



ST. JOHN

VIANNEY

COLLEGE SEMINARY
MAGAZINE

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THE DAWNING OF A
NEW DAY

A LOOK AT OUR PAST &
OUR FUTURE

FIRST ISSUE



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A MESSAGE FROM THE RECTOR

Un mensaje del Rector

Dear Sisters and Brothers in Christ,

Greetings of peace and joy from all of us at St. John Vianney College Seminary!

"In the beginning God created" the sacred author states as he recounts the history of salvation and embarks the reader on an incredible journey. An integral part of this history is our seminary, for it is here that many of the priests began the priestly formation which led them to participate of the Priesthood of Jesus Christ.

Seminary is defined as a seed plot, a nursery, from the Latin *sēminārium*; hence St. John Vianney is a field for planting seeds which will then be transplanted in other fields to bear fruit for Christ. The ministry at the seminary is to nourish these seeds that they will sprout, grow, and be pruned for the benefit of all. This year there are 95 saplings being transformed on this fertile plot of land, and whereas 25 years ago there were only 28 saplings. May we rejoice, not just in the increase in numbers, but also in the quality of the seeds that have sprouted in response to God's calling.

For 55 years this plot of land has born many sprouts which have produced abundant fruit throughout the state of Florida and beyond. May I invite you to rejoice in this gift from God and thank him wholeheartedly as we approach the altar; and may we continue to pray and ask him to strengthen the men he calls to serve the Church. Let us all engage in the ministry of promoting all vocations, especially that of the Priesthood of Jesus Christ.

In gratitude for your support this seed plot of St. John Vianney College Seminary shares with you a tiny grain of sand in the history of salvation in order that we might remember always the many blessings our Lord has bestowed upon us. Thank you for your prayers and support. We thank God and remember you as we gather around the altar to be nourished and pruned to then bring the fruit of our lives to share with all. As we partake of this fruit, may we rejoice in the words of the sacred author, "God saw all that he had made, and it was very good."

Please continue to pray for us and all the men that God keeps calling to be planted and become priests of Jesus Christ. With prayerful best wishes.

I remain at your service in Christ,

Queridos hermanas y hermanos en Cristo,

¡Saludos de paz y alegría de todos nosotros en el Seminario Universitario San Juan Vianney!

"En el principio Dios creó" relata el autor sagrado al recontar la historia de la salvación y conduce al lector en un increíble viaje. Una parte integral de esta historia es nuestro seminario, donde muchos sacerdotes comenzaron la formación sacerdotal que los llevó a participar del sacerdocio de Jesucristo.

Seminario se define como una parcela para sembrar, un vivero, del latín, *sēminārium*; por lo tanto, San Juan Vianney es un campo para sembrar las semillas que luego serán trasplantadas a otros campos y daron sus frutos para Cristo. El ministerio en el seminario es nutrir estas semillas que brotan, para que crezcan y se fructifiquen para el beneficio de todos. Este año hay 95 plantones transformados en este terreno fértil, y considerando que hace 25 años eran solamente 28 plantones, estamos muy bien. Regocijémonos no sólo en el aumento en los números, sino también en la calidad de las semillas que han germinado en respuesta al llamado de Dios.

Por 55 años en este terreno han nacido muchos brotes que han producido frutos abundantes en todo el estado de la Florida y en otros lugares. Les invito a regocijarse en este regalo de Dios y agradecerle sinceramente al acercarnos al altar; y que sigamos orando y pidiéndole a Dios que fortalezca a los hombres que llama a servir a la iglesia. Participemos todos en el ministerio de fomentar todas las vocaciones, especialmente la del Sacerdocio de Jesucristo.

En agradecimiento por su apoyo a esta parcela de San Juan Vianney, nosotros compartimos con ustedes un pequeño grano de arena en la historia de la salvación para que recordemos siempre las muchas bendiciones que nuestro Señor nos ha concedido. Gracias por sus oraciones y apoyo. Nosotros le damos gracias a Dios al reunirnos alrededor del altar para ser alimentados y podados de modo que podamos traer el fruto de nuestras vidas para compartir con todos ustedes. Mientras participamos de este fruto regocijémonos en las palabras del autor sagrado, "Dios vio todo lo que había hecho, y era muy bueno."

Por favor sigan orando por todos los hombres que Dios está llamando a ser plantados como semillas llamadas a convertirse en los sacerdotes de Jesucristo. Permanezco en oración con mis mejores deseos,

a su servicio en Cristo,

Roberto Garza

Monsignor Roberto Garza



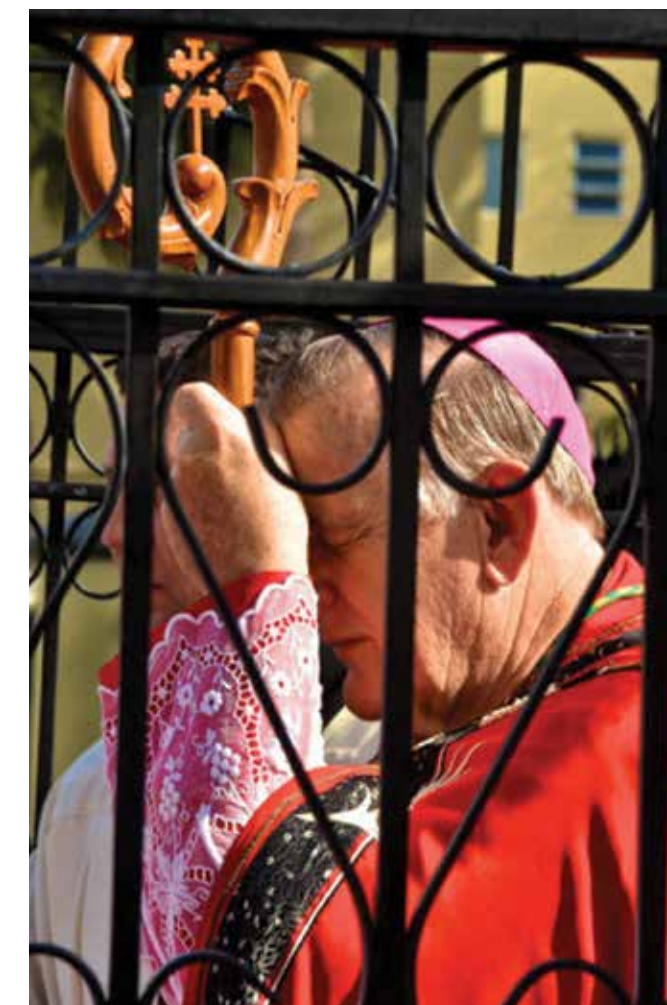
History of a VOCATION

Archbishop Thomas G. Wenski
Archbishop of Miami

On May 15, 1976 - the bicentennial year of our nation - I was ordained a priest by Archbishop Coleman Carroll at St. Mary's Cathedral - at the young age of 25. Today, many future priests don't begin their seminary studies until well beyond that age; but, I grew up in another time and, by God's grace, I discerned a calling to the priesthood at a very young age. My best recollection is that it was when I was in the third grade attending Sacred Heart School in Lake Worth, Florida. Of course, back then, it was not that remarkable that a boy in grade school taught by nuns would say that he wanted to be a priest - except, in my case, the desire never left me. Even when I experienced the inevitable crises that beset young seminarians as they begin to realize what the implications of such a vocation are, I could never imagine myself being anything else or doing anything else.

Again, a vocation is a thing of grace; nevertheless, there is one memory that is still vivid in my mind - and this memory is so vivid that it might explain how the seed of a priestly vocation was planted in my young mind and heart. When I was in the second grade, our pastor and the priest who baptized me, Msgr. James Cann, died. And I remember my parents taking me to the wake service held not in a funeral home but in the parish church itself. I still can recall in my mind's eye, Msgr. Cann laid out in the coffin - and I was impressed to see him laying in state in his vestments - as if he was ready to celebrate Mass. It was a powerful image of the psalm verse, "You are a priest forever according to the order of Melchizedek". I remember my mother explaining to me that not only was

Archbishop Thomas Wenski being
ordained to the Priesthood by
Archbishop Coleman Carroll.



Archbishop Thomas Wenski poses with his custom riding vest, a gift from the Knights of Columbus group, Knights on Bikes, whose Florida president, John Pesce, is on the left. At right is Rene John Sardina of the Chrome Knights Motorcycle Association, who helped organize the Poker Run (lower left). Archbishop Wenski greeting Saint John John Paul II (upper left). Archbishop Wenski resting his head against his Crosier as he is encompassed in prayer (right).

“ The seed of a priestly vocation was
planted in my young mind and heart ”

it customary that a priest be dressed as if for Mass for his funeral rites but also that his body be brought into the Church head first rather than feet first like a layperson. I'm not sure what I understood about all that - way back in the second grade; but, it sure made an impression on me. As I said, perhaps this event was used by God's providence to plant the seed of a vocation.

Thus, when I was in the eighth grade and the seminary entrance exams came, I asked my parents if I could apply. This was for the then High School Seminary (St. John Vianney originally included a four year High School program followed by two years of college). My parents did not encourage me - nor did they try to discourage me. I only now have begun to appreciate the sacrifice - and the faith that inspired it - that my parents made to allow their 13 year old son to leave home. At least, it wasn't too far away - I had been looking at vocation ads placed in various Catholic magazines for religious missionary congregations. But, in any case, seminary rules did not allow phone calls though we could write weekly letters and go home one weekend a month.

So, my vocation story is not a dramatic one - but one not unlike that of many priests of mine and earlier generations. It grew from a seed planted from the lived experience of family and parish life and the Catholic school. Some would describe the time in which I grew up as the waning years of the 'Catholic ghetto' constructed by immigrants in a generally hostile Protestant culture. Yet, it was also a time in which Catholics could feel at home in America - and at the same time be proud of their Catholic faith which was communicated clearly and coherently from the pulpit, in the classroom and at the family dinner table. In that lived experience of Catholic life, there was no lack of role models: the priests and religious sisters who witnessed to me through their own dedication and devotion to their vocations. And, of course, there was the faith of my parents who, while they may have occasionally complained about a long sermon or a particularly stern sister, held in high regard those who "left everything" to follow the Lord's call.

El Arzobispo Tomás Wenski es ordenado al sacerdocio por el Arzobispo Coleman Carroll.



Historia de una VOCACIÓN

El Arzobispo Tomás G. Wenski
Arzobispo de Miami

El 15 de mayo 1976 - el año del bicentenario de nuestra nación - fui ordenado sacerdote por el Arzobispo Coleman Carroll en la Catedral de Santa María a la temprana edad de 25 años . Hoy en día muchos futuros sacerdotes no comienzan sus estudios en el seminario hasta que son mayores, pero yo, que crecí en otros tiempos, y por la gracia de Dios, pude discernir mi vocación al sacerdocio cuando aún era muy joven. El mejor recuerdo que tengo es de cuando cursaba el tercer grado en la Escuela del Sagrado Corazón en Lake Worth, Florida. Por supuesto que en ese entonces era muy común que un niño enseñado por monjas en la escuela primaria dijera que quería ser sacerdote, excepto que en mi caso ese deseo nunca me abandonó. Incluso cuando experimenté las inevitables crisis que acosan a los jóvenes seminaristas a medida que comienzan a darse cuenta de las implicaciones de tal vocación, no podía imaginarme ser cualquier otra cosa o hacer cualquier otra cosa .

Como dije anteriormente, la vocación es cosa de la gracia; sin embargo, hay un recuerdo que aún está vivo en mi mente y tan vívido podría explicar cómo se sembró la semilla de la vocación sacerdotal en mi mente y en mi corazón, aún muy jóvenes. Cuando yo estaba en el segundo grado, nuestro párroco y el sacerdote que me bautizó , monseñor James Cann , murió. Recuerdo que mis padres me llevaron al velorio, que no se llevó a cabo en una funeraria sino en la propia iglesia de nuestra parroquia. Aún puedo recordar como si lo estuviera viendo con mis ojos al monseñor Cann en el ataúd y cuánto me impresionó



El Arzobispo Tomás Wenski posa con su chaqueta de montar motocicleta hecha especialmente para él, un regalo de los grupo de motociclistas de los Caballeros de Colón, Caballeros en Moto. A la izquierda está el presidente, John Pesce. A la derecha está Rene John Sardina de la Asociación de Motociclistas Caballeros de Cromo, quienes ayudaron a organizar el Poker Run (abajo a la izquierda). El Arzobispo Tomás Wenski saludando al Papa Juan Pablo II (arriba a la izquierda). El Arzobispo Tomás Wenski descanza la cabeza en su báculo, absorto en oración (a la derecha).



“ Se sembró la semilla de la vocación sacerdotal en mi mente y en mi corazón, aún muy jóvenes. ”

verlo en sus vestimentas sacerdotales, como si estuviera listo para celebrar la Misa. Fue una imagen poderosa del versículo del salmo: “Tú eres sacerdote para siempre según la orden de Melquisedec”. Recuerdo que mi madre me explicó que no sólo era habitual que vistieran a un sacerdote como si fuera a celebrar la Misa para sus ritos funerarios, sino también que, al entrar a la iglesia, su cuerpo fuera llevado con la cabeza por adelante, en lugar de los pies como se hace con un laico. No estoy seguro de lo que entendí de todo eso cuando estaba en el segundo grado, pero sí estoy seguro que hizo una fuerte impresión en mí . Podría decir que tal vez este evento fue utilizado por la providencia de Dios para plantar la semilla de la vocación en mí .

Así es que cuando estaba en el octavo grado y llegó el momento del examen de ingreso para el seminario, le pregunté a mis padres si podía solicitar. Esto era para el entonces el High School Seminary (St. John Vianney originalmente incluía un programa de escuela secundaria de cuatro años seguidos por dos años de estudios universitarios). Mis padres ni me alentaron ni trataron de disuadirme. Sólo ahora he comenzado a apreciar el sacrificio que hicieron mis padres y la fe que les inspiró para permitir que su hijo de 13 años se fuera de casa. Por lo menos no estaba demasiado lejos, ya que también había mirado nuncios vocacionales para

congregaciones religiosas misioneras en diversas revistas católicas. En cualquier caso, las reglas de seminario no permitían llamadas telefónicas, aunque podíamos escribir cartas semanalmente y también ir a casa un fin de semana al mes .

La historia de mi vocación no es dramática, pero no es diferente de la de muchos sacerdotes de mi generación y de generaciones anteriores. Creció de una semilla plantada en la experiencia vivida en la familia, en la vida de la parroquia y en la escuela católica. Algunos describen el momento en el que me crié como los últimos años del “ghetto católico” construido por los inmigrantes inmersos en una cultura protestante, generalmente hostil . Sin embargo, también fue una época en la que los católicos podían sentirse en casa en los Estados Unidos, estando al mismo tiempo orgullosos de su fe católica, que se comunicaba con claridad y coherencia desde el púlpito, en el aula y en la mesa familiar. En esa experiencia de la vida católica, no me faltaron modelos: los sacerdotes y religiosas que me dieron el testimonio a través de su propia dedicación y devoción a su vocación . Y, por supuesto, estaba la fe de mis padres, que, si bien de vez en cuando se quejaban de algún sermón largo o una hermana particularmente severa, siempre tuvieron en alta estima a los que “dejaron todo” para seguir la llamada del Señor .

HISTORY OF PRIESTLY FORMATION

Matthew Hawkins *Diocese of Orlando
Pre-Theology II*

Many people are surprised when they hear that seminary formation requires an equivalent number of years (7-9 years) to some doctoral programs. Prior to even beginning theology, seminarians spend anywhere from two to four years (depending on a previous degree) studying philosophy at a college seminary. Although a key component, growing in intelligence is not the sole purpose of such a lengthy period of time; three other equally important aspects must also be solidified: spiritual, human and pastoral. The current seminary program aims at shaping men in each dimension in order to respond to our diverse and ever-changing culture. This development, however, is in its infancy relative to the 2000-year history of the Church. Since the beginning, men have been called to be the “aroma of Christ” in the world while at the same time having the “odor of the sheep,” becoming the bridge that brings God to man and man to God. Times change and so too must the formation of seminarians in order to remain “ever ancient [and] ever new.”

**“Pray for good & holy families.
They are the seedbed from
which vocations flourish.”**

Pre-Trent

The Selection of Priests (100s – 1550)

In the first four centuries of the Church, there was no set pattern for priestly selection, studies, and training. Well-respected men in the community were often chosen to become priests and bishops by popular demand. One such example, St. Ambrose (†397), received the sacraments from Baptism to Holy Orders in one week to become the bishop of Milan at the request of the citizens. Once ordained, St. Ambrose and other bishops like him directed their own studies with the limited available texts. With this self-acquired knowledge, bishops would then gather the priests together in informal communities to study and pray. These small fraternities were not intended to spread an abstract, theoretical knowledge of the faith but rather to encourage the shepherds to lead holy lives rooted in Scripture as models for their flocks.

By the eighth century, a universal curriculum and set of criteria for ordination were still nonexistent. Education was offered to the sons of wealthy nobility in monasteries, however this remained inaccessible for

men becoming priests. Charlemagne (emperor of the Holy Roman Empire at the time) became concerned with the sparse education given to the ordained. His response was to decree that all clerics should at least know how to read and write, motivating some bishops to open cathedral schools. Though this was a move in the right direction, a majority of candidates continued to prepare for ministry through brief and informal instruction under the local priest – a form of apprenticeship. After achieving a sufficient level of competence (i.e. enough familiarity with Latin to read the texts and perform the rituals), the priest would present the young man to the bishop for ordination.

Council of Trent

A Need for Unified Formation (1545 – 1563)

In the 12th century, the Church helped establish the university system – which grew out of the monastic and cathedral schools – in part to alleviate the scarcity of intellectual formation for clerics. Many of today’s well-known centers of learning (e.g. Paris and Oxford) originated or gained fame for their theological programs at this time. They produced great minds and doctors of the Church like St. Thomas Aquinas (†1274) and St. Bonaventure (†1274), who studied and taught side-by-side. Unfortunately, their teaching remained locked up in the university system or in religious orders. Once again the overwhelming majority of priests did not have access to this form of education. Instead, they remained in the informal apprenticeship model, which was slowly becoming corrupt as it attracted men looking for political and financial gain.

Many zealous young men who desired an authentic life of self-donation slowly began to join newly established religious orders (e.g. Franciscans and Dominicans), living in prayer, community, and simplicity. They spread throughout Western Europe, but, due to the communal lifestyle, their impact remained localized. Despite the growing availability and popularity of universities on the one hand, and religious communities on the other, only a small number of diocesan priests reaped the benefits of either. Eventually, the Church would see the effects of this fragmented system.

The ongoing lack of formation in the lives of the majority of clergy began to reach a boiling point. The Borgia and Medici popes of the 15th and 16th centuries did little along the lines of reform: Men continued to be ordained with no theological or moral education, priests sought areas promising the greatest rewards and comfortable lifestyles, and from top to bottom, their lives were more often the object of scorn and scandal than of admiration.

St. Ignatius of Loyola (†1556) recognized that, in order to correct these problems, the formation of future priests needed to integrate education, morality, and spirituality. In 1551, he founded the first of the Jesuit colleges in Rome, now the Pontifical Gregorian University. Candidates for priesthood depended on the generosity of financial benefactors, opening the door for all classes of men. During their formation, they were expected to abide by a rule written by Ignatius that provided guidelines for each aspect of their daily lives (similar to the religious orders mentioned above – living in prayer, community, and simplicity). The success of this rule, known today as the Spiritual Exercises, was so widespread that it became the model for future seminaries.

As Ignatius firmed up the spiritual dimension of formation, another man, Cardinal Archbishop of England Reginald Pole, recognized the need for better administrative guidelines. He developed a decree that the Council of Trent (1563) would eventually adopt with slight modifications, giving birth to the official seminary program. Potential seminarians had to be at least twelve years old, able to read and write, preferably of poor families, and known to be of good character. Their studies would include the humanities, chant, Sacred Scripture, and theology. In addition to educa-



**“Pray for a greater number of
laborers for the vineyard.”**

tional requirements, the seminarians were also expected to wear clerical garb, receive the tonsure (shaving the top of the head), assist at daily Mass, confess once a month, and receive Holy Communion according to the advice of their spiritual director. For the first time, an awareness of the need for a universal standard of intellectual and spiritual formation appeared in the Church. In 1588, the Vatican also designed an office, now called the Congregation for Catholic Education, to monitor the execution of these guidelines.

Post-Trent

Growth and Development of Universal Formation (1564 – 1959)

Following the Council of Trent, the issues surrounding clerical abuses and the establishment of seminaries remained unresolved. Alarming as this may be, it must be kept within its historical context. Between the impact of the Enlightenment (a rationalist movement denouncing tradition and religion) and the growing number of Protestants – both of whom expelled clergy and religious communities – Catholicism was slowly losing its foothold in Western Europe. Many civil leaders were also leery of supporting Trent’s decisions for fear of causing further unrest. In addition to the many circumstantial difficulties, religious leaders struggled to devise ways to implement the requests of Trent: The documentation they received simply provided a brief list of requirements without any detailed plan to carry them out.

The vision of Trent finally began to materialize with the 17th century French religious communities. At least two of these communities, the Vincentians and the Sulpicians, were instrumental in our own country and continue to be involved in priestly education. St. Vincent de Paul (†1660), founder of the Vincentians, recognized that focusing on boys in their early teenage years – as encouraged by Trent – neglected a wide range of potential vocations. St. Vincent opened the door to men in their 20s and 30s, who began their formation with a greater sense of maturity, awareness, and self-possession. The Vincentians journeyed to the United States in 1816, staffing many seminaries, including our own in 1959 and St. Vincent de Paul Regional Seminary in Boynton Beach, Florida, in 1963.

The Sulpicians came to the United States when the French Revolution rendered it nearly impossible to openly train seminarians in their own countries. They found refuge in the Diocese of Baltimore, Maryland, in 1791. With a rented house and five foreign-born young men, they inaugurated North America’s first seminary, St. Mary’s. As expected, they experienced many growing pains and considered giving up within a few short

years. It was only through the intervention and foresight of Pope Pius VII that St. Mary’s remained open and eventually bore fruit.

The Second Vatican Council and Beyond

Shaping a True Shepherd (1965 – Present)

With the selfless dedication of so many individuals and religious communities, seminaries persevered through many difficult moments; however, due to these struggles, they spent most of their energy attempting to survive rather than strive towards a more perfect model. By the time that the Second Vatican Council began in 1962, little had changed in seminary formation since the early foundations four centuries earlier. Often times there was an isolation of the seminarians from the laity resulting in a disconnect between what was learned and what would eventually be put into practice. Academic demands placed upon the men expected up to 21 hours of weekly class work in addition to other mandatory activities. With this in mind, and with the general plan of taking the riches from the past and applying them to modern times, the Council Fathers drafted a document outlining the future of seminary development. Essential and primary to the renewal of the Church was the renewal of the priesthood – not only in what he knows or does, but more importantly in his own identity as a participant in the one priesthood of Jesus Christ. The most prevalent and ancient image of Christ was that of the Good Shepherd. This, then, became the model for priestly formation as a heavier emphasis was laid upon the pastoral dimension of their ministry.

In the latest development (1992), St. John Paul II issued *Pastores dabo vobis* [I Will Give You Shepherds], a document highlighting the pastoral aspect of the priesthood and acknowledging that a man cannot give what he does not first have himself. At the heart of all formation – what is fundamentally human – is the integration of heart, soul, mind, and body. Though this is emphasized in the seminary, it begins much earlier in the home. It is here that men are formed in prayer, joy, fidelity, and an openness to God’s will for their lives.

Since the Second Vatican Council, the Church has been supremely blessed with exemplary models of wisdom, compassion, courage, and holiness inspiring a steady growth in the number of vocations. Pray for a greater number of laborers for the vineyard; pray that they may be formed into the men – priests, shepherds, and servants – that the Church and the world needs. Please pray also for good and holy families as they are the seedbeds from which vocations flourish.

HISTORY OF THE CHURCH IN

A Brief look into the Development

Joshua Bertrand
Diocese of St. Petersburg
Pre-Theology II

Christopher Knight
Diocese of St. Augustine
Pre-Theology I

Early Missionary Efforts

The Catholic Church has a long and vibrant history in Florida that dates back to the Age of Exploration and the Spanish Crown’s race for gold, glory, and God. In 1513, the famed Spanish explorer Ponce de Leon discovered the mysterious peninsula that was thought to lie just north of Cuba. It was rumored to contain gold, local inhabitants to whom to spread the faith, and even the Fountain of Youth. Ponce de Leon landed near St. Augustine on April 3, 1513, during the Easter season. In honor of the Lord, who brought him to these white sandy shores filled with blooming flowers, he claimed the land for the Spanish Crown under the name La Florida, after the Spanish Easter Season: Pascua Florida (Feast of Flowers). This sparsely inhabited land of Native Americans would be the landscape for what is now seven dioceses, nearly five hundred parishes, and more than two million Catholics.

A major goal for the Spanish Crown in exploring and colonizing regions on the edge of the known world was to live out Jesus’ last request: “Go, therefore, and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit” (Mt. 28:20). Ponce de Leon’s discovery, then, ignited a flurry of Spanish missionary activity in La Florida (it is important to note that Spanish-occupied La Florida during this era encompassed not only Florida but parts of Georgia, South Carolina, Alabama, Mississippi, Louisiana, and Arkansas). Franciscan Priests led the missionary efforts, entering the virgin territory of La Florida through St. Augustine, ready for the challenges that awaited them.

For more than one hundred years, these brave Franciscans, interspersed with diocesan priests and other religious orders (Dominicans and Jesuits), traveled through the cypress swamps and pine forests of Florida and the Southeast, setting up a network of missions. They stopped at nothing to spread the Gospel of Christ Jesus, braving hostile natives, the harsh Florida climate, lack of supplies, and a constant threat of malaria. Some of these missionary priests even became martyrs, giving their lives as a witness to the passion of our Lord. One example is the martyrdom of Fr. Luis Cancer of the Order of Preachers (the Dominicans). In 1549 on the shores of Tampa Bay, he was beaten to death by frightened natives as he knelt in prayer before them, trying with every last breath to live out his vocation as a preacher of the Gospel.

Over time, the missionaries’ efforts paid off as they established more than fifty missions across the state. In addition to bringing Christianity to the natives (some scholars place the number of Native

FLORIDA

American converts in Florida at 26,000 during this period), each of these small missions that dotted the Southeast taught European methods of growing crops, raising livestock, weaving, music, and even reading and writing.

Unfortunately, this came to an abrupt end in the early 18th century (1702-1706) when the Carolinians (English Colonists from the Carolinas and their Native American allies) invaded La Florida. They destroyed each mission as they pressed into the Spanish territory. The Carolinians’ acts marked the end of any large-scale missionary efforts until the middle of the 19th century.

In 1821, due to the Spanish Crown’s lack of financial support and manpower, La Florida was transferred from the Spanish Crown to the emerging United States of America. This ended 300 years of Spanish rule over La Florida and marked a new era. The demographics shifted from Spanish Colonial Catholics to Scots-Irish pioneer Protestant families. The new tenants of the land brought their own Christian tradition, work ethic, and pioneer spirit with them. Within a few short years, La Florida also

“Go, therefore, and make baptizing them in the of the Son, and of the

took on a new pronunciation – Florida – further demonstrating the new ethnicity. The Church fell on hard times during this transition.

In 1857, Pope Pius IX sent a Frenchman, Father Augustin Verot, to evaluate the situation in the Florida Territory. He discovered a Church on life support (the church in Florida fell under the Archdiocese of Savannah, Georgia at this time). It only contained three priests with minimal resources who traveled by horseback to four parishes and several missions throughout the state. With urgency, Fr. Verot returned to his French homeland in 1859 and recruited seven diocesan priests to assist him in his efforts. In the same year he also enlisted five sisters of the Order of Mercy from Connecticut and three Christian Brothers from Canada to open schools in the territory. These men and women labored alongside Fr. Verot for decades, slowly building up the church in Florida.

Finally, in 1870, these men and women saw the wonderful fruit of their tireless labor: Rome elevated the Florida Territory to the Diocese of St. Augustine and Fr. Verot was ordained the first bishop. The diocese spanned the entire state from the Apalachicola River in the Panhandle to Key West, taking its land from the Archdiocese of Savannah. For the next seventy-five years, Bishop Verot and his successors steered the Church as waves of immigrants slowly shaped Florida. Pockets of vibrant Catholic ethnic groups formed throughout the state, one of the most famous being Ybor City just north of Tampa.

Shaping the Modern Church

The Diocese of St. Augustine continued to oversee the entire state of Florida until 1958. Over the next twenty-six years (1958 – 1984), the rural and sparsely populated Florida, consisting of only one diocese, became one of the most highly inhabited states in the nation, growing to seven dioceses. This marked an era in the Florida Church unlike any before. Many strong leaders would help the Church expand during this twenty-six year transition.

One man to step up to the challenge was Joseph Patrick Hurley, the Bishop of St. Augustine. He served as bishop from 1940 to 1967, first overseeing the formation of the Archdiocese of Miami and later paving the way for the Dioceses of Orlando and St. Petersburg. He earned the nickname “Ten-acre Joe” from his extensive land purchases throughout

disciples of all nations name of the Father and Holy Spirit. (Matt 28:19)

the state. His foresight proved invaluable during the population boom of the 1960’s and 1970’s. Today, many of our parishes and schools sit on land purchased by Bishop Hurley.

In October of 1958, a second diocese was formed to relieve the workload of St. Augustine. Florida was not split vertically down the middle, forming an east and west coast diocese, as Bishop Hurley envisioned; instead, Rome decided to split the state horizontally with a north and a south diocese. The Diocese of St. Augustine retained the area north of Yeehaw Junction and the newly formed Diocese of Miami acquired the area to the south.

The bishop chosen for the new diocese was Coleman Carroll, an Auxiliary Bishop of Pittsburgh. Dubbed “tough as nails,” Archbishop Carroll was a vocal man who managed the diocese through tumultuous times including the Cuban exile, race riots, and the implementation of the Second Vatican Council. He also became part of the unofficial class

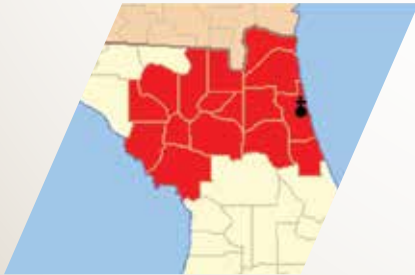
of American bishops termed “brick and mortar bishops” for their massive building projects. Among Carroll’s projects were dozens of parishes, schools, and our two seminaries: St. John Vianney College Seminary (1959) and St. Vincent de Paul Regional Seminary (1963). Coleman Carroll also witnessed the rapid growth of Catholicism in South Florida, due in part to the Cuban exile. During his time (1958-1977), the number of Catholics in the Diocese of Miami grew from 185,000 to 700,000. As a result of this growth, Pope Paul VI elevated Miami to the status of Archdiocese in 1968, making Coleman Carroll the state’s first archbishop midway through his episcopate.

When Miami became an archdiocese in 1968, two more dioceses were created: St. Petersburg and Orlando. The first Bishop of St. Petersburg, Bishop Charles Borromeo McLaughlin, was known as “Hurricane Charlie.” He earned his nickname by using his piloting skills to reach his flock that extended from Citrus County in the north to Collier County in the south (nearly three hundred miles). The Diocese of Orlando, which encompasses much of Central Florida, was first led by Bishop William D. Borders. Bishop Borders would invoke an interesting nickname for himself. During a meeting with Pope Paul VI, he jokingly introduced himself as “Bishop of the Moon” because Apollo 11, which launched from Cape Canaveral, had just made the first lunar landing.

The next diocese to be formed was the Diocese of Pensacola-Tallahassee in 1975. Previously, the area of the Panhandle west of Apalachicola was under the jurisdiction of the Archdiocese of Mobile, Alabama. However, the Archdiocese of Mobile transferred this land to the Diocese of St. Augustine in 1968, which assumed it until the Diocese of Pensacola-Tallahassee was created. Their first bishop was Rene Gracida, the former Auxiliary Bishop of Miami and later the Bishop of Corpus Christi, Texas. Prior to entering the priesthood, Bishop Gracida served as a tail gunner for the “Flying Tigers” during World War II.

Finally, the Diocese of Venice and the Diocese of Palm Beach were established simultaneously on October 24, 1984, solidifying the number of dioceses in Florida. The Diocese of Venice formed from parts of the Diocese of St. Petersburg, the Diocese of Orlando, and the Archdiocese of Miami; the Diocese of Palm Beach drew entirely from the northern part of the Archdiocese of Miami.

As the history of Florida is rich and complex, so is the development of the Catholic Church in Florida. It spans over 500 years through the turbulent waves of history and never fails to live the mission of Christ: “Go, therefore, and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit” (Mt 28:19). Our Florida Catholic Church stands on a secure foundation built upon the countless lives of past priests, sisters, and lay faithful who understood the necessity of continuing the mission of Christ in Florida. The next time you pass a parish, school, or hospital, think about the great footsteps in which we walk, for in many ways we “walk in the footsteps of giants.”



Diocese of St. Augustine 1870



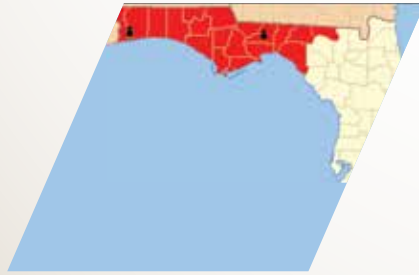
Archdiocese of Miami 1958



Diocese of Orlando 1968



Diocese of St. Petersburg 1968



Diocese of Pensacola-Tallahassee 1975



Diocese of Venice 1984

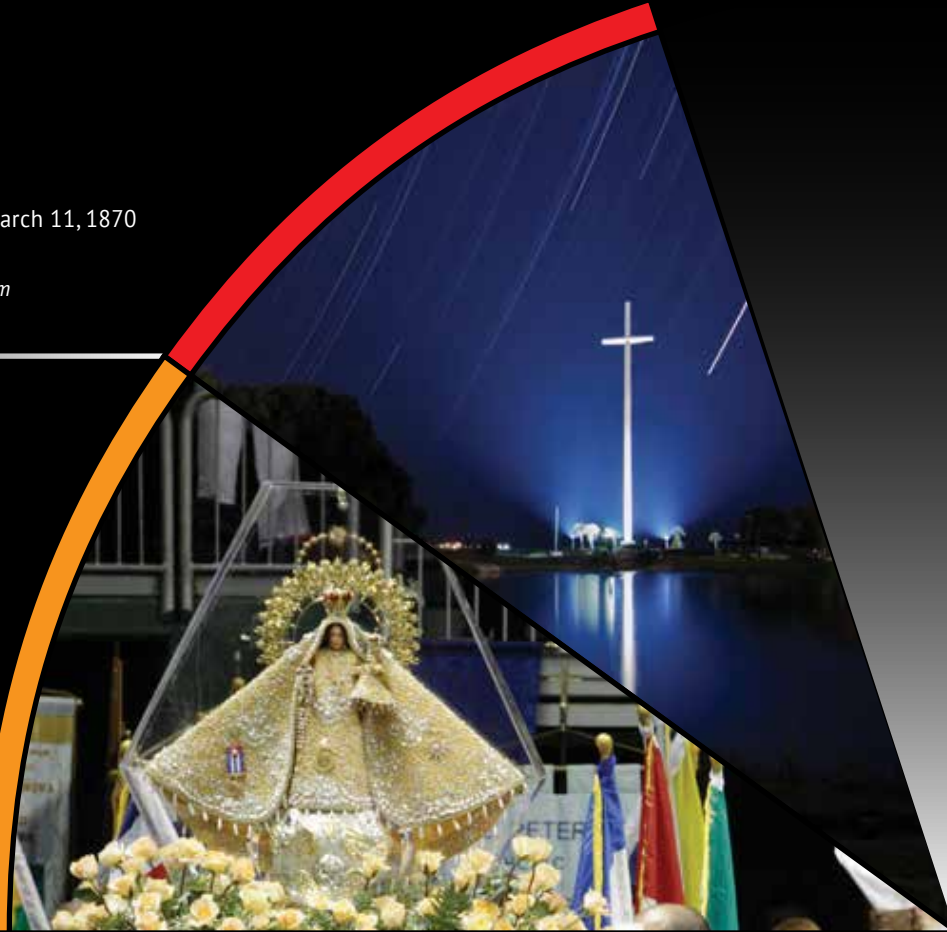


Diocese of Palm Beach 1984

DIOCESE OF ST. AUGUSTINE 1870

Photo of the Mission 'Nombre de Dios' at night.

52 Parishes
29 Seminarians
~180,000 Catholics
149 Diocesan Priests
Cathedral Basilica of St. Augustine dedicated on March 11, 1870
Current Bishop: Felipe de Jesús Estévez
Photo courtesy of Craig Hill - www.craighillphotography.com



ARCHDIOCESE OF MIAMI 1958

Photo of the La Caridad del Cobre Mass. This annual celebration of the Patroness of Cuba, Our Lady of Charity.

105 Parishes
61 Seminarians
~1.3 million Catholics
397 Diocesan Priests
Cathedral of St. Mary dedicated in 1958
Current Archbishop: Thomas Gerard Wenski
Photo courtesy of Diocese Communications Offices



ST. JOHN VIANNEY 1959

Photo of St. Raphael Chapel

85 current seminarians
Bilingual insituitiion since 1975
Transitioned from Minor Seminary to College Seminary in 1976
St. Raphael's Chapel dedicated on January 21, 1966
Current Rector: Msgr. Roberto Garza



DIOCESE OF ORLANDO 1968

Photo of interior of the Basilica of the National Shrine of Mary, Queen of the Universe.

79 Parishes
24 Seminarians
~400,000 Catholics
207 Diocesan Priests
St. James Cathedral dedicated on March 2, 1968
Current Bishop: John Gerard Noonan
Photo courtesy of Communications of the Basilica of the National Shrine



DIOCESE OF ST. PETERSBURG 1968

Photo of the dedication of the Cadthedral of St. Jude

81 Parishes
34 Seminarians
~425,000 Catholics
96 Diocesan Priests
Cathedral of St. Jude the Apostle dedicated on September 12, 2013
Current Bishop: Robert Nugent Lynch
Photo courtesy of Diocese Communications Office



DIOCESE OF PENSACOLA-TALLAHASSEE 1975

Photo of the bishops of Florida gathering for the 39th Annual Red Mass of the Holy Spirit.

57 Parishes
13 Seminarians
~75,000 Catholics
75 Diocesan Priests
Cathedral of the Sacred Heart dedicated on October 1, 1975
Co-Cathedral of Saint Thomas Moore dedicated on October 1, 1975
Current Bishop: Gregory Lawrence Parkes
Photo courtesy of Diocese Communications Office



DIOCESE OF PALM BEACH 1984

Photo of Vietnamese children processing with Our Lady of La Vang.

50 Parishes
9 Seminarians
~250,000 Catholics
108 Diocesan Priests
Cathedral of St. Ignatius Loyola dedicated on October 18, 1984
Current Bishop: Gerald Michael Barbarito
Photo courtesy of Palm Beach Florida Catholic



DIOCESE OF VENICE 1984

Photo of St. Martha, the first mission in Sarasota

59 Parishes
15 Seminarians
~223,000 Catholics
116 Diocesan Priests
Epiphany Cathedral established on October 1984
Current Bishop: Frank Joseph Dewane
Photo courtesy of Diocese Communications Office



OUR HISTORY Through the DECADES



NUESTRA HISTORIA a Través de las DÉCADAS

1950s: Breaking Ground

Under the guidance of newly appointed Archbishop Coleman Carroll, the archdiocese of Miami sets out to build a seminary on the outskirts of budding Miami. In the papal document that established Miami as a diocese, Pope Pius XII issues just one specific directive: the founding of a minor seminary within the Diocese's territory. On June 7th, 1959, construction crews break ground on the new seminary in the suburban neighborhood of Westchester. Under the patronage of St. John Vianney, the Congregation of the Mission (also known as the Vincentian Fathers) will staff the minor seminary's high school and two-year general college program. Archbishop Carroll diligently oversees its construction and - just three months after the groundbreaking - more than 7,500 onlookers witness the dedication.



1950s: Preparación del Terreno

Bajo la dirección del recién nombrado Arzobispo Coleman Carroll, la Arquidiócesis de Miami se propone construir un seminario en las afueras de la creciente ciudad de Miami. En el documento papal que estableció a Miami como Arquidiócesis, el Papa Pío XII especifica sólo una directriz: la fundación de un seminario menor en el territorio de la Diócesis. El 7 de junio de 1959, los equipos de construcción comienzan a preparar el terreno para el nuevo seminario en el suburbio de Westchester. Bajo el patronazgo de St. John Vianney, la Congregación de la Misión (también conocida como los Padres Vicentinos) provee el personal para la escuela secundaria del seminario menor y el programa universitario de dos años. El Arzobispo Carroll supervisa diligentemente su construcción y sólo tres meses después del comienzo de su construcción, más de 7.500 espectadores presencian la dedicación del nuevo seminario.

1960s: Growing in Size

Seeing enrollment triple from its original size by the fall of 1961, St. John Vianney Seminary continues to add more buildings to its campus. As the seminary's needs grow, so does the generosity of the Archdiocese's people. Recognizing the need for a fitting home for seminarians and staff to gather around the altar each day, Archbishop Coleman Carroll begins construction on the Chapel of St. Raphael on September 6, 1964. Due in large part to a generous donation by Mary Louise Maytag, heiress to the Maytag fortune, St. Raphael Chapel - in its distinct neo-gothic style with high walls and large overhangs that bear resemblance to the archangel Raphael's wings - will become the recognizable symbol of the seminary.



1960s: Creciendo en tamaño

Al triplicarse la cifra original de matrículas en el otoño de 1961, el seminario St. John Vianney continúa añadiendo más edificios en sus terrenos. A medida que las necesidades del seminario crecen, también crece la generosidad de los fieles de la Arquidiócesis. Reconociendo la necesidad de un lugar apropiado para reunirse en torno al altar diariamente los seminaristas y el personal del seminario, el Arzobispo Coleman Carroll inicia la construcción de la capilla de San Rafael el 6 de septiembre de 1964. Debido en gran parte a una generosa donación de Mary Louise Maytag, heredera de la fortuna Maytag, la Capilla de San Raphael, con su peculiar estilo neogótico con altos muros y grandes voladizos que se asemejan a las alas del arcángel San Rafael, se convertirá en el símbolo reconocible del seminario.

1964: Vatican II

The Second Vatican Council ushers in an era of reform throughout the Church, including seminary formation. Before the Council, seminaries are a two-tier system: minor seminaries and major seminaries. Minor seminaries provide teens interested in the priesthood with formation through a high school and additional two-year liberal arts program of studies in preparation for the major seminary. Major seminaries provide young men called to the priesthood with formation and higher education, philosophy and theology, leading to ecclesiastic degrees and ordination. The Second Vatican Council advises seminary formation to begin after men receive high school degrees. The seminary system transforms into college seminaries and theological seminaries. College seminaries form men in an undergraduate college setting, earning a Bachelors of Arts degree in Philosophy upon graduation. Theological Seminaries continue formation in a graduate studies environment in which men will be ordained, receiving a Master in Divinity.

Photo: Peter Geymayer • October 11, 1962



1964: El Vaticano II

El Concilio Vaticano II marca el comienzo de una era de reformas en la Iglesia, incluyendo la formación en seminarios. Antes del concilio, los seminarios tenían un sistema de dos niveles: seminarios menores y seminarios mayores. Los seminarios menores proporcionaban formación a adolescentes interesados en el sacerdocio a través de una escuela de segunda enseñanza y de un programa adicional de dos años de estudios en artes y humanidades en preparación para el seminario mayor. Los seminarios mayores proporcionaban formación a los jóvenes llamados al sacerdocio en educación superior, en filosofía y teología, conduciéndolos a títulos eclesiásticos y a su ordenación. El Concilio Vaticano II aconseja el comienzo de la formación del seminario a hombres que ya han recibido su título de bachiller. Por esta razón, el sistema de seminarios se transforma en seminarios universitarios y seminarios teológicos. Los seminarios universitarios forman hombres en un ambiente universitario de pregrado, obteniendo una Licenciatura de Filosofía al momento de su graduación. Los seminarios teológicos continúan la formación en un entorno de estudios de postgrado en el cual estos hombres serán ordenados sacerdotes, recibiendo una Maestría en Divinidad.

1970s: Developing Programs

As a result of the Second Vatican Council's directive, the high school program at St. John Vianney Minor Seminary closes in 1974. The two-year liberal arts program remains open. The following year, the Vincentian Fathers leave the seminary and staffing responsibility turns over to the Archdiocese of Miami. However, where some doors close, others open: Administration begins to develop a four-year college seminary program with a concentration in philosophy. St. John Vianney Minor Seminary becomes St. John Vianney College Seminary. Although this difficult transformation involves transitioning from a previous emphasis on high school education to that of a four-year college, certain priests help to guide the seminary through its growth, including Msgr. John Nevins, (later Bishop of the Diocese of Venice) who becomes the college seminary's first rector. He and the first Academic Dean, Fr. Sean O'Sullivan (a Franciscan), lead the college seminary into a new age.



1970s: Desarrollando Programas

Como resultado de la directriz del Concilio Vaticano II, se cierra el programa de la escuela secundaria en el Seminario Menor San Juan María Vianney en 1974. El programa de dos años en artes y humanidades continúa abierto. Al año siguiente, los Padres Vicentinos dejan el seminario y la responsabilidad del personal pasa a manos de la Arquidiócesis de Miami. Pero como dice el adagio: "Donde se cierra una puerta se abre otra." La Administración comienza a desarrollar un programa de seminario universitario de cuatro años con énfasis en filosofía. Aunque esta difícil transformación implica la transición de un énfasis en educación secundaria a uno en la educación universitaria, ciertos sacerdotes ayudan a guiar el seminario a través de su crecimiento, incluyendo a Mons. John Nevins, (más tarde obispo de la Diócesis de Venecia, en Florida) que se convierte en primer rector del seminario universitario. Él y el primer decano académico, el padre Sean O'Sullivan (franciscano), llevan a una nueva era al nuevo seminario universitario.

1980s: Growing Pains

St. John Vianney's second rector, Msgr. Robert Lynch (now Bishop of the Diocese of St. Petersburg), continues to improve the seminary. Arriving in 1979, Lynch makes a dedicated effort to recruit faculty and staff that will adequately fulfill its mission. Among many distinguished personnel, Sister Trinita Flood, O.P., arrives as the second Academic Dean after great success in developing nearby Barry University. An influx of seminarians from the Caribbean as well as Central and South America, along with a growing need for faculty office space necessitates expansion. In 1983, using money that Mary Louise Maytag set aside for further development, the seminary erects yet another building. The construction of the Maytag Memorial Library and adjacent Administration Building gives the campus library a permanent home and allows for the addition of more classrooms and bedrooms to the pre-existing Carroll Building.



1980s: Seguimos Creciendo

Mons. Robert Lynch, el segundo rector de St. John Vianney (ahora Obispo de la Diócesis de St. Petersburg), continua el progreso del seminario. Comenzando en 1979, Lynch hace un esfuerzo muy dedicado para contratar un profesorado y personal que lleve a cabo la misión del seminario. Entre el nuevo personal sobresalen, Sor Trinita Flood, O.P., que viene a ser la segunda decana académica después de su exitosa labor en el desarrollo de Barry University. Un influjo creciente de seminaristas provenientes del Caribe y América Central y del Sur, unido a la creciente necesidad de espacio, impulsa una necesaria expansión. En 1983, el seminario hace uso de fondos dejados por Mary Louise Maytag específicamente para el desarrollo de nuevas edificaciones. La construcción de la Biblioteca Memorial Mary Louise Maytag y un anexo edificio administrativo provee el recinto universitario con una biblioteca permanente y permite añadir más aulas y habitaciones al ya existente Carrol Building.

1990s: Tightening of the Belt

As plans develop to add yet another new building in response to the seminary's growing enrollment, the number of seminarians studying at St. John Vianney College Seminary radically dips below 30 men. Many courses only have a handful of seminarians in them. This not only ends the hope of further expansion but now threatens the seminary with the danger of closing under the serious burden of financial upkeep. Then, in August of 1992, Hurricane Andrew ravages campus with major and extensive damage. These trials bring out the very best in the entire administration, faculty, and staff as they step up to save the seminary. Out of love for St. John Vianney, many staff members take pay cuts for several years without requesting a single cent of compensation.



1990s: Echándole Agua a la Sopa

Al mismo tiempo que los planes de desarrollo para la expansión de un nuevo edificio como respuesta al creciente numero de matrículas en el seminario universitario St. John Vianney, el número de matriculados cae por debajo de treinta. Muchas clases solo tienen un puñado de seminaristas. Esto no solo trunca las esperanzas del la expansión, pero amenaza la institución con el cierre debido a las cargas financieras. Luego, en agosto de 1992, el huracán Andrew hace sus estragos en el recinto, dejando a su paso daños sustanciales. Estas pruebas sacan lo mejor de todo el equipo administrativo, el profesorado, y el personal que se proponen salvar el seminario. Por su amor a la institución, muchos de los trabajadores sacrifican parte de su salario por varios años.

2000s: A New Millenium

Previously making his mark at St. John Vianney as Dean of Students, Msgr. John Noonan (currently the Bishop of the Diocese of Orlando) ushers in the new millennium as rector. Noonan spends the entirety of this decade on campus: first as rector until 2005 and then as Auxiliary Bishop of Miami. Replacing him, Msgr. Michael Carruthers begins the implementation of a wave of improvements that focus on the importance of the humanities, including the inception of a fund that allows seminarians to attend enriching cultural events in the Miami area. Also, the academic program shifts with greater emphasis to the humanities through the institution of annual Junior projects that aim at augmenting their understanding of a particular topic in art and culture. In 2009, St. John Vianney marks the 50th anniversary of its founding.



2000s: Un Nuevo Milenio

Mons. John Noonan (actualmente Obispo de Orlando) deja su marca en el seminario como decano de estudiantes e inaugura el nuevo milenio como rector. Noonan pasará la década entera en el recinto universitario, primero como rector hasta el año 2005 y luego en residencia como Obispo Auxiliar de Miami. Mons. Michael Carruthers lo reemplaza y comienza la implementación de una ola de cambios que se enfoca en un énfasis de las Humanidades, lo que incluye la creación de un fondo que permite a los seminaristas la asistencia en el area de Miami. En 2009, St. John Vianney celebra el cincuenta aniversario de su fundación.

Envisioning the Future

Under current rector Msgr. Roberto Garza, the seminary hopes once again to expand its horizons. St. John Vianney has become one of the largest college seminaries in the country. In the past few years, St. John Vianney has run into a terrific problem: as enrollment will likely surpass 100 in the near future, boarding capacity remains capped at 85. The Archdiocese of Miami has begun preparing for growth. Over the next few years, St. John Vianney College Seminary will carry out the largest expansion since its founding.

Bajo la dirección del actual rector mons. Roberto Garza, el seminario espera una vez mas agrandar sus horizontes. St. John Vianney se ha convertido en uno de los seminarios universitarios más grandes del país. En años recientes, el seminario se ha visto frente a una buena situación, las matrículas sobrepasarán la centena en un futuro no muy lejano. Sin embargo, la capacidad de residentes permanece en 85. La Arquidiócesis de Miami ha comenzado a prepararse para el crecimiento. En los próximos años, St. Vianney planea llevar a cabo el mayor expansión en su historia.



*Above is an architectural rendering of the seminary as it stands now.
Arriba hay una representación arquitectónica vigente del seminario.*

*Below is an architectural rendering of the seminary with the proposed expansion.
Abajo hay una representación arquitectónica del seminario con la expansión propuesta.*

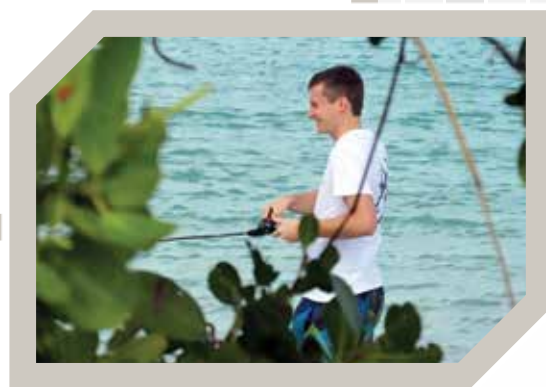


**The entrance to St. John Vianney College Seminary.
a conceptual rendering**



Seminary EXPERiENCE

Matt King
Senior
Diocese of St. Augustine



Greetings from Miami and may the peace of Christ be with you! My name is Matt King, and I am concluding my senior year at St. John Vianney College Seminary, having spent the last four years studying philosophy and discerning a vocation to the priesthood of Jesus Christ. Words truly fail to convey the experiences and relationships I have had during my time at seminary, but through it all I have discovered one uniting theme: Jesus Christ is alive and He is calling me to share, in a special way, the profound and undying love He has for His bride, the Church.

In my time here, I have developed the best friendships of my life. I promise you that we have great men preparing for the priesthood. I am honored as well as deeply humbled to call them my brothers, and I look forward to serving alongside them in the future.

The passion and love that our priests and staff have for us continues to amaze me. I entered seminary as an 18-year-old, fresh out of high school. Over the past four years, the priests and staff have challenged me; in doing so, they have contributed greatly to the man I have become. I am now 22 years old and can honestly say that I would not be the same person I am today if not for the formation I received here.

Jesus Christ is the model priest and the man with whom I have sought so tirelessly to grow in relationship during these past four years. One of my favorite aspects about the seminary is the strategic location

of our tabernacle in St. Raphael's Chapel, where we gather for daily prayer and Mass. It marks the exact center of campus. The intent of this placement is without a doubt symbolic of life here at St. John Vianney. Christ is the center of everything we do. My most beautiful memories have been the countless hours I've spent in St. Raphael's Chapel adoring Christ and coming to know him as a person. Lastly, I have you (the person reading this right now) to thank for my continued discernment and experiences in formation.

Christ has allowed me to encounter so many different people and, through these encounters, I have begun to fall deeply in love with Christ's bride, the Church. There is a good chance I have never met you, but I promise that you have been on my heart and that thinking of and praying for you inspires me every day. Knowing that one day I will have the opportunity to serve you motivates me to wake up early in the morning, challenges me to study with greater determination, and encourages me to keep going, especially when things become difficult or when I have doubts about Christ's call. I am a man in love and I cannot wait for the glorious day when I will be able to lay prostrate before the altar of the Lord and give you my entire life. Praised be Jesus Christ! Now and Forever!



Experiencia en el SEMiNARIO

Jose Lopez
Estudiante de cuarto año de Filosofía
Diócesis de Miami

Tú, el reto de mi destino. Prosa poética a cuatro años de formación. Hay un momento en nuestra vida en el cual nos encontramos frente una atracción absoluta. Y que no sólo una vez, sino muchas veces la encontramos. Ese encuentro nos intriga pues vislumbramos en él cual si fuera una llama lejana, nuestra felicidad. Esto nos atrae grandemente, pues: ¿quién no está comprometido con alcanzar la felicidad? Ese encuentro con esa atracción absoluta me ocurrió cuando entré por primera vez a la capilla de San Rafael. Ese día me di cuenta no solo con mis emociones, sino también con mi voluntad y razón, que allí residía aquello que calmaba las ansias de mi corazón. También supe en aquel momento revelador que lo que se encontraba frente a mí no era otra cosa que el reto de mi destino, que me llamaba a seguirlo y a entrar en una relación.

Cosa que sucedió, pues lo conocí por su Nombre. Lo conocí por Jesús, el Hijo de Dios y el carpintero de Nazaret. Desde entonces nuestra relación ha sido fluctuante, aunque siempre viva y constante. Fluctuante no por Él, sino por mí, pues he cambiado, así como han cambiado los tiempos. Me acuerdo que en el principio todo era alegre, todo nuevo, y lleno de emociones vibrantes. Aunque no lo conocía, pues pensaba que para agradarle tenía que derogar quien yo era, convertirme en otro; uno que no soy yo. Pensaba que debería ser rígido, dogmatizante, lleno de certezas y con un escrúpulo rampantemente vivo. Pues para mí Él era un Dios regio en cuya mano blandía la espada férrea de la verdad alzada contra sus enemigos. Mas prontamente me di cuenta que así no

era Él y que no quería convertirme en otro. Sino que quería poseer mi corazón tal cual era en aquel momento. Pues su deseo era moldearme y transformarme en Él, de tal modo que sea yo verdaderamente yo. Todavía recuerdo cuando le ofrecí mi corazón sintiendo en ello una vez más el reto de mi destino. Y desde ese momento ha sido verdaderamente un reto, pues descubrí que Él es también su Iglesia. Una Iglesia que por medio de mis formadores, o de Él, pues suyos son; me pedía que saliera de mí mismo, que me entregara aún más. Y que para mí era como empuje de lluvia y viento huracanado sobre mi casa en la arena. Debido a ello no faltaron las penumbras de los miedos, los destellos de las ansiedades, las pretensiones de huir y aun peor, mis resistencias y fallos. Pues a ti Señor, bueno, a todos, les tocó un poquito de mis furias en forma de rechazos y quejas.

Mas el recuerdo de tu pueblo, mi Señor, fue para mí bálsamo de gran consolación. Un día ese fuerte viento, ahora un susurro, que tantas millas me ha hecho andar, me condujo a un verde prado lleno de frutas y dones. Algunas ya las conocía, su abundancia era enorme y otras quedaban por conocer, cuyo número a las anteriores igualaban. Sorprendido me di cuenta que ese fértil prado era yo. Que Tú el reto de mi destino, poco a poco habías plantado en mi alma las semillas de tu amor. Y con ello me has transformado. Por eso hoy nuevamente estoy dispuesto, más que antes, a entregarte el corazón. Pues Tú, Misterio, permaneces siendo el reto y el destino de mi amor.

VOCATION STORIES

“If a man wishes to be sure of the road he treads on, he must close his eyes and walk in the dark.”

-St. John of the Cross



HISTORIA VOCACIONAL

Argenis Peralta
Diócesis de Venice
Estudiante de tercer año de Filosofía

Durante mi segundo año de escuela secundaria, yo pensaba sobre mi futuro. Me interesaban varias opciones. Yo tenía una fuerte inclinación de ser un profesor de música porque me gusta mucho la música. También consideré ser escritor o tener una carrera en el campo de las matemáticas. Yo estaba muy inquieto, especialmente cuando vi que todos mis amigos ya estaban seguros de lo que ellos querían hacer

con sus vidas. En un momento de impaciencia, pensé sobre el sacerdocio.

Ya estaba muy activo en mi parroquia, Santa Catalina en Sebring, Florida, y también me gustaba orar mucho. Pero, como yo nunca pensé en eso antes, yo no sabía mucho sobre el sacerdocio. Entonces, yo hablé con la ministra de los jóvenes de mi parroquia y ella me ayudó mucho a explorar esta vocación. El grupo de jóvenes me apoyó más de lo que merecía. Invitamos a sacerdotes a mi parroquia para hablar sobre el tema de las vocaciones y eso me atrajo más al sacerdocio de Jesucristo. También fui a una conferencia de hombres y conocí al director de vocaciones. Cuando yo le comuniqué mi interés en el sacerdocio, el me invitó a quedarme en el seminario por un fin de semana que se llama aquí lo llamamos «Fin de Semana de Conciencia de Vocaciones».

El día que el día que yo tenía que ir al seminario de San Juan Vianney, llamé al director de vocaciones y cancelé. Yo sentí que que no estaba listo para hacer una decisión tan importante y no fui. Afortunadamente, otro amigo mío también estaba interesado y él fue sin mí. Cuando él regresó, me dio un reporte increíble sobre el seminario y me empujó a ir el próximo semestre. Entonces, cuando vino el próximo semestre, yo acepté la invitación para ir al seminario por un fin de semana. Cuando llegué, inmediatamente me enamoré del espíritu que yo encontré aquí. Vi una comunidad tan armoniosa y una devoción a Cristo tan apasionada, que yo me entusiasmé más que nunca. También me inspiré con el testimonio de los seminaristas que nos hablaron. Ellos tenían una alegría infecciosa. Después del fin de semana, Me sentí en paz con la decisión de entrar al seminario después de graduarme y le pedí al director de vocaciones que me diera Una solicitud. Sólo me faltaba un año para graduarme y en ese tiempo tuve que reafirmar mi decisión de entrar al seminario muchas veces.

Entré al seminario de San Juan Vianney en Miami, FL el día once de agosto de 2011.



Yo no me arrepiento haber entrado al seminario. Al contrario, me siento más fuerte en mi fe. La jornada es increíble y es una de auto-encuentro. Uno puede ver la mano de Dios siempre en acción. Desde que yo llegué, el seminario ha sido un sitio dondelas bienaventuranzas de Dios abundan. A veces, no se sienten como bendiciones, pero con el tiempo uno encuentra que siempre lo eran. Para mí, uno de las grandes lecciones que he aprendido es que yo no me conozco tanto como yo creo. Siempre Cristo me humilla y me enseña que él está en control. Yo solo tengo que dejar mi poder y control sobre mi mundo y dejar que él me guíe.



ISTWA VOKASYON

Jim Albert
Dyosez Palm Beach
Etidyan twazyem ane filosofi

“Réjouissez-vous avec Jérusalem, exultez à cause d'elle, vous tous qui l'aimez ! Avec elle, soyez pleins d'allégresse, vous tous qui portiez son deuil ! Ainsi vous serez nourris et rassasiés de l'abondance de sa joie.”
Is 66, 10.11

Fre ak Se'm yo se ak yon gwo ke kontan mwen salye'n nan non Granmet la avek bel pawol esperans sa yo. Salitasyon sa chaje ak esperans paske la fwa nou kom kreyen, se chimen ke kontan ak esperans nan Bondye; malgre peche nou ta vle mete nou lwen lanmoun Granmet la.

Mwen rele Jim Albert, mwen se yon ayisyen k'ap etidye nan semine St Jean Marie Vianney pou yon jou m'ka paticipé nan sacedos Jezi Kris la. M'ap etidye pou diocez West Palm Beach e se avek anpil jwa, mwen vle pataje istwa vokasyon m'avek ou.

Mwen leve nan yon fanmi katolik ki paticipé anpil nan sevis legliz la. Mwen te gen chans resevwa sakreman pilye nan lafwa nou kom kreyen katolik (batem, kominyon ak konfirmasyon). Se konsa nan vanse nan lafwa e nan lanmou pou ale lames, mwen te vin santi volonte pou m'fe Pe. Premye panse a te rive nan tet mwen, nan legliz Notre Dame Altas Grace sou Delmas nan yon mes dimanch. Nan moman konsekrasyon an, mwen te dekouvri kokenn chen miste lanmou Bondye, ki fel prezan nan legliz li ya. Apre sa mwen te di papa'm ke, "mwen ta renmen fe Pe." Men kom mwen te piti, li pat vle kwe'm. Mwen te kontinye grandi nan yon fanmi ki renmen priye e ki rekonet ke Bondye sel se Granmet. Le'm vin gen 16 ane, mwen te ale nan mess yon dimanch epi pandan konsekrasyon, mwen te reviv men ezperyans le'm te gen 8 ane. Fwa sa, mwen te rankontre yon Pe ki rele Jacques Chavannes. Pe a ki te konstate bon kalite lakay mwen, deside ede'm. Li mete'm an kontak ak yon lot Pe ki kon ede moun dekouvri volonte Granmet la nan lavi yo. Se la mwen pral rekonet tout bon vre ke gen yon rout ke mwen dwe suiv e ke mwen dwe decide si se pou mwen li ye. Lem vin fini ak etid klasik mwen m'te rankontre Pe direkte vokasyon Diosez mwen pou m' te antre nan semine. Yon dezizyon ak yon chimen m'ap viv ak ke kontan nan lafwa e ezperans nan Granmet la. Kounya'm nan twazyem ane filozofi e m'ap kontinye swiv Granmet la soun chimen li rele m'nan. Mwen swete ke nou menm jenn ki santi Granmet la ap rele li, pa neglije medite sou sa. Li toujou difisil pou'w we sa kle e aksepte li.

Kom konsey pa rete kalkile pou kont nou. Di yon Pe oubyen yon relijye ke nou fe konfyans. Sa ka ede nou we pi kle apel Granmet la. Sa ki pi empotan, se ke nou kontinye priye e kontinye medite sou renmen Jezi Kris genyen pou ou. Mande'l pou'l gide ou nan vwa ke li menm li vle pou ou an.



A STUDENT OF CHRIST

John Daniel *Pre-Theology I*
Diocese of Pensacola-Tallahassee

I grew up in a normal, everyday Catholic family: we went to Mass at Good Shepherd Catholic Church in Orlando every Sunday, I was an altar server there for five years, and I even attended the parish school. However, I was never serious about my faith until I went to Florida State University (FSU). At FSU, I became very involved in the Catholic Student Union coordinated by the Brotherhood of Hope, a religious order that has been at FSU since 1993.



During Christmas break of my sophomore year in college, I worked at the Orlando International Airport. One Sunday I decided to go to Mass at the airport chapel. I arrived early and went inside to pray. While I was praying, I overheard a Transportation Security Agent thanking Fr. Bob Sussan, the chapel director. A few months earlier, Fr. Bob saw the man looking upset in the food court and talked to him. The man was having problems at home, and through speaking with Fr. Bob his problems improved. This touched my heart. For the first time, I realized the beauty of the priesthood and began to wonder if God was calling me to this vocation. A few weeks later there was a discernment retreat in Tallahassee, and one of my best friends invited me to go. I went hoping that I could shake these thoughts of the priesthood out of my mind. Instead, I left very confused with an intense question on my heart: "What is the Lord asking of me?" I let this question sit on my heart for the rest of the semester and I returned to it my junior year.

At that point, I began taking my discernment seriously. I participated in an intense discernment program with the Brotherhood

of Hope in which I gave the Lord ninety-nine days of prayer for at least thirty minutes every day. This also included reading and praying with a discernment packet that one of the Brothers gave me. After finishing this time of discernment, I felt confident that the Lord was calling me to the seminary, but I first wanted to finish my undergraduate degree at FSU.

Around the time I finished the ninety-nine days of discernment, I read *The Long Loneliness* by Dorothy Day. This book had a profound impact on my life; I had never before taken a serious look at the poor, but seeing Dorothy Day's passion invigorated me to take action. I began an internship with the Housing Opportunities and Personal Employment (HOPE) Community, a temporary housing facility in Tallahassee. I absolutely loved it! I enjoyed hearing about all of the clients' lives and I did my best to help them get back on their feet. I began to think that maybe I could serve the Lord by working with the homeless as a social worker.

As graduation approached, I was unsure of exactly what to do; however, I knew that my life was deeply impacted by the Brothers at FSU, and I wanted to give back to them in some way. So, I decided to become a campus missionary for a year with the Brothers at Northeastern University in Boston. I knew this would be a great opportunity: First, it enabled me to help other college students deepen their relationship with Christ in the same way the Brothers impacted my life at FSU; second, it allowed me more time to discern my future.

Working with the Brothers meant that I lived and prayed with them. Through this consistent setting, I saw the joy that the Brothers had in living out their religious vows. I experienced the joy of bringing people closer to Christ, which finally gave me the courage to answer the call to the priesthood. The peace that had been on my heart after the ninety-nine day commitment was now enlivened, and I was eager to act on it. In February of



2012, I applied and was accepted as a seminarian for the Diocese of Pensacola-Tallahassee.

I have loved my first year at St. John Vianney College Seminary growing as a man of God. I have found particular joy in the community life that seminary formation provides: playing sports, hanging out, and praying with the men who (God willing) will one day be serving beside me in the priesthood. I enjoy journeying together with them and have found strength in the support that we share with each other.

With my first year of seminary coming to a close, I am looking forward to my continued formation. I believe that over the years the desire that was placed on my heart while watching Fr. Bob minister at the airport will continue to deepen and penetrate my life in more ways than I can imagine.



Josh Hare *Senior*
Diocese of St. Petersburg

A GREATER CALL

God's work in my life started before I was even Catholic. I was raised in the Baptist Church, and it was through their ministry that I first heard the Gospel of Christ. We belonged to a little Baptist congregation in Memphis, Tennessee, on the edge of town. It had a small country feel with just enough people to have a decent sized potluck dinner every Sunday night. This community gave me the foundations of my faith. They introduced me to Christ, broke open the Word of God for me, and taught me the importance of Christian community. For this reason, the Baptists will always have a special place in my heart.

The summer before 4th grade, my parents decided to convert to Catholicism. Up to this point, I had no experience or knowledge of the Catholic faith. I still remember the first time I entered a Catholic church: It was for Mass at St. Anne's. It was completely different from the Baptist service with which I was familiar. There were so many colors, sounds, symbols and smells that permeated the atmosphere. Stained glass windows stretched from the floor to the ceiling, candles were lit around the altar in the sanctuary, and the church didn't smell like a Baptist church – it smelt like a sacred place. I was completely lost during the "service", and, on top of that, I couldn't for the life me understand why they kept kneeling toward a golden microwave. However, what struck me the most was that everyone memorized what seemed to be a forever-long "story" of Christ's life, the Nicene Creed. Shortly after this experience, I began attending RCIA and eventually became an altar server. Looking back, this was one of the major influences that led me to discovering my call to priesthood. Being able to serve Mass gave me a window into the life of the priest that I could not gain anywhere else.

As I was transitioning from middle school to high school, my parents broke the news that they were getting a divorce. This was definitely one of the most difficult times in my life. If the divorce didn't add enough stress, a few years later my mother and I moved to Brooksville, Florida, in the middle of my high school career. This was a big change for me; I went from a cozy Catholic school in Memphis, Tennessee, with only two hundred students to a Florida public school with over two hundred students in my class. This was a challenging time not only for my life, but for my faith as well.

Whenever a sheep goes astray, God always goes after it, and so he did for me. During my senior year, I prepared to fulfill my childhood dream, entering the Air Force. I wanted to be a part of something bigger than myself. I had the desire to serve others and to make a difference in the world. I talked to the recruiter, filled out my application, and even had my date of entry set. The Lord had a different plan for my life, though. Over Christmas break, I traveled back to Memphis, Tennessee, to visit family. While I was there, I had the opportunity to return to St. Anne's. During Mass, I had a profound experience of prayer that brought about a great sense of courage and peace. I knew that Christ was in control of my life and that it was because of him that I was able to overcome the difficult moments of my past.

This peace and courage began to resound in my heart, and I knew that Christ was calling me to make a commitment to discern His will for my life. Although the Lord could have used me to be a great soldier for my country, I believed that he was inviting me into something greater. I eventually came to discover that what I was looking for in the Air Force was, to a greater degree, present in the ministry of the priesthood. With this new and profound knowledge and awareness of God's will for my life, I knew I had to apply to seminary and formally discern God's call.

As my time at St. John Vianney comes to an end and I prepare to move on to St. Vincent De Paul, I am thankful to God for giving me the grace to respond to his call to the priesthood. Life has presented me with a lot of challenges and struggles. Reflecting on all the events of my past, I can see the hand of God present through it all, and I am assured that he will continue to guide me on this path towards priesthood. Whenever I get anxious about where God will take me next, I just look at what I have been through and continue on.

“ Although the Lord could have used me to be a great soldier for my country, I believed that he was inviting me into something greater. ”



“Ramon, my body is broken, but my mind is as sharp as ever.”

Remembering Dr. Maercks

A Generous and Joyful Witness Dr. Nita Prieto Maercks

March 2, 1939-November 19, 2013

This past November Dr. Nita Prieto Maercks, a member of our adjunct faculty for thirteen years, passed away after enduring, with extraordinary courage and grace, a long and painful struggle with cancer. When Nita came to the seminary in 2000 she was in the last stages of completing her Ph.D. in Psychology, which she completed in 2001 at The Union Institute. She was a graduate of the University of Miami, where she earned a B.B.A in 1966 and a M.Ed. in Guidance-Counseling in 1970. After graduating from U.M., Nita worked as a Counselor and as a Family Court Mediator, and as an adjunct instructor in Psychology at St. Thomas University and Broward Community College. At the time she came to teach our General Psychology in the Seminary, she was working as a volunteer for the Esperanza Homeless Shelter. Nita was a lifelong lover and supporter of the arts. She was a co-founder of the “Fifty Over Fifty”, an organization that over the years raised money to support the arts in our area.

Nita was a woman of faith and kindness; a woman who lived her life in hope and service till the end, an unforgettable witness for all of us of what a life of faith looks like. Many of you, especially her last group of students, came to know her only at the end, a woman frail and broken in body but strong and hopeful in spirit, who till her last class used all the energies and gifts God gave her to give of herself, to serve others. The seminary was very fortunate to count her as a member of our family for the past thirteen years.

Nita loved St. John Vianney College Seminary and felt most at home as part of our community. She was always enthusiastic about anything that happened here. Even when her declining health made it very difficult for her to walk and to talk, she kept attending every celebration at the seminary, slowly making her way to the Chapel with the aid of a walker, whether it was a Holy Spirit Mass, or a Christmas concert. As we remember and honor her memory, I want to share with you a conversation I had with Nita last summer, when I was finalizing the schedule for the Fall 2013 semester. Nita was already very frail in body, but she wanted to continue serving till the end. She told me, “Ramon, my body is broken, but my mind is as sharp as ever. I would love to continue teaching. I think I still have something to give to my students.” And indeed, she still had a lot to give! During the last few weeks of her life she kept teaching, mustering all her remaining energies to continue to give to her last group of students what she had given to so many other seminarians. Her presence in this community, especially during the last two years when her illness progressively debilitated her, was a quiet, gentle, witness of the joy and hope that define how a Christian lives and dies. Always, generous and joyful, Nita always welcomed you with a gentle smile; a smile that as she became burdened with pain and illness, made more transparent than even the deep faith and hope that filled her life. Grant her eternal rest, O Lord, and may perpetual light shine upon her. May her soul, and the souls of all the faithful departed, through the mercy of God, rest in peace.

Amen.

Dr. Ramon J Santos, Academic Dean

NEWS AROUND THE HOUSE



Msgr. John Cippel will be leaving to return to the Diocese of St. Petersburg, having left his retirement to work as a spiritual director for two years, for which we are incredibly grateful.

Filling the vacancy will be Fr. Arthur Proulx, also from the Diocese of St. Petersburg, who until receiving this assignment was the pastor of Nativity Catholic Church in Brandon, Florida.

A recently deceased priest of the Archdiocese of Miami, Fr. Ronald Pusak, generously bequeathed \$100,000 to the seminary.



On February 20, 2014, Pope Francis appointed Malta-born Msgr. Peter Baldacchino to be the new Auxiliary Bishop of Miami and Titular Bishop of Vatarba. He was ordained to the episcopacy on March 19. For the last 15 years, Bishop Baldacchino (originally a priest of the Diocese of Newark, New Jersey) had served as the chancellor of the missionary territory of the Turks and Caicos Islands. Bishop Baldacchino is a member of the Neo-Catechumenal Way.

Summer Reading Suggestions

The Joy of the Gospel
Pope Francis

The Cross in the Sand
Michael V. Gannon

The Healing Power of the Eucharist
John H. Hampsch

Jesus of Nazareth (3 book series)
Pope Benedict XVI

Summer Assignments

What do seminarians do during the summer?

Serve in parishes

Grow in spirituality and priestly identity at the Institute of Priestly Formation at Creighton University in Omaha, NE.

Continue formation at St. Joseph's House of Prayer and Formation in Tallahassee, FL

Learn Spanish through a Guatemalan immersion program.

Assist with the Catholic Charities Organization throughout the state.

Study Greek at Ave Maria University in Naples, FL

Serve as a summer missionary at Covecrest LifeTeen Camp in Tiger, GA

Intern at Spirit FM Catholic Radio Station in Tampa, FL

Minister to migrant farm laborers in Richmond, VA

Work as chaplains for:
DOSA camp for disabilities in St. Augustine, FL
Northern Tier High Adventure Boy Scout Camp in Ely, MN

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CURIOUS ABOUT THE PRIESTHOOD?



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