

SAINT JOHN'S SEMINARY  
BOSTON, MASSACHUSETTS



# CURRENTS

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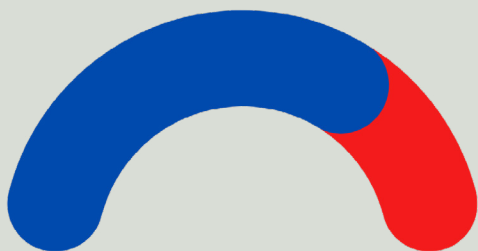
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# COST TO EDUCATE



25% of a seminarian's education  
is paid for by donors like you.

**Thank You!**

In the 2021-22 Academic year, 15 dioceses and religious orders trusted Saint John's Seminary to educate their future priests. Those educated at Saint John's pay the tuition of \$45,000 per year per student, but the cost to educate each resident seminarian is \$60,000 per year. In every Catholic educational model, from the parish school to university, the actual cost to educate is higher than tuition charged. This critical funding gap is why we must rely on generous donors like you to continue our Mission. Although each diocese raises essential funds to support vocations and priestly education, it only covers their seminarians' tuition. Therefore, please continue to not only pray for essential vocations, but also support Saint John's critical work of educating and forming those who are called to ministry.

**\$15,000** Financial gap  
for each seminarian, to  
be raised by Saint John's.

**\$45,000** Tuition paid by  
each sending diocese or  
religious order for each  
seminarian.

**\$60,000**

Cost to educate and provide  
room and board for one  
year for each seminarian



Very Rev. Stephen Salocks  
Rector  
Saint John's Seminary

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Please email us at [contact@sjs.edu](mailto:contact@sjs.edu) if you would prefer a digital copy.

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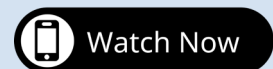
*May the blessings of the Christ Child  
fill you with peace, hope, and joy.  
Merry Christmas from all of us at  
Saint John's Seminary!*



*Today is born, in the city of David, a Savior, which is Christ the Lord.*

The faculty, seminarians, students, and staff of Saint John's Seminary remember you and your intentions gratefully in our daily prayers and Masses during this Christmas season. May you find His peace, love, and joy in the coming New Year.

Watch a special Christmas video from our community by scanning the QR code to the right or by visiting our YouTube Channel.





# LESSONS & CAROLS

*Your light will come, Jerusalem; the Lord  
will dawn upon you in radiant beauty.*







**R**EVIVING a Saint John's Seminary tradition the seminary schola offered two Advent Festivals of Lessons and Carols on December 4 and 5, 2021. With the added voices of guest musicians and brother seminarians from Pope St. John XXIII National Seminary, the Saint John's Seminary Schola sang several Advent chants and motets, including *Conditor Alme Siderum*, by 15th century composer Guillaume Dufay, a movement from J. S. Bach's *Wachet auf cantata* featuring seminarian Alden Bronson on cello, and a stirring rendition of the *Alma Redemptoris Mater*.

The event brought together the many different branches of the seminary family. Benefactors of the seminary, students, and faculty of the lay and priestly formation programs proclaimed scripture lessons. Seminarians played voluntaries on the chapel's historic Hook and Hastings pipe organ. Michael Olbash, Director of Sacred Music, led the entire assembly in singing some of the most beloved hymns of the Advent season.

After each of the services, all enjoyed a light reception in the seminary refectory.

The Lessons and Carols service grew popular in the Victorian era in the Church of England, but it finds its roots in the monastic traditions dating back to

the earliest days of the Catholic Church. In the monasteries, the service of matins would combine Scripture and sacred song, taking on added solemnity during the most significant days and seasons of the liturgical year.

Because almost all students, faculty, and staff associated with Saint John's Seminary leave for Christmas break and do not return until mid-January, the Festival of Lessons and Carols is an important time for the seminary community to celebrate with one another a small measure of the joy of Christmas, even in the midst of the Advent Season. It is also a powerful occasion for evangelization and the promotion of vocations to the priesthood and other ministries within the Church, offering a unique opportunity to throw open the doors and reach out into the wider community, draw souls closer to Christ, and inspire His people to explore the possibility of pursuing their education and formation at Saint John's Seminary.

Listen to a recording of our seminary schola with the QR code below or visit:

[www.youtube.com/c/SaintJohnsSeminary](https://www.youtube.com/c/SaintJohnsSeminary)



## SIX INSTALLED AS ACOLYTES

Mr. Nguyen Dinh, Third Theology

**S**AIN'T JOHN'S SEMINARY IS A house of formation where men are conformed to Christ in order to be sent out for the sacred ministry of the Catholic priesthood. If you visit our main chapel, you marvel at the detail and richness of its architecture. Each ornament carries a meaning, related either to the his-

very last stage of a man's priestly formation, right before diaconate and presbyterate.

"Acolyte" derives from a Greek term, *akolouthos*, which means "server," "companion," or "follower." In the Roman Catholic Church, a person is installed in the ministry of Acolyte in order to assist the deacon and the

significance: setting up the altar and distributing Holy Communion. Both St. John Chrysostom and St. Augustine speak of the angels surrounding the altar and helping the priest when he is celebrating Holy Mass. As an acolyte, I have the honor to be there among the heavenly hosts and to join them in their praise and



*From left:* Mr. Nguyen Dinh, Diocese of Đà Lạt, Vietnam; Mr. Khanh Le, Diocese of Hanoi, Vietnam; Mr. Paul Born, Archdiocese of Boston; Bishop Robert Reed; Mr. Peter Schirripa, Archdiocese of Boston; Mr. Rodrigo Martinez, Archdiocese of Boston; Mr. Hien Vu, Archdiocese of Boston.

tory of the Church, to Scriptural inspiration, or to apostolic foundation, or to the minor orders (ministries) essentially related to the priesthood. Located at the top of the wall on each of the chapel's sides in stained glass, these ministry symbols express the gradualness of priestly formation. Approaching the altar, you will see, above the Apostles' paintings on both sides, the symbols of ministries that a seminarian will receive along his way toward the priesthood. At the top of the right-side wall very close to the altar, there is a rounded stained glass window of two cruets of wine and water, symbolizing the ministry of Acolyte, which is instituted at the

priest in liturgical celebrations, especially the Eucharistic Liturgy. Besides the deacon and the priest, the acolyte is the one closest to the altar. In order to be instituted an Acolyte, a seminarian first has to be a candidate and a lector, which means he has to be at least five years in formation. This tradition indicates the significance of the Acolyte's ministry, which is linked closely to the sacred ministry of the priesthood.

The acolyte plays an essential role in the celebration of the Holy Mass. The General Instructions of the Roman Missal clearly indicates his duties (no. 178-193). Two of them that are of special

thanksgiving to God. Together with the angels of the Lord, I prepare the altar where the Lord becomes the High Priest offering Himself as the perfect Sacrifice and on which He becomes the Bread from Heaven to feed His sheep. St. John Chrysostom also cries out, "Behold the royal table. The angels serve at it. The Lord Himself is present."

As an acolyte, I may also distribute Holy Communion to God's people. I imagine the angels will step aside in humility to make way for me. With reverence, I will place the Blessed Host before each communicant and say, "The Body of Christ." Waiting for their



“Amen,” I will remind myself of my own “Amen” in silence: Do I simply look at the veil of the bread or fix my eyes on the hidden reality, Who is my God?; Do I truly believe that I am holding Christ, my Lord, in my hands?; Do I hold my Lord with proportional appreciation?; Do I believe that this bread can save and transform human hearts? Though these questions may not be answered well and fully each time, they deserve constant contemplation. The mystery of the Real Presence of the Lord, who is transcendent yet exists in the form of bread, is always the endless inspiration for men of all ages, and particularly for me as an extraordinary minister of Holy Communion.

Recalling the prayer of the Acolyte Institution, “Make your life worthy of your service at the table of the Lord and of His Church,” I am fully aware of the fact that I could never be or make my life worthy to be there with my own effort alone. And yet, everything becomes possible with the One I serve. Please pray for my classmates and myself in this service, so that we may become more worthy by God’s grace to be present at the Altar and the Table of the Lord.



Mr. Nguyen Dinh,  
Third Theology



View more photos on our Facebook page.



# RECORD-SETTING GOLF TOURNAMENT

**O**n October 25, 2021, almost 100 golfers gathered together at Blackrock Country Club for the 19th Annual Saint John's Seminary Golf Tournament. The seminary's longest-running fundraiser, this year's tournament raised a record \$311,000. Proceeds from the Golf Tournament benefit the seminary's Priestly and Lay Formation Programs, providing theological education, practical training, and spiritual formation to the next generation of parish priests and lay leaders.

Fr. Stephen Salocks, Rector of Saint John's, observed, "Although we gathered on a day where the weather was not favorable, the spirit of the day was one of joy and enthusiasm. The future is bright for Saint John's and our mission continues with fervor through the generous support of

the community gathered about us."

Diane and Gary Glick, tournament sponsors, reflected, "The seminary community embraced us in their prayers during a challenging time of our lives. We were excited to be able to help the seminary in this way and were so pleased to see the tournament succeed. We are already looking forward to the 20th Annual Tournament next year."

Saint John's Seminary has been forming men who aspire to be priests since 1884. Our mission, to form disciples who serve Christ and His Church in the modern world, continues fervently to this day.

This critical mission would not be possible without the support of our devoted donors, alumni, relatives, and friends.



## SAVE THE DATE!

Join our mission and support us next year at our 20th Annual Golf Tournament on **August 29, 2022.**

[www.sjs.edu/golf](http://www.sjs.edu/golf)

View more photos from the Golf Tournament on our Facebook page.



## VIRTUAL COMMUNITY

On November 17, Saint John's virtual event series resumed with a lecture by Fr. Daniel Cardo. Laity, seminarians, diaconal candidates, and priests attended an hour-long lecture entitled "The Art of Preaching," which was based on Fr. Cardo's 2021 book with the same title.

Father Cardo began with the Church's need for preaching. Prepared, spiritual preaching leads the faithful to communion with Christ. It also offers the priest an opportunity for spiritual growth. Fr. Cardo observed, "In preparing a homily well, we can find a unity between our prayer, our study, and our pastoral work." Lively conversation followed the lecture, as men in priestly or diaconal formation sought advice for improving their own homilies.

A wide cross-section of New England Catholics heard Fr. Cardo's message. Alex Charow, a pre-theology seminarian for the Archdiocese of Boston, remarked: "[The webinar] brought people from all walks of life together for talks. With Fr. Cardo, we had senior priests, men in formation to be permanent deacons, and the laity, plus SJS seminarians. It's nice to know that his message can reach such a wide audience." This diversity let Saint John's share its resources with preachers across the region, enriching the lives of thousands of Catholics who will one day hear them preach.

The monthly series continued throughout the academic year. On December 1, 2021, renowned spiritual director Fr. Timothy Gallagher led a virtual retreat to begin the Advent season. Preparations are underway for a lecture by Fr. John Gavin, SJ, on January 18, 2022. The author or editor of five books and a professor of historical theology at the College of the Holy Cross, Fr. Gavin will lead a webinar entitled "Examining the Our Father," exploring the theological riches of the Lord's Prayer. Registration is free and open to

View Webinar Recordings



Watch Now

Webinar Registration



Register

## UPCOMING EVENTS

[www.sjs.edu/events](http://www.sjs.edu/events)

### FIRST FRIDAY SEMINARY VISITS VOCATIONS EVENT

First Friday | Monthly\* | 6:00PM

Saint John's Seminary is pleased to welcome men who are discerning the priesthood for a First Friday visit to Saint John's. The First Friday visits are intended to give a man the space to discern on a regular basis, building a relationship with others in discernment, the seminary, and to offer an opportunity to meet Saint John's seminarians.

Each First Friday visit will include: prayer, a vocation talk, discussion groups, and social time.

*\*Beginning in February, 2022*

### EXAMINING THE OUR FATHER: WEBINAR

January 18, 2022 | 7:00PM

The Fathers of the early centuries of Christianity include saints, scholars, bishops, priests, laity, and ascetics, who are all united in their hunger to know the Lord. Thus, we could ask for no better guides in a prayerful examination of the Our Father. This presentation will introduce some of these major interpreters and share their wisdom regarding the transformative power of Christ's command to "pray like this."

Register at [www.sjs.edu/events](http://www.sjs.edu/events)



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## YOUR JOURNEY WITH OUR MISSION

Now faith is the assurance of things hoped for, the conviction of things not seen...  
(Hebrews 11:1)

**O**n the day of priestly ordination, the whole diocese can see the result of years of study and prayer—beautiful vestments, smiles, laughter, tears of pride and joy. Family and friends gather about to receive their first blessing from the new priest.

You could not see him then, but you have walked with this priest from the beginning. Your prayers, encouragement, and support accompanied him from his first days here, when he learned the seminary's routine, navigated strange halls, and searched for the correct classroom.

You were there through his coursework: long evenings studying alone, debates with fellow seminarians, and insightful discussions with professors. His journey passed through hours in the chapel, too: Daily masses,

praying the breviary, and quiet moments before the Blessed Sacrament.

These many years of prayer and study, parish work and pastoral assignments, have formed each priest to serve you, and your family, and the generations yet to come. You have not been there to see it, but from day to day your gifts have made that journey possible.

You did not simply purchase books or pay tuition. You helped to form a man who will pass on what he received. You did more than pay for room and board. You nourished a mature and faithful spirit who will now feed and tend God's people.

A future priest receives more than just his education at Saint John's. He inherits more than a tradition of service. He learns to imitate the Beloved Disciple and to conform his heart to the heart

of Jesus. Resting on Christ's heart, he hears the Good Shepherd's voice. By Ordination, he is ready to follow.

These are the priests who will provide the Sacraments to you and to your family. They will teach and preach the gospel to your children and grandchildren. They will bring Christ to His people and people to Christ.

Through your faith in these young men – and your trust in Saint John's to use your investments wisely in forming them – you provide for the Church's future in every diocese of New England, and in many beyond. May God bless you for your generosity.



Mr. Tomasz Kierul  
Vice President,  
Mission Advancement



**We are deeply saddened by the sudden death of Mr. James Riley, brother of Fr. Ed Riley, Dean of Men, Saint John's Seminary.**

James passed away unexpectedly on Sunday, November 21, 2021 at the age of 60. Jim was born on July 1, 1961 in Brighton, MA to Anna-Mary and John Riley. He was the founder and owner of Cross Real Estate. He was also a board member for Cooperative Production (CO-OP) and Abundant Hope. He was an active part of the Diocese of Fall River Catholic Social Services Adoption Board and the Diocesan Pastoral Council. Jim initiated the Catholic School Scholarship Fund in 1995 to support students throughout the Diocese of Fall River. Jim also served as a volunteer at the seminary and was a member of the Saint John's

Seminary Mission Advancement Committee.

Donations in memory of James M. Riley may be made to Saint John's Seminary, or Abundant Hope (Attleboro).



## FORMING LAY DISCIPLES: PROGRAM STUDY

Mr. Edward Bauer,  
The Bauer Group, New Albany, IN



Many people would acknowledge the changes in Catholic parish life in the US over the past few decades. But there has not always been an adequate response that both helps support pastors who are pressed for time, and continues to serve the needs of parishioners.

For over 20 years, Saint John's Seminary has succeeded in providing high-quality education, along with human and apostolic formation, to lay people from around the region. As dioceses across the region address the challenges and find new ways to serve God's people, these lay ecclesial ministers and new evangelists have taken on important roles in parishes and other ministries.

"We're rewriting the playbook on being an effective Church in this century," one priest said. "Lay ministers are clearly needed, and competent training has to be available."

The Master of Arts in Ministry (MAM) and Master of Theological Studies (MTS) Degree Programs provide "whole-person formation for the mission of Christ" for the laity, permanent deacons, and professed religious. Begun in 2000, the MAM was a breakthrough initiative in lay

outreach, giving its graduates the education and formation necessary to face the day-to-day challenges of parish ministry. The MTS was added in 2011, offering a degree designed to expose students to the broad parameters of Catholic theology to evangelize the fields of culture, work, politics, and family.

The seminary commissioned a study to review the work of the past 20 years, evaluate the effectiveness of the programs, and identify new challenges that must be addressed to prepare graduates for service in the future. A survey/questionnaire was distributed electronically to clergy and lay people across the region served by the Seminary. This was followed up with 'hybrid' focus groups, with people participating in-person and online. Finally, a series of phone interviews provided input from those not able to attend the focus groups.

The results were presented to the seminary's administration, faculty, and staff in late December. The study confirmed that these programs enjoy a reputation for excellence among clergy and faithful across the region. The alumni are grateful for the education and formation that prepared them for formal ministry, or have helped them bring an enriched faith to jobs outside the Church.

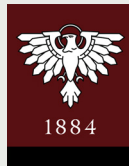
There is a wonderful spirit of fellowship and mutual support among the alumni. Unanimously, they attribute this to the dedication and guiding influence of Dr. Aldona Lingertat, Director of the MAM/MTS Degree Programs. The alumni interaction during the focus groups and the comments during interviews brought to mind that words of Tertullian about second century Christians: "See how they love one another."

The study also found challenges that have to be addressed going forward. Among the items raised by the respondents are: the difficulties of traveling to the current location and a need for a stable home for the programs; costs in both time and money; encouraging and assisting people from undeserved areas and communities to join; and serving the people while supporting a pastor who is responsible for more than one parish at a time.

The respondents expressed confidence in the Seminary's administration and faculty to address these challenges and continue to prepare lay ecclesial ministers and new evangelists for service to God's people.

*With data gathered through a survey, Mr. Edward Bauer spoke with clergy, laity, and seminary alumni in order to present a report on the Lay Formation Programs.*





# GRATITUDE. APPRECIATION. THANKFULNESS.

*Currents* newsletter continues to highlight the impactful programs and services provided by the seminary, none of which are possible without Your continued support. As 2021 comes to a close and we pray for a healthier and more prosperous New Year, the entire Saint John's community wants to say **THANK YOU FOR YOUR SUPPORT.**

If you have not yet had an opportunity to give this year, it is not too late. Please use the QR code, envelope provided or visit [www.sjs.edu/donate](http://www.sjs.edu/donate) to make a contribution today. **THANK YOU.**

