



SAINT JOHN'S SEMINARY
BOSTON, MASSACHUSETTS



CURRENTS

127 Lake Street, Brighton, MA 02135 • www.sjs.edu • FALL • 2022

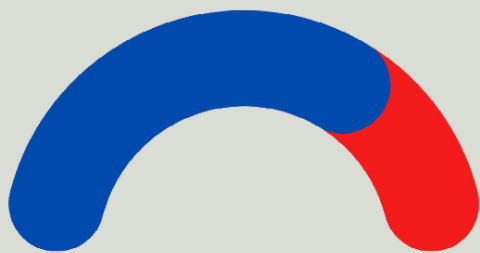
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COST TO EDUCATE



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

Thank You!

In the 2022-23 Academic year, 14 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 seminarian, but the cost to educate each resident seminarian is \$60,000 per year.

Pope Benedict XVI wrote, "the laity are really co-responsible for the Church's being and acting." The laity play essential parts in the mission of Saint John's Seminary. Lay professors instruct seminarians in philosophy, Church history, the theology of the body, and other topics. Lay alumni train to minister and evangelize in places that the clergy cannot reach. Laity across the region pray daily that the men now in seminary will persevere in their vocations and one day be ordained.

Critically, support from alumni, parents, faculty, staff, and friends gives Saint John's a way to equip our seminarians and students with the knowledge and tools necessary for a lifetime of service to Christ and His Church. The Saint John's Fund does more than just keep the lights on; it lights the way for a transformative educational experience for every seminarian and student.

\$15,000 Financial gap for
each seminarian, which has
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.

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inbox, please email us at contact@sjs.edu.

LETTER FROM THE RECTOR

Greetings to all!

The first month of the new year at Saint John's Seminary has passed quickly. It has been a busy time, and there are several notable developments.

The seminary is a fuller house this year! On the last weekend of August, we welcomed 24 new men studying at Saint John's Seminary. We now have a total of 91 seminarians who are coming to us for formation. These seminarians represent ten dioceses and five religious communities who have entrusted us with the formation and education of their seminarians.

The Master of Arts in Ministry (MAM) & Master of Theological Studies (MTS) programs report 6 new students for a total of 33 enrolled. The offices are now located at the seminary. Classes are being conducted at the nearby parish of Our Lady Help of Christians during the week and here at the seminary on Saturday mornings.

In the Fall of 2023, Saint John's Seminary will offer a **Propaedeutic Year** to the stages of seminary formation. The preliminary year in many ways resembles the period of novitiate that is required for candidates in religious orders, especially as it assists the seminarians in developing a rich interior life through prayer, self-knowledge, and discernment.

Outside of the chapel, library, and classroom, the seminarians are forming their teams for our **Fall Intramural Flag Football Tournament**. They are training and preparing a team to compete in the **All-seminary Basketball Tournament** in Milwaukee in February. Plans are also underway for the community to go to Washington, DC in January for the **March for Life**.

The following pages of this newsletter offer more details and insights into the life of the seminary this year. We hope that the enthusiasm and dedication of the seminarians, faculty, and staff at Saint John's Seminary will offer you inspiration and encouragement to continue your interest in and support of the seminary's mission to prepare our seminarians for priesthood.

As always, please know that you continue to be in our prayers every day. Thank you for your financial support, your wisdom and guidance, and especially for your prayers.

With God's blessing and peace,



Very Rev. Stephen E. Salocks, '80
Rector



WELCOME TO SAINT JOHN'S SEMINARY

The Saint John's Seminary community has recently welcomed its newest members. 24 new seminarians have joined us at Saint John's at the start of the Fall semester.

Mr. Joseph Beale
Diocese of Portland

Mr. Paulo Carvalho
Archdiocese of Boston

Mr. Nicholas Colón
Archdiocese of Boston

Br. Jerome Daignault
OSB

Mr. Felipe Duarte
Fall River

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OCD

Mr. Kyle Gregg
Archdiocese of Boston

Br. Vladimir Guadalupe
OCD

Mr. Ryan Henderson
Archdiocese of Boston

Mr. Nicholas Hershbine
Diocese of Portland

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Archdiocese of Boston

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Diocese of Rochester

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Diocese of Worcester

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Archdiocese of Boston

Mr. Liam Warner
Archdiocese of Boston

Mr. Vincent (Jay) Zizza
Diocese of Providence



Photo: Annual Mass of the Holy Spirit celebrated by His Eminence Seán P. Cardinal O'Malley, O.F.M. Cap. on Tuesday, September 6, 2022 marking the start of the 2022 - 2023 academic year. View more photos on our Facebook page. #SJSBoston

Saint John's also welcomes six new students to our Lay Formation Programs. These degree programs engage our students intellectually but also have a deep concern for the development of the human, spiritual, and vocational dimensions of the human person as well. Read more about how graduate theological education serves the Church on page 5.

Elaine Noonan
MAM

Virginia 'Ginny' Arpino
MAM

Rodolfo Panizales
MAM

Michael Emeka Ihionu
MTS

Dr. Erin McCann
MTS

Br. Thomas Lacourse,
O.S.B., MTS

WELCOMING OUR NEW BOARD MEMBERS



Rev. Msgr. Marc Caron, VG

Moderator of the Curia & Vicar General
Diocese of Portland, ME

From 2008 to 2016, Msgr. Caron served as the pastor of Prince of Peace Parish in Lewiston, Maine. Following that assignment, he spent four years at Saint John's Seminary as a member of the formation faculty and director of liturgy. He noted, "I believe that the preparation of priests after the Heart of Christ is essential to the work of evangelization. I look forward to strengthening the mission of the seminary through my participation on the Board."



Deacon Stephen Kaneb

Diocese of Manchester, MA

Dcn. Steve Kaneb and his wife Andrea are blessed with five children and three granddaughters. Steve grew up the oldest of six brothers. His parents fostered a spirit of lifelong active participation in the Church. An engineer and alumnus of Worcester Polytechnic Institute, Steve has spent most of his professional career in the family business. He feels both honored and humbled to serve Saint John's Seminary in its vital work.



Follow us



@SJSBoston

CHRISTIANS ARE MADE, NOT BORN

How Catholic Graduate Theological Education Serves Evangelization

I'm currently in my eleventh year of serving, in some capacity, Catholic graduate theological education. People will therefore, on occasion, ask me what the relationship is between this education and the Church's missionary and evangelization efforts. It's a great question, because while the two categories are related, they are not the same. The end of Catholic theological education as such is to come to know God; the end of evangelization is to live out the Christian experience in communion with others, especially liturgically. Catholic theological education need not have this further end in mind. It could simply have as its goal the increased knowledge of God in the mind of the student. But when Catholic graduate theological education does have the further goal of living a Christian life – and again, with the particular understanding that this life is ecclesial by nature – then it does serve evangelization. And when Catholic graduate theological education has as its goal the preparation of the student to serve the People of God in a particular apostolate, then it does serve the Church's ministry efforts.

Given, therefore, that a Catholic graduate theological institution has these further ends in mind, i.e., those of evangelization and ministry, how might it differ from an education that does not? On

this point the Magisterium of the Church has provided some guidance in her adoption of a particular idiom to describe an education with evangelistic and ministerial ends – specifically, the language of formation rather than simply education.

While I don't want to parse this language with too much scrutiny, the Church's use of the word formation emphasizes an education of the whole person in its human, spiritual, intellectual, and vocational dimensions. Especially in relation to those preparing for ordained ministry in the Church, the magisterial documents clearly indicate the need for formation of the whole person, and not simply education of the intellectual dimension.

Now, this is not to diminish the importance of intellectual formation in any way. In fact, the intellectual dimension is precisely what education and formation have in common, and it is of the utmost importance. Writing about the importance of intellectual formation in relation to candidates for the priesthood, in particular, Pope St. John Paul II stated:

The present situation is heavily marked by religious indifference, by a widespread mistrust regarding the real capacity of reason to reach objective and universal truth

[ex tempore], and by fresh problems and questions brought up by scientific and technological discoveries. It [i.e., priestly formation] strongly demands a high level of intellectual formation, such as will enable priests to proclaim, in a context like this, the changeless Gospel of Christ and to *make it credible to the legitimate demands of human reason*. (*Pastores Dabo Vobis* 51) [emphasis added].

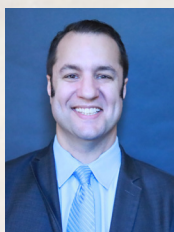
But beyond the intellectual dimension, true formation – as mentioned above – has a deep concern for the development of the human, spiritual, and vocational dimensions of the human person as well. And here we're finally getting at an answer to the question stated above, namely: How does Catholic graduate theological education serve evangelization? I would say – in accordance with several magisterial texts on the topic – that this education has to be formation. It has to involve all of the dimensions of the human person we've just mentioned in addition to the intellectual. As the great Latin theologian, Tertullian, once wrote: *Fiunt, non nascuntur Christiani*, i.e., "Christians are made, not born" (*Apologeticum* 15.4).

I am reminded here of the famous passage at the end of the Gospel

according to St. Luke, the Road to Emmaus. In this passage, the Risen Jesus appears to two of his disciples on their way to the village of Emmaus. Unrecognized, he “interpreted to them in all the Scriptures the things concerning himself” (Lk 24:27). Jesus instructs them, but he doesn’t simply instruct them. Though their “hearts were burn[ing]” (24:32) while Jesus spoke, it was not until he “took bread and blessed and broke it” (24:30) that the disciples recognized the Risen Lord. Similarly, at its best, Catholic graduate theological education is journeying with the Lord. It is walking with him as he instructs us and brings us into communion with each other through himself. If it does this, Catholic graduate theological education is also most certainly evangelization.



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Dr. Anthony Coleman
Director of MAM/MTS
Degree Programs
Saint John’s Seminary



Christ and his Disciples on the Road to Emmaus,
by Jan Wildens. (1613-1618). Public Domain.

JESUS CHRIST AT THE HEART OF DISCERNMENT

I would often hear someone say the phrase, “That kid is going to be a priest someday.” That’s a lot of pressure for a twelve-year-old kid. At the time, it was hard to imagine what discerning the priesthood was because I grew up being told I could be whatever I wanted to be. With infinite opportunities ahead of me, I just stayed the course with thoughts of the priesthood buried at the back of my mind.

It wasn’t until college that I learned what it looked like to live out of a personal relationship with Christ and what this would mean for my future. I had mentors who taught me that I was created for a relationship with God, and once that reality took root in my heart the question of “what I wanted to be” resurfaced with a new face. I wanted to be as close to Christ as possible. From there, my life became centered on knowing who Jesus is, how He sees me, and what He desires for my life. By building up habits of consistent prayer and attending the sacraments, I came to know the person of Jesus Christ more personally and was able to allow him to be the center of my life.

Discernment flows from a personal relationship with Christ. When we spend consistent time in prayer, read Scripture, attend Mass as frequently as possible, and receive the Father’s mercy in confession, we come to know the person of Jesus Christ more intimately. Jesus Christ is the foundation of every

vocation, and discernment does not exist apart from Him.



What followed was a growing desire to imitate Him. Saint Paul models a life of imitation and conforming of one’s life to Christ. He writes to the Galatians: “I have been crucified with Christ; it is no longer I who live, but Christ who lives in me; and the life I live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me” (Galatians 2:20). We are all called to imitate Christ and to conform our hearts to His. This can take many forms; but at heart of each particular vocation is a life called to sacrifice. Discernment, then, is taking stock of our gifts, talents, and desires and surrendering them all back to God who gave them to us in the first place. We are then able to act from this place of surrender, knowing that the Lord trusts us to take steps closer to Him, provided they are rooted in a relationship with Jesus Christ.

Throughout my process of discernment, a number of fears came up naturally: a temptation to think myself unworthy, an

attachment to my own plans, or just how much sacrifice the priesthood would require of me. These fears were real, but they lost their hold over me when I came to realize that it is Christ Himself who offered the ultimate sacrifice for my sake and who dwells within me. When we invite the Lord to live within us, we are asking Him to give us strength to persevere. What a privilege it is to know that the Lord is calling us to a sacrifice like His, and that He will be with us through every hardship and joy that comes from it.

Moving into Saint John’s this year has been an incredible blessing and it has been made abundantly clear that this is where the Lord wants me. These facets of discernment are ongoing processes – I will continue to deepen my relationship with the Lord each day, I will continue to allow the Lord to conform my heart and will to His, and new and old fears will continue to arise. With many years of formation ahead of me, I trust He will make His desires for me known. I’m taking each day as it comes, knowing that the Lord desires to be close to me and will continue to work in my heart to conform me to the man He created me to be.



Mr. Nicholas Colón
II Pre - Theology
Archdiocese of Boston

A MOTHERS' ROSARY

I got my first rosary beads for First Holy Communion. They were, to my imaginative eyes, the most beautiful string of gemstones ever. I felt glamorous as I held them, letting them cascade from one hand to the other with a satisfyingly gentle clatter. I received, at the same time, a far more sensible string of plastic beads: purple and white, and utterly boring. Unlike their shimmering counterparts, these could never be mistaken for treasure. Yet it is these beads that I still own and use. They are discolored now, from years of handling and prayer. My precious gemstones, on the other hand, never saw prayer. They fell apart almost immediately, too delicate to be handled.

Prayer is not meant to be a fragile thing. It should be humble and hearty, not meant for show. As a child, I had focused on the outward appearance of prayer. I strove for perfection and lost sight of its purpose. Prayer is praise and petition – a conversation with my Beloved! And in the passion of these conversations, my body now exposes my thoughts. I sway in joy and crumple under grief. Rarely can I maintain perfect posture, but I've learned to embrace that.

When the rosary returned to me a few years ago, I began to focus on the meaning of the mysteries rather than on the position of my body. This time, I began to let myself delve into the depths of the words. I found myself praying the

rosary in times of worry, in times of joy, and in times when nothing else would come to mind. As a confessor once noted, a good way to get into the rhythm of prayer is simply by beginning to pray. I find the rosary is often this bridge. The words come first, and awaken my hidden intentions.

Once a week, I now meet with a small group of moms to pray the rosary. It has become pivotal to my prayer life. We meet in our church after our children have gone to bed. We wear our days like clothing, and must summon the energy needed to forgo bedtime for prayer. Before our prayers begin, we pause to recover from the day and to prepare ourselves. When we gather in prayer we sigh, we cry, and we laugh. We reconnect with each other and expose those parts of our lives which most need God's grace. And then, we pray!

We don't just pray for ourselves or our families. Each week, we list the many prayer requests which have come to us. There are always so many who need prayer! And we pray for them. We pray tired mom prayers. We lay our lives at the foot of His cross. There is love. These are raw prayers, unrefined yet sincere.

We pray to God, and we walk closely with his mother Mary who draws us to her Son. We are like Mary, after all – mothers raising our children with love. Mary is our patron, our example, and our

Mother in Heaven. We ask her intercession, her guidance, and her help. She is there for us, and so is her Son – with us amid the sighs and the yawns.

It is far easier to meditate on the mysteries of the rosary as an adult. By now, we have suffered agony, and we have known joy. We look at the mysteries through the lens of experience. As mothers, we have shared many experiences with Mary. As adults, we recognize Jesus's suffering. We have lived, and we have felt, and we understand (to some extent).

As a child, I had expected prayer to be beautiful, as beautiful as my delicate rosary beads. I sought refined poses and flowery words. And prayer can be that. But I now see that prayer can be so much more rugged than expected. It can be tear-stained whispers and crumpled sighs, clutched beads and clenched hands. Raw prayer is beautiful too.

Prayer is not beautiful because of its appearance. It is beautiful because of what it is. We can talk to God! And He'll listen! Prayer is such a beautiful gift, let us share it!



Bridget Whyte
Class of 2023
M.A.M.

THE GOSPEL OF LIFE

Evangelium vitae, *The Gospel of Life*, promulgated by Pope Saint John Paul II on March 25, 1995, proclaimed the dignity of every human person, created by God in his own image and redeemed by Jesus Christ, from conception to death. At the time, more than a million abortions a year were being performed in the United States alone.

The encyclical addresses the worth of each person with stark clarity. “Whoever attacks human life,” it says, “attacks God himself” (9). So uncompromising is the teaching that even the life of Cain, who killed his own brother, is protected. (9). It explains that legalized abortion creates a “culture of death,” that is, a culture insistent upon a woman’s right to abort against all other claims. In such a culture, the law protects her right not to have a child by denying that child’s very right to live. Real violations against life are redefined as “actual rights” (18). The state becomes like the Pharaoh of old who, “haunted by the presence and increase of the children of Israel, . . . ordered that every male child born of the Hebrew women was to be killed (cf. Ex 1:7-22)” (16).

God intends a different reality. The glory of God shines on the face of every man,” says the pope (35). The Old and New Testaments extol the worth of every person inside and outside the womb. The Psalms proclaim awe and wonder at life in the womb, and the gospel of Luke

celebrates the joy of the meeting of Jesus and his cousin, John, in their mothers’ wombs (44). “Every person is made for eternity,” says the pope. (38).

Twenty-seven years have passed since *The Gospel of Life* was published, but its teaching remains relevant. In *Dobbs v. Jackson Women’s Health Organization* decided this June, the Supreme Court returned regulation of abortion to the states in America.

*“Every person
is made for
eternity”*

Right now, state legislators are deciding whether to outlaw abortion entirely, to restrict it to the earliest months of pregnancy, or to allow it even up to minutes before birth. Asked whether anything should override a woman’s right to abortion, Lawrence Tribe, a leading constitutional lawyer, proposed the following: “One such interest might be to combat invidious discrimination against people with disabilities of various kinds by restricting abortions that are motivated by eugenic considerations—abortions of fetuses predicted to develop into less than ‘perfect’ babies by prevailing social standards, or worse still, by the standards of those atop the current class

hierarchy” (*New York Review of Books*, September 25, 2022).

At Saint John’s Seminary, we teach men preparing for priesthood in the Archdiocese of Boston, neighboring dioceses, and religious communities. As seminarians, they follow a six-year program of spiritual, intellectual, pastoral, and human formation. Their intellectual formation in pre-theology includes philosophy, where they learn about natural law. Written on the hearts of all, natural law enables men and women to distinguish good from evil. Seminarians also study modern philosophers who say that the teachings of science and history have replaced those of God and natural law, and that God’s teachings, since not universally shared, have no place in public debates. It is such erroneous teachings that undergird Professor Tribe’s astounding recommendation that only a program of eugenics aimed at children with disabilities in utero justifies prohibiting abortion!

During four years of theology, seminarians study Scripture, Tradition, and Church documents. They read, for example, *The Gospel of Life* and *Familiaris consortio*, the latter on Christian marriage and the family (1981). They study *Veritatis Splendor*, *The Splendor of Truth* (1993), on the permanence of universal moral laws regardless of consequences or secondary circumstances. In Catholic Social

Doctrine, they focus on the dignity of the human person, the common good, and the principle that, apart from the gospel, there is no solution to social questions. In a seminar on Bioethics, they study Church teaching on euthanasia, physician-assisted suicide, embryonic stem-cell research, cloning, genetic engineering, and other questions.

Whether explaining to a young woman the sanctity of the life growing inside her, or to a legal scholar that every life in the womb requires protection, seminarians at

Saint John's Seminary are prepared to bear witness to Christ's teaching to the people of our time. As priests in Boston and across New England, they will celebrate Mass, hear confessions, baptize, give First Communion, prepare the young for Confirmation, and celebrate weddings. Mercifully, they will anoint and bury us when God calls us home. Like all of us, they are instruments in the hands of God, learning, teaching and eventually preaching that "every person is made for eternity"!

Read more and share this article by visiting:

www.sjs.edu/news



Prof. Janet Benestad
Professor of Philosophy
Saint John's Seminary

EVENTS

LESSONS AND CAROLS

December 3 | 7:00 p.m.

December 4 | 3:00 p.m.

Hear anew the prophetic telling of the world's salvation, listen to our Seminary Schola as they perform exquisite choral meditations, and sing together with them the most beloved Advent hymns proclaiming the coming of our Savior's birth.

RSVP: www.sjs.edu/events

HOOPS INVITATIONAL

Saturday, January 7, 2023

Learn more and register at:
www.sjs.edu/hoops-invite

ABIDE IN ME

A webinar series on the Eucharist

Learn more and register at:
www.sjs.edu/events

MEETING WITH POPE BENEDICT XVI

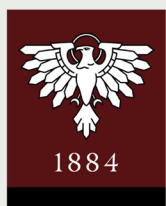


By: Fr. Maurice Agbaw-Ebai, Professor of Philosophy & Theology

"Holy Father, first of all, I wish to thank you immensely for accepting to meet me. This is a day that I never hoped for, though I have prayed for it for over 21 years. It is truly a miracle. Thank you for your generosity in receiving me. You have been the decisive spiritual and academic director of my life."

Read more about Fr. Maurice's meeting at www.sjs.edu/news

SAINT JOHN'S SEMINARY
BOSTON, MASSACHUSETTS
127 Lake Street, Brighton, MA 02135



Saint John's FUND

Preachers of the Gospel of Life

For generations to come, our seminarians will teach the truth with courage. They'll heal the wounded with compassion. They'll comfort the sorrowful with the love of God.

They will be preachers of God's truth and mercy—preachers of the Gospel of Life. Proclaim that Gospel with them. Support tomorrow's priests today.

Donate today to the Saint John's Fund by visiting www.sjs.edu/fund, or by scanning the QR code.



GIVINGTUESDAY

November 29

This #GivingTuesday you can participate in this global day of giving by contributing to the Saint John's Fund. Help us educate and prepare for ministry the future leaders of the Church.



Saint John's Seminary seminarians participating in the 2022 March for Life

PRAY²⁷
for SAINT JOHN'S SEMINARY

www.sjs.edu/27

