



SPRING • 2023

SING YOUR
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INTERNATIONAL
FOOD NIGHT
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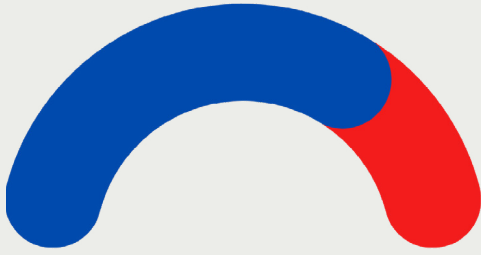
SAINT JOHN'S SEMINARY
BOSTON, MASSACHUSETTS

CURRENTS

THE MAN
AT MIDFIELD



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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CONGRATULATIONS TO OUR 2023 GRADUATES



From left: Fr. Rodrigo Martinez (Archdiocese of Boston), Khanh Le (Archdiocese of Hanoi), Engelberto San Juan, OMV, Br. Basil Franciose, OSB, Fr. Paul Born (Archdiocese of Boston), Fr. Peter Schirripa (Archdiocese of Boston), Br. John-Magdalene Fanders, OCD, Nguyen Dinh (Diocese of Dalat), Fr. Hien Vu, (Archdiocese of Boston), Fr. Jose Montero, (Archdiocese of Boston)

The Saint John's Seminary community extends our heartfelt congratulations to the whole class of 2023, especially to Fr. Paul Born, Fr. Rodrigo Martinez, Fr. Jose Montero, Fr. Peter Schirripa, and Fr. Hien Vu who were recently ordained on May 20, 2023 for the Archdiocese of Boston and who now begin their priestly ministry.

Master of Divinity

Fr. Paul Born
Fr. Rodrigo Martinez
Fr. Jose Montero
Fr. Peter Schirripa
Fr. Hien Vu
Nguyen Dinh
Scott Fanders
Br. Basil Louis Franciose O.S.B.
Khanh Van Le
Dcn. Engelberto Hernandez San Juan, O.M.V.

Master of Theological Studies

Dcn. John Minch

Master of Arts in Ministry

Dcn. James Hyatt
Eileen Klapprodt
Dcn. James Rice, Jr.
Bridget Whyte

Bachelor of Philosophy

Christopher John Barton
Alden Matthias Bronson
Joseph Paul Jasinski
Adam Jones
Nicholas Steven Jones
Timothy John Walsh

Bachelor of Arts (Philosophy)

Paolo Strudthoff

TO YOU, LORD, I WILL SING YOUR PRAISE!

For centuries, the Catholic Church has been blessed with its tradition of music. There is something about music that enriches our souls and brings forth various emotions within us. We find joy in praising God through song throughout the scriptures, particularly the psalms, "I will sing of your love and justice; to you, Lord, I will sing your praise" (Psalm 101:1).

Our music director, Mr. Michael Olbash, my fellow seminarian George Bastedo, and I are in charge of ensuring that reverent, beautiful music accompanies each liturgy. We are blessed at Saint John's Seminary to have a top-notch music ministry program. As a community, we chant the Liturgy of the Hours every day. We have a Schola Cantorum of about ten to fifteen seminarians who sing at our Mass daily. On solemnities and feast days, we also sing various hymns related to the day's liturgy. I am blessed to be able to play the organ and sing for several of our liturgies throughout the week. Aside from our daily liturgies, we have various occasions where secular music is appropriate.

One such opportunity arrives each Saint Patrick's Day. Part of that celebration is gathering around the grand piano in our refectory and singing Irish tunes. As a musician of Irish descent, I always enjoy

leading the community in the music portion of this celebration. We also have various events where guests visit, and I provide background music on our grand piano. Before entering Saint John's seminary, I worked as a musician doing multiple things, including music ministry in the parish. However, here at Saint John's, I have learned much about the importance of beautiful and prayerful music within the liturgy. I have grown to love the deep tradition of Gregorian chant and organ music. We aspire to fulfill that charge each day. We'd love for you to join us.

Consider visiting us at the seminary for our Sunday Mass during the school year. Aside from the Mass, you will experience beautiful and prayerful music and chant. Saint Paul tells us, "Let the message of Christ dwell among you richly as you teach and admonish one another with all wisdom through psalms, hymns, and songs from the Spirit, singing to God with gratitude in your hearts." (Colossians 3:16)

Mr. Christopher Letizia
Seminarian
Archdiocese of Boston



**Summer Classic
21st Annual Golf
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SAINT JOHN'S SEMINARIANS AND PRIESTS GO FOR THE MARCH FOR LIFE

“All hands on deck!” Cardinal O’Malley concluded his homily with this rallying cry for seminarians who attended the March for Life Mass that he celebrated at the Dominican House of Studies in Washington DC. From Thursday, January 19th to Friday, January 20th, 2023 Saint John’s seminarians participated in March for Life activities, praying for an end to abortion and the protection of life from conception to natural death. The events of the March for Life inspired seminarians to continue in their formation toward the holy priesthood for their respective dioceses.

Thursday, January 19th began with a Mass offered by Father Ryan Connors in the Saint John’s Seminary Chapel. He spoke about the reason for going down to Washington DC. He said that we go to be a witness to life. He encouraged the seminarians to give thanks to God for the gift of the American bishops who have called for all to witness to the culture of life. While the pro-life movement is a grassroots movement, the bishops have guided the Catholic Church of the United States to see abortion as a central issue of our time. With the overturning of *Roe versus Wade*, Father Connors said that this March for Life may be the last one. Time will tell whether this is the case.

After the Mass, seminarians picked up bagged lunches from the Refectory before heading to a coach bus parked outside. The seminarians took the coach bus to South Station where they boarded a train for Washington DC. After the train arrived in Washington DC, the seminarians found chapels, hotel rooms and Churches where they offered an hour of prayer in thanksgiving for a safe trip.

During the following day, seminarians attended a Mass offered by Cardinal O’Malley in the Dominican House of studies next to the Catholic University of America. Cardinal O’Malley spoke about how he and his father would go fishing at night when he was a child. His father would light a lantern at the bow of his ship, attracting many fish to the boat. Father and son always caught a lot of fish.

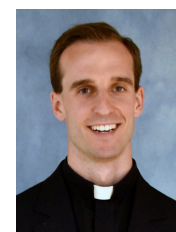


The gospel of the day was the storm at sea. The apostles worry because they believe they are perishing, and Jesus stills the storm to a whisper. Cardinal O’Malley called on the seminarians to be a light for the world attracting many people to God. Speaking of life issues as a storm at sea, Cardinal O’Malley closed his homily by saying that the Church needs seminarians and priests who strive to be lights to the world, tending to the needs of the Barque of Peter, loving, serving, and helping to draw people to Christ.

After the Mass, seminarians boarded trains for the March. Seminarians marched from the midpoint between 9th and 12th Street on Madison Drive Northwest to the Capitol Building with tens of thousands of other pilgrims from all over the United States. After marching to the Capitol building, seminarians boarded a train at Union Station to return to Boston.

Despite the overturning of *Roe v. Wade*, the battle for the recognition of the dignity of every human life continues. Thank you to all who support our trip for the March for Life. Through this trip, we hear anew the call of the Lord Jesus to tend to the needs of the Barque of Peter by being formed for sacred priestly ministry.

Mr. Matthew Valles
Seminarian
Diocese of Portland





The MAN at MIDFIELD



Football fans seated at the 50-yard line are a rare breed. A few anecdotes from the NFL to prove the point: The “Hogettes” in Washington wear women’s dresses, garden party hats, and pig snouts; a former bodybuilder in Seattle transforms into the “Seahulk,” covering himself from the waist up in green body paint; and out in Vegas (and Oakland in the past), some diehards sport black hardhats with silver spikes, Kiss-like facepaint, and skulls resting on shoulder pads.

Midfield mania is often unmatched. Yet Fr. David Barnes didn’t quite fit the mold.

When he posted up in his beach chair to watch our intra-seminary flag football tournament from the sidelines, there was nothing eye-popping about his profile: a white Panama hat, shorts, and a sweatshirt, working fervently on the Wall Street Journal’s Friday puzzle.

Truth be told, Barnes established residence beside the 50 before any *player* had even stepped foot on the Sparhawk Academy (Millis, Mass.) field. He got there early, stayed till the end, and in the interim, very much was.

As we unstable (literally? figuratively? *yes*.) seminarians tried as best we could not to kill each other throughout the course of four contests, Fr. Barnes seemed perfectly content occasionally checking out the action, returning to the newspaper to fill in a word or two, then looking up again to see a seminarian make an interception ... and proceed to run toward the wrong endzone (true story).

And Fr. Barnes laughed.

He’s constantly hitting on the importance of fraternity, and how we can find Jesus so tangibly

within those brotherly bonds and spaces. In a homily a few days after the tourney, he recalled scanning the scene that Saturday in mid-April and hearing St. John’s words to St. Peter upon seeing the Resurrected Christ on the Sea of Tiberias’ shores:

“It is the Lord.”

It means a lot to hear someone like Fr. Barnes say that about us seminarians, who gutted, sweated, dove, ran, ripped, roared, and rolled around in the dirt for four-plus hours ... because we see that Christ-like presence in him, too.

What’s more, his presence allowed me to reminisce about seeing *my* dad on the sidelines at sporting events growing up. He never yelled or got too “into it,” as some parents, sadly, do. He just *was*, and always seemed to delight in simply watching me play and have fun.

His *being there* meant everything.

Ministry of presence cannot be undersold. Just as my seminarian brothers were to each other during that day of gridiron glory — and as Fr. Barnes and the other resident priests are for us each day at seminary — I can’t wait for the day we get to pay it forward in a new fullness as priests of Jesus Christ.

Please, Lord, be it on a sideline or, one day, at Your Altar, let all of us seminarians be present for others, as You are ever-present for us. At the 50. Perfectly content.

Joseph Jasinski

Seminarian
Archdiocese of Boston



SAFE HAVEN

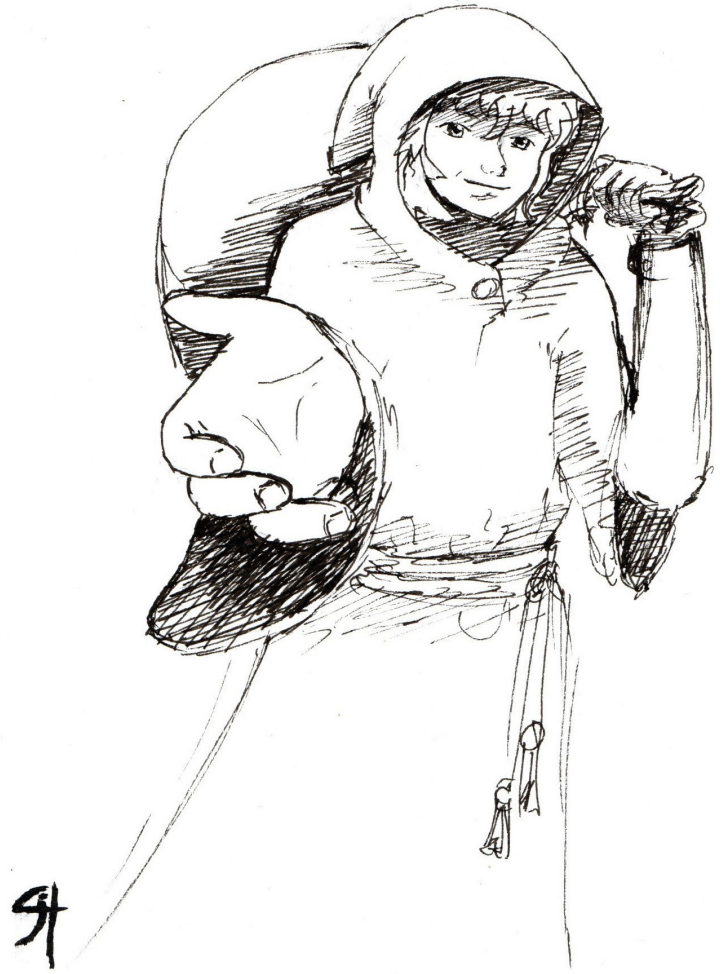
“Safe Haven” is an allegory for the time before and the entry into the Christian life. Below is an excerpt from this short story.

Groaning in agony under your breath, you slog on up the muddy road. Your foggy brain warns you to keep these noises minimal, unless you want to feel the lash on your back again, but you barely have the strength to pay it any heed. Your knees wobble as you lean all your feeble muscles into hauling your load of hard, angular stones on and on for what seems an endless distance. Sharp pebbles in the path cut into your bare, bony feet, and you know you are leaving a trail of bloody footsteps, but you hardly care, and if you did it would make no difference.

Beside you and before you, you hear the grunts and see the slumped dull shapes of many other poor souls mindlessly drudging on through their endless task. Some are bent down on their hands and knees as they struggle to ascend the final slope to the top of the hill, where lies the site of construction – the great purpose of their imposed labors.

It is not much to behold so far – only a large rectangle of many stones set into the earth, and a stone wall rising little more than shoulder height in most places. You care not what it looks like, nor how sound it stands. All you know is that is where you must get to before you can dump your stones and have some slight relief in the trudge back down the hill to the quarry, where you must once again fill your pack with as many stones as you can manage.

Reaching the top of the hill at last, you dump your heavy load on the pile before the stone masons and feel your back uncoil slightly as the great weight lifts from it. The masons pay you no heed as they work away glumly, heaving stones into place and pouring mortar around them. You also ignore them and turn back to plod slowly down the hill once more. Keeping your eyes downcast, you barely notice those you pass by as they labor up the slope under their own stony burdens. There is no strength left in you to spend on acknowledging those other poor souls around you, and there is no reason to do so. All of the attention you can spare is instead upon the armored guards who stand beside the path, leaning



on their spears and twirling their whips in their hands as they watch for anyone who seems to them to be slacking from their task.

Much too soon, you find yourself once more at the bottom of the great pit, where many more ragged and gaunt laborers are wielding pickaxes and shovels, and various metal instruments, hewing out endlessly more heaps of stones for you to carry. Dropping weakly to your knees beside one pile, you begin to fill your pack once again. Your arms go mechanically through the motions of heaving the stones one by one into your pack. This motion is hardly possible to distinguish from the last, so monotonous is the passing rhythm of life. You have lost count of the number of trips you have made that day. Despite your attempts to enumerate your daily journeys up and down the hill, you have so far failed to keep count for even a single day. You are hardly even certain that time exists any longer.

Your pack is nearly full, when you are suddenly thrown from your reverie by a strange sound beside your shoulder.

“Hello. Do you mind if I take some of your stones from this pile?”

You jolt back in astonishment, and it takes you a startled moment to make sense of this noise and locate its source. A laborer stands beside you, and you are taken aback as his bright gaze meets your own. You quickly cast your eyes aside and assess instead the pile of stones from which you have been taking, slowly beginning to put together the meaning of the sounds he had uttered.

You open your mouth, trying to remember how to form words in response, and croak out a few rusty syllables. Frowning, and keeping your eyes downcast, you clear your throat and try again: “N-no. Go ahead.”

“Great! Thank you!” is his hearty reply.

You watch his feet approach the mound of stones, then his bony knees fall to the earth and his wiry arms drop his wicker pack beside him and begin filling it with stones. He wears the same ragged, filthy tunic as all the other laborers, and his bare feet and arms look just as slim and beaten, yet you cannot comprehend how energetically he piles the stones in his pack or why his shoulders are not slumped and his muscles tense with the defeat and suffering of your bondage.

In barely a breath of time, you find that this strange man is heaving his pack onto his back, having finished filling it already, and getting to his feet. With a rush of panic, you realize that you have been sitting dumbly and watching him fill his pack this whole time, instead of filling your own. Glancing around, you furiously stuff the last few stones into your pack and hope that none of the guards noticed your inactivity.

Swaying slightly as you attempt to heave your crushing load onto your back, you notice the man’s feet standing purposefully before you. His calloused hand descends into your field of vision.

“Here, let me help you up.”

You hesitate but, feeling your knees wobble beneath you as you struggle to stand on your own,

you reach out a wavering hand and he clasps your wrist. With astonishing ease, his strong arm pulls you to your feet, and you find yourself gazing dumbly into his careworn face. Dark curls frame his bronze skin and sweat beads on his brow. His mouth widens slightly in a motion that you have forgotten the name of, and he claps you heartily on the back, causing you to sway slightly on the spot. A shudder runs through you at the touch; you had forgotten the power of positive human contact.

“Thanks comrade! I must be on my way, but perhaps our paths will cross again soon. I wish you well.”

He turned and trod away up the side of the pit towards the wilderness.

“Wait!” you croak. Then you look around in panic, but luckily no soldiers are near enough to hear.

The strange man stops and turns back to you. He waits expectantly as you stand there dumbly and try to figure out how to express the thoughts and feelings surging about within you. No one has ever left the path before. Even putting one toe out of line would be enough to earn a lashing bloody enough to deter any sane laborer.

At last, you choke out, “Wh-where are you going?”

Mr. Nicholas Hershbine

Seminarian
Diocese of Portland



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INTERNATIONAL FOOD NIGHT BRINGS US CLOSER TO HOME

Every year on Fat Tuesday, the seminary gathers for “International Food Night”, one last celebration before we begin our Lenten penances and prepare ourselves to more worthily enter into the Paschal mystery in a few short weeks. This night is all about celebrating the cultures of the men here at the seminary. We’re encouraged to prepare a table and some dishes from their culture. This year we had many nationalities represented, including El Salvadorean, Irish, Vietnamese, Polish, Brazilian, French and Portuguese.



I am always happy to give my brother seminarians a taste of my own Portuguese culture by preparing a few of the dishes that I have been enjoying since

childhood. Sharing these family recipes with my brother seminarians is a great joy for me, as is being able to experience some small part of their own cultures. Breaking bread and sharing a meal is one of the most fundamental human bonding experiences, to eat and drink together is to have unity, to be a community. This experience is when the food we share engenders feelings of nostalgia and pride.

For me, sharing such foods as *Massa Sovada* (Portuguese sweet bread) recalls to me every Easter morning as a child and how happy I would be when my grandmother would take some out of the oven. *Carne Vinha-d’Alhos* (Madeiran marinated pork), brings back the feeling as if I am sitting around the table for Christmas lunch with my whole extended family. Food can bring you back to places such as these, and sharing them makes it feel, in at least some way, like you’re sharing those experiences as well. This fundamental human phenomenon speaks to the Incarnational aspect of our faith. We as human beings

are body and soul; and because of that, both aspects need to be tended to, and both play a part in our spiritual lives.

Just as the “smells and bells” of our faith speak to our senses and help guide and elevate our minds to heavenly things, so do certain tastes, smells, and sounds automatically bring you back to a time in your life and fill you with nostalgia and joy. Being able to share these experiences as a community, a community that is made up of people from different backgrounds, cultures, countries, and traditions, helps us get to know each other better. It builds a sense of understanding and true fraternity; these apparent differences can, in a way, be a source of unity. While the night certainly helps build that sense of community through a cultural exchange, it also builds community by simply being fun! A time to get together, laugh, and enjoy each other’s company before we turn towards the cross and begin our Lenten pilgrimage with a firm hope in the resurrection.



Mr. Lucas DaCosta
Seminarian
Diocese of Fall River



SENT FORTH: 2023 GRADUATES OF THE MAM AND MTS DEGREE PROGRAMS

I had a dream the other night in which I was offered a great new administrative job with a fancy sounding title and a great salary at a college that downsized me when the pandemic struck.

I was really happy with the offer, but I couldn't accept the dream job. I kept thinking about "my kids" - the students to whom I now teach theology at St. Michael School in Lowell. "How could I miss out on the fun of teaching my kids our faith and all the wonderful things there are to know about our Triune God," I thought. When I woke up, I realized my real dream job is teaching youths.

This spring, Saint John's Seminary is scheduled to award Deacon Jim Hyatt, Eileen Klapprodt, Deacon Jim Rice, and Bridget Whyte Master of Arts in Ministry (MAM) degrees; and I'm scheduled to receive a Master of Theological Studies (MTS) degree.

I'm so grateful to the seminary's benefactors whose generosity helped support my education through financial aid. After being downsized from my previous job, I was blessed to continue my studies because of the generous scholarships the school awarded me. I know those scholarships are made available by the contributions of benefactors who believe in the seminary's mission.

I've already got a graduate degree in public administration from another school but it's not nearly as important to me as the

MTS degree. "It's a degree I'm going to be using every day that I walk through the classroom door or down the school halls," I said to my wife Pauline when I told her about my dream. "Junior high school students ask some pretty tough questions. Thanks to my theological studies, I know how to answer their questions; or, if I can't answer them, now I know where to research for answers and get back to them." The MTS degree is also providing an important building block for my ministry as a deacon at St. Veronica Parish in Burlington.

Deacon Jim Hyatt, who lives in Walpole and is assigned to the Walpole Catholic Collaborative, said his degree is making him more effective in his role as a member of the clergy. "The MAM program has given me a much deeper understanding of our faith and beliefs which helps me in my ministry as a deacon in many ways," he said.

Bridget, of Foxboro, is the faith formation coordinator at Brockton Catholic Tri-Parish Collaborative. Along the way to her degree, she enjoyed her Moral Theology course because the topic lent itself so well to conversations about truly living as Catholics. "The MAM program has been quite an experience of learning and of faith," she said. "I frequently bring what I learn in class with me to my job, my home, and my parish. I have grown far more through this program than my degree can ever show."

Deacon Jim Rice, of Concord, MA, assigned to Our Lady Comforter of the Afflicted in Waltham, works in the research center at Massachusetts Institute of Technology. For him, the MAM degree is part of his quest to learn more about God. "It's one more step in what I have discovered is a life-long journey to learn more and more about our fantastic, holistic, loving, merciful, and blessed Catholic faith," Jim said.

Eileen, of Topsfield, is a parishioner at St. Rose of Lima Parish in Topsfield. She'll join St. John's Preparatory School's Religious Studies Department as a seventh and eighth grade teacher this coming fall. Additionally, she serves in the ministry of recovery as a facilitator for Catholic in Recovery at the Lazarus Center for Healing in Wakefield. "My experience studying at Saint John's Seminary has been a great blessing and a gift that will keep on giving until I draw my last breath," she said. "The formation I received in the MAM program has influenced every aspect of my life in the way it has helped me grow both personally and spiritually."



Dcn. Jack Minch
2023 MTS Graduate

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