

SEEDS OF HOPE

From the Seminarians of St. Vincent de Paul Regional Seminary, Boynton Beach, FL

FALL 2022, ISSUE XVIII



ST. VINCENT DE PAUL
REGIONAL SEMINARY



*“I am with you always,
until the end of the age.”*
Mt. 28:20



*“The whole of creation is a
manifestation of the love of
God, and from when that
same love was manifested in
its fullness in the cross of Jesus,
all of creation was drawn
toward it.”*

Pope Francis,
Desiderio Desideravi no. 42

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Rector's Message

Dear Friends of SVDP,

Soon before His Ascension to heaven, Jesus reassures His apostles saying, "I am with you always, until the end of the age" (Mt 28:20). During this sixtieth year of seminary formation, we are focusing on the ways in which Jesus Christ keeps this awesome promise to us, and the ways in which all of us, especially seminarians and priests, are called to be instruments to make Him known in the world.

This edition of Seeds of Hope, the first publication to be primarily electronic (the spring edition will come out in the traditional format), contains articles that reflect how Christ has kept His promise. You will see Jesus present in our community life, in the vocation story of a permanent deacon who heard God's calling to the priesthood in the midst of tremendous pain, in mission work, in hospital ministry, in a pastoral year internship, and in much more. You will also hear from several alumni priests celebrating significant anniversaries this year. Finally, you will read a seminarian's review of the poem, "Every Riven Thing", and welcome the newest Bishop in Florida, Bishop Erik Pohlmeier. In the lives of our seminarians and priests, one can see how Jesus Christ fulfills His timeless promise, in ordinary and extraordinary ways.

As always, be assured of our prayers for all of you, especially those affected by Hurricanes Fiona and Ian. Enjoy this issue. May it lead you to consider how Jesus' promise rings true in your own life: "I am with you always, to the end of the age" (Mt. 28:20).

In Christ the High Priest,

Very Rev. Alfredo I. Hernández, PhD, STL
Rector/President



"In the lives of our seminarians and priests, one can see how Jesus Christ fulfills His timeless promise in ordinary and extraordinary ways."

Warm Welcomes, A Grateful Goodbye

WELCOME TO FR. KEVIN MCQUONE

Fr. Kevin McQuone is a 2010 graduate of St. Vincent de Paul Regional Seminary and is the newest spiritual director on faculty. Fr. Kevin has worked in three parishes in the Diocese of Pensacola-Tallahassee and last served as the pastor of St. John the Evangelist in Panama City. There, he grew in pastoral leadership through many challenges due to a Category 5 Hurricane (Michael, 2018) and the pandemic. He also took great interest in working with organizations regarding parish renewal, such as The Amazing Parish and Divine Renovation. He is excited to share what he has learned with the seminarians. In addition to providing spiritual direction, he also instructs in the pastoral theology department. Please join us in welcoming Fr. Kevin to the seminary community.



WELCOME TO JOSEPH PASINT



Mr. Joseph Pasint joined the staff of St. Vincent de Paul Regional Seminary in May 2022. He is passionate about customer service and computer technologies, and he brings with him an extensive background in IT and Microsoft operating systems and policies. He greatly enjoys working with the administration, faculty, staff, and seminarians here on campus. Please join us in welcoming Joe to the seminary community.

CONGRATULATIONS TO THE DEVELOPMENT TEAM

Please join our Board of Trustees, administration, faculty, staff, and seminarians as we wish to congratulate both Deb Lindsay (pictured left) and Carmela Grande.

Deb is retiring from her position as Director of Development and Public Relations this upcoming January, and we are indebted to her deft navigation through the troubled waters of COVID while surpassing our development goals. Having recruited Carmela Grande to serve as her Assistant Director after working with her in the past, they again formed a powerful dynamic duo (with superpowers no less!).

In a natural transition, Carmela has accepted the offer to head the development office as our new Director of Development. In addition to her experience at St. Vincent de Paul Regional Seminary, she has extensive nonprofit experience in prior roles in executive suites.

Please join us in congratulating them both. May God bless their future paths.





*“I am with you always, until the end of the age.”
Mt. 28:20*





TRUE TO HIS PROMISE

by Dcn. Serge Dubé, Configuration III,
Diocese of Palm Beach

Sitting in my room, having just left a high school party, not fitting in and wondering where I belonged and where my life was headed, I grabbed my Bible. Thumbing through some pages, I settled on Luke 12:22: “Therefore, I tell you, do not worry about your life...” I read to the end of the section before God added His own commentary in the silence of my heart: “You will never win the lottery, but I will always provide for you.” I was about 16.

God has been true to His promise. God carried me through my parents’ divorce when I was about eight years old, and He continued providing through the roller coaster ride of middle and high school. By day, He helped me persevere in the commute to college, and, by night, He guided me during the work of second shift at a nursing home.

A few years after college, I experienced an eight-day silent Carmelite retreat. I can still hear the friars chanting the Salve Regina and God whispering to me, “You will be a priest.” About a year later, I entered the Franciscans of Holy Name Province but requested a leave of absence mid-way through my second year.

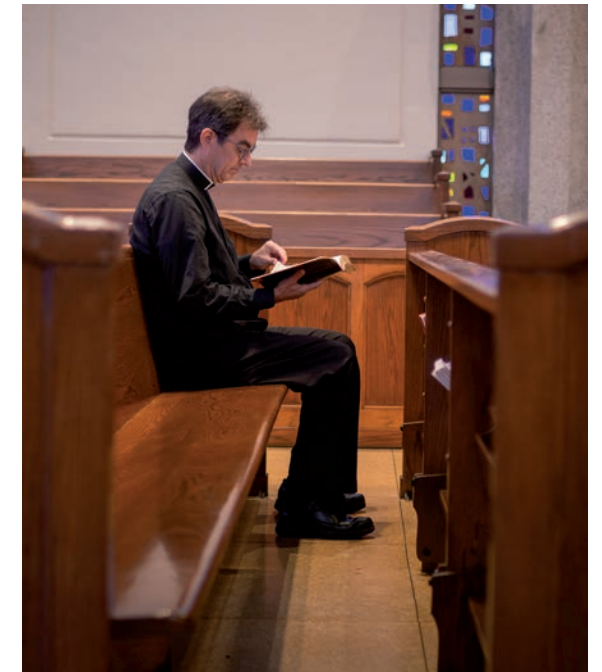
I met JoAnn, and her three children, Mia, Jack, and Christy three years later. We married six months after our first date and the following year moved to Florida. We attended a Congregational church at first, but by the fifth year, I felt as out of place as I did at that high school party. After the service ended one Sunday, I walked next door to St. Peter Catholic Church. Sitting in the back pew, I was moved to tears and soon realized that Jesus in the Eucharist was inviting me to come home. JoAnn and I became members of St. Peter’s, and, about three years later, I entered the permanent diaconate program. God and JoAnn provided the strength and support I needed to make it through to ordination on September 7, 2013.

JoAnn was diagnosed with pancreatic cancer in the Spring of 2019 with no hope for a cure. We moved to Los Angeles to be closer to our adult children. As she lost weight, I felt like I was watching a crucifixion. I can imagine a little better how Mary felt watching her Son die on the cross. JoAnn died on September 2, 2019, at 7:48 am. Like experiencing an amputation, I would live, but never be the same.

A year later, I tested positive for COVID and was hospitalized as it progressed into pneumonia. As with JoAnn’s sickness and death, I felt God’s closeness and his peace. As I recovered over the next year, I followed JoAnn’s guidance of discerning my next step by putting all options on the table. Soon, eight options became three, then two – early retirement to rest and write...or the priesthood. A few weeks later, standing in our bedroom, I asked God, “What do you want me to do?”

Priesthood.

My pastor, vocation director, and bishop all confirmed God’s invitation. I am blessed and thankful to be at my desk at St. Vincent de Paul Regional Seminary, typing these words about how God has always been with me over these fifty-seven years. This work He has begun in me will be brought to completion by Him. I trust and believe He will continue to be with me every step of the way (Mt. 28:20). ✚



“...God added His own commentary in the silence of my heart: “You will never win the lottery, but I will always provide for you.””





by Mr. Francisco J. Gamboa Félix, Configuration III,
Diócesis de Savannah



“El ir y venir diario en una parroquia misionera gira en torno a un simple concepto: presencia.”



Es común que los seminaristas, al concluir el segundo año de teología, interrumpamos transitoriamente nuestros estudios para vivir el «año pastoral», período formativo que se lleva a cabo en una parroquia determinada. Allí, al mismo tiempo que reforzamos y compartimos los contenidos teológicos recibidos en el aula, nos enriquecemos con el contacto y conocimiento cercanos de la realidad y diversidad en nuestras diócesis a través del servicio al Pueblo de Dios y adquirimos herramientas pastorales prácticas, buscando formar un corazón sacerdotal a ejemplo de Cristo, Buen Pastor. En una palabra, con el año pastoral, Dios envía al seminarista a “hacer discípulos,” prometiendo estar siempre con él (Mt. 28, 19).

Pertenezco a la Diócesis de Savannah. Para esta etapa, mi obispo me envió a la parroquia de San José, en Waycross, una pequeña población en el sureste de Georgia. Una característica de esta comunidad es su multiculturalidad. De hecho, mi diócesis es un auténtico territorio de misión —únicamente el 3% de la población de los noventa condados que cubre es católica—, las buenas relaciones con cristianos de otras denominaciones son imprescindibles. No en vano una de mis experiencias más gratas fue haber tomado parte activa en los servicios ecuménicos de Acción de Gracias y Semana Santa en una iglesia bautista local. Allí, las ramas de una misma vid pudimos unirnos para pedir al Señor que hiciera de nuestras vidas una Eucaristía eterna, es decir, «dar gracias» siempre. Jesús sella su promesa de permanecer con nosotros todos los días (cf. Mt 28, 20) no sin antes enviarnos a hacer discípulos suyos a todos. ¡Qué mejor manera de expresar nuestro ser discípulos y anunciar que Cristo se ha quedado realmente con nosotros: uniéndonos, a una sola voz, en una sola acción de gracias!

Además de eso, el ir y venir diario en una parroquia misionera gira en torno a un simple concepto: *presencia*. «Estar allí», sencillamente, y que la feligresía viera y sintiera mi «estar allí», me permitió participar no solo en la estructura interna de la parroquia, sino de las alegrías y luchas de las familias y—hasta cierto punto—de la vida de la población cristiana de Waycross en general. La gente no solo valora la presencia del seminarista; le abrazan y sumergen en la vida de una comunidad de fe que no se limita a una iglesia y sus instalaciones, sino que les trasciende y continúa en la sala, el comedor, el hospital, el asilo...experiencias todas que coadyuvaban a fortalecer el amor y pertenencia a la Iglesia particular—o, como bien lo denomina el Papa Francisco, el sentido de «diocesanidad»—.

“Pastoral Year” is a time for seminarians to share the formation they have received and to observe firsthand the reality of their diocese. They are sent out on mission, and they seek to form a priestly heart conformed to Christ, the Good Shepherd. In a word, through the pastoral year experience, God sends the seminarian to make disciples, promising that He will accompany him always.

I am a seminarian for the Diocese of Savannah, and my internship took place at St. Joseph’s Catholic Church in Waycross, Georgia. The parish and surrounding community were incredibly diverse. “Being present” helped me to experience the everyday life of this multicultural faith community, participate in the joys and struggles of the people, take active part in ecumenical efforts, and strengthen my love and sense of belonging to my diocese. It was a truly rewarding pastoral experience. ✚



HOSPITAL CALLS

WITH JESUS CHRIST

This past summer, I traveled to Clearwater, Florida, for two months of Clinical Pastoral Education (CPE). The experience was truly wonderful! In addition to learning how to care pastorally for patients, I learned a great deal about myself. As a chaplain, I was regularly assigned to three floors in the hospital, including the intensive care unit and the emergency room.

In the hospital, each room is its own world. Every patient comes bearing pain, suffering, grief, and at times, experiencing joy. The role of the chaplain is to minister to the individual person in whatever way possible. At the start of the assignment, I was admittedly scared. I lacked the confidence of knowing what to say to both patients and family members. How could I, as a chaplain and otherwise stranger, walk into somebody's room and accompany him or her in

their sorrows? Initially, I felt alone in this, but it was Jesus Christ who accompanied me through it all. In a way, I came to appreciate that He was already in the patient's room before I ever entered. This gave me confidence and peace. The Lord sustained me, and, by the end of my CPE experience, I was blessed to have ministered to countless patients and families in need.

Jesus Christ has promised to be with us always, until the end of the age (Matthew 28:20). We can be confident that He anticipates our every move. Wherever we go, he will meet us precisely there. If He is for us in this way, who can be against us? ✚

*by Mr. Joshua Martin, Configuration III,
Diocese of Palm Beach*

LEARNING TO LOVE

on Mission



*by Mr. Keegan Moloney, Discipleship I,
Diocese of Raleigh*

Having graduated from North Carolina State University in December 2021, I spent the months prior to entering seminary serving on the Diocese of Charleston's Diocesan Missionary Team (DMT). This opportunity came as a wonderful surprise. Just two weeks before graduating from college, I had been uncertain of how to best spend the eight months until the upcoming academic year. Amidst the uncertainty, God led me to join the DMT. He wished to send me on mission, to go and make disciples (Mt 28:19). Little did I know what a gift this would be!

The missionary team was composed of four young adults including myself. We lived in Charleston, SC, and traveled throughout the diocese, holding retreats for Catholic parishes and schools. Although there were challenges, the ministry proved fruitful, not only for the retreatants, but also for me. The distinctive characteristic of the mission was God's providential care. From our first days together to our last, God provided abundantly for our team, particularly in the areas in which we were not aware of our need. Our fears and wounds began to be healed. Any difficulties encountered only lent opportunities to lean on Him. I learned much about how to love, both on mission and among friends. With such provision from God, I grew in many ways that have made me a better man, and God-willing, will make me a better priest. Ultimately, what have I learned? That I can rarely see what God's plan is, but I can always rejoice knowing everything is a gift of His providence. ✚

FR. CHUCK NOTABARTOLO

Diocese of Palm Beach

45 YEARS



God is the one who calls us and gives us His grace for our vocation. After initially ignoring the call, I said 'yes' and was ordained on May 14, 1977, in St. Mary's Cathedral in Miami. One of the joys and great learning experiences of my life was serving as the founding Pastor of St. Peter's Parish in Jupiter. I remember one time when things were not working out, and I stopped to pray: "Lord, I am doing your work. Why is this not working?" After this prayer, I realized that I had forgotten to start with prayer and follow the Lord's lead. Thus, I learned to always pray first. Throughout my priestly life, in preparation for the day, I have consistently risen an hour earlier than needed to pray the Divine Office. We are all people in process, and with God's help, we will become the holy men and women that God wants us to be. I thank God for the blessing of forty-five years of priesthood.

FR. MANNY ALVAREZ

Archdiocese of Miami

20 YEARS



"This is the world you're being ordained to serve."

At midday Mass on Tuesday, September 11, 2001, at the beginning of our final year at St. Vincent de Paul Regional Seminary, Monsignor Stephen Bosso addressed us with these words during his homily. Our world had been upended, but the challenge from our rector resonated in our hearts.

Just six months later in the spring of 2002, months from ordination to the priesthood, the Church sexual abuse scandal exploded across the nation.

"This is the Church you're being ordained to serve."

As new priests, we wanted to provide healing. Twenty years later, that healing continues. How blessed are we as priests that we get to bring the Real Presence of Christ to a still-broken world.

WHERE ARE THEY NOW?

FR. JASON TRULL

Diocese of St. Augustine

20 YEARS



With twenty years passed, I could never have imagined the journey the Lord had in store for me back in May of 2002. I have been a pastor for seventeen of the past twenty years among four different parishes, and I have served as vocations director. God has continued to shape me as I serve and encounter His people. From serving in the inner city to now being pastor of my original home parish, God has always placed me where He wants me. I cannot wait to see what He has in store for the next 20 years and beyond.

FR. VICTOR AMOROSE

Diocese of St. Petersburg

10 YEARS

Since my ordination on May 19, 2012, I have absolutely loved being a priest of Jesus Christ. There have been plenty of difficulties over the years, from challenging pastoral situations, to moving around to many parishes, to adapting to languages and cultures, and to seeing friends leave the priesthood. These difficulties, these crosses, have led to some of my most profound moments of prayer and have allowed me to glimpse Jesus Christ walking beside me. I would not be a priest today if it was not for a very real awareness that God called me to this life and continues to be with me, leading me and guiding me for His name's sake.





THEY HAVE BEEN CHRIST TO ME

by Mr. Carlos Luzardo, Configuration II,
Archdiocese of Miami

As a seminarian, I have spoken to many people about their relationship with God. A common question, particularly during times of difficulty, is, "Where are you, God?" Over the years, I have found the answer in varied places: prayer, study, the sacraments, my family, and friendships. And while I have had many moments of personal and powerful encounters with Jesus Christ, the places where I most often encounter God are spontaneous and rather ordinary.

The experience of community life has been a fundamental part of my time at Saint Vincent de Paul Regional Seminary. Through the people here, I have encountered Jesus Christ. Despite the challenges that arise throughout priestly formation, Jesus has always been present. Deepening my relationship with Jesus has made me more sensitive to recognizing Him, especially in acts of love. Having this disposition and sensitivity allows one to be constantly and pleasantly surprised by Him and His care. These unforeseen blessings from Jesus Christ characterize my life and relationship with Him. I could name many, but I especially remember one that marked the beginning of my time at SVPD.

During my first year of theology (Configuration stage) in 2021, I badly burned my hand while making coffee. I must admit it was a painful experience. Never before had I felt pain like that; it took great caution and care to fully recover. The response I received from the seminary community was more than I expected. Rapidly, one brother reported what happened to a priest, another took me to the emergency room, and several more took care of me in the following days. The affection, attention, and support made Jesus Christ present in such a unique way. His love and presence transformed a challenging moment into one of encounter and communion.

I could not be more grateful. By ourselves, we struggle to perceive God's actions in our lives, particularly in difficult situations. However, I have experienced how the Christian life flourishes when, instead of living in isolation from others, we share our joys and struggles.

The sense of joy I feel today is stronger for simply having met some of my brother seminarians. I wish I could express my gratitude to all of them, for they have been Christ to me. For me, the promise by Jesus Christ in Matthew 28:20 has been fulfilled precisely through others. Jesus has assured us of His continual presence. We need only to keep our eyes open to encounter Him in every circumstance, especially in the other. ✚

**“THE EXPERIENCE OF
COMMUNITY LIFE HAS
BEEN A FUNDAMENTAL
PART OF MY TIME AT
SAINT VINCENT DE PAUL
REGIONAL SEMINARY.
THROUGH THE
PEOPLE HERE, I HAVE
ENCOUNTERED
JESUS CHRIST.”**



“Every Riven Thing”

A Poetic Reminder of God’s Enduring Presence

by Mr. Matthew Cole Austin, Configuration I,
Archdiocese of Atlanta



Given the destruction of Hurricane Ian, the poem “Every Riven Thing” by Christian Wiman, may be exactly what we need to hear today. *Webster’s Dictionary* gives two definitions of the word “riven”: to be “split apart,” or “divided into pieces or factions.” While all things are riven, who in this world has the *experience* of being such? That’s right...we human beings do. But Wiman reassures us in his poem that “God goes, belonging to every riven thing he’s made.” However, it’s not easy being a riven thing to which God belongs. It “means a storm of peace,” or “willing [ourselves] into a stillness where / God goes belonging.” God is “a part of what man knows, / apart from what man knows,” at the same time. It is a constant tension, a “storm of peace.”

This life abounds with suffering, darkness, doubt, fear, and endless desire. What if that abyss in us where these things reside was also the gift given to us as riven things? What if it’s precisely in that place of poverty or “riveness” that “God goes belonging?”

At the end of St. Matthew’s Gospel, some of the disciples doubt Jesus’ risen presence and are afraid. He reassures them saying, “All power in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Go, therefore...I am with you always, even until the end of the age” (Mt. 28:17-20). It is as if Jesus said, “Fear not, for I ‘go belonging’ to you. I belong to ‘every riven thing’ always.” Regardless of the particular crosses in our life—be they related to the hurricane or not — this poem helps one hear Jesus’ promise anew. ✚

Scan this
QR code to
hear the
poem recited!



BEYOND THE BREAKERS

by Mr. John Buonocore, Configuration III,
Archdiocese of Miami



Jesus Christ has promised to be with us until the end of the age (Mt. 28:20). Although we encounter Him in a privileged way through the Mass and prayer, He is revealing Himself to us in every moment, even the most ordinary ones. As Catholic Christians, the more aware we become of His enduring presence, the less likely we are to live in fear. We live instead secure in His love. When I consider this, I think of the great outdoors, and specifically, surfing. To put it simply, I have come to a greater understanding of God’s presence in my life through this wonderful pastime and sport.

When I first started surfing, the size and power of the waves scared me. Early on, out of fear of not being able to return to shore (and out of fear of the occasional shark), I avoided paddling out very far, past the breaking waves to the deeper part of the ocean. As a result, I neither caught the best waves nor truly learned how to surf. It was not until I summoned the courage to paddle out past the breaking waves, that things finally changed. At that time, having passed beyond the breaking waves, I remember sitting down on my board and encountering the profound beauty and peace of the ocean and horizon. The water was peaceful, the waves rolled by and the sky magnificent. I never could have appreciated this, observing the waves from the safety of the shore. When I caught my first few unbroken waves, it was like tasting a piece of Heaven.

In the spiritual life—not just surfing—it is not uncommon to experience fear or uncertainty. It is important to know first that Jesus Christ is with us precisely in those fears. With this knowledge, we can then summon the courage to take that next step, “to go beyond the breakers.” Beyond the breakers, we see His abiding presence all the more clearly. He is with us in our fears, and He desires to lead us beyond them. ✚



ASK A SEMINARIAN

1 **How has Jesus Christ been present to you in these years of seminary formation?** I have found that through the difficulties and busyness of seminary, when I have taken time to abide with the Lord in my holy hour, He has provided freedom and peace.

2 **What did you do prior to seminary?** I graduated from Florida State University with a bachelor's degree in Biological Science. I then worked for a year in the operating room as a Patient Care Technician.

3 **What do you do for recreation?** I enjoy spending time with friends, going to the beach, golfing, and going to the gym.

4 **What is your favorite book and why?** *The Lamb's Supper* by Dr. Scott Hahn. It has shown me the deeper beauty of the Mass.

5 **Where are you in the formation process?** I am in what was traditionally called the second year of Pre-Theology. We now call it the Discipleship II stage. Next year, I will begin the Configuration stage.

6 **To which saint do you have a devotion and why?** St. Joseph! He is a great example for fathers (biological and spiritual), and he is a great example of a man who sacrificed much for the kingdom of God.

7 **What is Sunday like at the seminary?** We have Mass at 10:30am followed by community brunch. Because the afternoons are normally free, I take this time to hang out with brother seminarians and recreate. It is a true day of rest.

8 **What are the weekdays like at the seminary?** We normally have Lauds (Morning Prayer) and Mass at 6:45 am. After Mass, we have classes throughout the morning and usually a few hours of free time in the afternoon for homework and exercise. At 5:45pm, we meet as a community to pray Evening Prayer, followed by dinner. The evenings are usually free for study.

9 **What are summers like for seminarians?** This is an excellent question - It depends on what year of formation you are in. For example, this past summer I served at a parish in my diocese. Some seminarians will go to Guatemala for a Spanish immersion, others will work at a hospital, and still others will go to the Institute for Priestly Formation (IPF) in Omaha, Nebraska, to enhance their spiritual life. Every summer promises to be unique.

10 **What kind of community work do seminarians do?** Last year, I assisted with the St. Vincent de Paul Society at a local parish. I also worked with the children of immigrant workers, tutoring them in English and any other homework.

11 **Are visitors allowed at the seminary?** Yes, they are. We enjoy having guests. It is always a beautiful experience sharing our life here at seminary with family and friends.

TWENTY QUESTIONS, TWENTY ANSWERS

by Mr. Tyler Gates, Discipleship II, Diocese of St. Petersburg

12 **What does prayer life look like at seminary?** As a community, we celebrate the highest form of prayer, the Mass, and we pray morning prayer and evening prayer. In addition to praying as a community, I pray a personal holy hour at some point during the day.

13 **How often is Mass celebrated at seminary?** Mass is celebrated every day at the seminary. It truly is a beautiful gift to daily receive the Holy Eucharist.

14 **What are classes like at the seminary?** The first two years (Pre-Theology or the Discipleship stage) are heavily centered on philosophy. The next four years are centered on theology.

15 **What do you look forward to most each week at seminary?** I look forward to our community dinners. I enjoy the intentionality of sharing a meal as a family together.

16 **What have you learned about Jesus Christ since joining seminary?** I have learned that he desires an intimate friendship with me. The Blessed Sacrament plays a huge role in this relationship.

17 **How has our Mother Mary accompanied you during seminary?** Through deepening my devotion to Mary, she has shown me the love and relationship Christ is inviting me into. I hope to someday be able to have the same "yes" like Mary's fiat to the vocation to which the Lord is calling me.

18 **Who has inspired you in your discernment and formation for the priesthood?** My former pastor back home, Fr. Jacob, has inspired me. He radiates the joy of the priesthood and regularly shares how rewarding this vocation is.

19 **What are you most grateful for since joining seminary?** I am most grateful for the spiritual and intellectual growth. Also, I am grateful that God has formed me more into the man He desires me to be.

20 **What should I do if I feel drawn to the priesthood?** If you feel any draw to the priesthood, contact your diocesan vocations director. Their job is not to recruit, but to accompany you in your discernment of God's will. Also, stay close to the sacraments. Make time to attend daily Mass and to pray in front of the Blessed Sacrament.



SEEK FIRST THE KINGDOM OF GOD

WELCOMING BISHOP ERIK T. POHLMEIER

by the Editors of Seeds of Hope

Habemus episcopum - we have a Bishop. On July 22, 2022, the Diocese of St. Augustine celebrated the ordination and installation of its eleventh bishop, Bishop Erik T. Pohlmeier. Bishop Pohlmeier hails originally from the Diocese of Little Rock, Arkansas. A priest of 24 years, Bishop Pohlmeier has been pastor of five parishes in his home diocese in addition to serving in a variety of leadership positions including, but not limited to: Director of the Offices of Faith Formation, Deacon Formation, and Continuing Education for Clergy. For his episcopal motto, Bishop Pohlmeier has chosen "Seek first the kingdom of God" (Mt. 6:33). Such a motto helps one to keep first things first, namely, Jesus Christ. If we seek Jesus and His kingdom first, all else will be given to us besides.

On a more personal note, Bishop Pohlmeier has shared that the one thing that has most shaped him into the man he is today has been his family. He grew up in a family wherein the Catholic faith was central. It was "the air we breathed at home." Understandably, the greatest challenge of his transition from Arkansas to Florida will be the distance from much of his family. However, knowing that Florida is a place that everyone wants to visit due to its beaches, he looks forward to many family visits in the future.

Please join the St. Vincent de Paul Regional Seminary community in giving a heartfelt welcome to Bishop Pohlmeier. May we all keep each other in prayer, ever and always seeking "first the kingdom of God" (Mt. 6:33).

The information included in this article was adapted from the Diocese of St. Augustine website introducing Bishop Pohlmeier.



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