



# ST. VINCENT DE PAUL REGIONAL SEMINARY

OFFICE OF DEVELOPMENT AND PUBLIC RELATIONS

10701 South Military Trail ~ Boynton Beach, Florida 33436-4899

Tel: 561.732.4424 ~ Fax: 561.737.2205

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**Contact:** Hunter Ernste

December 16, 2025

**Phone:** 561-623-8017

**Email:** [development@svdpc.edu](mailto:development@svdpc.edu)

[Boynton Beach, FL] – Tuesday, December 16, 2025 – St. Vincent de Paul Regional Seminary (SVDP) is honored to participate in a new national initiative to strengthen priestly and pastoral formation through robust mentorship training pastors working with transitional deacons and newly ordained priests. This collaboration, led by Mount Angel Seminary in Oregon and funded by a major grant from Lilly Endowment Inc. under its *Pathways for Tomorrow* Initiative, will directly enhance SVDP's mission of forming priests who can joyfully and effectively serve the People of God in the reality of today's parishes.

## **National mentorship initiative**

Under the leadership of Mount Angel Seminary, SVDP joins a select group of seminaries and the Seminary Formation Council in developing a large-scale mentorship model aligned with the *Program of Priestly Formation*, 6th edition. This model focuses on the Vocational Synthesis Stage, the final time of formation for transitional deacons in the months before priestly ordination, equipping experienced pastors to accompany these deacons and, later, new priests as they integrate into parish life, strengthening their pastoral, human, and spiritual foundations in the early years of ministry.

In addition to strengthening mentorship for transitional deacons and newly ordained priests, a key dimension of this grant is to equip pastors and their parish leadership teams—together with these new clergy—to implement concrete parish formation programming. By developing ready-to-use resources and multi-year formation content for parish life, the initiative aims to foster hope, renew parish culture, and invite the faithful into a deeper encounter with Christ in their local communities.

## **Benefits for SVDP and the Church in the Southeast**

By taking part in this collaborative project, SVDP will help design and implement mentor training, host formation gatherings, and contribute evaluation and best practices rooted in its long experience serving the dioceses of Florida and the Southeast. This national collaboration will therefore not only enhance how St. Vincent de Paul Regional Seminary accompanies men into their first years of priestly ministry but also support them and their pastors in building parish-based formation initiatives that engage lay leaders, families, and young adults. This parish formation dimension offers a particularly promising opportunity to stir up new hope and interest

in the life of the Church at the local level, as seminarians and newly ordained priests help lead renewal efforts rooted in Scripture, the sacraments, and missionary discipleship.

### **Integrating SFC curriculum and forming formatters**

This initiative builds on St. Vincent de Paul's existing partnership with the Seminary Formation Council (SFC), whose new Certificate in Seminary and Parish Formation is hosted by SVDP for seminary formation staff and pastors from around the country and across the globe. Through this collaboration, SVDP has contributed and will be able to contribute even more to "forming the formatters" who will guide seminarians and young priests in seminaries and in parishes.

### **Leadership and mission alignment**

Very Rev. Alfredo I. Hernández, Ph.D., S.T.L., Rector/President of St. Vincent de Paul Regional Seminary, affirms that this national mentorship project is a tangible expression of SVDP's mission to share in the work of Jesus Christ by forming priests for missionary discipleship and pastoral leadership: "We have been the sponsoring seminary and have been a part of the mission of the Seminary Formation Council since its foundation a decade ago. Our collaboration with this new and exciting stage in the work of the formation of those guiding our future priests will help us remain at the forefront of seminary formation for many years to come."

St. Vincent de Paul Regional Seminary operates under the sponsorship of the seven Roman Catholic dioceses of Florida, with Most Rev. Thomas G. Wenski, Archbishop of Miami, serving as Chancellor, and Most Rev. Gregory L. Parkes, Bishop of St. Petersburg, serving as Chairman of the Board of Trustees. St. Vincent de Paul Regional Seminary serves Catholic dioceses across the Southeast.

For PDF access to this press release and more information on how you can support the seminary, please visit [www.svdp.edu](http://www.svdp.edu)