

NOTRE DAME SEMINARY

Graduate School of Theology

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Notre Dame Seminary Begins Its 92nd Year with 126 Seminarians

Great beginnings last a lifetime. This is a theme the faculty and I introduce to the new seminarians. If each seminarian embraces priestly formation with intention, courage, seriousness, and with much deliberation, they will proceed in the program as a better man, a better Christian, a better disciple of Jesus. The spiritual life of the seminarian is what motivates him to discern a priestly vocation. Human formation is how a seminarian understands his God-given dignity but also those areas that need to be purified – for our Lord promises: Blessed are the pure of heart, they shall see God. The academic program exposes the seminarians to the great Tradition of the Church rooted in God’s Word. Finally, the goal of priestly formation is the pastoral mission of the Church. Pope Francis has shepherded the Church to be a Body of Christ in which all people can experience the mercy of God. Priests embody this mercy in the sacramental life of the Church as well as shepherds striving after the heart of Jesus, the Good Shepherd. As Notre Dame Seminary celebrates this 92nd year of excellence as we prepare future priests of the Church, we thank our bishops, vocation directors, benefactors, families and friends of our seminarians as we together support the seminarians in their discernment.



Ten Countries at NDS

Sylvester Adoga and Brother Augustine Odhiambo, *Seminarians*

NDS welcomed 40 new seminarians to Orientation Week on August 16, 2015. The new seminarians came from different dioceses and religious communities across the United State and countries such as Brazil, Cameroon, Kenya, Mexico, Sri Lanka, Uganda, Vietnam and more. They, like the biblical Samuel, have come just like the rest of us to discern whether it is the voice of God calling. And like the prophet Isaiah, that they may also learn to say "Here I am, send me" (Isa 6:8). The remaining orientation days were an occasion that missing would have been a loss to any new seminarian. It was a time for prayer and learning what it takes to fit into seminary life. Each morning began by spending time before the Lord in the Blessed Sacrament. This created an opportunity for each new seminarian to offer to Jesus his prayers, petitions and to cast his fears and worries to Him. It was a time for Jesus to inspire and strengthen the new seminarians for the work of each day. It was a time well spent, since no time spent in Jesus' presence is ever wasted. The new seminarians spent these days becoming acquainted to the academic, spiritual, pastoral, intellectual and liturgical requirements of the seminary and getting to know faculty members. The orientation program took nothing for granted, not even the need for recreation. They travelled to the famous French Quarter, visited the Blessed Seelos Church and Shrine, the Ursuline Convent and Our Lady of Prompt Succor Shrine. The Natchez Cruise was another memorable moment for the 'neophytes'. One of the African proverbs says that everyone in his right mind appreciates gestures of love. It is with this regard that all the new seminarians thank everyone who ensured the success of their orientation week.



From Permanent Diaconate to Priesthood

Raney Johnson, *Seminarian*

Each vocation story has something unique about it. Occasionally those discerning the priesthood share similarities in their journey, and this is the case for Deacons Eddie Martin and Patrick Broussard. Both men were permanent deacons for the Diocese of Baton Rouge before becoming transitional deacons at Notre Dame Seminary. Both men married and respectively spent over 30 years with their wives. They would both go on to have children and grandchildren. During married life, they wanted to have a greater role in the Church, so they started studying for the permanent diaconate. This is when Dc. Broussard and Dc. Martin met each other and the two were ordained together in June of 2010. The two men and their wives became friends over this period of time. Among the many similar occasions of joy in both men's lives, they would also share very painful moments in life. Dc. Martin's wife, Jennie Martin, passed away in 2013, and Dc. Broussard's wife, Aminthe Broussard, passed away in 2014. In a bond of friendship, Dc. Broussard read the gospel at the funeral for Dc. Martin's wife and Dc. Martin read the gospel at the funeral for Dc. Broussard's wife. The two deacons questioned what to do after such the painful loss of their wives. After a year of discernment following his wife's death, Dc. Martin entered Notre Dame Seminary. Following the same path, Dc. Broussard joined Dc. Martin at Notre Dame. "It is so great having him here," said Dc. Martin. "Him being here has ramped up my peace exponentially." Among the many other shared situations of life, the two men are now discerning the priesthood together. "Eddie and I are brothers in loss and hope," said Dc. Broussard.

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Notre Dame Seminary is participating in the first-ever day of giving for Catholics on #GivingTuesday, December 1, 2015. Support us through #iGiveCatholic on Giving Tuesday at <https://igivecatholic.org/#npo/notre-dame-seminary> or www.nds.edu.

Fit for the Priesthood Initiative Nicholas Adam, *Seminarian*

Dozens of seminarians are taking advantage of a new program aimed at helping candidates for the priesthood stay healthy. *Fit for the Priesthood* was started this past summer by NDS Athletic Committee Chairman Joseph Caraway (Lake Charles) with the help of several other seminarians and administrators. Seminarians contacted many Knights of Columbus Councils across the Gulf South to ask for support for the *Fit for the Priesthood* initiative. Many councils responded enthusiastically and these donations are being used for wellness and exercise training, exercise equipment and an individual incentive program to encourage seminarians to set personal fitness goals and to make exercise a way of life.

“We have raised nearly \$5,000 so far, and we hope that this program will provide a unique window into life here at NDS,” said Nick Adam (Jackson), one of the seminarians that helped organize the initiative. Over 50 seminarians are currently participating in the program. Money raised from the initiative will also help with travel expenses for the annual Josephinum Seminary Shootout in Columbus, Ohio, a national seminary basketball tournament.

The seminarians are grateful to the organizations and Knights of Columbus Councils from Louisiana and Mississippi that have contributed. If your Council would like to participate in this initiative, please contact the Development Office at 504-866-7426, ext. 374 or ylacour@nds.edu or email Seminarian Joseph Caraway at jcaraway@nds.edu.

Contributing Councils:

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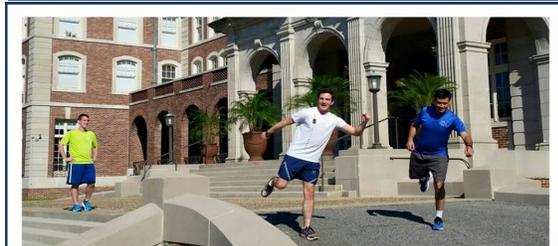
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SAVE THE DATE

Christmas Luncheon for Priests

Tuesday
December 1, 2015

Immaculate Conception
Church and
The Roosevelt Hotel

Chancellor's Dinner

Monday,
February 29, 2016

Notre Dame Seminary

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Notre Dame Seminary Gala & Auction

The Notre Dame Seminary Gala & Auction was held on October 10, 2015 on the beautiful and historic campus of Notre Dame Seminary. Over 650 guests, benefactors and friends showed their great support of and love for our seminarians by attending the Gala, the seminary's major annual fundraiser. Rector/President Fr. Jim Wehner and our Chancellor, Archbishop Gregory Aymond, welcomed all of the guests as they arrived. Magnificent floral arrangements of roses and lilies in jewel tones were generously donated by a benefactor and adorned tables draped in black linen. Gala attendees enjoyed delicious cuisine and cocktails donated by over 40 restaurants, caterers and individuals including: Drago's, Austin's, Pigeon Catering, Lagniappe Luncheonette, Notre Dame Seminary Food Services, Michael & Kelley Olinde, Coca Cola Refreshments, Abita Brewing Co., Sysco, and Seminarian Paul Birdsall. The Dessert Room was filled with heavenly delights from La Louisiane Bakery, Haydel's Bakery, Swiss Confectionery, Chez Pierre French Bakery, Manny Randazzo's, the Cuban Flan Queen and Maurice's French Bakery, to name a few. Jean Luc Albin, of Maurice's, was on hand to personally serve his famous Chocolate Martini. An exciting Silent auction featured online/mobile bidding this year and was the most successful auction ever held at the seminary. Beautiful auctions items were donated by nearly 200 businesses, schools and individuals and included: hotel stays, dining experiences, handmade rosaries, wine and spirit baskets, jewelry, a Drew Brees signed football, jersey and Blue Dog print, a cross crafted from 2000 year old cypress wood, as well as other beautiful religious art. Leap of Faith surprise bags, Drago's Raffle and Jewelry Raffle tickets were available to all Gala guests. A 14kt White Gold Ladies' "Love Knot" diamond dinner ring was donated and created exclusively by Greg Raymond, of Raymond's Jewelry Creations. The Jewelry Raffle winner will be drawn on December 1, 2015 at the Christmas Luncheon for Priest Event at the Roosevelt Hotel.

The Live Auction was held in Mary's courtyard and began with a presentation to our 2015 Honorary Chair Family, Klara Cvitanovich and her son, Tommy Cvitanovich of Drago's Restaurant. The Cvitanovich Family has generously supported the Seminary over the years and was honored for their philanthropic work in the community. The bidding was high at the Live Auction, where guests vied to win one of eleven fabulous auction items including: LSU vs. Florida tickets; a one week stay at The Charter in Beaver Creek, Colorado; Br. Carl Bouchereau's original oil painting on seminary roof slate of the Grotto at NDS; and a weekend at The Soniat House in the French Quarter. The most anticipated item at the Live Auction was the Seminarian Fais Do Do and was won by Callen and Coleen Hotard.

We proudly recognize and thank our 2015 Event and Gala Sponsors: Tom & Gayle Benson, Friend of the Seminary, the Azby Fund, Louisiana State Council Knights of Columbus, David and Anna Jouandot, Jane Nalty, St. Patrick Church (Baton Rouge), Harry and Londa Connick, and The Drago Cvitanovich Family. We are grateful to ALL of our gala patrons for their generosity and ongoing support including: Joseph and Erin Caruso, Guy and Nell Chiappetta, Deacon Lloyd and Hilary Huck, Stan and Sandy Middleton, Dr. Andrew Orestano, Dominick and Georgette Sciortino, Milton and Christine Dureau, Anthony and Roselyn Fernandez, FMOL Health System, Guillot's Sanitary Supplies, Callen and Coleen Hotard, and Mr. and Mrs. Robert Riviere. The seminary community is grateful to our dedicated Gala Committee, whose members worked countless hours and many months in preparation for this event. The Committee was led by (Board Member) Deacon Carlo & Debbie Maniglia (Auction), Rhonda & Frank Tusa (Auction), Anna & David Jouandot (Patron), Lisa & Tim Thriffiley (Food) and Seminarian Liaison Ryan Hallford. Other loyal committee members were: Erin & (Board Member) Joseph Caruso, Mitzi & Patrick Taylor (Mitzi was the creative force behind the beautiful auction displays), Beverly & Tim Napier, Cissy & Raymond Yakelis, Brother Carl Bouchereau, Barbara & Larry Hedrick, Kelley & Michael Olinde, Pam and Deacon Robert Pendzimaz, Carey & Kim Roberts, Rachelle & Norman Albright, Joe Dicharry, Lisa & Brett Herr, Joe Ann Lindner, Charlene & Greg Raymond, Dana & Ricky Welch, Ann & Sam Johnson, Marie & Steve Yost, Bonnie Stewart, Barbara & Steve Collura, Shannon & Byron Adams, Holly & Stu Palermo, Sandy & OJ LaCour, Anita & Carl Bonura, Christine & Chris Baglow, Jay Trusheim and Greg LaCour. Many thanks also to all of our event night volunteers for their great work, especially students from Archbishop Rummel High School, Archbishop Chapelle High School and LSU Medical School Catholic Student Association who served as Bidding Assistants at the silent auction.

"Getting to personally know the many Seminarians and Priest on campus is such a pleasure for the gala committee. It reaffirms to all of us why we are so committed to making the evening such an elegant and successful event." - Rhonda Tusa, Co-Chairperson

"Once again this year, our gala at Notre Dame seminary has proven to be a tremendous success. Countless hours of total dedication by volunteers make this possible. I feel honored to be part of this group. Food donated by some of the top restaurants around the city is enjoyed by all. The dessert room is an event all by itself. Through the generosity of many local businesses, and individuals, quality prizes are in abundance to bid on. The evening is highlighted by the live auction in Saint Joseph's courtyard. The unselfish bidding by our patrons is one of most enjoyable moments of the night. There is no doubt in my mind that the price of a ticket to enter is filled with tremendous value. The gift of value to those of us who volunteer is seen in the eyes of the young men who are discerning the priestly life. I look forward to many more years of involvement in this great event." - Deacon Carlo Maniglia, Co-Chairperson

Pictures from the NDS Gala & Auction



NDS Welcomes Two New Faculty Jude Fernando, *Seminarian*



Dr. Gregory Vall

Dr. Gregory Vall is a native of Cleveland, OH. He received a B.A. in English Literature from the Franciscan University of Steubenville in 1984. He taught theology at Magnificat High School in Rocky River, OH from 1984 to 1986. He received his M.A. and Ph.D. in Semitic Languages and Literatures from the Catholic University of America in Washington, DC, where he also taught Biblical Hebrew. In 1992, then Msgr. Gregory Aymond, the President-Rector of Notre Dame Seminary, invited Dr. Vall to join the NDS faculty. Dr. Vall accepted the invitation and served as a professor of Sacred Scripture for eight years. Dr. Vall said he met his wife, Lourdes Espina, at Notre Dame during an NDS Community Night celebration on February 29, 1996. They were married in the NDS chapel on December 28 of the same year and went on to have four children – Teresa, Gregory Thomas, Ezra and Mark. Dr. Vall taught theology at his alma mater, Franciscan University, from 2000 to 2004. He then taught at Ave Maria University in Florida from 2004 to 2015, where he achieved the rank of full professor and served as Director of the Ph.D. Program and Chair of the Theology Department. After fifteen years away, Dr. Vall said he is delighted to return to Notre Dame Seminary as a Professor of Sacred Scripture..

Reverend Jeffrey A. Montz is a native of the Archdiocese of New Orleans. He grew up in Chalmette where he was involved, from a young age, in his home parish, Our Lady of Prompt Succor. The faithful witness of his parents helped him to develop a personal relationship with God and to foster within him a sense of vocation to the priesthood from a young age. He attended Archbishop Hannan High School, and upon graduation entered into seminary formation at St. Joseph Seminary College. After graduating from St. Joseph Seminary College in 2004 with a bachelor's degree in liberal arts, Fr. Montz continued his seminary formation at Notre Dame Seminary in New Orleans where he received a Master of Divinity in 2008. That same year, Fr. Montz was ordained a priest of the Archdiocese of New Orleans. Following ordination, Fr. Montz served the Archdiocese as parochial vicar for three parishes over the span of five years, spending one year part-time in the diocesan Office of Worship. In 2013, he was sent to Rome to pursue a licentiate in spiritual theology from the Pontifical University of St. Thomas Aquinas (Angelicum). Having completed his licentiate in the summer of 2015, Fr. Montz joined the faculty full-time at Notre Dame Seminary, where he currently serves as Spiritual Director, Assistant Director of Spiritual Formation and Professor of Theology.



Fr. Jeffrey Montz

2015 Acompañó Mission Trip



Notre Dame Seminary's Annual Acompañó Mission Trip will be December 11-19, 2015. Thirty seminarians, primarily first year theologians, along with NDS priests, faculty and laity will travel to Granada, Nicaragua to serve the people there. Archbishop Gregory Aymond, who initially started this mission trip when he was Rector at NDS, will join the group for part of the trip this year.

The Acompañó mission trip offers the Acompañó group a practical experience of the need for social justice for every person. Acompañó allows seminarians, priests and laity to accompany the people of Granada, Nicaragua, so that they can come to better understand the beauty and difficulties of life in this developing nation. In walking together, both the missionaries and those they serve come to see Christ in others and in themselves. The term Acompañó ("to accompany or walk with") came to be used as the name of this mission trip because of its authentic representation of life in Central American culture and the realization of the need to encounter the people of Nicaragua in a way that is open to seeing everyone's gifts.

The Acompañó group will be housed at the Seminario San Pedro. During the trip, the group will begin each day with adoration and benediction. They will visit local parishes and parishioners, praying with families and bringing Holy Communion to the infirm in the hillsides. The group will dig and set foundations for the building of brick homes. They will visit two orphanages run by the Daughters of Charity, where they will share food and put on a Christmas Nativity play for the children. The group will also have an opportunity to meet with the local bishop to hear the needs of the local church. The seminarians will learn that their rule of life-time for prayer, mass, study and ministry-must be mobile even on mission and ministry. They will attend daily mass and participate in daily prayer.

Andrew Schumacher will visit Nicaragua for the second time as a member of the Acompañó leadership team. "Our days in Nicaragua are centered on community prayer, personal reflection, devotion to liturgy and joy in fellowship. We invite the Holy Spirit into our daily service and pray that He may bear fruit not only in our lives, but also in all those with whom we come in contact. The people we serve have great faith in Christ and this is an inspiration for me!" says Andrew.

Fr. Joe Krafft, who returns to Nicaragua for his 16th NDS mission trip, hopes to help the seminarians have an experience of the universal Church. "That means that no matter where people live, no matter their geographical, national or economic situations, these future priests are called to shepherd and lead the people of Jesus.... and provide a shepherd's care to all of God's people," states Fr. Krafft.

Fellow leadership team member, Derek Ducote, looks forward to the trip and to serving with his brother seminarians. "This trip allows the seminarian community to bond together in a unique way. We grow in appreciation for the universal Church and God's generosity poured out upon us in the United States," says Derek.

Special thanks to all members of the Acompañó Leadership Team for their planning and coordination of the mission trip, and contributions to this article, including: Dcn. Michael Richard, Dcn. Ken Smith, Colten Symmes, Derek Ducote, Hector Arvizu-Mancilla, Andrew Schumacher, Mark Shoffner, Fr. Joe Krafft and Fr. David Kelly. The leadership team asks all friends of Notre Dame Seminary to pray for the success of the 2015 Acompañó Mission Trip.

Ministering to God's People Raney Johnson, *Seminarian*

Each year the transitional deacons are assigned a parish for their diaconal ministry. The deacons spend the first three months of their final year at Notre Dame Seminary in these parishes. Three of the deacons answered the question, "What has your diaconal ministry been like in the parish you are serving?"

Deacon David Ducote said he had a truly amazing experience during his diaconal ministry at St. Catherine of Siena Parish in Metairie, LA. "I have been involved in many ministries here. The most rewarding aspect for me has been getting to enter into the lives of many of the parishioners," he said. "While very few have opened up to the point of telling me their whole life story, I have been privy to many important and intimate moments in their lives." He said he met with many couples in their homes as they prepared to celebrate the Sacrament of Baptism for their children. "We try to visit each couple in their homes because we want to experience them on their "home turf" and in a setting where they are more comfortable," he said.



Deacon Jason Johnston said he really enjoyed his Diaconal ministry and serving in a parish in his diocese. "The experience of preaching has been really great," he said. "I had the opportunity to address tough issues as well as offer words of hope and encouragement." He said his time in the parish has been very fulfilling in beginning to take on his vocation - challenging in some ways - but it has proven to be very rewarding. "Over the past few months I think I have done a little bit of everything in the parish. We have three hospitals in town and several nursing homes where we try to make regular appearances," he said.

Deacon Alexander Albert called the time he served at the parish he was assigned a joyful experience. He said spending much of his time in hands-on service to the people confirmed that he wants to spend his life in priestly ministry. "I've been working with the local homeless shelter quite a bit," he said. "Building relationships with the various people who live in poverty has given me a solid glimpse of Christ in the poor and enriched my love for God in my neighbor." While serving in the parish, he was also able to use his contacts there to teach a class on the lives of the saints, opened to the homeless and to parishioners.



Martin Villarreal's Beautiful Woodworking Skills at NDS Deacon Eddie Martin, *Seminarian*



Through the years, the Notre Dame Seminary campus has been enhanced by the incredible woodworking skills of Mr. Martin Villarreal, a four year member of our maintenance staff, learned his craftsmen skills in Nicaragua, under the watchful eyes of his father, Eugenio, who owned a shop of his own. Political unrest in the 1980's cost his brother his life and led Martin to immigrate here with his wife, Rita, and first child, Mario. The couple, who has been married thirty-six years, would be graced with three other bundles of God's love: Angela, Ana Marie, and Jose. Martin's handiwork has transformed hotels in the French Quarter, plantation homes, and he was contracted to build a sixty foot bar for former Saint stand out, Ricky Jackson's nightclub. One his most notable works here has been his modifications to the main hallway of Shaw Hall which exposed all the archways, formerly hidden from view. Most recently, Mr. Martin has created a beautiful piece for the outdoor pool area. The NDS community sincerely thanks Mr. Martin for sharing his gifts and talents with us.

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