



FALL 2025

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SAINT JOHN'S
SEMINARY**

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AND THE FUTURE
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SAINT JOHN'S SEMINARY
BOSTON, MASSACHUSETTS

CURRENTS

127 Lake Street,
Brighton, MA 02135

www.sjs.edu

617.254.2610

DID YOU KNOW?

SEMINARIAN POPULATION

Total Seminarians: **74**

Resident Seminarians: **49**

Religious Order Seminarians: **13**

Redemptoris Mater Seminarians: **12**

Dioceses & Religious Orders Served

Dioceses: **7**

Religious Orders: **5**

COST TO EDUCATE

\$60,000 – Total cost per seminarian per year

\$45,000 – Tuition paid by diocese/religious order

\$15,000 – Your gift makes a lasting impact

25% of every seminarian's formation is funded through donor support.

Each year, Saint John's Seminary relies on more than \$1 million in donor support to sustain our mission.

THE THEOLOGICAL INSTITUTE

28 Lay students enrolled

3 Dioceses represented

Graduate Degree Programs in: Theology, Ministry, Evangelization

Your support helps form future priests and lay leaders for the Church!



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LETTER FROM THE **RECTOR**

Dear Friends of Saint John's Seminary,

Peace in Christ.

As autumn settles over Brighton and the rhythms of a new academic year take hold, our chapel and classrooms are once again alive with the earnest prayer and study of men preparing for priestly service. Each day I am reminded that the road a priest walks toward your parish—toward the pulpit, the confessional, the hospital room—passes through these very halls. Your generosity makes that journey possible.

In this Fall issue of *Currents*, we are intentionally focusing on mission and stewardship. When you support Saint John's Seminary, you are not simply “keeping the lights on.” You are helping to form priests who will preach the Gospel with clarity, celebrate the sacraments with reverence, and accompany God's people with compassion. Your gift this season strengthens the academic and spiritual formation our seminarians receive, equips our faculty and formators to guide them with wisdom, and sustains the sacred work of priestly formation when the Church needs it most.

I invite you to pause and consider your own parish for a moment: the priest who baptized your grandchild, the confessor who offered you God's mercy and forgiveness, the celebrant who brings Christ to the altar each day. Many such priests once walked our corridors—and many future priests are walking them now. Your support ensures that their formation is faithful, robust, and worthy of the people they will serve.

In the months ahead, we will continue to welcome friends to campus for liturgies, concerts, and formation events that deepen our common life of faith. We will also continue our simple promise of intercession through **PRAY27**—remembering your intentions on the 27th of each month at Mass, Holy Hour, and in personal prayer. Please know that our seminarians and I are daily grateful for your sacrifices; we carry your needs to the Lord with confidence.

As you read the stories in these pages, I ask—humbly and hopefully—that you join us with a gift to the Seminary Fund this fall. If you are able, please make your gift today at sjs.edu/fund. Your generosity will live on in every homily preached, every sacrament celebrated, and every soul comforted by the presence of a priest for years to come.

Thank you for believing in this mission and for standing with us. Be assured of my prayers for you and your loved ones, and please continue to pray for our seminarians, faculty, and staff.

With gratitude in Christ,



Rev. Msgr. Stephen E. Salocks, '80
Rector



AT THE **HEART** OF PARISH LIFE

TWO SUMMER CONFERENCES AT SAINT JOHN'S SEMINARY OFFERED PRACTICAL TOOLS FOR PARISH LEADERSHIP AND SPIRITUAL RENEWAL FOR PRIESTS



This summer, Saint John's Seminary opened its doors to leaders from across the Church for two unique conferences—one bringing together clergy and laity to explore co-responsibility in parish leadership, and another offering priests a day of spiritual renewal. While different in audience, both gatherings shared a single mission: to strengthen those who shepherd our faith communities so that they can meet today's challenges with hope, clarity, and renewed zeal.

FACING TODAY'S PARISH REALITIES

Across New England, parishes face unprecedented challenges: declining Mass attendance, aging infrastructure, financial uncertainty, and the pressures of secular culture pulling families in every direction. Priests are stretched thin, often carrying the full weight of administration and pastoral care at once. Lay leaders, too, shoulder increasing

responsibilities—managing ministries, finances, and facilities while trying to keep mission at the heart of it all.

For parishioners, the result can sometimes look like “business” rather than mission. But the real story is one of faithful men and women striving—often against the odds—to ensure that parishes remain places of encounter with Jesus Christ.

It was against this backdrop that Saint John's Seminary hosted its first conference, *Leading Together*:

Co-Responsibility of Laity and Clergy. This half-day leadership summit gathered priests, seasoned lay ministers, and parish business leaders to explore new models of governance, stewardship, and collaboration.

Kevin Kiley, Chancellor and CFO of the Diocese of Fall River, opened the morning by addressing the evolving landscape of parish administration. He described how today's complex financial, legal, and operational realities often leave pastors with little time to do what only they can do: teach, sanctify, and shepherd. By reimagining models of temporal administration—whether through trained lay leaders, deacons, or shared services—Kevin offered hope that pastors could return their primary focus to preaching the Gospel while lay experts steward the parish's material needs.

Jared Cowell, Evangelization Consultant for the Archdiocese of Boston, outlined a vision for





sustainable parishes grounded in stewardship and encounter with Christ. He challenged participants to rethink parish life through the lens of discipleship: “Stewardship is not about keeping the lights on—it’s about worship.” His “three-legged stool” framework—balancing finances, volunteer leadership, and long-term development—offered practical steps for building parishes that are both spiritually vibrant and financially sound. His call was clear: clergy and laity must work side by side, each bringing their unique gifts, to ensure that parishes thrive.

The day concluded with a panel discussion, Shared Mission — Clergy & Lay Leadership in Parish Life. This dynamic conversation brought together Kevin Kiley, Jared Cowell, Susan Horne of St. Joseph’s Parish in Needham, and Susan Abbott and Kathy Stebbins, co-directors of the Shrine of Our Lady of Good Voyage in Boston. Together, they explored the lived reality of co-responsibility

in parish life, reflecting on moments of growth, conflict, and collaboration. Focusing on evangelization, administration, leadership formation, and sustainability, the panelists offered practical insights on how to build trust, strengthen communication, and foster leadership cultures rooted in mission. Their storytelling grounded the day’s themes in real parish experience, leaving participants with both encouragement and tangible takeaways for their own communities.

Together, these sessions and discussions gave attendees a vision of co-responsibility that is not theoretical but urgently practical. As one participant noted, “If our priests burn out and our lay leaders feel unsupported, the mission suffers. But if we truly lead together, the parish can flourish.”

STRENGTHENING THE PRIEST’S HEART

The second gathering of the summer, *Living a Good Spiritual Life as a Busy Priest*, focused inward—on the spiritual renewal of priests themselves. In a culture where busyness often overshadows prayer, this half-day seminar reminded priests that their first task is to remain rooted in Christ.

Fr. Marcel, Pastor of St. Thomas More Parish, shared personal reflections on prayer and fraternity. Drawing from his own

Scan the QR code, or visit:
www.sjs.edu/webinars to view a
recording of the conference sessions.



ministry, he stressed that priests cannot pour from an empty vessel. The call to friendship—with Christ in personal prayer and with brother priests in intentional fraternity—remains essential to sustain a life of service.

Fr. Bart, Associate Professor at Boston College and research scholar at the Institute for Advanced Jesuit Studies, introduced Ignatian spirituality as a framework for balance.



He reminded his brother priests that even St. Ignatius himself emphasized the importance of health, rest, and retreat—not as indulgences, but as necessities for mission. His challenge to priests was to embrace both self-care and discernment, learning even to say “no” at times, so that their “yes” to Christ and the parish might be wholehearted.

Finally, Fr. Ezra, professor of moral theology and psychology at the Angelicum in Rome, spoke on the value of time. Through Scripture and personal anecdotes, he reminded priests that every moment is a gift to be stewarded wisely. His encouragement to “prioritize prayer and order the day around it” resonated deeply with attendees who often feel pulled in countless directions.

Together, these talks formed a single message: the priest’s

inner life must be guarded and nourished if he is to shepherd others fruitfully.

A SHARED MISSION FOR THE CHURCH

Taken together, these two conferences painted a vivid picture of parish life today—complex, demanding, and at times overwhelming, yet filled with hope and possibility when clergy and laity embrace co-responsibility and priests find renewal in Christ.

For our alumni priests, the message is both grounding and encouraging: you are not alone in these challenges, and resources exist to help you thrive. For our lay leaders and parish staff, these gatherings affirmed that your gifts are indispensable to the Church’s mission. And for our generous supporters, they provided a window into the real struggles

facing the people who serve your parish each week—reminding us all that the Church needs not only our prayers but also our investment in leadership formation.

LOOKING AHEAD

Saint John’s Seminary is committed to continuing this work of formation and renewal—not only for our seminarians preparing for priesthood but for all who serve the Church today. Conferences like these allow us to bring clergy and laity together, to name real challenges, and to equip leaders with both vision and practical tools.

But this is only the beginning.

WE WANT TO HEAR FROM YOU.

What topics most urgently need to be addressed in future gatherings—whether for clergy, for lay parish leaders, or for parishioners seeking to serve more fully? Your feedback will help guide our next steps.

Together, we can build stronger parishes where clergy and laity share the mission of making Christ known, and where those who serve are renewed in spirit for the work ahead.

Please scan the QR code to complete a short survey.



PRAY²⁷

for SAINT JOHN'S SEMINARY

Each month on the 27th, Catholics across the region join in prayer for the mission of Saint John's Seminary. This day honors St. John the Evangelist, the Seminary's patron, and includes a special Mass for all Pray27 benefactors. United in faith, we pray for the continued success of the Seminary's vital work for the Church.



Learn More

BECOME A MONTHLY DONOR TODAY

Scan the QR code or go to www.sjs.edu/donate to sign us as a recurring monthly donor who is securing a legacy of faith in Saint John's Seminary. Your support empowers future priests and lay leaders to serve the Church throughout New England and beyond.



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SCAN ME

WELCOME TO SAINT JOHN'S SEMINARY



Aaron Beecher
Archdiocese of Boston
Propaedeutic Program



Adam Sorrels
Archdiocese of Boston
Propaedeutic Program



Benjamin Woodruff
Diocese of Rochester
Propaedeutic Program



Chrisantusmary Eze
Archdiocese of Boston
Propaedeutic Program



Daniel Zatta
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Jesus Reynoso
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John Turner
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Michael Uzoma
Diocese of Springfield
Discipleship I



Nicholas Huegel
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Ryan Immerman
Archdiocese of Boston
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Steven Diel
Diocese of Providence
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Thomas Pawlak
Diocese of Rochester
Propaedeutic Program

Forming Disciples.
Proclaiming Jesus Christ.

When Saint John's Seminary opened its doors for the first academic year on Monday, September 22nd, 1884, the story of God's work among the people of Boston and beyond entered a different stage. The people of God now have not just a "nursery" in God's vineyard where seedlings are nourished until the time for transplanting, but they now have a ground of booming fruitful harvest of good and holy priests who make known God's work, presence and blessings through the administration of sacraments to those in most need of it. The vocations of good young men became the seed of Saint John's seminary.



On Saturday, August 23rd, 2025, we welcomed the 141st class of seminarians into this Holy House; 14 of them! These are young men seeking the face of God and discerning if it is God's Will that they serve Him as Catholic priests. These new men, as well as the returning men, come to us from different parts of the country and

various dioceses like, Springfield, Fall River, Worcester, Providence, Portland (ME), Manchester, Rochester, the Archdiocese of Boston and even as far as the Archdiocese of Hanoi in Vietnam. We also have members of several Religious Congregations who study with us like the Oblates of the Virgin Mary (OMV), the Order of Discalced Carmelites (OCD), Order of Saint Benedict (OSB), as well as the Redemptoris Mater Seminarians.

To all of you discerning your vocations here, welcome to Saint John's Seminary! As I welcome you, I wish to thank God for the gift of you; you who are ensuring that the mandate given by Rome to the first Bishop of Boston, Bishop Cheverus, in 1810 to establish a diocesan seminary continues; you who are keeping the mission of the seminary going; you whose YES joins thousands of yeses of generations of young men who have entered, lived, studied, were formed and ordained as priests from this Holy House. You are making history this year as well for being here!

Welcome and thank you for ensuring that the story of Saint John's seminary never stops being written. The authors of the Preface to the History of Saint John's Seminary published March 29th, 1945, noted that the "seminary's story is more than the buildings... more than the list of names of the Seminary's professors and graduates....The real story is what they did here." Truly, the real story is the one you will be making

in the coming days and years by being configured to Christ here through all the dimensions of formation that lead to forming a good, personable and holy priest to serve the people of God here in the Archdiocese and beyond.

While we welcome the new men, I wish to at this point, express our deepest gratitude to all who have contributed in any way to the mission of Saint John's Seminary, friends, family, alumni, staff and faculty. Special mentions are to first, our past Vice Rector, Rev. Fr. Thomas Macdonald, S.T.D., who put in his all to ensure that the story of Saint John's seminary never stops being written. Second, to our esteemed outgoing faculty member, Dr. Angela Franks, Ph.D., a renowned theologian, speaker and writer, who gave her time, talent and treasure to contributing to the intellectual formation of our seminarians for almost two decades. Thank you both for all you did to ensure that Saint John's Seminary is a ground of booming fruitful harvest of good and holy priests to serve God and His Church, and may God continue to bless your endeavors especially in your new roles.

Once again, to our new seminarians, welcome to Saint John's Seminary! Your vocations are the seed of Saint John's seminary.



Rev. Stanislaus C. Achu
Interim Vice Rector
Saint John's Seminary

SHAPED FOR MISSION

HOW OUR SEMINARIANS ENCOUNTER CHRIST AND GROW IN THEIR VOCATION THROUGH SUMMER ASSIGNMENTS

Priestly formation does not pause when the academic year ends. Each summer, our seminarians step beyond the walls of Saint John's to encounter Christ in new contexts—through prayer and fraternity, through the life of parish communities, and even through the quiet lessons found in ordinary work. These summer assignments are vital moments of growth, where classroom learning meets lived experience. In the following reflections, Adam, Sam, and Vince share how God shaped their hearts and deepened their vocation through the unique opportunities of their summer.

This summer I was blessed to be assigned to St. Mary's Parish in Waltham, MA. Alongside the blessings of extraordinary works with parishioners, I've found abundant fruit in ordinary manual labor.

You may be wondering, "What could I possibly learn from helping fix up an old church and rectory?" Quite a lot, actually. I spent a lot of time sprucing up the wooden fixtures. If done correctly, you really start to get familiar with all the smooth and rough edges. You get to closely appreciate the beautiful carvings and the sturdiness of things. You grow to respect another's craftsmanship, while also recognizing yourself as the steward in that moment despite not building it. You get a sense of how much dust and grime cover up its beauty. There's a joy when you clean it, and a fulfillment seeing others enjoy the sort of new life fixtures have after TLC. All great things, but where's the fruit?

Well, a lot of the same could be said of the Church. Our brothers and sisters all have their own

smooth and rough edges that we care for. We're blessed with the beautiful carvings of traditions and art, and reassured by our sturdy foundation in Christ. We praise and glorify the Father's craftsmanship, while recognizing in this moment we are His stewards. Sin, like dust and grime, covers up our true beauty. But with a little TLC, there's a new life in the Holy Spirit and a joy we can share with others. Incredible gifts and lessons from God, all through the simplicity of cleaning.

St. Mary's Parish gave me a lot of time to pray and meditate, whether with a rosary and breviary or a spray bottle and rag in my hands. And for that, I am forever thankful.



Mr. Vincent Barcinas
Discipleship I
Archdiocese of Boston

As part of the rising First Discipleship class I really did not know what to expect for my first

summer assignment at a parish. What I definitely did not expect was to go to a Pastoral Council meeting, a Financial Council meeting, and a meeting regarding the upkeep of the local cemetery within the first 48 hours. I can't imagine that when someone thinks of the life of the priest they think about conversations about the placement of flowers around the statue of Our Lady, nor the nuances of whether the double wide or double deep grave is the more practical option to be advertised in the cemetery fundraiser trifold. But, these moments, though not necessarily the glamorous stories one reads about in the lives of the saints, are reality and I am so very grateful to have experienced them. Sometimes amidst the academics and routine of the Seminary, one can forget that the ultimate goal is to become Christ-like, to become a servant, and my summer was a great time to refocus on that mission.

I had the privilege of being assigned to the Stoughton Collaborative of St. James and Immaculate Conception with Fr.

Carlos Suarez for the summer, where I was able to experience the reality of being in a parish. Part of this reality is the wide range of people that make up the body of the Church. In Stoughton I was welcomed by the Portuguese, Brazilians, Hispanic, and perhaps most foreign of all to a boy from the Northshore like myself, the Southshore townies. For anyone from Stoughton who may be reading this article, I'd like to thank you for welcoming me into your home and reminding me what I am studying for.



Mr. Samuel Neumann
Discipleship I
Archdiocese of Boston

About a week after our academic year concluded at St. John's 109 seminarians from all across the country descended upon Omaha Nebraska for the Institute of

Priestly Formation (IPF) summer program. The IPF program at Creighton University is designed for diocesan seminarians to grow in the human and spiritual dimensions of priestly formation. During our six weeks, we would gather for communal prayer in the morning and evenings, daily Mass, and a conference in the afternoon. Depending on the day, our evenings varied, whether it was another conference, Holy Hour, or community time on our respective floors. One of the highlights of the summer was our eight day Ignatian silent retreat. During these eight days we would gather for daily Mass as a community, then we would each pray four Holy Hours a day, and meet with our spiritual director. By the end of the retreat we would have spent about 32 hours with our Eucharistic Lord. During our Holy Hours we were instructed to use Sacred Scripture and to pray with certain passages for the hour. As our Holy Father Pope Leo XIV said, "If you truly

want to encounter the Risen Lord, then listen to his word, which is the Gospel of salvation" (Dialogue between His Holiness Pope Leo XIV and young people during the jubilee vigil, 2 August 2025).

While our focus during the week was on the human and spiritual dimensions of formation, there was time for fun on the weekends. We had the opportunity to visit the Omaha Zoo (the largest in the United States), visit Boys Town USA, have a steak dinner, a day at the lake and we even had the chance to take in a game at the College World Series.

Overall it was a great experience of prayer, and fun with brother seminarians from around the country.



Mr. Adam Habershaw
Configuration II
Diocese of Providence



Photo: Institute for Priestly Formation



AN ADVENT FESTIVAL OF LESSONS & CAROLS

Saturday, December 6, 7:00PM

Sunday, December 7, 3:00PM

www.sjs.edu/events



VOICES RAISED TO HEAVEN

THE ROLE OF SACRED MUSIC IN PREPARING SEMINARIANS TO LEAD THE FAITHFUL IN WORSHIP

Early each day at the first ray of dawn, a clatter of footsteps echoes through the Great Hall, banishing the silence of the night that clings to the murky shadows. As the hasty scuffle recedes, a chorus of voices burst from the open door of the chapel, singing a hymn of praise that hails the Author of the new day's light. It is the beginning of a class day, and together with the universal Church, the seminarians entrusted to our institution chant the Divine Office just as generations of men have before them.

On each man's vocational path, a seminary is only the beginning of his journey. The liturgy, on the other hand, is timeless. When a seminarian is ordained first to the diaconate and later to the presbyterate, the rhythm of prayer that is the cornerstone of seminary formation has become more than mere habit alone. His partaking in the sung liturgy, both the Divine Office and the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass, coupled with the grace that is poured out in the Sacrament Holy Orders, is a true inheritance bequeathed by the Church to sustain him in ministry throughout his life on earth.

Since music and particularly plainchant is so deeply entwined with sacred liturgy, the musical formation of a seminarian is preeminently greater than sharpening his taste for aesthetics or deepening his appreciation

of beauty. The liturgy of Holy Mother Church deserves to be elevated with dignity, reverence, and awe. When prayer is sung, it binds mind, body, and soul – both spiritually and physically. It is paramount to train a seminarian



to partake of liturgy's full richness both for his own sanctification and for the sanctification of the Faithful who will be under his care. A seminarian who possesses the ease, familiarity, and practical expertise of chanting the liturgical texts is poised to deepen the Faithful's encounter with the divine mysteries that are clothed and expressed by the sacred words.

Pedagogically, our seminary steeps men in the praxis of chanting the liturgy by immersing them in opportunities to develop their voices. The seminary schola sings for holy Mass each class day, and the entire body of faculty and seminarians chant Morning and Evening Prayer throughout

the week. On Sundays, visitors are invited to partake in a slice of seminary life by attending the 10:30 AM Mass which is replete with music during the academic term. Although much of the schola's daily work remains

hidden from the public eye, the best occasion to witness the culmination of seminary music is our annual Advent Festival of Nine Lessons & Carols. This year, it takes place at **7:00 PM on Saturday, December 6, and at 3:00 PM on Sunday, December 7.** Concerts of sacred works by guest musicians also abound, including an ongoing collaboration with the archdiocesan choir school of Saint Paul's Parish, Cambridge. Stay tuned for news of performances.



Mr. Tristan Smith
Director of Sacred Music
Saint John's Seminary

GOLF, FELLOWSHIP, AND THE FUTURE OF THE CHURCH



What happens when you combine a perfect June day, a beautiful course at Ipswich Country Club, and a group of generous friends who love the Church? You get one of the most joyful—and impactful—days of the year for Saint John's Seminary.

This year's Golf Tournament brought together supporters, alumni, and friends for more

than just a round of golf. It was a celebration of faith and fellowship, and a powerful reminder that when we come together, we can make a lasting difference in the lives of our seminarians.

We are deeply grateful to Loretta and Brian Gallagher, whose long-standing generosity and love for Saint John's made this day possible. Their leadership, along with the

tireless work of our tournament committee, created a seamless event filled with fun, laughter, and purpose.

As Msgr. Stephen E. Salocks, our Rector, shared at the dinner: "This tournament is more than a fundraiser—it's a sign of the community that surrounds our seminarians. Every swing, every putt, and every smile today has helped build up the Church of tomorrow."

The seminarians from the Archdiocese of Boston were a highlight of the day. They greeted guests, shared stories, and even joined in on the course. One remarked, "It's humbling to see so many people come out to support us. Knowing that you are walking with us in our formation means everything."





Donors felt the same joy. One golfer told me, “I’ve played in many charity tournaments, but this one is different. Here, you actually meet the men you’re supporting. You can see the future of the Church in front of you—and it makes every shot worth it.”

And yes, there were plenty of memorable shots—from long drives down the fairway to heroic putts that somehow found their way into the cup. There were also a few swings best forgotten (mercifully covered by mulligans!). But the biggest win of the day wasn’t on the scorecard—it was the generosity that poured forth for our seminarians.

Every dollar raised goes directly to their formation—covering the costs of tuition, housing, and the spiritual and academic preparation they need to answer God’s call. In fact, your generosity makes up the 25% of formation costs not covered by dioceses and religious orders. That means days like this directly ensure that financial obstacles never prevent a man from becoming the priest God is calling him to be.

One donor summed it up perfectly at the dinner: “We come here for the golf, but we leave with the joy of knowing we’re building the future of the Church.”

To Loretta and Brian Gallagher, to our hardworking committee, and to every golfer, sponsor, and volunteer—thank you. You made this day not only possible, but unforgettable.

Save the Date! We invite you to be part of next year’s Saint John’s Seminary Golf Tournament on **Wednesday, July 1, 2026 at Woodland Country Club in Newton.**

Join us for another day of faith, fellowship, and fun on the course—all in support of our seminarians. Together, let’s keep building the future of the Church.

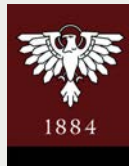


Mr. Tomasz Kierul
Vice President for
Mission Advancement
Saint John’s Seminary



*More photos can be found on the
Saint John’s Seminary Facebook Page*

SAINT JOHN'S SEMINARY
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DONATE TO SAINT JOHN'S SEMINARY

The priests serving your parish today once walked the halls of Saint John's Seminary. Now, a new generation of seminarians is preparing to answer God's call—and *they need your support*. Your gift sustains the sacred work of priestly formation, providing the academic, spiritual, and pastoral preparation tomorrow's priests need to shepherd the faithful with wisdom and devotion. Please make your gift today by scanning the QR code or visiting www.sjs.edu/fund



Saint John's Seminary Community Photo, 2025