My name is Fr. Robert Barron and I am the Rector/President of the University of Saint Mary of the Lake/Mundelein Seminary. I am pleased to know that you are discerning priesthood and are considering Mundelein Seminary for your formation. Please be assured of my prayers and those of the seminary community as you consider this decision.

When I became Rector in July 2012 I declared that the work of Mundelein would be focused on producing priests for the New Evangelization. Accordingly, the study and practice of evangelizing an increasingly secularized culture are now the principal concerns of both our students and our faculty.

In support of this effort we have implemented a new structure for our program of formation. The students will now be led along three great spiritual paths: finding the center, knowing that you are a sinner, and realizing that your life is not about you. The ultimate purpose of this reconfiguration is to produce priests who are deeply in love with Jesus Christ, who have come to terms with their attachments, addictions, and sin, and who are, consequently, ready to be sent on mission.

We implemented an academic curriculum to support the formation of priests for the New Evangelization. The M.Div. program synchronizes academics with the formation program, creating what we call “integral formation.” Our faculty has intentionally rejected the so-called “university model,” which separates spirituality and theology. Instead, we have embraced a patristic vision according to which head and heart are united.

I want to assure you that we are thrilled to be doing seminary work precisely at this challenging time in the history of the Church. We are delighted to play a role in providing priests for the New Evangelization. Please pray for all of us here at Mundelein, and know that we keep you close in prayer every day.

Yours in the Lord Jesus,

Very Reverend Robert Barron
Rector/President
Mundelein Seminary leads our students down three great spiritual paths that have always struck me as extremely helpful for thinking about the Christian life: finding the Center, knowing you are a sinner, and realizing that your life is not about you.

Path one was beautifully expressed by St. Paul when he remarked, “It is no longer I who live but Christ who lives in me.” Paul was announcing that the center of his life was no longer his own ego, with its distinctive projects and plans, but rather Christ Jesus. Now everything in him - mind, will, passions, talents, etc. - would be in service to Christ and his purposes. Kierkegaard said that a saint is someone whose life is about one thing. He did not mean the saint lives a monotonous existence, but rather all of the elements that constitute the saint’s being are gathered around, focused upon, the Lord alone. What this singular attention produces is the beautiful and integrated soul.

Path two - knowing you are a sinner - follows ineluctably from path one. It is precisely in the light of grace that one understands how far one has departed from the way of God. St. John of the Cross compared the soul to a pane of glass and observed that it is when the light is shining most directly on the glass that the marks and smudges on it are most apparent. Because St. Augustine could “confess” the praise of God, he also was able to “confess” his sin. If the consideration of the Christian spiritual life commences with sin, it gets rather quickly off the rails, devolving into pelagianism or puritanism. It begins indeed in grace, but then moves naturally to the acknowledgement of sin and the deep willingness to do something about it. Path two is, accordingly, the “purgative way” of which so many of our spiritual masters speak. One of the greatest guides on path two is the poet Dante.

In his Divine Comedy, he recounts the journey that he made up the seven story mountain of Purgatory, coming to terms with all of the deadly sins. Anyone who is serious about guiding others on the spiritual journey has to be willing to undergo the “searching moral inventory” that is path two.

Having been purified, the Christian disciple is ready to be sent. In the Bible, no one is ever given an experience of God without being given, subsequently, a mission. Abraham, Jacob, Joseph, Moses, Samuel, David, Isaiah, Jeremiah, Matthew, Peter and Paul: all of them are commissioned by the God of Israel to go forth.

Path three - realizing your life is not about you - is all about this spiritual adventure. Hans Urs von Balthasar was gesturing toward this path when he spoke of making a transition from the “ego-drama” to the “theo-drama.” The former is the drama we write, produce, direct and, above all, star in; the latter is the drama written, produced and directed by God. Being the star of the ego drama amounts, finally, to nothing. Joseph Campbell said most of us climb the ladder of success only to find out it’s up the wrong wall! But being even a bit player in the theo-drama - acting the role God wants us to play - is to discover the pearl of great price and the treasure buried in the field.

Anyone who wants to be a priest of Jesus Christ must be willing to be an apostle, which is to say, someone who is sent. Anyone aspiring to the priesthood must, like the prophet Isaiah, say, “Here I am Lord! Send me!” He must, in a word, be willing to commit himself to path three, realizing in his bones that his life is not about him.

From grace through purgation to mission: that is the threefold rhythm of the Christian spiritual life; that will be the pattern of our formation program.
Both St. Pope John Paul II and Pope Emeritus Benedict XVI have declared that the New Evangelization should be the central preoccupation of the Catholic Church at the beginning of this third millennium. Accordingly, upon becoming rector of Mundelein Seminary, I resolved that this historic place should be placed on a New Evangelization footing. This means that Mundelein will be about the business of training priests skilled in the art and science of announcing the Christian message to a culture that is growing increasingly indifferent, even hostile, to it.

What precisely are the marks that ought to characterize someone geared to this mission? There are, of course, many, but I would specially highlight seven.

In Love with Jesus Christ
First, a new evangelist has to be in love with Jesus Christ. Evangelization is not simply the sharing of ideas or convictions. If it were, any theologian or historian of ideas would be automatically skilled in it. The Good News is about a relationship with the person of Jesus, a friendship with the risen Christ. As the Romans said long ago, nemo dat quod non habet (no one gives what he doesn't have); therefore, if someone wants to share this friendship with others, he has to have it himself. This is why the new evangelists we are seeking to train here have to be men of prayer. The reading of Scripture, the Liturgy of the Hours, daily Eucharist, the adoration of the Blessed Sacrament, the Rosary, Lectio Divina, and contemplation must be regular features of their lives, for these are the means by which a relationship with the Lord is cultivated.

Passion and Enthusiasm
Second, a new evangelist must be a person of passion and enthusiasm. In a talk given in Haiti, in 1983, St. Pope John Paul II said that the evangelization practiced today must be new “in ardor.” I believe that St. Pope John Paul II sensed that in the years following the Council, the Church had lost a good deal of its fire. Caught up in endless debates about its own internal dynamics (largely concerning sex and authority), many Catholics had forgotten that their fundamental task was to proclaim Christ to the world with boldness and confidence. In his Rhetoric, that masterpiece dealing with persuasive speech, Aristotle argued that people finally only listen to “an excited speaker.” Catholic evangelists, who are unsure of the truth of Catholicism, hesitant in speech, and lacking in ardor, will simply fail to persuade anyone. I want to train a generation of preachers who have the requisite fire.

Knowledge of the Story of Israel
Third, new evangelists must know the story of Israel. The “good news,” the euangelion, is that the great adventure of Israel had reached its climax, or as St. Paul put it, that all of the promises that God had made to his chosen people had found their “yes” in Jesus Christ. God had chosen a people Israel and then had shaped them according to his own heart, giving them law, covenant, prophecy and temple. All of these institutions had one purpose: to bring divinity and humanity together, to produce friendship between God and human beings. In the person of Jesus Christ, risen from the dead, law, covenant, prophecy and temple had all been fulfilled, for in him the human longing for God perfectly met the infinitely more passionate divine longing for us. In light of this stunning state of affairs (“God was in Christ reconciling the world to himself.”), all the nations had to know about what the God of Israel had accomplished. This was, and still is, the basic evangelical task. And this is why a Christ divorced from Israel, presented, as he so often is today, as a generic spiritual teacher, is so un-compelling. We need evangelists who know that the Church is the new Israel and that Jesus is the “glory of his people Israel.”

Understand the Culture
Fourth, new evangelists must understand the culture that surrounds them. Karl Barth, the greatest Protestant theologian of the last century, famously commented that the preacher must prepare his sermons “with the Bible in one hand and the newspaper in the other.” This is wise advice for the evangelist as well. One
might be a friend of Jesus Christ and a passionate proclaimer of the fulfillment of Israel, but if he doesn't appreciate the cultural dynamics that shape the people to whom he speaks, his words will fall flat.

Perhaps the dominant cultural force of our time – at least in the West – is secularism, by which I mean, a worldview that involves the shutting down of the transcendent dimension. What this has produced is a society of deeply frustrated people, for as St. Augustine taught us long ago, we are all, by nature, oriented to God. Nothing in this world can ultimately satisfy us, because we have been wired for infinite truth, goodness and beauty.

New evangelists should therefore see secularism as an opportunity, for it has produced an army of people thirsty for the Gospel. Another mark of our time is a relativism or indifferentism in regard to ultimate values. This “dictatorship of relativism,” to use Pope Benedict’s term, has conducted toward what I call the “Meh” culture. In the “Meh” world, nothing finally makes a difference; everything is just a matter of opinion; and every person is sequestered in a world of his or her own making. This bored, listless, drifting and lonely culture is, in fact, crying out for the energy and objective value of the Gospel. I want Mundelein Seminary to produce evangelists who know the secular culture better than do the secularists themselves.

**Knowledge of the Traditions of the Church**

Sixth, a new evangelist is someone who knows and loves the great Tradition of the Church. Catholics do not subscribe to Martin Luther’s *sola Scriptura* (by Scripture alone) principle. We love the Scriptures, but we also love the rich and loamy interpretive tradition which has developed over space and time and which allows us more adequately to appreciate the Bible. We hold that Christ is more fully known in the measure that he is seen through the lenses provided by the writings of Origen, Chrysostom, Jerome, Augustine, Anselm, Aquinas, Bernard, John of the Cross, John Henry Newman and Joseph Ratzinger. More to it, we believe that Christ is more completely appreciated when he is illumined by Dante’s *Divine Comedy*, the Sistine Chapel Ceiling, Mozart’s *Requiem*, the poetry of T.S. Eliot, and the Cathedral of Chartres. New evangelists must be mystagogues, those who guide others into the mystery of God. To do this work effectively, they must, therefore, be students of the great artists, poets and spiritual masters who have walked the way before them.

**Adept at Using the New Media**

Finally, new evangelists should be adept at the use of the new media. In the address that I referenced earlier, St. Pope John Paul II said that the New Evangelization is new, not only in ardor, but also in method. Undoubtedly he had in mind the extraordinary power that new technologies offer to the proclaimer of the Gospel today. We have tools now for which Fulton Sheen would have given his right arm: Twitter, Facebook, YouTube, podcasting, the Internet, etc. With these methods, we can reach millions of people who would never otherwise have any contact with the Church. I learned to type on a manual typewriter (which shows how old I am), but Mundelein students today were brought up with the new technologies, and they have the skill to use them in their brains and nerves and fingertips. I want to form a generation of evangelists who know how to reach out to the world through these new media.

This is a great time to be a priest or seminarian, for the harvest, as the Lord said, is indeed plenty. May a corps of evangelists go forth from Mundelein to meet the secular world with intelligence, ardor, prayerfulness and panache.
CAMPUS

Come explore the beauty of the campus, learn about the architecture and treasures that make this a place of reflection, study and prayer. It is a place that is unique and vital to the Catholic Church. Mundelein Seminary is located in Mundelein, IL. The 15 major buildings are at the west end of the campus, overlooking a lake. The buildings are built in the Colonial Revival mode, common in the early 20th century, and include the centrally located Chapel of the Immaculate Conception, Administration Building, Feehan Memorial Library, McEssy Theological Resource Center, Theology Lecture Hall, Theology Residence, Center Office, Conference Center Hall and Faculty Residence. Mundelein Seminary also has a gymnasium with facilities for basketball, swimming, handball, racquetball and bowling; an auditorium with a full stage, theater organ and projection equipment; a dining hall; a power plant; two computer labs; and two studios to assist the seminarians in the Homiletics and Liturgical Practicum course.

Call 847.970.4869 to arrange a tour of campus
FOUR PILLARS OF PRIESTLY FORMATION

Spiritual

The seminarians’ spiritual formation follows the recommendations of the Program of Priestly Formation, “Through the Sacrament of Initiation, seminarians already share in the Paschal Mystery of Jesus Christ with other members of the Church. They also aspire to become priests who are configured to Christ, Head and Shepherd of the Church, our great High Priest. Therefore, their spirituality draws them into the priestly, self-sacrificial path of Jesus.” Seminarians have unceasing opportunities to deepen their love for the Lord through daily Mass, Eucharistic adoration, praying the Liturgy of the Hours, and directed retreats. Every seminarian meets twice a month with his spiritual director. Each year, a group of third-year seminarians make a pilgrimage to the Holy Land, where they deepen their relationship with the Lord, as the Sacred Scriptures come alive for them. Seminarians have the opportunity to attend multiple retreats each year. Among them are: an on-campus retreat that begins the school year, a third-year directed retreat, retreats prior to ordination and a Cam retreat.

Human

In Pastores Dabo Vobis, St. Pope John Paul II wrote, “It is important that the priest should mold his human personality in such a way that it becomes a bridge and not an obstacle for others in their meeting with Jesus Christ.” Our goal is to develop the leadership qualities of all candidates for priesthood. Not only is a priest a public leader entrusted to direct and guide a parish, he also is a religious leader who represents the larger Church. Another objective is to shape fraternity among future priests. Priesthood grows when shared and supported. Many efforts are made to find ways to come to know each other well, to trust each other and to live out our priestly service in a united manner.

Cam Life

Men live together at the seminary in a wing of the building called a cam, which derives from the Italian word Camerata, meaning dormitory. The atmosphere, attitudes and relationships within the cam and between cams contributes to building life in the seminary.
FOUR PILLARS OF PRIESTLY FORMATION

Pastoral

The seminarian will prepare for priestly life and ministry by engaging in a range of pastoral experiences. Mundelein’s program allows the seminarian to gain exposure to the variety of ministries and work that are common to diocesan priesthood. At the heart of Mundelein’s pastoral experience is a vision of service flowing from the Corporal and Spiritual Works of Mercy. These include opportunities to minister to the sick, visit the imprisoned, teach RCIA, and help the poor. Also, mission trips to Arizona or Africa are offered to seminarians. All seminarians participate in two full-time internships: one in a parish of their home diocese and one in a hospital setting.

Intellectual

Intellectual formation ... “is a fundamental demand of man’s intelligence by which he ‘participates in the light of God’s mind’ and seeks to acquire a wisdom which in turn opens to and is directed towards knowing and adhering to God.” (Pastores dabo vobis, no. 51, citing Gaudium et Spes, no. 15) The program of intellectual formation at Mundelein seeks to build the capacity for deeper self-knowledge through the disciplined use of reason guided by the Rule of Faith. Intellectual formation seeks to help a man deepen his appropriation of the content of the Faith, understand it so as to penetrate its mysteries and prepare to share it with Christ’s faithful and the world.
ADMISSION INFORMATION

For information on applying to Mundelein Seminary, please contact the
Vice Rector for Seminary Administration, Father James Presta.
Please address your correspondence to:

Rev. James Presta, S.T.D.

Vice Rector for Seminary Administration, Director of Admissions
Mundelein Seminary | 1000 East Maple Avenue, Mundelein, Illinois 60060
Office number: 847.970.4869 | Email address: jpresta@usml.edu

PRE-THEOLOGY

Mundelein Seminary offers a two-year Pre-Theology program. It is designed for those college graduates who need to make the transition into seminary life and to acquire the necessary academic courses in philosophy and religious studies.

Students in the Pre-Theology program are full-time members of the Mundelein Seminary community. They pursue either a certificate or Master of Arts degree to prepare them. Individual rooms provide space for study, reflection and prayer. Their group living provides the base for mutual support and interaction. Students participate in one of two mission trip options: an international Catholic Relief Services Global Fellows Trip or a mission trip within the United States. From the experiences shared with poor and marginalized, the men will be called to live the love of Christ expressed in their prayer and theology.

MASTER OF DIVINITY

The Master of Divinity curriculum is a four-year integrated program of formation designed to fulfill all of the requirements of the Program of Priestly Formation. The classroom is formational in addition to being academic. Professors relate their own experience of priestly ministry (whether as priests performing the ministry or laity receiving priestly ministry) to the lessons of the subject. The core curriculum offers a comprehensive presentation of the doctrine of the faith. Field education offers experiences, which give context to the classroom lessons. Two internships allow the seminarian to work full-time in parish and hospital settings. Mundelein’s aim is to produce generalists with depth, who are well prepared for the duties and tasks of diocesan priesthood.
ADDITIONAL DEGREE PROGRAMS

For those seminarians who wish to pursue additional academic studies, the Pontifical Faculty at Mundelein Seminary offers the following programs:

**Baccalaureate of Sacred Theology (S.T.B.)**

The program for the Baccalaureate degree initiates seminarians to the study of the whole range of Catholic theology. In addition to course work with an emphasis on research, a comprehensive examination is required. The program normally requires three years of study.

**Licentiate of Sacred Theology (S.T.L.)**

This program can serve as a foundation for doctoral studies to do research in theology or as a terminal degree in preparation for an intellectual apostolate. A graduate of the S.T.L. program is qualified to teach theology in a seminary or college, do university work as a Newman Center chaplain, function as a chaplain for various professional groups, or serve as a theological resource for diocesan programs and offices. It typically requires an additional two years of study after the completion of the S.T.B.
**Frequently Asked Questions**

**What is a typical day like?**
- Morning prayer begins at 7:15 a.m., followed by Mass at 7:40 a.m., breakfast and class. A seminarian might have either morning or afternoon classes, or both, totaling about 3-4½ hours of classes per day. Evening Prayer is at 5:15 p.m. and is followed by dinner. During the evenings, there are meetings, study sessions and time for prayer and relaxation.

**What will my room look like?**
- Each seminarian has a private room with individual study, shower, toilet facilities, phone, cable and WiFi connection.

**Who teaches at the seminary?**
- The Mundelein Faculty is among the largest in the United States, with 43 full-time members. The faculty includes 31 priests and 12 laity. Many of our professors are recognized leaders in their fields. Mundelein professors serve as members or experts to pontifical academies, councils and the International Theological Commission. They are sought-after speakers nationally and internationally.

**Can family and friends come to visit?**
- Yes, your family and friends are welcome to visit Mundelein. There is even a separate “Conference Center” on-campus where they are welcome to stay. Also, each year the Mundelein community hosts a “Family Day,” which includes guided tours, activities and a barbecue.

**Are there any extracurricular programs?**
- Yes, many seminarians participate in sports programs such as soccer, basketball, volleyball and golf. There also is a large Peace & Justice / Gospel of Life apostolate. Finally, there are a number of choirs and different musical opportunities available to seminarians.

**Does Mundelein Seminary offer Eucharistic Adoration?**
- Yes, each Wednesday the entire Mundelein Seminary community gathers for Solemn Vespers and Adoration before the Blessed Sacrament. Benediction is celebrated twice a week. Eucharistic Adoration is available throughout the week.

**What is the student body like?**
- Mundelein Seminary welcomes candidates from across the United States and other countries. The human face of Mundelein Seminary mirrors the Universal Church.