FORMED IN TRADITION. TRAINED IN COMPASSION. PREPARED TO SHEPHERD.

We are Mundelein. We form parish priests.
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GREETINGS FROM MUNDELEIN SEMINARY!

My name is Fr. John Kartje and I am the Rector/President of Mundelein Seminary/University of Saint Mary of the Lake. Our mission at Mundelein is simply stated but profoundly engaging: we form parish priests who are prepared and excited to bring others to Christ.

In the words of the Second Vatican Council, a seminary should function as the heart of the diocese it serves. It provides a bridge between the individual parishes, led by their parish priests, and the entire diocesan community, led by its bishop. Furthermore, a diocesan priest himself should serve as a bridge between his people and the Lord, helping them to enrich their own spiritual journeys. This triad of “heart,” “bridge,” and “parish priest” beautifully captures both the reason that Mundelein Seminary exists and the mission the Holy Spirit impels us to pursue.

Mundelein is home to over two hundred seminarians from nearly forty dioceses from across the country and around the world. But what they all have in common is that they are preparing to serve a specific community that is centered on a local Church in obedience to their bishop. In other words, every man at Mundelein Seminary has a heart that is burning to serve as a parish priest.

But the modern Church is dynamically changing. The parish of today can be vastly different from that of a generation or even a decade ago. As smaller parishes are consolidated into single parishes of much larger extent, as social media becomes increasingly more pervasive, as more and more Catholics are raised without basic catechesis, and as the pressures of a secular culture multiply moral challenges, a parish priest needs to be a man who is intellectually well-grounded in the Truth. He must be socially capable of not only sending a tweet but also personally interacting with people from all walks of life and in every conceivable pastoral situation. Above all, he must be a man of deep interior prayer. At Mundelein, our academic and formation teams integrate their missions into a common goal of forming priests with precisely these qualities.

As you discern your own vocation, continually ask the Holy Spirit for guidance and do please keep us at Mundelein Seminary in your prayers. My prayer for you is that this booklet may help open your heart to hear more clearly the Spirit’s voice. The seminarians, priests and dedicated lay women and men you encounter in these pages are all driven by a single mission.

We are Mundelein Seminary. We form parish priests.

Yours in the Heart of Christ,

Fr. John Kartje
Rector/President
The call of the modern Church has been emphatic from Saint Pope John XXIII through Pope Francis: the parish priest must be prepared to serve as a missionary disciple. He must be a true disciple of Christ through his prayer, his study and his participation in the sacramental life of the Church. But he must also have a missionary heart and zeal for bringing the Gospel out into the world and for bringing all people to Christ.

It is critically important that a priest be first a disciple before he can be an effective missionary. And his identity as disciple can only follow from a close, intimate relationship with God the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

A priest who thinks his identity flows from the parish tasks he accomplishes is only acting out of his own ego and is doomed to failure. At Mundelein Seminary, our formation program is designed to continually ground a man's identity and missionary discipleship on an authentic relationship with the Trinity.
Parish Priest as Missionary Disciple:
In Relationship with the Trinity

The life of a parish priest must be grounded in prayer, which draws him into ever deeper union with the Lord. Our seminarians are formed to be men of prayer in myriad ways: through the silent retreat at the start of every school year and multiple days of reflection during the year, through daily liturgies and holy hours, through regular spiritual direction, to name but a few. They are continually challenged to fully integrate their philosophy and theology studies with the fruits of their prayer so that the library becomes a sacred space for growing closer to Christ, while the chapel becomes a forum for intellectual development and expansion.

Because he is made in the image and likeness of God who is a Trinity of persons, every seminarian is invited to enter into the interior relationship that is shared by the Father and the Son, which helps him to receive the Father’s love and to be inspired with the fire of the Spirit. This deepening relationship with the Trinity aids the seminarian in discerning his vocation as he increasingly develops a commitment to serve God singleheartedly in and through His Church.
Parish Priest as Missionary Disciple:
Growing in Priestly Identity

As a seminarian’s relationship with the Lord matures, his identity as one who is called to act in the person of Christ becomes ever clearer. Our formation program at Mundelein is designed to help each seminarian recognize and embrace a number of “benchmark identities” that distinguish the charism of diocesan priesthood.

By virtue of his baptism, every seminarian is first and foremost a beloved son of the Father and is an integral member of Christ’s Body in the world, the Church. This identity is foundational for all Christians and it lies at the heart of a man’s authentic self-awareness. As a man progresses through our formation program, he comes to experience celibate love more richly. He is called to love the Church as Christ did, as a beloved spouse. Through his identity as a spiritual, chaste spouse, the seminarian learns to love the people of God with a selfless and sacrificial love, analogous with how a married man is called to love his spouse. Through experiencing the fruitfulness of his pastoral ministry, his prayer, and his shared community, the seminarian receives the joys and challenges of bringing forth new life and inspiration from out of his identity as spiritual spouse to the Church. From this relationship to the Body of Christ, it follows that the seminarian should increasingly take on the identity of spiritual father. His heart should be oriented to nurture and encourage others, to correct and advise, to protect and provide support. These three identities hardly form an exhaustive list, but they illustrate the ways in which Mundelein’s formation program helps a man to discern his diocesan priestly vocation.
Parish Priest as Missionary Disciple:  
To Serve in Missionary Discipleship

Pope Francis famously called for his priests to take on the "smell of their sheep." For a diocesan priest, that means that he must be prepared to move out beyond the Church walls to directly encounter people in whatever circumstances they are living. He needs to be adept at all forms of social media for an increasingly “wired” society. But he also needs to have the courage to be with the poor, the sick, the many who are marginalized in all socio-economic communities. In many respects, the most effective social medium is a joyful, holy parish priest: a man who can look anyone in the eye and extend the compassion of Christ while conveying the beauty of the Truth of the Gospel. In our formation program, we constantly provide our seminarians with the opportunity to integrate their intellectual and spiritual pursuits into apostolic missionary service. Such integration in service of others is an expectation of Mundelein Seminary and is a central charism of parish priesthood. Our program is designed to emphasize that true missionary discipleship can only flow from an identity that is firmly grounded on a personal and ecclesial relationship between the seminarian and the Trinity.
During his brief tenure as rector of Mundelein Seminary (2012-2015), Fr. (now Bishop) Robert Barron strove to form seminarians into skilled apostles of the New Evangelization. In many ways, the spirit he helped engender remains a strong focal point for Mundelein. The following are excerpts from a talk he delivered while still rector.

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. 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 one’s life.

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 ardent.” Catholic evangelists, who are unsure of the truth of Catholicism, hesitant in speech, and lacking in ardor, will simply fail to persuade anyone.
Knowledge of the Story of Israel

Third, new evangelists must know the story of Israel. The “good news,” the evangelion, is that the great adventure of Israel had reached its climax. 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. 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. New evangelists should therefore see secularism as an opportunity, for it has produced an army of people thirsty for the Gospel. I want Mundelein Seminary to produce evangelists who know the secular culture better than do the secularists themselves.

The Heart of a Missionary

Fifth, a new evangelist must be a person with the heart of a missionary. I want to train priests who are hungry for souls, who want to rescue people from the dismal fate of being separated from God. I want priests who are not content simply to maintain the structures and institutions of our parishes, but who have a passion to go out into the highways and byways of the secular world and to find the lost sheep.

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.

Adept at Using the New Media

Finally, new evangelists should be adept at the use of the new media. 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. I want to form a generation of evangelists who know how to reach out to the world through these new media.
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.
Four Pillars of PRIESTLY FORMATION

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.

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.
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.
Call (847) 970-4800 to arrange a tour of campus.

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, 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 courses.
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.
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.

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.

WHO TEACHES AT THE SEMINARY?
The Mundelein Faculty is among the largest in the United States, with 41 full-time members. The faculty includes 27 priests and 14 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.

WHAT WILL MY ROOM LOOK LIKE?
Each seminarian has a private room with individual study, shower, toilet facilities, phone, cable and WiFi connection.

DOES MUNDELEIN SEMINARY OFFER EUCHARISTIC ADORATION?
Yes, adoration is available from 6:00 a.m. to 7:00 a.m. Monday through Friday and from 8:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m. Sunday, Monday, Tuesday and Thursday.

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.