

Community of Jesus Crucified
**SPIRITUALITY PROGRAM
FOR SEMINARIANS (SPS)**



June 29 - July 31, 2020
Our Lady of Sorrows Retreat Center
103 Railroad Avenue
St. Martinville, Louisiana 70582



RATIONALE

In paragraph 62 of *Pastores Dabo Vobis*, St. John Paul II communicated the need for a kind of propaedeutic period of formation prior to Major Seminary. The Program for Priestly Formation no. 111 states: “The development of sound and lasting habits and attitudes in the spiritual life is a challenging process. Intensive spiritual formation experiences, for example, a Spirituality Year Program, a thirty-day retreat, a summer program, etc., are valuable means for facilitating this process and should be considered for possible inclusion and integration into the seminary program.” The 2016 *Ratio Fundamentalis Institutionis Sacerdotalis* brings up this pressing need in seminary formation: “The propaedeutic stage is an indispensable place of formation with its own specific character. Its principal objective is to provide a solid basis for the spiritual life and to nurture a greater self-awareness for personal growth. In order to launch and develop their spiritual life, it will be necessary to lead seminarians to prayer by way of the sacramental life; the Liturgy of the Hours; familiarity with the Word of God, which is to be considered the soul and guide of the journey; silence; mental prayer; and spiritual reading.” (*Ratio*, 59)

The CJC *Spirituality Program for Seminarians* aims at contributing to this challenging process of developing “sound and lasting habits and attitudes in the spiritual life” which will in turn “provide a solid basis for the spiritual life.”

Formation in Prayer

Pope Benedict XVI once told his priests in Rome that they had to be “soaked in prayer.” St. John Paul II told the Church, “We have to learn to pray: as it were learning this art ever anew from the lips of the Divine Master himself, like the first disciples: “Lord, teach us to pray!” (Lk 11:1). Prayer develops that conversation with Christ which makes us his intimate friends: “Abide in me and I in you” (Jn 15:4). This reciprocity is the very substance and soul of the Christian life, and the condition of all true pastoral life” (NMI, n. 32). The priest is called to help people become “friends of God” and is called on to teach others how to pray. *Sed nemo dat quod non habet*. To become a professional in prayer, one has to be formed in it, not just taught about it.

Not unlike learning a language where intensive immersion programs prove to be most effective, the SPS will *marinate* the seminarian in a culture of prayer. The seminarian will participate in the communal celebration of the Liturgy of the Hours five times each day. The *recto tono* chanting of the psalms will provide an apt context for entering into the Christological understanding of the psalms and afford a technique easily applied to the seminarian’s personal life and for parish participation. The daily celebration of the Eucharist within the context of the *Magnum Silentium* allows for contemplative preparation and thanksgiving before and after experiencing this great Prayer of Prayers. The seminarian will be taught how to make a meditation on Sacred Scripture and will put this into practice each morning. The daily communal Holy Hour and *examen* afford opportunity for allowing the graces of the day to be gratefully acknowledged and assimilated. A practical course on Spiritual Theology will be followed by the seminarian in this milieu of prayer. The course will give particular focus to formation in prayer according to the Catechism of the Catholic Church and her rich mystical tradition.

The great mystical tradition of the Church of both East and West...shows how prayer can progress, as a genuine dialogue of love, to the point of rendering the person wholly possessed by the divine Beloved, vibrating at the Spirit’s touch, resting filially within the Father’s heart. This is the lived experience of Christ’s promise: “He who loves me will be loved by my Father, and I will love him and manifest myself to him” (Jn 14:21). It is a journey totally sustained by grace, which nonetheless demands an intense spiritual commitment and is no stranger to painful purifications (the “dark night”). But it leads, in various possible ways, to the ineffable joy experienced by the mystics as “nuptial union”. How can we forget here, among the many shining examples, the teachings of Saint John of the Cross and Saint Teresa of Avila? (NMI, 33).

Unplugged

“Be still and know that I am God!” (Ps. 46:10). In order to foster a greater interior recollection and sensitivity to hear the voice of God, and in an effort to foster psychological and emotional maturity, the seminarian will be “unplugged” for the time that he is at SPS. Cell phones will not be allowed from Sunday evening after Vespers until Saturday after the 12 noon Mass. Internet access for research purposes and/or for necessary communication will be available in the Library of Prayer Reading Room with the superior’s permission.





5-Day Silent Retreat

The seminarian will experience a 5-day retreat under the direction of an experienced retreat master. The retreat will take place near the third week of the SPS and is considered the heart of the program. During the time of retreat, the communal chanting of the Divine Office will be optional and can be prayed in private. The candidate will have the opportunity to meet with a spiritual director to better assimilate the fruits of the retreat experience and make progress in prayer, virtue and discernment.

Curriculum of Study

The *Spirituality Program for Seminarians* will include on average two hours of class per day for a total of approximately 40 hours of lecture. Lectures and studies will focus in three areas: prayer, priesthood, and virtue. The PPF's two pillars of spiritual and human formation will find pride of place during the SPS.

An in-depth course of Spiritual Theology will be presented which will highlight understanding and growth in prayer, practice of the virtues, active participation in the Sacraments, rules for discernment, and how to effectively use the Church's means to holiness. Other courses treating the area of Priestly Spirituality in the Fathers of the Church, Ignatian Rules for Discernment, Theology of the Body, celibate chastity, and diocesan spirituality will be presented during the course of the summer.

Seminarians will have the opportunity to utilize the many tomes of spiritual masters housed in the CJC *Library of Prayer* which includes over 15,000 volumes. The evening meal will include readings from classics such as Dom Chautard's *Soul of the Apostolate* and Blessed Marmion's *Christ the Life of the Priest*.



Ora et Labora

Though the Lord showers down graces upon his faithful ones while they slumber (cf. Ps. 127), St. Paul urges us all to “work out our salvation with fear and trembling” (Phil. 2:12) and further legislates that “he who does not work should not eat” (2Thess. 3:10). The Son of God spent 30 years in a hidden existence at Nazareth working and the priest will serve those who do the same. Everything that the Son of God touched was transformed, and so too work has become redemptive. The SPS will incorporate manual labor as has been done for centuries in the monastic tradition to have the seminarian both incorporate his prayer and study into action as well as to better identify with those whom he will serve as a future priest. Work such as painting, plumbing, gardening, cleaning and mowing will be assigned throughout the days of the program.

Apostolic activities hosted on site by the Community of Jesus Crucified will serve as a good opportunity *tradere aliis contemplata*. Seminarians will take turns presenting the Thursday morning Catholic Bible School in *lectio divina* style. They will also be involved in preparations for the *Fête-Dieu du Teche* Eucharistic Boat Procession and in the various retreats and spiritual offerings held at CJC during the month of July. Participants will also be trained in engaging persons who approach the mobile confessional (Spiritual Care Unit) as an effective form of new evangelization. At least once per week teams will “with Mary go in haste to bring Jesus” by accompanying a priest confessor and going into the public square with the SCU. Seminarians will participate in outreach to the poor through activities at St. Teresa Center for the Works of Mercy (food pantry and soup kitchen), Oratory Don Bosco (camp and vocational training for at-risk youth), and Guadalupe House (a sober living house and re-entry program for men).



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1. Oratory Don Bosco
2. Fête-Dieu du Teche Boat Procession
3. Spiritual Care Unit
4. Adoration in Mater Dolorosa Chapel
5. Guadalupe House
6. Bible Study
7. Center for the Works of Mercy

Presenters

The Spirituality Program for Seminarians will involve many priests and professionals who are experts in the various fields of study presented. The SPS will employ priests of the Community of Jesus Crucified, priests from the Diocese of Lafayette, and priests and professionals who are involved in seminary formation. A list of tentative presenters and their credentials is as follows:

Fr. Patrick Broussard, MA

BS Mechanical Engineering, ULL
BA St. Joseph Seminary College
MA Pontifical University of St. Thomas, Rome
Vocation Director Diocese of Lafayette

Fr. Michael Champagne, CJC, STD

BS Mech. Engineering – 1986, Louisiana State University
STB – 1993, Pontifical Gregorian University, Rome
Licentiate in Sacred Theology – 1995
Doctorate in Sacred Theology - 2006
Pontifical University of St. Thomas, Rome
Superior, Community of Jesus Crucified, Louisiana.

Richard Fitzgibbons, M.D.

Director - Institute for Marital Healing - Philadelphia PA
Doctorate in Medicine - Temple University. Trained in
Psychiatry at the University of Pennsylvania Hospital
and the Philadelphia Child Guidance Center. Has
been an Adjunct professor at the Pontifical John Paul II
Institute for the Studies of Marriage and Family at the
Catholic University of America in Washington, DC and
a Consultor to the Vatican's Congregation for the Clergy.

Peter C. Kleponis, Ph.D.

Licensed Clinical Therapist and Assistant
Director of Comprehensive Counseling
Services in West Conshohocken, PA.
He holds an M.A. in Clinical-Counseling
Psychology from LaSalle University in
Philadelphia, PA and a Ph.D. in General
Psychology from Capella University in
Minneapolis, MN.

Mario Sacasa, PhD

Doctor of Philosophy in Counselor Education and Supervision
Our Lady of Holy Cross College Anticipated, May 2017
Specialist in Education in Marriage and Family Counseling
University of North Carolina at Greensboro December 2006
Master of Science in Marriage and Family Counseling
University of North Carolina at Greensboro December 2006
Bachelor of Science in Psychology
Florida State University August 2002

Fr. Clinton Sensat, STL

BA, Philosophy and Liberal Arts – 2004
St. Joseph Seminary College
MA Theology and M.Div. – 2009
Mount St. Mary's Seminary, Emmitsburg, MD
STL in Systematic Theology – 2013
Dominican House of Studies

Fr. Bryce Sibley, STL

STB – 1999, Pontifical University of
St. Thomas, Rome
Licentiate in Sacred Theology – 2001
John Paul II Institute of Marriage and Family, Rome
Pastor at Our Lady of Wisdom Catholic Student Center, ULL
Lafayette, LA

Horarium

Developing sound and lasting habits in the spiritual life is indeed a challenging task which requires the discipline of forming a balanced *horarium*. Participants of the SPS will follow an intense daily *horarium* during the week, with an optional freer schedule for the weekends. The plan of life includes the *Magnum Silentium* from Compline until after matins the following morning. The schedule includes as well the choral chanting of the Liturgy of the Hours and celebration of the Holy Eucharist with a nightly Holy Hour of Adoration. There are two classes per



day, one in the morning and one in the evening, as well as free time for prayer, reading, exercise, fellowship, and rest. Participants are free from Saturday after the Mass at 12 noon until Sunday Vespers at 6:15 pm so that they might visit friends and family and relax. The *horarium* includes about 4-5 hours of apostolate per week as well as about the same amount of time for manual labor.

CJC Horarium

5:15 AM	Bell for Rising
5:40 AM	Confessions
6:00 AM	Holy Mass
7:00 AM	Lauds Angelus
7:15 AM	Meditation
7:40 AM	Matins
8:00 AM	Grand Silence Ends Breakfast (<i>speaking allowed</i>)
9:00 AM	Class
11:45 AM	Sext
12 Noon	Angelus Lunch (<i>ad libitum – silence</i>)
12:30 – 3:00 PM	Free time – rest, reading, prayer, sports, walks
3:00 PM	Class
4:00 – 5:30 PM	Manual Labor or Apostolate
6:15 PM	Vespers Supper (in silence with table reading)
7:15 - 8:00 PM	Recreation
8:30 PM	Holy Hour Compline
9:20 PM	Benediction Grand Silence Commences
11:00 PM	Lights Out

Saturdays - *Same as above except the following revisions:*

6:15 AM	Bell for Rising
12:00 PM	Holy Mass

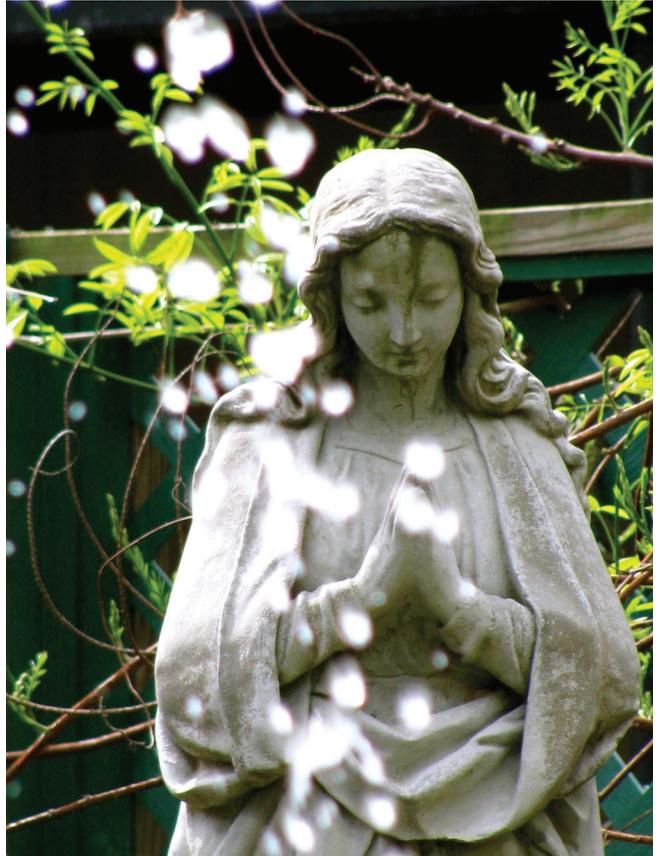
Sundays - *Same as above except no manual labor and the following revisions:*

6:15 AM	Bell for Rising
10:25 AM	Warning Bell for Holy Mass
10:30 AM	Holy Mass

Date, Locale and Tuition

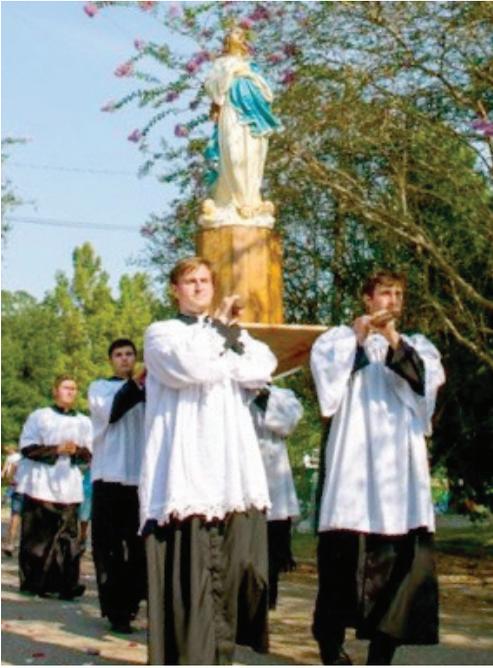
The 2020 Spirituality Program for Seminarians runs from Monday June 29 through Friday July 31. Seminarians may arrive on Saturday or Sunday, June 27-28. SPS will be held at the Community of Jesus Crucified - Our Lady of Sorrows Retreat Center, 103 Railroad Avenue in historic St. Martinville.

The seminarians will be housed in Our Lady of Sorrows Retreat Center which is located at 420 N. Main Street. Seminarians will have private rooms and will have the opportunity to pray and study on the beautiful secluded retreat grounds and in the remarkable Mater Dolorosa Chapel. The Most Blessed Sacrament is perpetually exposed in Assumption Chapel and will be available to the seminarians throughout their time at SPS. The Retreat Center is located very near to the historic St. Martin de Tours Church (1765), Evangeline Oak, and Longfellow Park which affords opportunities for walks and recreation in close proximity of the retreat grounds.



Because of the rich local expertise in spirituality and seminarian formation, and in line with the Community of Jesus Crucified's mission to disseminate knowledge of the spiritual life, we are pleased to offer SPS at our cost. The tuition, room, and board for the 2020 SPS is \$2900 per seminarian for the 5-week program.

TESTIMONIALS



In my own discernment and formation, the Community of Jesus Crucified is where I have encountered the power of the Cross, which is to say it is where I have encountered Divine love. This is the indispensable light by which anyone discerns their vocation, and I know of nowhere where it shines more clearly than here. The members of this community - both lay and religious - are fully devoted to an interior life which bears abundant fruit in their tireless apostolates, and so live a life that may reasonably be esteemed as a standard for any Christian's formation, a formation which unabashedly and resolutely takes a cruciform shape.
— *Fr. Travis Abadie, Diocese of Lafayette*

Receiving the formation provided by the CJC, as well as the prayers and example of the Community members, was essential to my priestly formation. Even today I consider it an eternal asset. If not for this formation, I am convinced that I would not have persevered in pursuing the call from Jesus Christ.
— *Fr. Carl Beekman, Diocese of Rockford, Illinois*

I often look back at my time at CJC, and can even now taste the Joy that I experienced. I would recommend this opportunity to anyone who might be contemplating a total surrender to the will of God. The atmosphere of silence, prayer, community, and the ever present reality of Christ Crucified, made the idea of a life of service in the Church not only possible but down right desirable. Now as a husband and father of 5 young children, I recognize that the time spent at CJC was more than just a discernment process. It was an incomparable spiritual and intellectual formation for the great task of shepherding the domestic church that God has entrusted to me. — *Daniel LeBrun, Lake Charles, LA*

It was during my time with the CJC that I came to the realization that the mystery of the cross of Christ is more fully revealed only in the context of community--a community enriched by frequent prayer and selfless service; being of one mind and of a diversity of vocations: Priests, religious and laity combined.

— *Fr. Eric Zegeer, Our Lady Star of the Sea, Key West, FL*



The three months I spent at CJC did something to me which I shall never forget. For the first time in my life I found that I was left to be in a solitary relationship with God. Although I participated in the communal aspects of life, I experienced more than anything the reality that I had chosen to walk with Christ as the beginning and the end. There was peace in living with others who all desired the same thing - the Lord God - and to be his hands and arms in this world.

— *Fr. Jay Alexius, Diocese of Lake Charles, LA*

