



"Priestly Formation for the 21st Century"

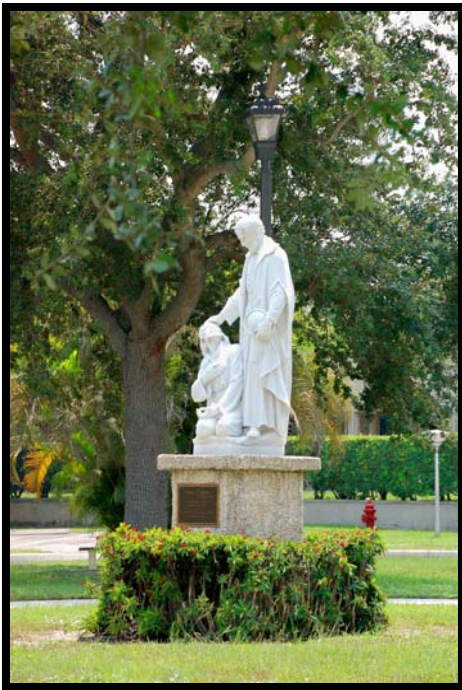
ST. VINCENT DE PAUL REGIONAL SEMINARY
BOYNTON BEACH, FL

Case for Support

JULY 2008

"Priestly Formation For The 21st Century"

Our Mission



The primary purpose of St. Vincent de Paul Regional Seminary is to provide a human, spiritual, academic, and pastoral formation program which prepares candidates for the Roman Catholic priesthood. In response to the large number of Hispanic Catholics in Florida and throughout the country, the seminary's curriculum makes it one of a very few major bilingual and multi-cultural theologate programs in the United States.

The secondary purpose of the seminary is to provide continuing theological education to qualified clergy and laity of all denominations. The seminary offers a Master of Divinity degree for seminarians and the Master of Arts for resident and non-resident students and a Deacon Certification Program for the Diocese of Palm Beach. The Fall of 2008 will mark the 46th anniversary of the seminary. It is an appropriate time to reflect on the past and offer our gratitude to Almighty God for many blessings and growth as we envision the future with hope.

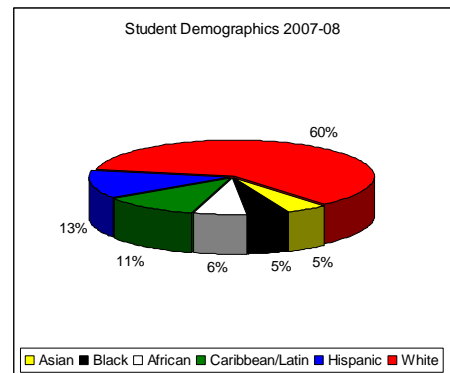
The Primary Theologate For Florida

As a freestanding, graduate, professional School of Theology the seminary is committed to providing continuing education for clergy and religious and laity of all denominations. Qualified non-seminarian students may enroll in theological courses and seek appropriate degrees. Currently 109 students attend classes at our Boynton Beach campus. On average there are 60 to 65 seminarians enrolled, typically 25 to 30 students in the Diaconate Certification Program and 15 plus non-resident students at the seminary. Roughly 40% of our students seek a Master of Divinity as a second degree. The seminarians enrolled range in age from 22 to 67 and the average age of our students is 35. In addition, 22 non-seminarians are pursuing advanced degrees. As of 2008 the seminary has graduated over 500 students and we list 460 living alumni on record. In May of this year, ten seminarians graduated with a Master of Divinity.

"The priestly vocation is essentially a call to sanctity, in the form that derives from the Sacrament of Holy orders. Sanctity is intimacy with God; it is the imitation of Christ, poor, chaste and humble; it is unreserved love for souls and self-giving to their true good; it is love for the Church which is holy and wants us to be holy, because such is the mission that Christ has entrusted to it. Each one of you must be holy also in order to help your brothers pursue their vocation to sanctity." - Pope John Paul II

A Diverse, Multi-cultural Student Body

One strength of SVDP's program is the diversity of its student body. Few supporters realize that the seminary's student body consists of students from the continents of Europe, South America, Asia, and Africa as well as from various islands including the Caribbean and Puerto Rico. Both the multi-cultural enrollment and the emphasis on bilingual education set SVDP apart from all other theologates. The Bishops and Board of Trustees made a conscious decision to create a pro-active curriculum which met the needs of the ever-changing composition of the Florida Catholic community. AS a result the SVDP Seminary program is testament to the school's motto, *"Priestly Formation for the 21st Century."*



An Historic and Accredited School of Theology



The roots of St. Vincent de Paul Regional Seminary began with the mother diocese of Florida. Archbishop Joseph Hurley, 6th Bishop of the Diocese of St. Augustine, purchased 80 acres of land west of Boynton Beach in 1955.

Archbishop Hurley's purchase of seemingly worthless land and his idea to build and support a seminary there seemed impossible to some. However, his dream became a reality in 1963.

Today all seven dioceses of the Florida province of the Catholic Church share joint ownership of the seminary. Monsignor Keith R. Brennan, J.C.D. is Rector and President. The seminary is accredited by the Commission on Colleges of the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools to award Masters degrees. The Association of Theological Schools of the United States and Canada also fully accredits the seminary.



SVDP is both proud of its 30-member faculty which includes 10 resident faculty as well as 10 non-resident and 10 adjunct members. Our faculty has over 180 years of teaching experience and possess a total of 67 degrees of higher education. Twenty-three faculty members are priests and eight hold a doctorate.



The Florida Department of Veterans and War Orphans Affairs approves the seminary for enrollment under section 1775 (a) (1) Chapter 36, Title 38, U. S. Code.

Educating the Priests of Tomorrow

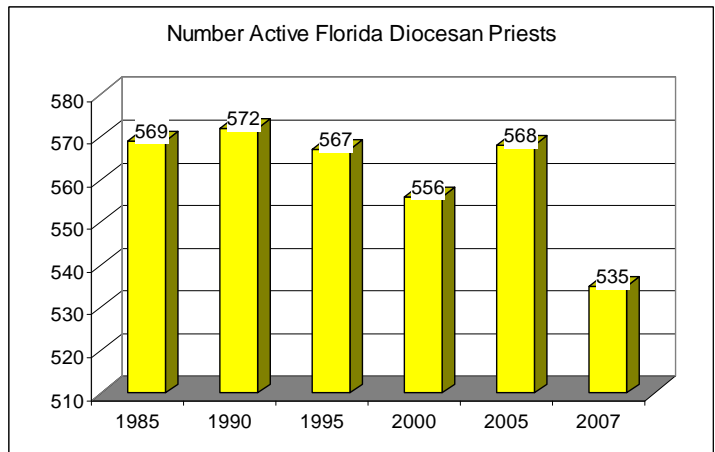
For forty-four years St. Vincent de Paul Regional Seminary has been preparing men who have responded to the call of the Spirit to follow Christ and serve God's people as ordained priests. Today the seminary offers a

holistic approach to formation, which is rooted in the ecclesiology of Vatican II, an ecclesiology of communion.

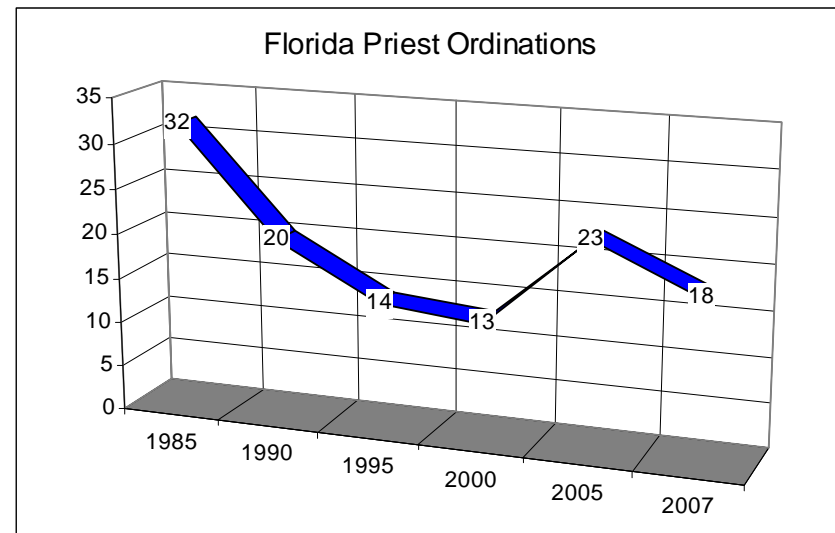
Because of its identity of the ministerial priesthood with the mystery of Trinitarian communion (PDV 12), the seminary formation program focuses on an ecclesiology of communion, which aims to form, shape, train and educate priests who face the challenge of nurturing the communities of Florida and the world. In their program for priestly formation, the U. S. Bishops emphasized goals for the ordained ministry which included growth in three areas: spiritual life, theological knowledge and ministerial skills. To achieve these goals St. Vincent’s Seminary has developed a holistic approach to formation. Its program emphasizes four areas of formation which shape the identity of a priest: human, spiritual, intellectual and pastoral.

The Growing Catholic Community in Florida & The Continuing Shortage of Priests

Over 2 million Catholics reside in the state of Florida. Thousands more live within our borders but are not registered with a parish. Hundreds more are born daily. The demand for priests is already under pressure as parishes continue to grow and expand. In some areas there is a known shortage which is not projected to decrease. The very growth rate of the Catholic population means SVDP must be able to provide the best faculty possible to attract more students and remain competitive. There are 458 parishes in the Archdiocese of Miami and six dioceses in the province of Florida.



Over 2 million Catholics reside in the state of Florida. Thousands more live within our borders but are not registered with a parish. Hundreds more are born daily. The demand for priests is already under pressure as parishes continue to grow and expand. In some areas there is a known shortage which is not projected to decrease. The very growth rate of the Catholic population means SVDP must be able to provide the best faculty possible to attract more students and remain competitive. There are 458 parishes in the Archdiocese of Miami and six dioceses in the province of Florida.



Since 1985, the Catholic population of Florida has grown substantially from 1.3 million to nearly 2.4 million in 2007. Unfortunately, the number of diocesan priests in the state has not matched that growth. In fact, in 1985 there were 569 diocesan priests serving Florida Catholics but that number dropped to 537 in 2007. Nationally, the number of priests has dropped from 35,052 in 1985 to 28,299 in 2006, a decline of 23.9%.

Source: Catholic Directory

Statewide the ratio of parishioners to active diocesan priests has increased from 2,298 parishioners per priest in 1985 to 4,422 parishioners per priest in 2007.

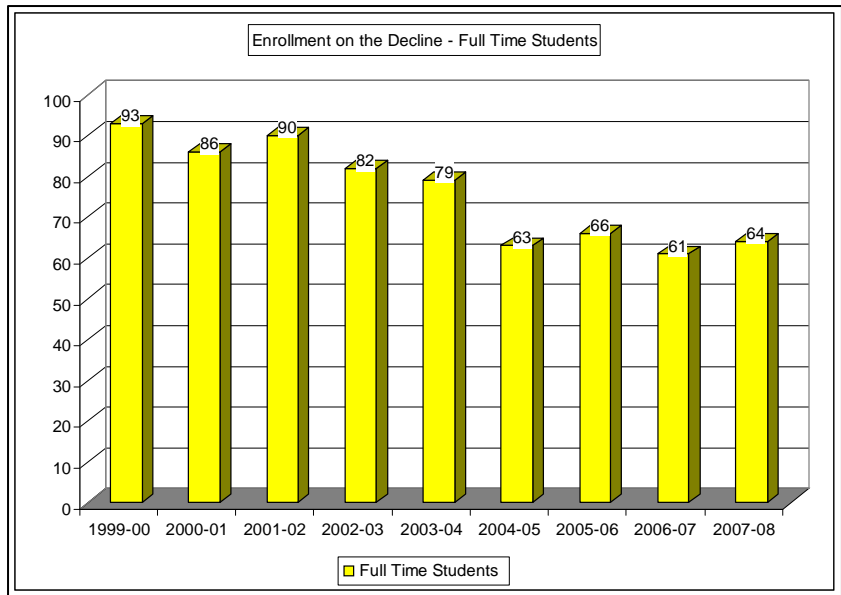
Annual ordinations have decreased during that same 22 year period, from 32 in 1985 to 18 in 2007. These dismal statistics are evident in every diocese in Florida. At this time, however, there is evidence of some stabilization in the number of men considering the priesthood here at the seminary. The Fall 2008 class of first year men is at 14, the consistent average number of first year seminarians for the past four years. Nationally, the number of graduate level seminarians was 8,325 in 1965, which (in 2006) decreased to just 3,306, a decline of over 5,000 students. Similarly, in 1965 only 549 parishes in the U.S. were without a resident pastor. However by 2006 that number had increased to 3,405.

While there is nothing we can do to alter these historical statistics, St. Vincent de Paul Seminary can impact the future of Catholicism in Florida. In order to meet that challenge St. Vincent's Seminary must offer the best possible environment for preparing the priests of tomorrow. Unfortunately, although our four part formation process is strong, our physical plant has become weak.

Recognizing that seminaries compete with one another for men aspiring to the priesthood, St. Vincent de Paul must remain a competitive choice for all who wish to pursue a Master of Divinity degree. Given the present condition of our campus facilities, we realize we are losing ground with each passing day. We predict Florida's Catholic population will continue to grow as the state's population increases. This means the demand for priests will increase proportionately. St. Vincent must correct the deficiencies in the physical plant and facilities, if it is to continue to serve fully its constituents in Florida.

Declining Enrollment

Since 1999 enrollment at SVDP has slowly declined from 93 full-time seminarians to 61 in the fall of 2008. While our decline corresponds to a national trend over that time period and is similar to a decline in some college theology programs, since 2004 our enrollment has averaged 62 students. We believe the best way to increase our enrollment is to provide the best faculty, academic programs, facilities and living quarters possible. As competition for the best and brightest students entering vocations increases, SVDP's total program must aspire to excellence to be equal to the task.



Strengthening Support For Vocations

The path to priesthood within the Catholic community in Florida consists of one program on two campuses. The Archdiocese of Miami owns and maintains St. John Vianney College Seminary in Miami, the major feeder school for St. Vincent. However, many students matriculate to the St. Vincent de Paul Seminary from other four year university degree programs within Florida and beyond.

The support for vocations originates at the high school and college levels and continues through diocesan and university programs. This support must be increased. The great work of organizations like the Knights of Columbus, Serra Club, Council of Catholic Women and others dedicated to the support of

vocations, has become increasingly important. At every level, staff and volunteers, professional men and women, religious and lay people need to work together to foster the pursuit of religious livelihood. In other words, the seminary needs the support of every Catholic. Vocations and the priesthood eventually affect each and every parishioner's daily life including their families as well as their spiritual being. In a world of temptations and distractions, the availability of well trained men who have dedicated their lives to God and His people may be our only salvation. Each Catholic has a personal responsibility to God to do all that can be done to support vocations, the priesthood, and SVDP.

"If one wishes to change the world, it is necessary first of all to change man's heart.

The experience of a vocation is unique and indescribable, and is only perceived as a gentle breeze of the clarifying touch of grace. The vocation is a breathing of the Holy Spirit, who, at the same time as he genuinely shapes our fragile human reality, shines a new light into our hearts. He instills an extraordinary power that merges our existence into the divine enterprise." - Pope John Paul II

Our Statements of Institutional Purpose

The primary purpose of St. Vincent de Paul Regional Seminary is the formation of candidates for priesthood who demonstrate the following:

In the area of *academic formation*:



- a sound understanding and mature acceptance of the teachings of the Church;
- the intellectual ability to engage in theological study at a graduate educational level, which embraces a healthy respect for legitimate theological pluralism in a contemporary context;
- a sincere appreciation for the ecumenical and interfaith dimensions of the Catholic faith as well as the interdenominational and interdisciplinary dimensions of Catholic theology;
- the ability to relate the theology and teaching of the Church to others in a pastorally sensitive and effective manner.

In the area of *human formation*:

- the emotional, moral, and psychological maturity for Christian living and priestly service;
- mature self-awareness and sound prudential judgment;
- a level of self-acceptance, confidence, and the skills necessary to relate to others as colleague, co-worker, and leader in the church;
- evidence of having interiorized and appropriately integrated their seminary formation.



In the area of *spiritual formation*:



- commitment to the Lord in prayer through personal meditation, the celebration of the Liturgy of the Hours, and a love for scripture;
- an abiding love for the sacramental life of the Catholic Church and the church's traditions, manifested by the practice of daily Eucharist and frequent recourse to the Sacrament of Reconciliation;
- an understanding of and commitment to the priesthood attested by living in celibate chastity and obedience, while embracing a simplicity of life and manifesting the personal flexibility needed for the service to God's people;
- sincere devotion to the Blessed Virgin Mary and the saints.

In the area of *pastoral formation*:

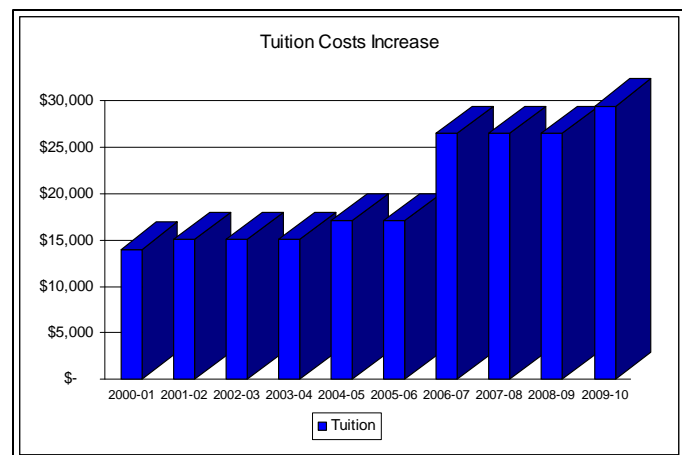
- the pastoral and communication skills necessary to proclaim the Gospel and lead the people of God in worship and prayer;
- the ability to lead a faith community in a professional, competent, and collaborative fashion;
- cultural literacy and pastoral sensitivity in ministering to diverse cultural and ethnic communities;
- professionalism and competency in the ministry of pastoral care and counseling.

Furthermore, the secondary purpose of the seminary is to provide continuing theological education to qualified clergy, religious, and laity of all denominations, which result in the following:

- an understanding of and appreciation for the theology and teachings of the Catholic Church;
- the development of each student's capacity for ongoing theological reflection;
- the ability to relate their theological studies to their personal lives as well as to the ministries of prayer and service to their churches and communities.

Institutional Funding & Rising Costs

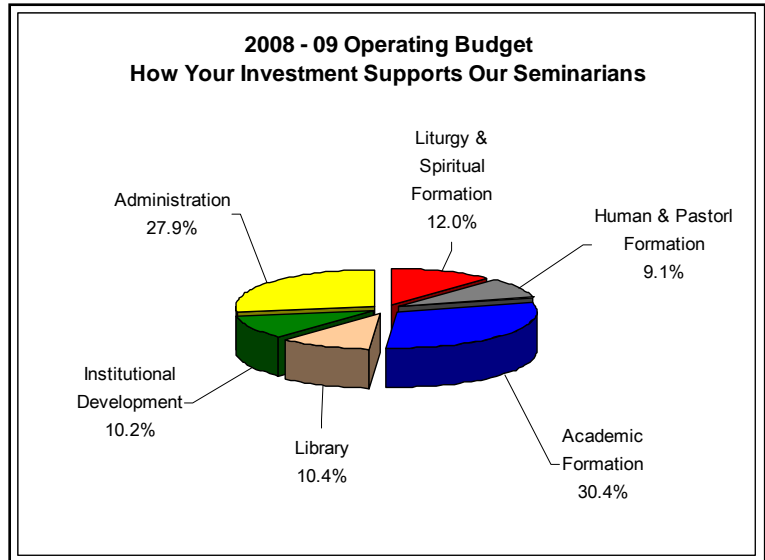
Throughout the history of the seminary, the dioceses have helped to make-up the difference in cost between tuition and the actual cost of educating priests. However, the tuition paid by our seminarians and/or home dioceses today represents just over 45.5 percent of the actual cost of their education. The remaining balance – nearly 50 percent, has come from the dioceses in Florida which share ownership of the seminary. Our board of trustees has encouraged us to institute programs which help make up this ever-increasing deficit.



Additional support must be found within the Florida Catholic community to strengthen vocations and SVDP seminary since it offers a unique bilingual and multi-cultural theologate programs within the southeastern United States.

Our Budget and Expenses

The pie chart of the 2008-09 Budget on the right is an excellent representation of a typical fiscal year for the seminary. Like any educational institution, we must maintain certain required facilities. The seminary's infrastructure must be maintained and continually updated. SVDP's current enrollment consists of over 50 students who live on campus eight months of the year. They attend class, eat their daily meals in the Refectory (cafeteria), and are provided areas to socialize, study and exercise similar to any modern college campus. Each resident and non-resident faculty member has an office and there are also offices for support staff. St. Vincent's maintains an administration building which also houses a large library. All these buildings must be maintained and upgraded from time to time. Our mission is clear: we need to do all we can to support the road to priesthood.



A Spacious Campus With Aging Facilities



The seminary's 73 acre campus is four miles from the city of Boynton Beach. It is accessible from the Florida Turnpike and Interstate 95 and within easy walking distance of banking facilities and shopping centers. The campus comprises more than seventy acres, which adequately houses the facilities necessary for a priestly formation program.

The seminary complex consists of eleven buildings constructed in a modernized Spanish-mission style. The heart of the seminary is St. Vincent Chapel. The chapel is important because of its spiritual significance as well as its predominate architectural style. Broad outside corridors interconnect most of the buildings which include the resident wings that house the resident faculty and students, the classrooms, refectory, auditorium, bookstore, student lounges, faculty meeting room, and faculty offices. All of these buildings were constructed in 1962, and are now 45 years old. The ten buildings which comprise the main complex are constructed of cement block walls with thick solid concrete ceilings and steel beams. Window frames are made of steel. Both the wiring and plumbing are outdated. The original dorm rooms were designed without separate or private bathroom and/or shower facilities. Because the construction materials needed to make renovations or improvements, has increased substantially to maintain the original buildings has become expensive. A lake is located on the north side of the property in front of the Oscar P. Schorp Library and the administration building. This building constructed in 1995, is our only modern facility. The Schorp Library, administration building, and the field house are freestanding facilities.

The field house contains the student Rathskeller, the recreation and television rooms, laundry facility, barbershop, a well-equipped weight room with showers for the sports facilities. The outdoor athletic facilities include four handball courts, two basketball courts, four tennis courts, soccer and football fields, two baseball/softball fields and a swimming pool.

Fortunately, there is ample land on the seminary campus for expansion. The construction of a new, modern dormitory and homiletics laboratory is becoming increasingly evident since cost of maintenance of the original buildings has become unfeasible.

Continuing Education and New Academic Programs



Spanish Language and Ministry Immersion

Program: The Spanish language and ministry immersion program launched in the summer of 2007 enables our seminarians to acquire a pastoral facility in the Spanish language as well as practical pastoral experience with Hispanic Catholics in the Dominican Republic. This is achieved through a daily integration of language instruction with real life pastoral practice in a variety of supervised settings. Attention is given to each seminarian's spiritual formation through a daily horarium of Liturgy of the Hours, Eucharist and the opportunity for personal prayer in the campus chapel. A deeper understanding of the Dominican faith and

family life is gained through involvement with local parish families on weekends.

This unique program is consistent with our quest to provide "*priestly formation for the 21st century*" because it prepares our seminarians to meet the needs of a growing bilingual nation. Moreover, we believe it testifies to SVDP's vision for preparing seminarians effectively for the priesthood.

Palm Beach Diocese Deacon Certification Program: A joint M.A. degree and Certificate of Diaconal Studies program that certifies Deacons for service in the Catholic faith is also available.

Academic Day: Every year the seminary sponsors a day devoted to the presentation of a topic of pertinent theological significance. An expert in a particular theological field is invited to speak and the event is open to the public.

Scholar in Residence: Since 1983 the seminary has sponsored a scholar-in-residence who teaches or presents a series of lectures. The purpose of this program is to expose faculty and seminarians to contemporary Catholic theological thought. The "Scholar in Residence" program is not an annual program.





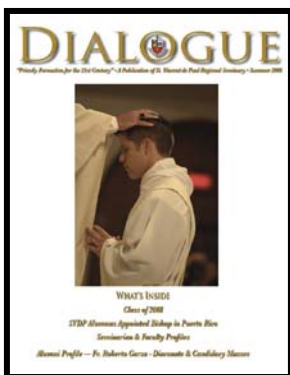
Study Week for Priests: In keeping with the secondary purpose of the mission statement, the seminary sponsors an annual continuing education program for priests. Experts in a selected topic present material relevant to the vocation and/or spiritual formation of priests.

Study Week for Permanent Deacons: In keeping with the secondary purpose of the mission statement, the seminary sponsors an annual continuing education program for permanent

deacons. A topic of particular relevance to permanent deacons is presented by experts in that subject matter.

Institutional Development - Assuring the Future

The seminary's need to focus on fund raising priorities resulted in the creation of the Office of Institutional Development in 2005. If the seminary is ever to realize the dream of increased private donations for operations and an endowment and for targeted capital projects, an effective fundraising program must be established. In order to achieve these goals, certain tools, equipment, and trained personnel are necessary to build a comprehensive development program. Recently, the Development Department enlisted the Board of Trustees, volunteers, faculty and staff in an effort to create and implement a series of objectives and goals. The result of this work has culminated in a long range strategic development plan.



Because of the adoption of a number of new policies as well as procedures and programs, the seminary has already experienced some positive outcomes. In the future there will be a greater emphasis on grant writing in order to obtain greater foundation support. In order to raise sustainable operational funds, we believe the continuing support of the SVDP Endowment Fund is key.

One of our significant developmental objectives is the design of a planned communications and public relations program. If we are to raise the awareness of SVDP throughout the state among Catholic parishioners, and with the media, support groups as well as organizations, such as the Knights of Columbus, the development of a public relations campaign is crucial. We have already

established a number of initiatives as part of our public relations.

For example, because we wanted to emphasize the seminary's mission, we decided to redesign and expand the quarterly magazine, *Dialogue*. The Spring and Summer '07 issues reached over 6,400 laity, many of whom are alumni or supporters of the seminary. This distribution figure represents an increased readership of 4,400 since the Winter '07 issue was released. Distribution of *Dialogue* is expected to increase each quarter.

An equally important part of our public relations campaign aims to harness the popularity of internet communications. Increased direct mail and printed publications and advertisements require that the seminary maintain a first class website.



Now all of our communications efforts direct friends, potential students, and supporters to www.svdpc.edu. Our new internet site, established in August 2007, allows for

on-line giving, member log-in registration, shopping for SVDP merchandise, viewing and downloading photo albums, e-news, special access for accrediting agencies, interactive capabilities and database access for networking alumni. The website also provides links to other key constituent web sites that encourage involvement within the Catholic community and St. Vincent de Paul.

Taking St. Vincent de Paul to the Next Level



St. Vincent de Paul is on the brink of an exciting new era for educating and preparing men for the priesthood. The number of Catholics continues to grow along with the demand for well-trained priests. SVDP is positioned to meet that demand with the appropriate infrastructure, faculty, and staff. As one of the few bilingual multi-cultural major theologates in the United States, St. Vincent de Paul Regional Seminary is truly prepared to provide “*Priestly Formation for the 21st Century*.” Because of a successful partnership with multiple organizations, the seminary was able to create and launch its pilot Spanish Language and Ministry Immersion Program conducted this summer in the Dominican Republic. This program sets our seminary apart from all others.

The seminary needs only to achieve a greater awareness among the Catholic population to succeed. With the financial and spiritual support of our fellow parishioners, clergy and lay leadership, St. Vincent de Paul Regional Seminary will reach the next level of prominence and excellence befitting the institution we depend on to train “priests,” the very lifeblood of the Roman Catholic Church.

“Just as priesthood is more difficult than most of us thought it would be, it is also a lot better. In the end, there can be no mediocrity in this life, no room for a half-hearted priesthood. It demands a personal, total, and radical commitment. I believe that one of the many learnings from the 2002 church crisis in the U.S. is that we are called to a life of full integrity and to a level of holiness that we might not have thought possible. In fact, it is the laity who has challenged us to these heights of sanctity. The people expect us to be chaste, humble, and totally dedicated servants of God. In our hearts, I suspect this is what we want for ourselves too.”

This is one of the reasons that celibacy is part of the priestly commitment. As Saint Paul tells us, “An unmarried man is anxious about the things of the Lord, how he may please the Lord. But a married man is anxious about the things of the world, how he may please his wife, and he is divided” (1 Cor 7:32-34). This radical, total commitment to the “things of the Lord” is our life’s calling.”



From the Book “THE JOY OF PRIESTHOOD”
By Fr. Stephen J. Rossetti

Source of Research for Statistical data:

Cara – Center for the Applied Research in the Apostolate

Florida Catholic Conference

Giving USA Foundation

The Official Catholic Directory

U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops

7/17/08