



Eight Men To Be Ordained to the Priesthood This Year for Three Dioceses

There is an added international flavour to celebrations at the Seminary this Spring, as eight men, from all parts of the world, will be ordained for three different dioceses, including one for the Archdiocese of Hanoi, Vietnam.

Also unique about this group of Ordinandi (those who will be ordained),

is that half are from St. Augustine's and the other four are from the Redemptoris Mater Missionary Seminary (RMMS), which resides within St. Augustine's [see *Redemptoris Mater*, page 3].

"St. Augustine's and Redemptoris Mater have a unique relationship: two seminaries, two rectors, different styles of formation,

yet one goal to prepare men for the Holy Priesthood," said Fr. Edwin Gonsalves, Rector, St. Augustine's.

The four being ordained from RMMS are all for the Archdiocese of Toronto. Of the ordinandi from St. Augustine's, three are for the Diocese of Hamilton and one for Vietnam. All have unique vocation stories.

Archdiocese of Toronto

Rev. Mr. Mauricio Gilo Sanjines Calatayud was born in La Paz, Bolivia. He first felt the calling to the priesthood at World Youth Day in Paris, 1997. He studied Civil Engineering at the University in Santa Cruz City. He belongs to the Neocatechumenal Way and after attending a retreat in Italy, his name was drawn by lots as to where he would go. He drew Toronto, and says he has the missionary spirit to go anywhere in the world in the same way he was sent here. In 2014, he graduated from philosophy at the Oratory of St. Philip Neri. He did his Parish Internship Program at Blessed Trinity parish in Toronto.

Rev. Mr. João Gilberto Veras Ferreira was raised in Brasilia, Brazil and played semi-professional soccer for four years, but always felt something was missing in his life. His vocation story began to deepen about 15 years ago when he joined the



The men to be ordained for the Archdiocese of Toronto on Saturday, May 11, 2019 at St. Michael's Cathedral Basilica: (left to right) Rev. Mr. Mauricio Gilo Sanjines Calatayud, Rev. Mr. Eduardo de Oliveira Paixão, Rev. Mr. Renan Roberto Costa, Rev. Mr. João Gilberto Veras Ferreira.

Neocatechumenal Way community. Later, in 2007, when Pope Benedict XVI went to Brazil for a meeting in the Sanctuary of Our Lady of Aparecida, he felt the call even stronger. In 2009, he entered the Redemptoris Mater Missionary Seminary of Brasilia, and in 2011 he transferred to the RMMS in Toronto.

Rev. Mr. Eduardo de Oliveira Paixão was born and raised in Salto, São Paulo, Brazil. Growing up in a Catholic family he went to Mass every Sunday. At eight years old, he would tell his pastor that one day he would become a priest. The loss of his father in 1998 was a huge shock that left him

questioning whether or not God was present in his life. Encouraged by his mother and friends, he joined the Neocatechumenal Way in 2004 and as the time passed he began to rediscover the love of God in his life. He entered the seminary in 2012.

Rev. Mr. Renan Roberto Costa comes from Pitangueiras, a small town in the interior of the state of Sao Paulo, Brazil. He entered the Neocatechumenal Way when he was 16. That's where he first felt the call to the priesthood. In 2010, he was sent to Italy to a retreat where he was chosen to go to Toronto. As a Seminarian at the RMMS, he graduated in Philosophy at the Oratory of Saint Philip Neri. He did missionary work in Winnipeg for a year, and finally studied Theology at Saint Augustine's.

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Hamilton Ordinandi: (left to right) Rev. Mr. Joseph Vivek Trindade, Rev. Mr. John Schnurr, Rev. Mr. Gregory Merkley. Hamilton ordinations are on Saturday, May 4 at the Cathedral Basilica of Christ the King, Hamilton.

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Diocese of Hamilton

Rev. Mr. John Schnurr is the second of eight children, growing up on a dairy farm near Formosa, Ontario. He was home-schooled through high school. Although he considered the priesthood as a teenager, it was not something that he felt called to pursue at the time. He got a commercial pilot licence in 2009 and worked as a flight instructor in Hanover, Ontario for a year and a half before moving to Winnipeg to fly for a small charter airline. It was during this time he again felt God calling. In 2013, he quit his job and entered formation at St. Augustine's.

Rev. Mr. Gregory Merkley was born in Kitchener into a family not actively practicing any religion. Despite attending Catholic school, he eventually became a practical

atheist. During university, he was drawn towards the faith by a young woman he was dating. He began going to Church again, asking the priest all his tough questions. Not only did he find excellent answers to all his questions, but most importantly, he experienced the peace and joy that can only come from a personal relationship with Jesus. Later, at a 'Come and See' weekend, he felt God calling him to be a priest.

Rev. Mr. Joseph Vivek Trindade was born in Calcutta, India. He worked in the advertising field in Mumbai. In 1988, he experienced what he calls a powerful St-Philip-Neri-like God experience. Life thereafter was never the same. He devoted a great deal of time to voluntary ministry in Mumbai and Dubai, where he worked for 11 years. He took care of his mother in India during the last years of her life. After she passed, he came to Canada to visit his



Mr. Vang Tran, who will be ordained to the Archdiocese of Hanoi, Vietnam.

sister. While here, he attended a 'Come and See' weekend, where he felt the Lord's call.

Archdiocese of Hanoi, Vietnam

Mr. Vang Tran was born and raised in Vietnam. He has two sisters, who are both nuns, and three brothers. In his second year of university, one of his classmates invited him to attend a seminary program for young men. He was impressed with that visit and continued to participate in the program in his later years of university. After graduating, he applied to be a seminarian for the Archdiocese of Hanoi. He began his seminary studies in 2010 at St. Joseph's Seminary of Hanoi. He was sent by his Archbishop in late 2014 to study Theology at St. Augustine's.

Fr. Tomasz Skibinski, Rector, Redemptoris Mater Missionary Seminary of Toronto – My Journey Here



I was born and raised in Warsaw, Poland. In 1997, I was sent to the newly-opened Redemptoris Mater Missionary Seminary of Toronto. In August 1999, ten of us, including our former rector, now Bishop Hector Vila, moved onto the second floor of the Kehoe Hall, part of the complex of buildings forming St. Augustine's Seminary. That's how our journey together began.

The seminarians of both Seminaries often pray, study, eat and relax together. We (at Redemptoris Mater) were all foreigners,

but it was through friendships with "the Canadian boys" that we would learn a great deal about Canadian culture: from hockey, to geography of this vast land, to the idiomatic English expressions.

Sharing facilities and many daily routines helped us to be enculturated in order to serve the people of the Archdiocese of Toronto and beyond.

I was ordained in May 2005, and after having served for two years at St. Mary's Parish in Brampton, to my surprise, I was called back to the seminary – as vice-rector. Then in 2016 I was appointed rector. The most rewarding part of this special work is to see throughout the years of formation how God molds and transforms the minds and the hearts of these men, who are sent into the world to proclaim the Good News of God's infinite mercy.

Redemptoris Mater, a Seminary in a Seminary



St. Augustine's has a unique partnership with the Redemptoris Mater Missionary Seminary (RMMS) of Toronto – a seminary within a seminary.

It began in June 1999, when then Cardinal Ambrozic of Toronto welcomed the Neocatechumenal Way community and invited them to establish their seminary in Kehoe Hall, the south annex of St. Augustine's main building. It is one of 95 RMMS

throughout the world with seminarians coming from all over the world.

“Once a week, both St Augustine's and the RMMS celebrate mass together in the Seminary Chapel,” says St. Augustine's Rector Fr. Edwin Gonsalves. “The faculty and seminarians of both seminaries work together for the glory of God and the good of the Church.”

Ongoing Formation for Young Priests

Formation does not end at ordination. Throughout the year, recently ordained priests regularly return to St. Augustine's Seminary for the *'Five and Under Program.'* The latest one was held on March 7-8, with 18 priests in attendance.

The gatherings are meant to foster a sense of fraternity and spiritual growth.



Some of the participants from the recent *Five and Under* gathering. (From left to right) Fr. Scott Birchall, Fr. Raymond So, Fr. Matt McCarthy, Fr. Tom Kluger, Fr. Jim Zettel, Fr. Jeremias Inoc, Fr. Marijan Sisko, Fr. David Twaddle.

Twenty-eight men attended the *Come and See* weekend at the Seminary from March 15-17.



Come and See Weekend

A number of men in formation at the Seminary first made their commitment after a 'Come and See' weekend, including a couple of this year's Ordinandi.

As the name would suggest, a 'Come and See' weekend is designed to give men a chance to come and see the Seminary as part of a discernment process to see if they may be called to the priesthood. It is a live-in experience over a couple of days.

Third Annual Day of Reflection for Women



Dr. Josephine Lombardi

On Saturday, June 1, 2019 the Institute of Theology at St. Augustine's Seminary is happy to present its Third Annual Day of Reflection for Women.

This year, Dr. Josephine Lombardi, Associate Professor and Director of Lay Formation at St. Augustine's, will present a day on "Identity, Community, and Purpose." She will reflect on the deeper meaning of

a Catholic woman's identity as a cherished daughter of the Most High.

By virtue of our baptism, we participate in the threefold office of Christ – prophet, priest and king. Dr. Lombardi will explore this baptismal identity and other questions pertaining to a woman's identity in the Church: "Who am I?" "To whom do I belong?" and "What is my purpose?"

Ecumenical Prayer Service



In January, St Augustine's hosted representatives from all the seven colleges of the Toronto School of Theology at an ecumenical prayer service during the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity. The guest speaker was Very Rev. Dr. Peter Galadza, Director of the Sheptytsky Institute of Eastern Christian Studies. (From left to right) Hayden Starczala, seminarian; Very Rev. Dr. Galadza; Fr. Edwin Gonsalves, president; Joshua Lobo, seminarian.



News Briefs

St. Augustine's has consistently had a series of outstanding international retreat directors contributing to its formation program. This year, the retreat directors were: Francis Cardinal Arinze (Fall Reflection Weekend), Fr. Michael Gaitley, M.I.C. (Lenten Reflection Weekend), and Sister Briege McKenna, O.S.C. (year-end silent retreat week).

In the Diaconate Formation program, the Office of Clergy Personnel has begun accepting applications to the next Propaedeutic year, which begins in October.

In reparation for the harm done to the Church in the abuse crisis, and in prayer for all those abused by clergy, the seminarians organized two walking pilgrimages this year – to St. Lawrence the Martyr church and St. Michael's Cathedral Basilica. During the walk, seminarians prayed litanies and psalms.

Ways to Support the Seminary

There are many ways to support the Seminary. First and foremost is prayer, but you may also consider:

- Naming St. Augustine's Seminary as a beneficiary in your will
- Making an insurance gift
- Supporting a specific project

- Sponsoring a seminarian
- Contributing to our retreats

For more information, to arrange a tour of the Seminary, or to attend an Estate Planning Session sponsored by the Archdiocese, contact Samantha Koon at skoon@archtoronto.org or 416-261-7207 ext. 358.

Thank You For Your Generous Support
Please keep the Seminarians in your prayers

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