



St. Augustine's Adapting To The New Normal

The Seminary continued its mission despite the ongoing COVID-19 restrictions.

The seminarians arrived in late August – two weeks before the original start date of the new academic and formation year. During this time, they prayed, attended seminars and enjoyed the outdoors. Maintaining physical distancing, wearing masks and following health and safety protocols all helped create a “safe bubble” within the seminary community.

The Permanent Diaconate and Institute of Theology formation programs both transitioned online. For online teaching, the Seminary acted quickly in obtaining Audio Visual technology – a process that brought new opportunities despite challenges for the Seminary in fulfilling its mission.

“This has been quite a summer for us,” says Fr. Kevin Belgrave, Director, Institute of Theology and Associate Professor of Moral Theology, who has overseen many of the technical aspects. “First, the entire topic of ‘EdTech’ (education technology) was absolutely new to us. From the middle of May, when we first realized we had to move on this, we have been learning on the fly about the pros and cons of different types of equipment.”

It hasn't been easy.

“With almost every university in the world trying to acquire equipment at the same time, we have encountered shipping delays, even lost packages. Supply chain constraints have delayed major pieces of equipment, but Providence has provided for backups.”

Other Adjustments

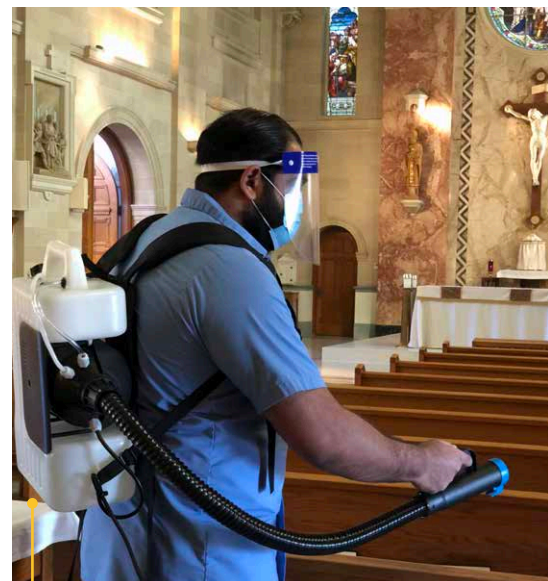
The teaching environment isn't the only aspect of life at the Seminary that is different. Seminarians, faculty and staff continue to follow provincial and Archdiocesan COVID safety protocols. Should anyone get sick, isolation protocols are in place, as



Fr. Kevin Belgrave teaches a hybrid (or dual-delivery) class with students both onsite and online.

are ongoing safety measures such as visitors having to wear masks and maintain social distance.

Hand sanitizers are in all classrooms and regular cleaning takes place, including disinfecting the Chapel, where seminarians gather for daily prayer and Mass. They also have socially-distanced assigned seating in the Chapel.



Adam Herbert, Assistant Manager of Housekeeping Services at St. Augustine's, sanitizes the Seminary Chapel.

Social distance seating in the Chapel with assigned seating

Finding Blessings In The Midst Of The Pandemic

Ryan Nigli

While the Pandemic has brought many challenges and sorrows, it has also helped seminarians look for the everyday blessings in their lives.

Take second-year Theology student Ryan Nigli for example. He had his parish placement cancelled when everything shut down in mid-March. He moved home with his family and applied for a job at the Walmart warehouse in Mississauga.

“I worked in the receiving department,” he says. “I did a lot of lifting boxes all day. It was a huge blessing to be able to work when a lot of people didn’t have that opportunity.”

He also welcomed the opportunity to talk about his faith when people at work asked him about studying to be a priest. “That was a beautiful experience for me to be able to share my experience with them. I had some great conversations.”



James Cyfko

“When we had to shut down because of the provincial regulations, most of the guys went home,” remembers James Cyfko, first-year Theology student. “But the pastor at St. Isaac Jogues (Fr. Marc-André Campbell) in Pickering asked if I was free to help out at the parish. I didn’t expect it to go on as long as it did. I thought I would go help out for a month until things reopen. I really got a beautiful pastoral experience.”



Christian Lindenbach

Dcn. Christian Lindenbach, who is scheduled to be ordained for the Archdiocese of Regina, SK, this spring, was actually on his parish internship in Regina when COVID hit. He remained at the parish throughout and was struck by “seeing just how important faith is to people. It was such a blessing to see that even when the doors of the physical building were closed due to restrictions, we were still Church — we still gathered virtually, we still prayed, we still worshiped and journeyed toward heaven together.”



Michel Quenneville

Dcn. Michel Quenneville, who will be ordained for the Archdiocese of Kingston next spring, says there was a lot of uncertainty when he moved home in March. He had to complete his courses online and his ordination to the transitional diaconate was delayed before it finally happened on July 11.

“It was a great learning experience to let go and trust that God’s timing is perfect,” he says, adding that he is glad to get back to the Seminary to continue his formation. “It is wonderful to be with my brothers. That’s a big aspect of formation. It’s not just academic formation, it’s also human formation, pastoral formation and spiritual formation that you get from being here in the Seminary together.”



News Briefs

- The St. Augustine’s online preaching conference at the end of June was a great success with well over 100 participants from around the world, including Canada, the US, Hong Kong and Trinidad. Cardinal Collins, Dr. Scott Hahn, Dr. Josephine Lombardi, and Dr. Mary Elizabeth Callan gave inspiring and extraordinary talks. Planning is already underway for next June’s event.



Cardinal Collins on Preaching

- Due to COVID restrictions, this year’s Convocation will take place virtually on Monday, November 2, 2020. There are a total of 35 graduands. Congratulations to all.
- St. Augustine’s Lay Formation Program has also gone online. Cost is \$25.00 for each event. The good news with the virtual events is that they have been attracting people from outside the Archdiocese, helping the Seminary expand the reach of its mission of forming disciples of Christ.
- Renovations are ongoing in the student kitchen. The driving force behind this and other renovations at the Seminary is to create spaces that feel less institutional, more home-like and encourage seminarians to spend time together that will be essential to the formation of friendships and fraternity so necessary to a healthy and life-long priesthood.

New Appointments

St. Augustine's is pleased to announce some new appointments.

Fr. Eric Rodrigues has taken on the roles of Vice-Rector and Director of Liturgy. Fr. Rodrigues will be busy as he will complete his doctorate as well as teach at the Seminary.

Meanwhile, **Fr. Ante Market** has been appointed Chaplain for the Permanent Diaconate Formation Pro-

gram and Coordinator of the Spiritual Year. He too will be completing his doctorate and will teach at the Seminary.

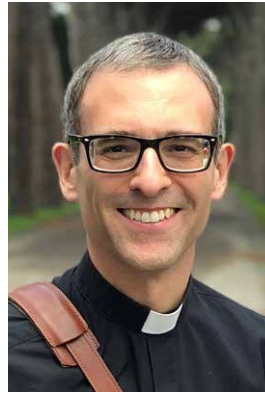
Fr. Kevin Belgrave, who is Associate Professor of Moral Theology at St. Augustine's, has also been named Director of the Institute of Theology.



Fr. Eric Rodrigues



Fr. Ante Market



Fr. Kevin Belgrave

A Fond Farewell

Coinciding with the new appointments, St. Augustine's also bid farewell to **Fr. Peter Marr** and **Fr. John-Mark Missio**, both of whom have been appointed to parishes.

"After eleven years of living, working and most importantly praying with the young men in formation for priesthood and with the candidates in the formation program for the permanent diaconate, I will now be ministering in the parish alongside these 'co-workers of the truth,'" says Fr. Marr, who had served as Vice-Rector, Chaplain for the Permanent Diaconate, Director of Pastoral Formation, Coordinator of the Spiritual Year as well as many other responsibilities.

"It was a privilege to be involved in the Seminary formation program," says Fr. Missio, who joined the formation faculty in 2012 and served as Vice-Rector, Director of Liturgy, and many other responsibilities. He will continue to be a sessional lecturer at the Seminary. "I learned a great deal about being a priest from the faculty and the seminarians, and I especially thank the lay staff who made the Seminary such a pleasant place to live, work and pray."

Life As A Newly Ordained Priest

When newly-ordained Fr. Michael Corpus returns to the Seminary to visit seminarian friends, he often gets asked what life is like as a priest in the parish.

"Many of the guys ask that question," says Fr. Corpus who was just ordained this past June and is now an associate pastor at St. Joseph Parish in Mississauga. "I had great expectations for what parish life was going to be like, but for me this is beyond all my expectations."

He says he has been most touched by the experience of journeying with parishioners in faith through the Eucharist and the sacraments.

"To be with people as they come back to the Lord through Confession has been a special experience. As a layperson, Seminarian and Deacon, I only saw the one side, and now I am privileged to be a bridge to encounters with the Lord and a mediator to conversions that I could not have imagined before my priestly ordination."

He acknowledges that parish life is busy. "When you get to the parish, you realize



that something like a couple of funerals can throw quite a bit off. So I take one thing at a time. Preaching daily is also something that was new to me. What is great is that you rely on the grace of God, and the foundation of prayer life laid before and built up during Seminary. So when you get to a parish you are able to give what you receive in prayer."

Fr. Michael Corpus, in the basement of St. Michael's Cathedral Basilica, where during the COVID-19 lockdown, he oversaw the technical aspects of the daily livestream of the Mass.

Upcoming Events

All Events will be held Online.

Dates are subject to change.

October 3, 2020

**Annual Day of Reflection for Men:
Called to a Daily Vocation**

Presenter: Dcn. Peter Lovrick
1:30 p.m. to 5:00 p.m.

November 21, 2020

**Workshop on the Holy Spirit: Water
and Fire - The Person of the Holy
Spirit in Christian Life**

Presenter: Fr. Joseph Chandrakanthan

December 12, 2020

Advent Retreat: Imitation of Christ

Presenter: Dr. Josephine Lombardi

January 23, 2021

**Workshop: The Songs of the Angels in
the Book of Revelation.**

Presenter: Msgr. A. Robert Nusca

March 13, 2021

**Lenten Retreat:
The Holy Spirit and the
Abandonment of the Saints.**

Presenter: Fr. Charles Anang

All online events, unless otherwise noted, will be 9:30 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. and the cost is \$25. Link for virtual presentation will be sent upon registration.

Register Online:

staugustines.on.ca/about/events



Diaconate Ordinations Finally Take Place

After a four-month delay due to COVID-19 restrictions, Cardinal Collins presided over the ordination of seven men to the permanent diaconate on Saturday, October 3, 2020 at St. Michael's Cathedral Basilica. They had been originally scheduled for May 23.

The seven men ordained for the Archdiocese of Toronto are: Paul Bar, Michael

Lewis, Daniel McPhee, Donald Muller, William Nalepka, Martin Treash, Carlos Ivan Retamales-Riveros.

Meanwhile, this year's Permanent Diaconate Formation program began September 12 and has been adapted to be delivered entirely online. There are 20 candidates and 19 wives in year three and 14 candidates and 13 wives in year one of the program.



Your Generosity Kept Us Going

St. Augustine's would like to thank our countless benefactors, whose generosity has made it possible for us to make many of the needed changes at the Seminary in order to continue our mission during these trying times.

Your support has helped us secure new equipment to bring our courses online. Several donors purchased tickets for seminarians to attend the Preaching Conference. Another

generous donor supported the renovation of the seminarians' kitchen lounge.

These are just a few examples of how your generosity helps the Seminary flourish. We continue to need your prayers and financial support to continue the mission that Christ has entrusted to us. Please contact Samantha Koon at skoon@archtoronto.org or 416-261-7207 ext. 358 for information on how you can help.

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

ShareLife A ShareLife funded agency
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St. Augustine's Seminary of Toronto
2661 Kingston Road, Toronto, ON M1M 1M3
Tel: 416-261-7207 | Fax: 416-261-2529
www.staugustines.on.ca

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