

Sacred Heart

HIGHLIGHTS ■ Fall Semester 2023

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Preparing Evangelizing Disciples

From the President-Rector
of Sacred Heart Seminary
and School of Theology



Our mission: Preparing evangelizing disciples through specialized formation to conform our world to the Heart of Christ

We at Sacred Heart are blessed. This year we are serving 169 students and 29 sponsors, and many international students in our English and Culture Studies Program (ECS). We look forward to welcoming 3–5 new residential seminarians and 2 additional sponsors in January. In our third consecutive year of growth, we added additional faculty and staff across all four dimensions of formation. We are grateful that when sponsors visit, they thank us for knowing their students and for being a seminary they can trust.

The Program of Priestly Formation Sixth Edition calls for accompaniment. We believe that starts with listening to sponsors and understanding the current and future needs of their seminarians. We have been providing specialized formation for over 50 years, and know that thinking creatively about the future ministerial needs of our graduates is critical to helping them flourish in this changing world. Our Propaedeutic Stage Program is well underway, with an in-person residential option and an in-place collaboration for two sponsors who are hosting their own programs. We created an optional unique Catholic Studies program that provides a solid foundation during the discernment period and also builds in excursions designed to help the men encounter the beauty and history of our faith.

So much goodness is on the horizon. We look forward to being able to offer pontifical degrees as we continue discussions with the Pontifical Gregorian University in Rome. We are blessed by the priests and religious brothers and sisters who come here to study in our ECS Program. We are grateful for the charism and continued support of the Priests of the Sacred Heart, of whom we are an apostolate.

We strive to provide outstanding human, spiritual, pastoral, and intellectual formation to seminarians and lay ministers around the world. Please contact us if we can be of service.

Very Rev. Raúl Gómez-Ruiz SDS, Ph.D.

On the cover: The Very Rev. Carlos Luis Suárez Codorniú, SCJ, Superior General of the Priests of the Sacred Heart, preaches at the Multicultural Mass (page 6).



Holy Mass for the Opening of the Academic Year

Holy Mass for the Opening of the Academic Year was on August 30, 2023. The entire Sacred Heart community gathered to celebrate the beginning of the new school year. Dinner followed Mass and included new student introductions, joyful conversation, and prayer.



Institution to the Ministry of Acolyte

The Most Rev. James T. Schuerman, Auxiliary Bishop of the Archdiocese of Milwaukee, presided at Mass and instituted three seminarians as Acolytes: Mr. Diego Osvaldo Acosta Chávez, Diocese of Lexington; Mr. Esteban Hernández, Diocese of Dodge City; and Mr. Fernando Díaz Olazábal, Diocese of Pensacola-Tallahassee.



Inspiring Hearts & Minds

Strengthening Formation

Priestly formation takes place within a faith community, including “Affinity Groups” and through “Affinity Learning Experiences.” With funding from the million-dollar Lilly Pathways for Tomorrow grant, Affinity Groups are small groups of seminarians at a similar stage of priestly formation. During these groups, they engage in faith conversations with their priest formation advisor. Groups include deacons preparing for priestly ordination as well as new seminarians being introduced to essential activities for priestly formation such as prayer, discernment, dialogue, active listening skills, and conflict resolution. Affinity Learning Experiences provide a diverse group of seminarians a transformational formation encounter that expands their horizons to recognize the presence of God in their journey. This year, Propaedeutic and Discipleship seminarians participated in the Mission and Education Conference of the Priests of the Sacred Heart at the St. Joseph Indian School in Chamberlain South Dakota. New seminarians from various stages participated in Sunday Mass in the first half of the fall semester at a variety of parishes of the Archdiocese of Milwaukee.





Days of Recollection

Sacred Heart provided two Days of Recollection this past fall. These days are designed as days of prayer and silent reflection, helping seminarians, students, faculty, and staff to withdraw from the noise of the world and deepen their relationship with God. Vice President of Formation Programs, Fr. John Mack, led the first day and focused his reflections on “Calls to Community: Holy Convergence.” Assistant Director of Formation, Fr. Anthony Lajato, OFM Conv., led the second day and spoke on: “Sorella Morte: Christian Death as Transitus.”



Catholic Heritage Excursions

A series of excursions are built into the Catholic Heritage Studies for Propaedeutic Stage men. These are designed to help them encounter the beauty, truth, and goodness of the faith in places of Catholic historical significance. The September excursion included learning about the early history of Catholicism in Wisconsin, with visits to multiple historic sites. For example, they met with Sr. Mary Boyd, SSSF, who gave the group a fascinating tour of St. Joseph’s Chapel in Milwaukee and shared touching stories about her vocation as a sister. Two additional excursions occurred this fall to help bring the faith alive and achieve our mission of creating evangelizing disciples.



Gathering the Global Church

Welcoming New Students to English & Culture Studies (ECS)

Sacred Heart's ECS Program attracts priests and religious brothers and sisters from around the world to study English and US culture. To say the world church meets here is true! It also enables our seminarians, faculty, and staff to interact with the world church without leaving campus. Over the course of the fall and summer sessions, the ECS program served 40 students from 20 countries.

Multicultural Mass and Fair

Our ECS students invited our Sacred Heart Community to a Multicultural Mass, using the various languages, music, and cultural styles of their home countries. They also organized a Multicultural Fair where students shared their customs, history, and cuisines. We are very blessed to learn more about other cultures and how the Catholic faith is lived throughout the world.



Contributing to Theological Dialogue

The ECS Program hosts a Lunch Speaker Series where international English students share their research. We were blessed with four presentations this fall:

- **Mr. Samson Tesfaye**, seminarian for the Archdiocese of Addis Ababa in Ethiopia and, a student at the Catholic University of Eichstaett-Ingolstadt, presented “Stories of a Catholic in an all (Christian) Orthodox Family in Ethiopia.”
- **Rev. Petr Soukal**, from the Diocese of Hradec Kralove in the Czech Republic, a doctoral student at the Pontifical Gregorian University in Rome, presented “The Doctrine of Original Sin, its Past and the Future.”
- **Rev. Robson Caixeta Silva**, from the Diocese of Paos de Minas in Brazil, Academic Director of the Dom Jose Andre Coimbra Major Seminary, presented “Revisiting the Relationship Between Philosophy and Theology: A Hegelian Perspective.”
- **Rev. Emerson Ruiz, SCJ**, from the Priests of the Sacred Heart Province of Brazil (Sao Paulo), presented “The Sint Unum in the Life and Writings of Father Dehon.”





Engaging Our Communities

Rite of Commissioning Seminarians for Pastoral Service

The Very Rev. Raúl Gómez-Ruiz SDS presided at Mass and commissioned five seminarians to begin their supervised pastoral field education experiences at the following local ministries:

- **Mr. Diego Acosta Chávez**, *Diocese of Lexington*, to St. Martin de Porres, St. Michael, St. Rose of Lima, and All Saints Parishes
- **Mr. Esteban Hernández**, *Diocese of Dodge City*, to All Saints Parish and Food Pantry
- **Mr. Eric Frieb**, *Diocese of Dodge City*, to Cathedral of St. John the Evangelist and Open Door Café
- **Rev. Mr. Michael Snyder**, *Diocese of Davenport*, to St. James, St. Theresa, and St. Peter Parishes
- **Mr. Charles Wuebker**, *Order of St. Camillus*, to St. Martin of Tours Parish



Going Out

The Archdiocese of Milwaukee co-hosted the “Defending the Faith” Conference with Men of Christ. Over 80 men gathered to learn and pray together. Associate Professor of Systematic Theology, Dr. Mike Brummond, was a featured speaker.

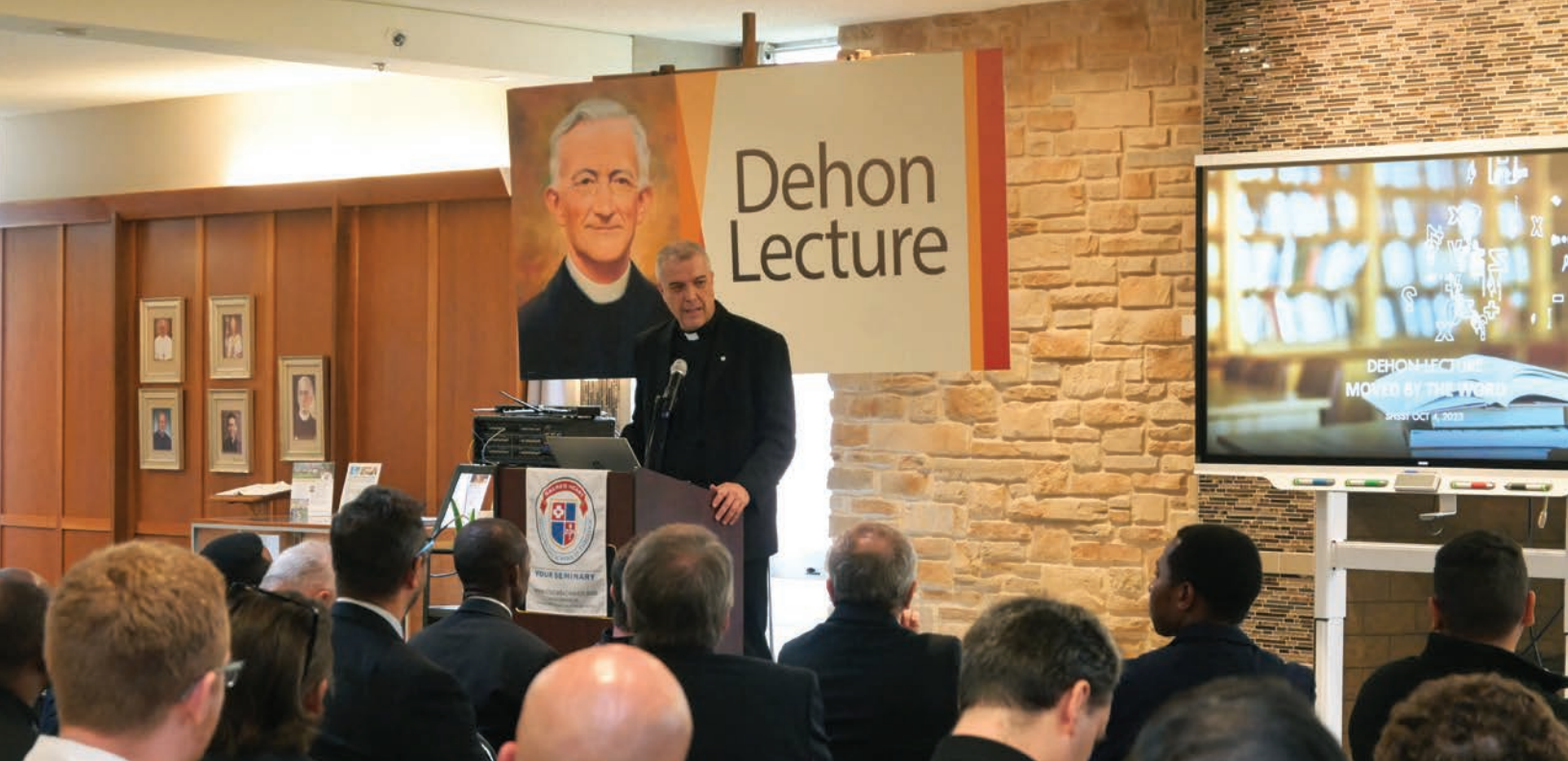
Native American Heritage Month

In commemoration of Native American Heritage Month, Fr. Jim Walters, SCJ, and Fr. Yvon Sheehy, SCJ, teamed up for a lunchtime presentation on their years of ministry in South Dakota. The session was hosted by the Leo John Dehon Library at Sacred Heart. The speakers reflected on the integration of Christian and Lakota traditions. The presentation concluded with Fr. Jim walking participants through the Sign of the Cross and Lord Have Mercy in the Lakota language before giving a final blessing in Lakota.



A Walk Through the Torah

Rabbi Michal Woll, Co-Director of the Lux Center for Catholic-Jewish Studies, gave a mini-course in modern Judaism to seminarians, faculty and staff. Topics included The High Holy Days, Torah scrolls, and blowing the shofar. The Lux Center's vision is to strengthen the living relationship between Catholics and the Jewish people. Multiple events occur throughout each semester for seminarians, lay students, faculty, staff, and the community.



Fostering the Dehonian Charism

Fall Dehon Lecture

The Very Rev. Carlos Luis Suárez Codorniú, SCJ, Superior General of the Priests of the Sacred Heart (also referred to as Dehonians or SCJs), provided our annual Dehon Lecture, given to all seminarians, students, faculty, and staff. The topic of his talk was “Moved by the Word.” He discussed how, in addition to the words found in the Bible, words spoken in love and wisdom from people’s lived experiences moved him. Fr. Carlos also remarked, “This is a special house!” We are glad he enjoyed his time here and thank him for his inspiring words.



100 Years of Dehonian Ministry in the United States

Our congratulations to the Priests of the Sacred Heart who celebrated their 100th year of ministry in the United States. Their US ministry began with a Palm Sunday Mass in 1923 at St. Mary’s Church in Lower Brule, SD, and now extends from South Dakota to Wisconsin, Mississippi, Texas, and Florida. The mission of the religious order is to be prophets of love and servants of reconciliation. Sacred Heart Seminary and School of Theology is grateful to be an apostolate of the Priests of the Sacred Heart. You can learn more about the SCJs at dehoniansusa.org.

SCJ Mission Education Conference

Sacred Heart Seminary and School of Theology sent 35 members from our faculty, staff, seminarians, and English and Culture students to participate in the SCJ Mission Education Conference in South Dakota. Participants learned about the ministries of St. Joseph's Indian School and St. Mary's Parish on the Lower Brule Reservation. The trip was inspiring and we thank the people of both ministries for their work.



Pursuing Theological Scholarship

Dr. Paul Monson, Vice President of Intellectual Formation and Academic Dean (pictured above), has recently published a blind peer-reviewed article in *US Catholic Historian*, "The Sioux Catholic Congress and the Preservation of the Lakota *Tiospaye*" (41, no. 3 [Summer 2023]: 73-93). The article reflects the fruits of Dr. Monson's sabbatical research on nineteenth-century missions and his participation in a national roundtable on the legacy of Catholic Native American boarding schools. Further inspiration and insight stemmed from Dr. Monson's visit to St. Joseph's Indian School in South Dakota and its commitment to the Lakota *tiospaye* as a model for family life, learning, and healing.



We also congratulate all other full-time faculty who published during the fall 2023 semester:



- Very Rev. Raúl Gómez-Ruiz SDS, Ph.D., President-Rector



- Kathy Harty, M.A.L.S., M.A., Research and Technology Librarian and Professional Faculty

- Deacon Steve Kramer, D.Min., Associate Professor of Pastoral Studies, Director of Homiletics, Director of Recruitment



Supporting Our Mission

shsst.edu/support-us

Our seminarians come from across North America and around the world. Many are from mission dioceses. **Your contribution** provides financial assistance so seminarians can have the best formation possible. Please pray for our seminarians! **Join us as we work together to *Conform Our World to the Heart of Christ.***



For Our Alumni

If you would like to join our new **Alumni Association**, serve on an **advisory board**, or would like to come back and **preside and/or preach** in our Main Chapel, please email Rachel Allison at rallison@shsst.edu. The alumni association is free to join, just send us your contact information!

If you have ideas specific to one of the programs below, feel free to contact the following representatives:

- **Lumen Cordis Alumni:** Michael Beard, mbeard@shsst.edu
- **Cor Unum Alumni:** Edell Schaefer, eschaefer@shsst.edu
- **English & Culture Studies Alumni:** Ryan Stubbs, ecsp@shsst.edu

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