

Press Release

Cardinal Timothy Dolan, Archbishop of New York, has announced the appointment of Bishop James Massa as the Rector of Saint Joseph's Seminary, Yonkers NY, effective July 16. Bishop Massa is an auxiliary bishop of the Diocese of Brooklyn and a former member of the faculty of the seminary (2012-2015).

Bishop Massa's appointment was made with the approval of the Holy See, and with the support of Bishop Nicholas DiMarzio of the Diocese of Brooklyn and Bishop John Barres of the Diocese of Rockville Centre, who together with Cardinal Dolan, make up the Saint Charles Borromeo Council which oversees the seminary system shared by the three dioceses.

Bishop Massa succeeds Monsignor Peter I. Vaccari, who became Rector in 2011 after the three downstate New York dioceses merged the programs of St. Joseph's with those of the Seminary of the Immaculate Conception in Huntington. Then-Father Massa was the coordinator of the merger, overseeing the formation of the new faculty and the accreditation of academic programs with the Middle States Commission on Higher Education (MSCHE) and the Association of Theological Schools (ATS). Saint Joseph's Seminary, and the three sponsoring dioceses, have been praised for taking seriously the call of the Holy See that seminaries merge and cooperate, in order to provide the best possible theological, pastoral, spiritual, and faith formation education and training.

In addition to seminarians from the Archdiocese of New York, Diocese of Brooklyn, and Diocese of Rockville Centre, Saint Joseph's Seminary trains priesthood candidates for the Diocese of Bridgeport CT, the Diocese of Camden NJ, the Ukrainian Catholic Eparchy of Stamford, the Franciscan Friars of the Renewal, the Neo-Catechumenal Way, the Piarist Fathers and Brothers, and the Idente Missionaries.

With its main campus located in the Dunwoodie section of Yonkers, the seminary also sponsors degree programs for candidates for the permanent

diaconate, as well as for lay women and men pursuing various ministries in the Church. The Archdiocese of New York, Diocese of Brooklyn, and Diocese of Rockville Centre cooperate in the administration and governance of the seminary system, which includes Cathedral Seminary House of Formation in Douglaston, Queens for men in college preparing to enter the Seminary, and the Seminary of the Immaculate Conception in Huntington, Long Island, for the ongoing education and formation of priests. There is also a branch campus in Somers, New York.

Ordained an auxiliary bishop in 2015, Bishop Massa has been the Moderator of the Curia, the Vicar for Catholic Education, and the Vicar for Evangelization for the Diocese of Brooklyn. Prior to becoming a bishop, he held various teaching positions at seminaries in New York and Boston. He is the former Executive Director of the Secretariat for Ecumenical and Interreligious Affairs at the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB) in Washington, D.C. (2005-2011), a former Consultor to the Holy See's Pontifical Council for Interreligious Dialogue, and currently serves as a member of that same Pontifical Council.

Bishop Massa earned his doctorate in systematic theology from Fordham University in 1997, writing his dissertation under the late Cardinal Avery Dulles, S.J. He has written and lectured on topics related to the sacraments, Christian unity and the Church's engagement with Judaism and other religions. He currently serves on three USCCB committees: doctrine, education, and the Catechism, and is a member of several ecumenical dialogues.

St. Joseph's Seminary was founded in 1896 by Archbishop Michael Corrigan of New York. Pope St. John Paul II visited the seminary and celebrated Evening Prayer during his Apostolic Visit in 1995. Pope Benedict XVI presided over a Youth Rally at the seminary in 2008.

Bishop Massa is the twenty-second Rector of St. Joseph's Seminary, one of five bishops who has served in this role.

