



THE CATHOLIC DIOCESE OF ROCKVILLE CENTRE

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MEDIA RELEASE

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NEW YORK CITY REGIONAL BISHOPS PURSUE NEW PATH FOR PRIESTLY FORMATION

October 27, 2022 – Cardinal Timothy M. Dolan, Archbishop of New York, Bishop Robert J. Brennan of Brooklyn, and Bishop John O. Barres of Rockville Centre today announced the launching of new programs at St. Joseph’s Seminary in Yonkers, to enhance seminary training beginning next fall as part of their implementation of a new model of priestly formation in the United States.

That model, released earlier this year in the sixth edition of the Program for Priestly Formation, aligns with the 2016 document of the Holy See, *Ratio Fundamentalis Institutiones Sacerdotalis*, where priestly formation seeks to form “missionary disciples who are ‘in love’ with the Master...” To this end, candidates for the priesthood will journey through four stages accompanied by a community of formators: Propaedeutic, Discipleship, Configuration, and Vocational Synthesis.

“Demands on the priesthood today require a deep friendship with Jesus and a team of mentors willing to journey with the priests of tomorrow, particularly during these years of formation,” said Cardinal Dolan.

St. Joseph’s Seminary in Yonkers (Dunwoodie) will be the new site for the recently created Propaedeutic Year for intensive human and spiritual formation as well as for the study of graduate-level philosophy. The Propaedeutic Stage will seek to give priesthood candidates a firm foundation in prayer, discernment, and personal growth. The Dunwoodie campus will provide a dedicated space in a reflective atmosphere and allow for the engagement of an experienced faculty.

For what is now called the Discipleship Stage, seminarians pursuing their Master’s in Catholic philosophy will be moving from the Immaculate Conception Center of the Diocese of Brooklyn in Douglaston to the Yonkers campus. Undergraduate seminarians will study philosophy and complete this stage of formation at one of the pre-existing programs out of state.

The Configuration Stage, with the study of theology will continue at Dunwoodie. The Vocational Synthesis Stage will take place upon the completion of the study of theology and ordination to



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the Diaconate. During this stage, a transitional deacon will serve in a parish in his respective diocese under the direction of a mentor priest.

Since 2011, the three Diocesan Bishops have worked together in the formation of priests, deacons, and lay leaders for service in the church. This collaboration, known as the St. Charles Borromeo Partnership, has allowed for sharing personnel and governance at each level of priestly formation and theological education.

“Our priority in the implementation of the new Program for Priestly Formation is to assure a high quality of formation for candidates for the priesthood in the twenty-first century,” said Bishop Robert Brennan.

“This new paradigm of priestly formation centered at St. Joseph’s Seminary will help cultivate shepherds who will embrace the creative approaches needed today to bring people to the Heart of Christ,” said Bishop John Barres of the Diocese of Rockville Centre

The Cathedral Seminary House of Formation at the Douglaston facility will no longer host seminarians but the Center will continue to offer graduate-level theology courses for candidates for the Permanent Diaconate and lay faithful at the Douglaston campus and serve other offices and programs for the Diocese of Brooklyn, including the Bishop Mugavero Residence for senior priests.