

August 15, 2018

Greetings! I hope this letter finds you well during your summer break!

Before this summer ends I would like to take the time to thank all those that I have met, staff, formators and seminarians, who have been very gracious in welcoming me to Assumption Seminary as your new rector. I am especially appreciative of the graciousness of our former Rector, Fr. Jeff Pehl, now pastor at Our Lady of Perpetual Help Catholic Church in Selma, Texas. Thanks to him I was able to have a much easier transition into my new assignment here at the seminary. I am grateful for his labor and effort in moving Assumption forward through its centennial celebration and beyond, as well as the many improvements he made throughout his tenure as rector. My hope is that the Sulpician charism can build on all the positive signs of growth, commitment, and dedication that I have found at Assumption.

I also wish to thank the other dedicated formators who worked and ministered here at our seminary last year: Fr. Krikor Chahin, who will remain in residence on campus until the renovations of his residence at St. Padre Pio parish are completed, Fr. Jeffery Harvey, CM, who is now enjoying a yearlong sabbatical, also Fr. Tom Moonanappillil, MSFS, who now serves as Parochial Vicar at San Fernando Cathedral, and continues his Ph.D. studies in St. Mary's University. Their service was a driving factor in the success of the past year, and our prayers go with them as they begin their new ministries.

As we begin the new academic year, I would like to welcome the returning formators, Fr. Anthony J. Pogorelc, PSS, Sr. Dianne Heinrich, CDP, Fr. Luis Corneli, PSS, Fr. Marcos Ramos, OP, Mr. Martin Martinez, Fr. Nam Kim, PSS, Fr. Renato Lopez, PSS, and Fr. Servando Guerrero. Fr. Vincent Bui, PSS, will also be joining us this year.

A big congratulations goes to our recent graduates who are now ministering as newly ordained priests in their dioceses: Frs. Reggie Odima and Freddy Perez in San Angelo, Johnson Le and Michael English in San Antonio, Victorino Loresca in El Paso; and newly ordained Deacon Richard Gutierrez from the Diocese of Corpus Christi. Please join me in praying for their continued faithfulness in living out their call. Let us also include in our prayers those seminarians that are no longer part of our community but who have decided to follow the Lord in a different vocation or have transferred to new seminaries, as well as former members of our formation team that have recently passed away, Fr. Jim Tucker, PSS, and Fr. Marty Elsner, SJ.

This coming year we will have 69 men registered as seminarians at Assumption. (15 men living in Lopez Hall, 46 living in Flores hall, and 7 who are on internship or pastoral year). We also want to recognize our 13 new seminarians! The Dioceses of El Paso, Little Rock, and San Bernardino, will each be sending new men to join our seminary in the fall. We also have one new seminarian from each of these dioceses of San Antonio, Fort Worth, Laredo and Las Cruces. Please join me in giving them a warm welcome to our community, and we know that they will bring a positive and prayerful spirit this coming year.

After a long year on Pastoral Internship we welcome back to our community our brothers; Matthew Deleon, Thomas Jones, Pedro Martinez, Ricardo Ramirez, Blayne Riley and Ian Robbins. We pray their time in the parish was beneficial and rewarding to their ongoing formation.

We continue to entrust this seminary to our Mother Mary, Assumed into Heaven and Sedes Sapientiae (Seat of Wisdom). We have placed an image of Mary *Sedes Sapientiae* in the entrance to our administration building with an open bible representing the written Word of God. In this image of Mary, the Child Jesus (our *Logos*) rests on his mother's breast allowing heart-to-heart communication, which calls us to an intimate communion with Jesus in our own hearts. We Sulpicians have always stressed the importance of Mary for the spiritual life and will continue to honor her as a way of assisting us in developing a properly oriented Marian devotion. Just as in the name of our seminary, and our chapel, we hope the presence of this image will underline the importance of developing a true love and devotion to the Mother of God, as well as the Word of God in scripture, among our seminarians. The open bible is a sign that we cannot profess a love of Christ, nor can we claim to be disciples of Christ, unless the living Word of the Scriptures has a central place in our lives. Only through our configuration with Jesus (the *Logos* –the Wisdom of the Father) can we become priests and servants of the Word.

When you return to begin the semester, you will find that the beautiful St. Thomas Chapel in Flores Hall will now remain a Eucharistic adoration chapel for personal prayer, and lectio divina. We encourage the seminary community to practice this ancient method of prayer with the Word of God. Attached to this letter you will find a synthesis of the method of lectio divina for all the community to use. We will continue to use Our Lady's Chapel, the St. Joseph's Chapel in Lopez hall, and the chapel in the second floor of the Administration building for liturgical celebrations.

One of the changes that we will implement is the change in nomenclature from "faculty" to "formator", it was often used interchangeably, however we will use the term "formator" exclusively to reflect the role we play in the seminary. The group of our formators together make up the "Council of Formators". All the Sulpician priests at the seminary make up the "Local Sulpician Council". Fr. Servando Guerrero will serve as Vice-Rector for administration and

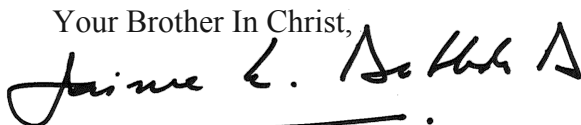
responsible for Lopez hall residents. Fr. Rene Lopez will be our Vice-Rector for formation and will be responsible for Flores hall residents. The team that will make up the formation of the college/pre-theology program, will be known as the *Formation Advisory Council for the College and Pre-Theology Program* (FACCP), and they are: Fr. Vincent Bui, PSS (Chair), Fr. Luis Corneli, PSS, Fr. Servando Guerrero, Sr. Dianne Heinrich, CDP and Mr. Martin Martinez.

The team that will make up the theology program will be known as the *Formation Advisory Council for Theologians* (FACT), and they are: Fr. Renato Lopez, PSS (Chair), Fr. Nam Kim, PSS, Fr. Anthony J. Pogorelc, PSS, and Fr. Marcos Ramos, OP.

Fr. Anthony J. Pogorelc, PSS will be the coordinator of the human formation and Fr. Vincent Bui, PSS will be the director of liturgy. Fr. Marcos Ramos, OP will be the coordinator of the spiritual formation program, associate director of liturgy, and director of music. Sr. Dianne Heinrich, CDP will continue as coordinator of intellectual formation. Fr. Servando will also continue as coordinator of the pastoral dimension with the help of Mr. Martin Martinez.

I should also mention that Fr. Jim Oberle, PSS will be in residence as a spiritual director and confessor, however he will not be a member of the council of formators at the seminary. Fr. Jim is returning to Assumption as a retired Sulpician, but when he served here at the seminary years ago he helped to coordinate the building process of Flores hall, please join me in giving him a warm welcome to our community.

As the new Rector of Assumption Seminary, please know that my door is open to listen, and know that I am committed to help direct you towards your goal of ordination to the priesthood for the Catholic Church in your particular dioceses. I ask for your prayers, patience, and humble obedience as we enter this New Year, so that together we can assist you to fulfill your call to be modelled after Christ the Good Shepherd and servant, through the intercession of Mary our Mother.

Your Brother In Christ,


Fr. Jaime E. Robledo, PSS
Assumption Seminary, Rector