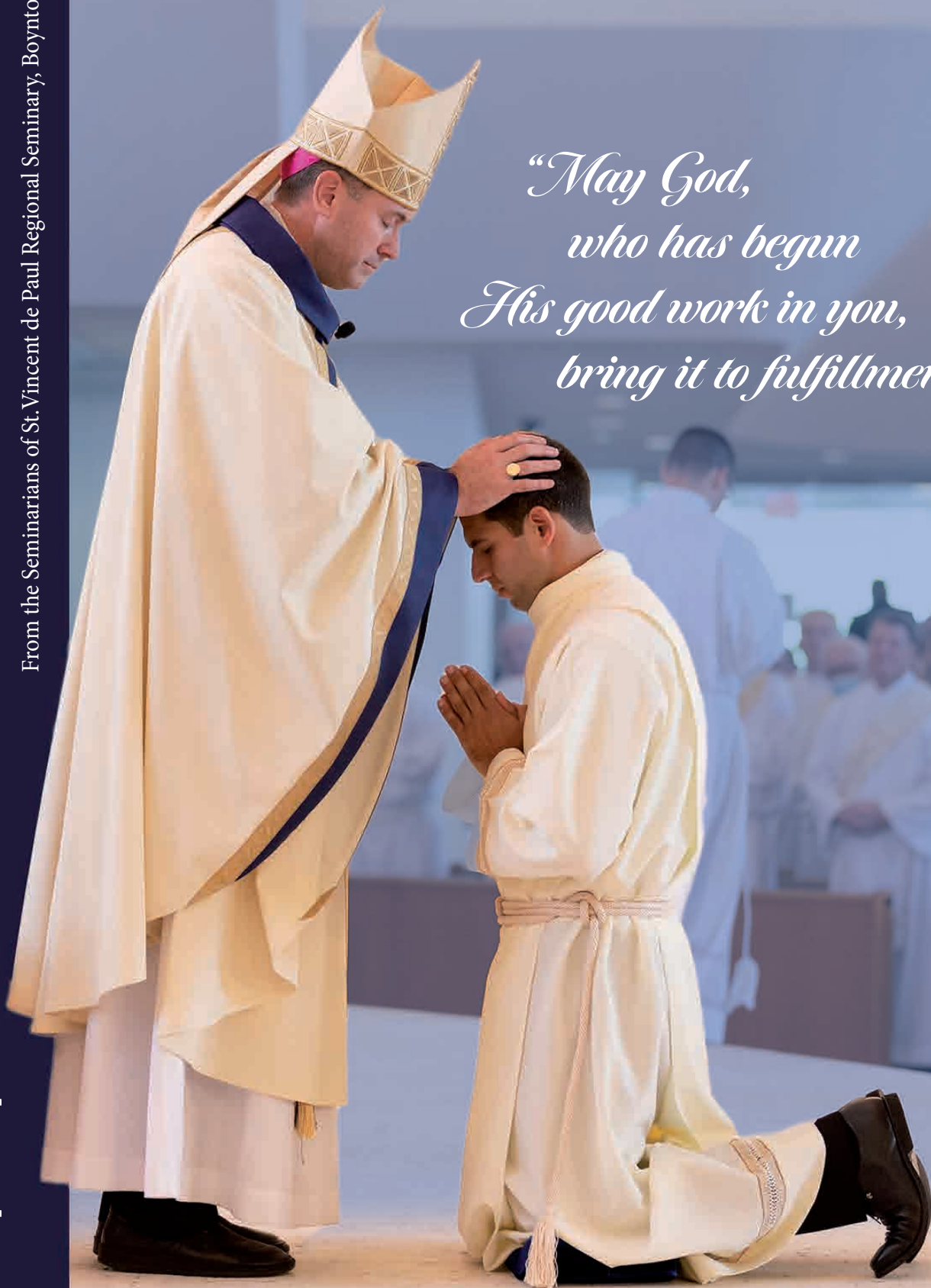


# SEEDS OF HOPE

From the Seminarians of St. Vincent de Paul Regional Seminary, Boynton Beach, FL

ORDINATION ISSUE  
SPRING 2022, ISSUE XVII

*"May God,  
who has begun  
His good work in you,  
bring it to fulfillment."*



ST. VINCENT DE PAUL  
REGIONAL SEMINARY





*“The Church continues to place the highest value on the work of priestly formation, because it is linked to the very mission of the Church, especially the evangelization of humanity: ‘Go, therefore, and make disciples of all nation’ (Mt 28:19).”*

*-Program of Priestly Formation, Introduction*



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# Rector's Message

## ***Dear Friends of SVDP,***

"May God, who has begun His good work in you, bring it to fulfillment." The bishop presiding at an ordination addresses these words to each man immediately after the promise of obedience. The words are inspired by Philippians 1:6: "I am confident of this, that the one who began a good work in you will continue to complete it until the day of Christ Jesus." With the same confidence, the Church calls each man to ordination as a deacon and later as a priest.

In this edition of Seeds of Hope, you will see a number of pieces that speak to the ways in which God has carried out His good work in our community. One seminarian describes his successful effort to improve his ability to serve in English. Additional seminarians will reflect on specific milestones in priestly formation, including Candidacy and the process of preparation for the Diaconate. To cap these wonderful reflections, you will hear from a deacon to be ordained a priest in just a few months. God is carrying out very good work in these men and all of our men.

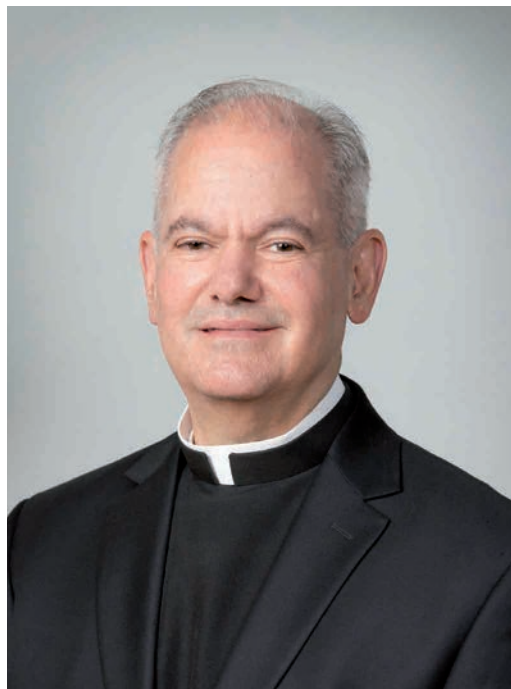
Of notable mention are two more articles speaking to God's good work in longtime members of our faculty and staff. Mrs. Minnie García has been Assistant to the Rector since 2003, and we thank God for the gift that she always will be to our SVDP community. The seminarians of the Diocese of Pensacola-Tallahassee will likewise offer us a tribute to Msgr. Stephen Bosso. After nearly 37 years of service to our seminary community, he will be retiring. Let us together thank and praise the Lord for His good work in these two beloved members of our community.

Enjoy this issue, and may God who has begun a good work in you, our dear friends and benefactors, bring it to fulfillment.

In Christ the High Priest,



Very Rev. Alfredo I. Hernández, PhD, STL  
Rector/President



*“God is carrying out  
very good work in these men  
and all of our men.”*

# Sacrifice and Joy: Learning a Pastoral Language

*by Johan Salas-Restrepo*

**A**s I reflect on my journey learning English so far, there are two words that come to mind: sacrifice and joy. In the first place, I have come to appreciate that learning a new language requires sacrifice. Without it, any hope of mastering the language is unrealistic. Of course, the sacrifice is far from something negative. In fact, sacrifice gives any process in life a deeper meaning, even to the point of being something

desired or enjoyed. This brings me to the second word: joy. In my experience, there is a profound joy that can be found in achieving something long sought after. Having studied the language for only one year so far, the process has continually taken me out of my comfort zone. It has cost me hours of practice, repetition, and lessons with my tutors in the seminary. I am most grateful for the opportunities to approach my fellow seminarians

and the formation community to ask for their help. Through it all, there is joy, especially as I see my progress.

In all of this also, my desire to be a priest in the Diocese of Raleigh is constantly being strengthened. This inspires me to persevere. Although I have spoken to sacrifice and joy, I can add a third word: prayer. There is one prayer in particular that I use to ask for God's help. It is attributed to St. Thomas Aquinas: "Guide the beginning of my work, direct its progress, and bring it to successful completion. This I ask through Jesus Christ, true God and true man, living and reigning with You and the Father, forever and ever. Amen."







*“May God who has  
in you bring it*







*begun this good work  
to fulfillment. ”*







# EXPERIENCE <sup>OF</sup> CANDIDACY

*by Aristides Lima*

## *Healer of Body to Healer of Soul*

Just a few weeks ago from the time of writing this reflection, my classmates and I celebrated the Rite of Admission to Candidacy. In many ways, this rite serves as one of the first milestones of priestly formation. During the Rite, we each entrusted ourselves into the hands of the Church, through which the Holy Spirit truly acts. As a newly accepted Candidate for Orders to the Diaconate and Priesthood for the Archdiocese of Miami, I am honored to move forward into the next stage of priestly formation. Time has flown by in my journey of discernment and formation so far. I entered seminary in 2019 after graduating from the University of Florida as a physical therapist. I



was in the business of healing bodies, which was certainly a blessing, but now I believe that God is calling me to heal souls. Best of all, he is preparing me to do this through his Church. This last point occurred to me as the Rite of Candidacy was taking place.

As part of the Rite of Admission to Candidacy, my brother seminarians and I were asked by the presiding bishop, "Do you resolve to complete your preparation so that in due time, through Holy Orders you will be prepared to assume ministry within the Church and give faithful service to Christ the Lord and his Body, the Church?" We all answered, "I do." Yet, even as I said those words, I knew I could not do it alone. I take comfort and draw inspiration from the fact that this is the Lord's plan for my life and not merely my own; He is with me at every step. In addition to our Lord, many great role models and Saints have committed to this path before me, and I trust the practical wisdom shared with us by our formators. The bishop concluded the Rite of Admission to Candidacy with, "May God, who began a good work in you, bring it to fulfillment," to which we responded: "Amen!" As I look back on the past years, I see how God's hand has providentially orchestrated my life. I look forward to the future (ordination and beyond) with great hope, knowing that He will be with me every step of the way. He will bring his good work in me to fulfillment. Thanks be to Him!



# DEACON AND PRIESTLY

*"Come, Creator Spirit, visit the souls of your*



Rev. Mr. Gustavo Santos  
*Archdiocese of Miami*



Rev. Mr. Andrew Vitrano-Farinato  
*Archdiocese of Miami*



Rev. Mr. Paul Lacombe  
*Diocese of Charleston*



Rev. Mr. Ángel García  
*Diocese of Orlando*



Rev. Mr. Zachary Parker  
*Diocese of Orlando*



Rev. Mr. Marc Gustinelli  
*Diocese of Palm Beach*



Rev. Mr. Christian Alfredo Galvan  
*Diocese of St. Petersburg*



Rev. Mr. Alan Baldarelli  
*Diocese of Venice*



# CLASS PHOTOS

*devoted; with your divine grace fill the hearts you have created.”*

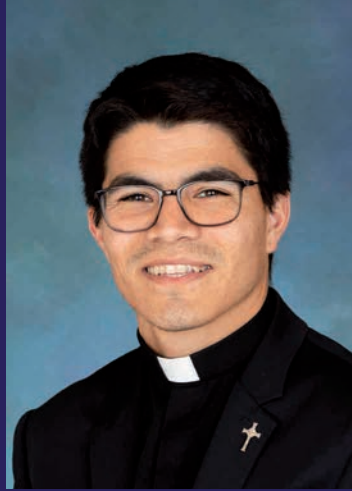
- Veni Creator Spiritus Hymn



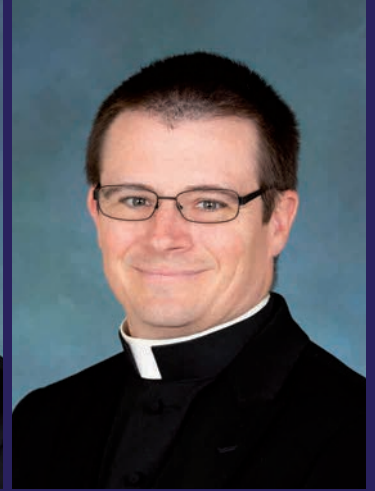
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Archdiocese of Miami



Rev. Mr. César Betancourt  
Archdiocese of Miami | Redemptoris Mater



Rev. Mr. Agustín Estrada  
Archdiocese of Miami | Redemptoris Mater



Rev. Mr. Chris Loester  
Diocese of Charleston



Rev. Mr. Zackary Gray  
Diocese of Orlando



Rev. Mr. Joseph Tran  
Diocese of Orlando



Rev. Mr. Daniel Donohue  
Diocese of Palm Beach



Rev. Mr. Armando Leon  
Diocese of Palm Beach



Rev. Mr. Donald Amodeo  
Diocese of St. Petersburg



Rev. Mr. Zackary Brasseur  
Diocese of St. Petersburg



Rev. Mr. David Portorreal  
Diocese of Venice



Rev. Mr. Luis Daniel Guivas  
Passionists





# DIACONATE ORDINATION




“Jesus has called you for this time  
to be His deacons  
and, soon,  
to be His priests.”

*Bishop David Toups, Diocese of Beaumont*





A photograph of a man with a beard and mustache, wearing a black clerical shirt, sitting in a wooden church pew. He is holding an open red book and looking down at it. The background features tall, narrow stained glass windows with colorful abstract patterns and modern pendant lights hanging from the ceiling.

# A MAN FOR OTHERS

*by Rev. Mr. Christian Galvan*



Getting out of the car and breathing in the crisp salt air, I felt an instant peace wash over me. I had just arrived at Our Lady of Divine Providence Retreat Center in Clearwater, Florida. After more than five years in priestly formation, the time for my canonical retreat in preparation for my diaconate ordination had come.

Unexpectedly, I found prayer during the first two days of my five-day silent retreat to be particularly difficult. I had every desire to be a good and holy deacon and, eventually, a priest. But, I began to look inwards toward myself to seek consolation and affirmation of my vocation rather than wait for the Lord in the silence. The self-preoccupation created only confusion in my heart.

It was on the third day of the retreat after lunch that I felt drawn to make a visit to the retreat center chapel. To my great surprise, I found the Real Presence of Jesus Christ in the monstrance greeting me as I entered. I made my way towards the front of the quiet chapel and began to pray and even weep, wondering if I was even good enough to answer the Lord's call.

Just then, a young woman came in to pray along with her young daughter who appeared to be about the age of three. The mother began to pray her Rosary while the daughter entertained herself, walking around the pews and in the center aisle, interrupting her mother's prayer every two to three minutes. The young mother never missed a beat. She would simply point to the Blessed Sacrament and whisper, "That's Jesus!" to her young daughter and then return to her prayer. This pattern continued for the next fifteen minutes or so. The mother then rose, grabbed her daughter's hand, and left the chapel in peace.

My tears flowed as I saw the beauty of that mother's prayer and her desire to encounter the Lord in her own vocation. It is only through the Priesthood of Jesus Christ that the Blessed Sacrament is made present for adoration. These fifteen minutes of prayer were probably the only free moments this young mother had that day, and she desired to spend them with the Lord in great intimacy. Shattering all silence in my own prayer, I then heard the Lord say to me, "This is why I am calling you, for their sake and many others."



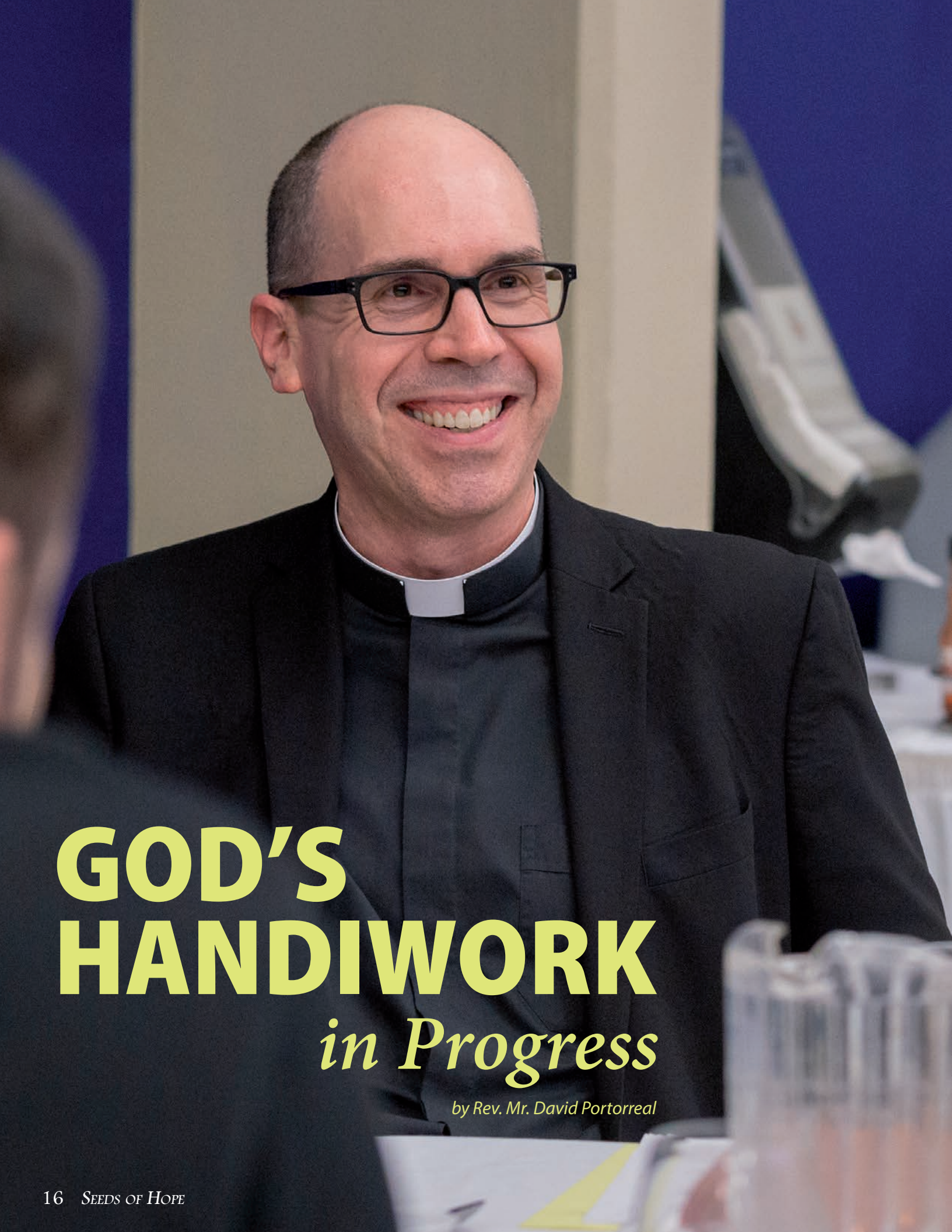
My focus in prayer shifted from looking within myself to looking to the Lord, seeing through his eyes, how he was at work in my own life story. The words from the Rite of Ordination of Deacons resonated in my heart for the rest of the retreat: "May God who has begun the good work in you bring it to fulfillment." I have complete trust that when I lay down my life at ordination, the Lord will continue to fulfill his work in and through me for the sake of his people.

The Lord is not outdone in generosity. Not only did he provide the affirmation I sought on my canonical retreat, but he deepened this grace by granting me a firmer resolve to be a man for others as a deacon and, one day, priest of Jesus Christ.



*“I then heard the Lord say to me, ‘This is why I am calling you, for their sake and many others.’”*



A photograph of a middle-aged man with glasses, smiling. He is wearing a black clerical shirt with a white collar and a black jacket. The background is slightly blurred, showing what appears to be a church interior with blue and white walls. The text 'GOD'S HANDIWORK' is overlaid in large, bold, yellow-green capital letters, and 'in Progress' is overlaid in a smaller, yellow-green script font below it.

# GOD'S HANDIWORK

*in Progress*

*by Rev. Mr. David Portorreal*



**I**t seems hard to believe that after so many years of formation, my long journey to the ministerial priesthood is soon approaching. The decision to enter seminary and discern God's will in a formal setting was delayed by many detours and distractions. There are many twists and turns to my story – too many to recount here. Even so, I am grateful for them all because I will be able to use those experiences in parish ministry. As a later vocation, I am a testament to the fact that God is the Great Course-Corrector, truly merciful and immensely patient. For God, it is never too late. I am eternally grateful that the work He began so many years ago is now being fulfilled.

The first seeds of a priestly vocation were planted back in grade school when I began to have thoughts of what my future life's work would be. At the time, however, I was more taken with pursuing the arts: acting, writing, and directing. While I had an inkling that God wanted more from me and I remained very involved in my home parish, the priesthood did not seem to be my calling. After attending College of the Holy Cross where I studied Political Science, I enrolled in the Spanish Language School at Middlebury College, receiving a master's degree in Spanish. Returning to the Cleveland area where I was born, I taught high school Spanish for four years at my alma mater. Still feeling drawn to the arts, I applied to the College of Motion Picture Arts at Florida State University. After acceptance, I earned a master's degree in film production before moving out to Los Angeles to pursue a career in film.

After many years of toiling to 'make it in the business,' doors began to open.. A short film I made won several awards on the festival circuit, and I had booked a co-star role on an episode of Criminal Minds, leading a manager to sign me to her roster. Amidst all of these good things, however, I was continually restless. Was this what God wanted for my life? Why in the back of my mind was I always thinking that God wanted me to be a priest? It was not until I met with the Vocations Director for the Archdiocese of Los Angeles that everything became clear for me. To paraphrase him, he said "David, you have all the signs of a vocation, but

you'll never know for sure until you leave this world behind and enter seminary to formally discern God's will for you." After so many years of running, so many different challenges and experiences in life, it was in that moment that I surrendered to the Lord. The Holy Spirit opened the doors for me to enter seminary, and eventually I made my way to the Diocese of Venice in Florida.

Each year of formation has been a challenge and a blessing. I now know with certitude that the ministerial priesthood is God's calling for me. What a joy it will be to be ordained and minister to the People of God as a priest. God is bringing to fulfillment what He began within me long ago. But, I remain God's handiwork in progress. My formation will continue until the Lord calls me home. In light of this, I stay open to growth. To paraphrase St. Ignatius of Loyola, I hope to serve God as He deserves.

**“FOR GOD,  
IT IS NEVER  
TOO LATE.  
I AM ETERNALLY  
GRATEFUL THAT  
THE WORK  
HE BEGAN SO  
MANY YEARS AGO  
IS NOW BEING  
FULFILLED.”**





# Country Roads, Take Me Home!

*by the Seminarians of Pensacola-Tallahassee*

**I**n 1964, the Pontifical Biblical Commission published *Sancta Mater Ecclesia*, asserting that the Gospels developed in three distinct stages: the word and deeds of Jesus, the oral preaching of the first Christians, and the writing of the four Gospels. In a similar way, the stories about Monsignor Stephen C. Bosso's tenure at Saint Vincent de Paul Regional Seminary (SVDP) have been passed down from generation to generation of seminarians. Each expresses different aspects of the personality of this larger than life, incredibly generous, and beloved member of our community. It is impossible to measure the impact this former rector has made on hundreds of priests serving throughout the southeastern United States and, indeed, the world. To borrow from St. John the Evangelist, if these were to be described individually, I do not think the whole world could contain the books that would be written (Jn 21:25).

Although this is not Monsignor Bosso's first farewell to SVDP, his retirement this summer marks the end of an era as he returns at long last to his hometown of Pensacola. Soon, his colorful presence will become mere legend in the courtyards of 10701

**MSGR.  
STEPHEN BOSSO**  
**Son. Brother. Christian.**  
**Catholic. Scripture**  
**Scholar. Formator.**  
**Spiritual Director.**  
**Rector. Pastor. Priest.**

S. Military Trail. For those of us studying for the Diocese of Pensacola-Tallahassee, our weekly gatherings will certainly not be the same, but we take great solace knowing that he will be only a phone call away. Each of us, and so many others, are eternally grateful for his guidance, support, and friendship.

Monsignor Bosso has worn many hats over the years, faithfully serving God and the Church. Now, thirty-seven years after arriving at SVDP, he can finally sing these amended words of John Denver's classic hit: "Country roads, take me home / To the place I belong / Pensacola-Tallahassee / Take me home, country roads."

## A GRATEFUL FAREWELL TO MRS. HERMINIA (MINNIE) GARCÍA

*by the Editors of Seeds of Hope*

In 2003, then-Rector Msgr. Stephen Bosso hired Mrs. Minnie García to the staff. After nearly twenty years of service to the seminary, Minnie has retired. She will be missed, but the impact of her faith, hope, and love will remain.

**THANK YOU, MINNIE!**



St. Vincent de Paul Regional Seminary  
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### NOTE FROM THE EDITORS

In light of product shortages and with an eye toward preserving the "seeds" of the environment we have decided that our Fall issue of *Seeds of Hope* magazine will be available only electronically; however, we will continue to print and mail our Spring ordination issue each year. Please make sure that we have your email address so that you may receive the Fall issue. You may send that information to [development@svdp.edu](mailto:development@svdp.edu), and please also share your thoughts on this decision!

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ST. VINCENT DE PAUL  
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