



# THE ROME EXPERIENCE

A SUMMER PROGRAM FOR DIOCESAN SEMINARIANS

## 2019

Mission of The Rome Experience  
Program Courses  
How to Apply



# THE ROME EXPERIENCE

Tuesday, May 21 – Monday, July 1, 2019

## OUR MISSION & PROGRAM OVERVIEW

In 2007 a number of Bishops familiar with the positive impact of St. Josemaria on diocesan priests expressed interest in a formative program for their seminarians inspired by his spirituality and teachings. St. Josemaria Escriva (1902-1975), founder of Opus Dei and the Association of the Priestly Society of the Holy Cross, devoted many years of his life to both fraternal and spiritual support for diocesan priests, and remains a role model for many priests today.

In response, the St. Josemaria Institute in 2009 organized a six-week program offering academic courses accompanied by spiritual formation, designed to enhance priestly identity and cultivate a love for pastoral ministry.

Since 2009, 205 seminarians from 50 dioceses have participated in the program. Seminarians make a five-day retreat in Ars, France, village of St. John Vianney, to reflect on the meaning of the priesthood. Some seminarians have remarked that this retreat was the most memorable experience of the entire program.

Following the retreat, the seminarians go to Rome for coursework in Theology and the History of the Church.

They pray at the sites of the great saints of the early church, enhancing the priestly zeal for the New Evangelization. Rome provides direct observation of the richness and breathtaking beauty of Christian art and Catholic Churches.

Besides academics, the daily routine is centered on the celebration of the Eucharist and Liturgy of the Hours coupled with an hour of meditation before the Blessed Sacrament. The schedule includes time for fraternal interaction, so important for priestly life.

The program concludes with a pilgrimage to Spain visiting Barcelona and the Monastery and Marian Shrine of Monserrat, and spending a day of reflection at Torreciudad, a Marian Shrine in the Pyrenees.

In the spirit of pilgrimage, the program offers:

### SPIRITUAL FORMATION

- 5-day retreat in Ars, France
- Daily schedule that includes Holy Mass, the Liturgy of the Hours, mental prayer, and the Holy Rosary
- Sacrament of Penance, adoration of the Blessed Sacrament, and spiritual meditations
- Living in close proximity to the Holy Father
- Pilgrimages to churches and tombs of the martyrs and saints

### FRATERNITY

- Seminarians from across the United States
- Daily prayers, meals, and classes
- Movie nights
- Sports and hiking excursions
- Free-time

### CULTURAL & INTELLECTUAL FORMATION

- Being immersed in the cultural history of the Church
- Experiencing the beauty of the Church's art and architecture
- Academic courses:
  - Christian Art and Architecture
  - Human Virtues for Priestly Fatherhood
  - Priests in the New Evangelization
- Expert instructors from the United States and Rome
- Guided tours and excursions to religious and cultural sites
- Papal liturgies and audiences
- Visits to Vatican Congregations



## TENTATIVE DAILY SCHEDULE

The Rome Experience's daily schedule\* is designed to help the participants benefit maximally from all the offerings of the program, to foster fraternity, and to remain intimately united to Christ through prayer and study.

Visits with family, friends, brother seminarians, and priests are only permitted during scheduled free time. Family and friends visiting Rome should be informed of this policy. Visits from vocation directors, rectors, or bishops may occur at any time that is convenient.

### WEEKDAYS:

8:00 AM	Breakfast
9:00 AM	Class
10:00 AM	Class
11:00 AM	Break
12:00 PM	Angelus/Class
1:00 PM	Lunch

The daily schedule also includes:

- Morning Prayer
- Holy Mass
- Afternoon Tours/Classes
- Evening Prayer
- Dinner
- Holy Rosary
- Examination of Conscience and Night Prayer

### WEEKLY SCHEDULE INCLUDES:

- Eucharistic Adoration and Benediction
- Confessions and Spiritual Direction
- Papal Liturgies
- Visits to Vatican Congregations
- Tours and Excursions

Students have free time every Saturday from noon until Sunday dinnertime.

\*PLEASE NOTE: The daily schedule is subject to change. A final schedule will be given to each seminarian at orientation.



# 2019 PROGRAM COURSES

## **PRIESTS IN THE NEW EVANGELIZATION** (.50 credit)

For the New Evangelization, future priests need to have a physical and spiritual closeness to people, and to touch and move people's hearts, as Pope Francis is reminding the Church. St. John Vianney, the patron saint of parish priests, did all of these things while re-evangelizing Ars after the spiritual ravages of the French Revolution. While on retreat in Ars, seminarians will ponder the Church's summons to a New Evangelization through the lives of the St. John Vianney, St. Josemaria, and Pope St. John Paul II.

## **THE HUMAN VIRTUES FOR PRIESTLY FATHERHOOD, CHARACTER, STEADFASTNESS, AND SELF-MASTERY** (1.25 credits)

Every priest needs to be Christ in his daily life to succeed in his priestly mission. The Directory for the Life and Ministry of the Priest emphasizes the human virtues as cornerstones for the priest being a well-rounded, resilient, and reliable man, capable of ministering effectively to God's people. With the current confusion on gender in our society, the Church needs men with a clear priestly identity who steadfastly exercise the strength of character to help promote the holiness of all men and women, celibate and married, lay and consecrated. This course will offer a theoretical account of these virtues and how they can be acquired through Aristotelian-Thomistic anthropology, and St. Josemaria Escriva's practical proposals for seeking holiness through the virile pursuit of the human virtues.

Instructor: Rev. Robert Gahl, Associate Professor of Ethics, Pontifical University of the Holy Cross, Rome

## **COURSE ACCREDITATION**

The Rome Experience courses are accredited by the Pontifical University of the Holy Cross  
Piazza Sant'Apollinare, 49  
00186, Rome, Italy  
[www.pusc.it/eng](http://www.pusc.it/eng)

The program follows the Vatican Congregation for the Clergy's Directory for the Ministry and the Life of the Priests (1994) and "The Gift of the Priesthood" (December 8, 2016).

"Through The Rome Experience, we have been blessed to get a taste of the power of beauty as found in the richness of the Universal Church. We have seen it in the wonderful churches we have visited, in the breathtaking museums, in the loving words of the Holy Father, and in the rich poverty of people like St. John Vianney and St. Francis."



**FERNANDO RICAUD**  
SEMINARIAN  
DIOCESE OF AUSTIN  
THE ROME EXPERIENCE 2018

## **PASTORAL PRACTICE SEMINAR** (.50 credit)

This seminar will help the seminarian bridge the gap between the theological and spiritual principles learned during the Rome Experience with the lived experience of a parish priest. The goal is to help the seminarian to understand his future responsibility as a priest to imitate and live out Christ's own pastoral charity—a pastoral charity that, in essence, requires a total gift of self to the Church and that makes special demands on the parish priest (*Pastores Dabo Vobis*, 1992).

Instructor: Rev. Eric Nielsen, Diocese of Madison;  
Director, St. Paul University Catholic Center, Madison, Wisconsin

## **THE BASILICAS, CHURCHES, AND CATACOMBS OF ROME** (1.50 credits)

The patriarchal basilicas, catacombs and other ancient churches in Rome are an encyclopedia of Church history and theology taught not in words but in indelible images of architecture, sculpture, painting and mosaic. As with the interpretation of stained glass windows, however, one needs to learn the art of "reading that encyclopedia," by understanding the meaning and context of the symbols used. Through readings and discussion in the classroom, and a series of in-depth guided tours, seminarians will have the various volumes of this "encyclopedia" opened for them, to confirm them as followers of Christ and future evangelizers.

Instructor: Dr. Michael Tinkler, Associate Professor of Art and Architecture, Hobart and William Smith Colleges, Geneva, New York



## 2019 TENTATIVE ITINERARY

Rome, "The Eternal City," attracts millions of visitors each year. While several visits in Rome and its environs are scheduled, seminarians will be strongly encouraged to maintain a spirit of prayer and pilgrimage, remembering that they have come to Rome as future priests to pray and study next to the Chair of St. Peter and the saints, while providing a witness to the Faith.

### **TUESDAY, MAY 21, 2019 (CHICAGO):**

Arrive in Chicago  
Orientation  
Accommodations – University of St. Mary of the Lake (Mundelein, IL)

### **WEDNESDAY, MAY 22, 2019 (CHICAGO/LYON):**

Afternoon Flight Departing for Lyon/Ars

### **THURSDAY, MAY 23, 2019 (LYON/PARAY LE MONIAL):**

Arrive in Lyon/Ars  
Pilgrimage to Paray-Le-Monial  
Accommodations – Hostellerie des Trois Pigeons

### **FRIDAY, MAY 24, 2019 (CLUNY/ARS):**

Pilgrimage to Cluny  
Arrive in Ars  
Accommodations – Foyer Sacerdotal Jean-Paul II

### **SATURDAY, MAY 25, 2019 (ARS):**

Pilgrimage to the Basilica of Notre-Dame de Fourvière in Lyon  
Begin Spiritual Retreat

### **WEDNESDAY, MAY 29, 2019 (ARS):**

Retreat Ends

### **THURSDAY, MAY 30, 2019 (ARS/ROME):**

Arrive in Rome  
Accommodations - Centro Internazionale Animazione Missionaria (CIAM)

### **FRIDAY, MAY 31, 2019 (ROME):**

Academic Program Begins  
Courses at CIAM and the Pontifical University of the Holy Cross

### **FRIDAY, JUNE 28, 2019 (ROME/BARCELONA):**

Arrive Barcelona  
Pilgrimage to Monastery and Marian Shrine of Montserrat  
Accommodations – Tres Caminos

### **SATURDAY, JUNE 29, 2019 (TORRECIUDAD):**

Pilgrimage to Shrine of Our Lady of Torreciudad  
Day of Reflection

### **SUNDAY, JUNE 30, 2019 (ZARAGOZA/MADRID):**

Visit Barbastro and Zaragoza  
Arrive Madrid  
Accommodations – Casa de Espiritualidad Emaus

### **MONDAY, JULY 1, 2019 (MADRID/CHICAGO):**

Return to the US

## HOW TO APPLY

The Rome Experience is designed to complement existing programs of formation in diocesan seminaries for seminarians who have completed their first year of theology. Seminarians interested in applying must be recommended by their bishops and vocation directors.

### **APPLICATIONS**

Download the application at [www.theromeexperience.org](http://www.theromeexperience.org)

### **DEADLINE**

Applications for the program and scholarship must be received or postmarked by:

Monday, January 7, 2019

### **SCHOLARSHIPS**

Midwest Theological Forum has established a scholarship fund to assist those seminarians who are in need of financial assistance. Limited partial scholarships are available based on merit and need. See the program application for more information.

### **SUBMITTING APPLICATIONS**

Because there are a limited number of openings for the program, incomplete or late applications for the program and the scholarship will not be considered. Applications may be submitted by mail, fax, or email.

Rev. Peter V. Armenio  
Executive Director  
The Rome Experience  
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Downers Grove, IL 60515

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Fax 331-777-5819

Email [info@theromeexperience.org](mailto:info@theromeexperience.org)

[www.theromeexperience.org](http://www.theromeexperience.org)

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*"If you use your time well, Rome will leave a mark on your soul, a deep, lasting imprint. And, you will be able to be a more faithful son of the Church."*

*St. Josemaria Escriva*

\*PLEASE NOTE: The itinerary is subject to change.  
A final schedule will be given to each seminarian at orientation.

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**Rev. Stephen Beseau**  
The Athenaeum of Ohio  
Archdiocese of Kansas City in Kansas



“Being in Rome has been awe-inspiring... We are being formed as men preparing for the priesthood, in order to help save souls through a knowledge of the history of the Church, through the beauty she has produced, and the firmness and maternal affection with which she proclaims Christ the Truth.”

“The privilege of seeing the Pope, receiving his blessing, and hearing his words was overwhelming. The specific content of his message was about sonship: in Christ, we have a loving ‘padre,’ not a ‘padrone,’ and thus, we are truly beloved sons and daughters rather than slaves. What a great message to hear from our Holy Father!”



**EDWARD SEELEY**  
SEMINARIAN  
ARCHDIOCESE OF LOS ANGELES  
THE ROME EXPERIENCE 2018



**JACOB LINDLE**  
SEMINARIAN  
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