

STF NEWSLETTER

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Cardinal Jose Saraiva, Prefect of the Congregation for the Causes of the Saints, with Bishop Javier Echevarría at the 20th anniversary ceremony.

Pontifical University of the Holy Cross Celebrates 20th Anniversary

WHAT STARTED in 1985 as a satellite theology campus affiliated with the University of Navarre, is now the Pontifical University of the Holy Cross in Rome.

“We began with 40 students. Now we are about 1,400,” said Msgr. Mariano Fazio, Rector of the University. “Our classrooms have gotten bigger, but thank God the spirit with which we began has not changed. We desire to serve the Church as the Church wants, through our academic work.”

Portuguese Cardinal Jose Saraiva, Prefect of the Congregation for the Causes of the Saints, and members of the Vatican diplomatic corps attended a ceremony earlier this year to celebrate the milestone and pay homage to those who played a role in the school’s expansion

“Obviously, the adjective ‘pontifical’ is not a decorative title but rather it is a whole program,” said Cardinal Saraiva. “Pontifical means being faithful to the Pope, the Vicar of Christ, the Successor of Peter. It means being faithful to the Church.”

The Grand Chancellor of the University, Bishop Javier Echevarría,

Prelate of Opus Dei, recognized the University’s founders, St. Josemaría and Bishop Alvaro del Portillo.

“With hard work, we are able to do things because we are not the ones doing them,” said Bishop Echevarría. “It is Our Lord who acts through us.”

The Pontifical University of the Holy Cross now boasts four departments: Theology, Philosophy, Canon

Law and Institutional Social Communications. The expansion comes during an age where scientific debates on issues like embryonic stem cell research and crisis media management are among the Catholic Church’s modern day challenges.

“Theology can enlighten modern men and women. It can help clear up ignorance in religious matters and in Church issues, which unfortunately is widespread in modern society. There is nothing worse than ignorance in any matter but especially in religion,” said Cardinal Saraiva.

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In collaboration with the
• Pontifical University of the Holy Cross (Rome, Italy)

• Ecclesiastical Faculties of the University of Navarre (Pamplona, Spain)

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Pope Benedict XVI visits the Pontifical University of the Holy Cross and the University of Navarre



Bidasoa International Seminary in the University of Navarre received Joseph Cardinal Ratzinger, now Pope Benedict XVI, on February 2, 1998.



Pope Benedict XVI, then Joseph Cardinal Ratzinger, with Bishop Javier Echevarria, Grand Chancellor of the Pontifical University of the Holy Cross, during a visit to the University in 2004.

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Like the range of studies offered at the University, the students represent an array of cultures and backgrounds.

“There is no profile which perfectly describes our students because they come from over 70 countries,” states Msgr. Fazio. “There are priests, religious, lay men and women. But obviously the majority are priests or seminarians who are seeking formation in order to better serve the Church.”

The University is “universal” in the sense that it represents students from across the globe, but the faculty still considers the atmosphere particularly Roman.

“Roman to me means universal, something I learned from St. Josemaría. You cannot be truly Roman without thinking of the entire world and all of its people,” said Bishop Echevarría.

The anniversary is also an occasion to honor the University’s founder, Saint Josemaría Escrivá.

Plans for an institute dedicated to studying the life and writings of St. Josemaría were presented at the ceremony, as well as a summary publication of the 2002 International Conference entitled the “Grandeur of Ordinary Life” - which took part during the centenary of the saint’s birth.

“Since the University is inspired by his message it seemed logical to us to combine the 20th anniversary and

the presentation of the results of the Conference,” said Msgr. Fazio. “There is a special connection because on January 9, 1985, the academic center was founded. January 9th is the birthday of St. Josemaría. And the university organized the Congress on that date three years ago, on the centenary of his birth.”

After only 20 years, the University is already outgrowing its campus.

“We would like to finish up construction so that our students can study and work more comfortably. And we hope we can count on the help of many people because it is not easy to raise funds,” said Msgr. Fazio. “From an academic point of view, we would like to expand the faculty of our Theology department. We are also thinking of creating new departments.”

With the rapid increase in the school’s student body, expansion plans for the 21st century are currently in the works.

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**Visit the new
Theological Centrum
website at:
www.iripple.net/theocentrum/index.htm**



Filipino priests and seminarians in Rome welcome Pope Benedict XVI

“Annuntio vobis gaudium magnum, habemus Papam!”

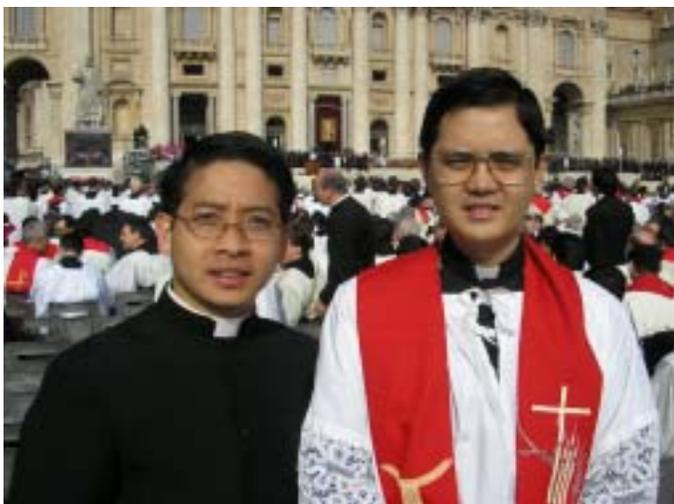
I was studying inside my room when my companion told me: Presto! Andiamo alla piazza è fumata bianca! In that moment with great joy and surprise I took my jacket immediately and started to run from Sedes Sapientiae Seminary to St. Peter’s Square. I arrived there 20 minutes before the announcement and a lot of people were already there in the piazza.

The white smoke that announced the election of the German pope was appeared at around 5:50 p.m. after the 24 hours of conclave and maybe 4 times of votation. That was an hour after, when Jorge Arturo Cardinal Ezevez appeared in the balcony of the Basilica announced to the people: “Annuntio vobis gaudium magnum, habemus Papam! Eminentissimum ac Reverendissimum Dominum, Dominum Josephi, Sanctae Romanae Ecclesiae Cardinalem Ratzinger, qui sibi nomen imposuit Benedicti XVI.” this was the formula of the “storico annuncio”. With great joy and surprise I could not stop at that moment applauding and shouting “Benedicto!” to the newly elected Pontiff.

That was an unforgettable experience for me and I am very thankful for the Lord for having a new Pastor that would guide his flock, a shepherd after His own heart as they said: “Papa eletto, Papa fatto!”

I would like to extend my greetings to all our benefactors who make possible our presence in Rome. My prayers for all their endeavors.

—A letter from Filipino seminarian in
Sedes Sapientiae International Seminary, Rome



Rev. Fr. Gregory Gaston and Seminarian Expedito Torrevillas at St. Peter’s Basilica.



Participants of the seminar “Fostering Spiritual Direction” with Rev. Fr. Juan Luis Bastero.

Alumni Seminars on Spiritual Direction Held

IN THE COURSE of the permanent formation of the alumni of the University of Navarre and the Pontifical University of the Holy Cross, the need for spiritual direction showed itself to be a constant concern. This need is felt very much in seminary formation, vocation animation and in the formation of the faithful in general. It is, no doubt, the effective way in assisting souls in their journey to come closer to God.

To address this the alumni of both universities held this year various seminars on developing spiritual direction in the local Church. The holding of both the National Congress of the Clergy and the launching of the Institute for Seminary Formation by the CBCP in 2004 inspired the alumni to launch this project.

Rev. Fr. Luis Felipe Navarro, professor of the Pontifical University of the Holy Cross came to the Philippines on April 18 - 25, 2005, to be the main speaker on the seminar “Towards Effective Spiritual Guidance”. On October 1 – 12, 2005, Rev. Fr. Juan Luis Bastero, of the Office of Promotion and Student Assistance of the University of Navarre, and for many years, Rector of the Bidasoa International Seminary was in dioceses of San Pablo, Palo, Manila, and Legazpi to hold conferences on “Fostering Spiritual Direction”.

As a result of the two important visits of the professors of the Pontifical University of the Holy Cross and the University of Navarre, the alumni initiated the Spiritual Guidance project aimed to foster a more effective application of spiritual direction, first of all, among the alumni themselves and, secondly, in the course of their priestly ministry especially in seminary formation and in promoting vocations to the priesthood.

20 years of training priests and seminarians: A progress report

There are many dioceses in the Philippines that need priests especially for the task of seminary formation. To help address this situation, the project *Formation of Priests and Seminarians for the Local Churches* was started in 1986 by Theological Centrum, a project of the *Studium Theologiae Foundation, Inc. (STF)*. In these 20 years, from 1986 up to the academic year 2005-2006, Theological Centrum in collaboration with the Pontifical University of the Holy Cross and the University of Navarre has assisted in the training of priests and seminarians of the following dioceses:

Alaminos	2 graduates
Baguio	6
Balanga	2
Bangued	1
Bayombong	2
Borongan	13
Cabanatuan	1
Cagayan de Oro	5
Calbayog	6
Capiz	1
Catarman	5
Cebu	4
Daet	3
Davao	4
Dumaguete	2
Ilagan	1
Jaro	4
Laoag	1
Legaspi	11
Lingayen-Dagupan	1
Lipa	12
Lucena	9
Maasin	1
Malolos	1
Manila	2
Masbate	3
Mati	1
Military Ordinariate	6
Naval	4
Palo	25
Romblon	1
San Pablo	14
Sorsogon	1
Tagbilaran	2
Talibon	1
Tarlac	7
Tuguegarao	11
Virac	11
Zamboanga	1

At the present academic year there are 39 Filipino diocesan priests and seminarians in both the Pontifical University of the Holy Cross in Rome and the University of Navarre in Pamplona, Spain:

Borongan	3 students
Catarman	3
Cebu	7
Davao	1
Legaspi	1
Lipa	2
Lucena	1
Maasin	1
Military Ordinariate	2
Palo	4
San Pablo	1
Sorsogon	4
Tagbilaran	1
Talibon	1
Tarlac	1
Tuguegarao	3
Virac	1
Zamboanga	1

It is through your generous help that these priests and seminarians from the Philippine dioceses could benefit from the Formation of Priests and Seminarians for the Local Churches project.

Be an active part of this legacy to the Church in the Philippines. Give more priests and seminarians the opportunity to train at the Pontifical University of the Holy Cross and the University of Navarre.



Diaconal ordination of Revs. Eugene Hechanova, Antonio Umali, Russel Bantiles, Mario Echano, and Benito Trocino at St. Nicholas Parish, Pamplona, Spain.

You can help support their studies in Rome and Pamplona.

Academic fees	1,150 Euros
Board and lodging (1)	7,100
Books and medical insurance	850
Other expenses	900
Total	10,000 Euros

How can I send my donations?

- *You can send a check to our mailing address:*
Studium Theologiae Foundation, Inc.
5/F Quad Alpha Centrum
125 Pioneer Street
1550 Mandaluyong City
Philippines
- *Or send a bank transfer to the following account:*
Bank of the Philippine Islands
Account name: Studium Theologiae Foundation, Inc.
Account number: 1891-001-513 (peso deposits),
1894-0661-01 (foreign currency deposits)

We encourage you to invite your friends and relatives and other contacts in Filipino communities abroad to take part in this project **to support the church in the Philippines.**

To request information please email us at:

theoцент@uplink.com.ph,

or call tel. (02) 635-6113, fax (02) 634-8590.

Total graduates: 214; 104 students who enrolled as seminarians have been ordained to the sacred ministry.