

# HOLY CROSS SEMINARY NEWSLETTER



## THIS ISSUE

Dec 2023

✝ **Rector's Message**

✝ **Mark Bond**

*Kinh Nguyen—2023  
Valedictorian*

✝ **Fourth Year  
Seminarists**

*Linh Cao, Emilio Capin, Ryan  
Sy*

✝ **Ordination to  
Diaconate**

*Matthew White*

✝ **Farewell**

*Fr Pat Breeze SM, Fr Peter  
Costello, Lisette Demeer*

✝ **Fr Pat Breeze**

*Thanks, Farewell and God  
Bless*

✝ **Ministry of Lector**

*Gerson Badayos, Ignatius  
Tung Tran*

✝ **Thank you**

## UPCOMING EVENTS

✝ 13 - 15 Feb 2024 | Hikoi  
in Northland

✝ 19 Feb 2024 | Semester  
One Commences

✝ 06 May 2024 |  
Founder's Day  
Celebrations

Dear Friends of Holy Cross Seminary,

As we come to the end of our Seminary year of 2023, we move into the seasons of Advent and Christmas. I have always advocated that the best way to prepare for Christmas was to celebrate Advent well. It is an especial time of what we might call 'spiritual Spring cleaning'. The Scripture readings for the first few Sundays of Advent echo the cry of St John the Baptist, "Prepare the way of the Lord". It is, then, a period of reconciliation and peace. When we think that Christmas is a time when we welcome the Prince of Peace into our midst, the world today is anything but a place of peace and reconciliation. It is a fractious and fractured planet with the wild savagery and brutality of war in Gaza and the Ukraine besides many other conflicts in Africa and the Middle East, with tensions, suspicion and strains in other areas of our common home of Earth.

As humans we never seem to learn from the past - that war solves nothing but leaves only a legacy of death, destruction, poverty, homelessness, anger, bitterness, distrust and a desire for revenge. As Christians we are called to be as St Paul reminds us, ambassadors of peace. We must not only preach that message but live it. We need to be role models of peace. Advent is a sharp reminder to put this into strong relief. So, people whom we may be 'off-side' with through resentments, grudges, arguments, hurts, -true or perceived- we need to do our part to mend them by forgiveness and reconciliation. And as Advent reminds us, not tomorrow but now! We need to be creditable witnesses of peace, so that the Prince of Peace will find that ready welcome in our minds and hearts and lives.

Dear Friends and Benefactors of Holy Cross, we here at the Seminary thank you sincerely for your wonderful support and generosity through prayer and hospitality. We remember you in our prayers here, and I offer Mass for your intentions on December 6<sup>th</sup>, the feast of St Nicholas, the true Santa Claus.

May the Prince of Peace, Jesus Christ, bring you and your loved ones that joy and peace at Christmastide and may we all be those ambassadors of reconciliation in our families, our communities and our world.

In the Spirit,

+Colin Campbell

Rector Holy Cross Seminary



## Kinh Nguyen | Te Kupenga – Catholic Theological College | 2023 Valedictorian

By Auckland Seminarian Mark Bond

Kinh Nguyen is Valedictorian in this year's graduating class, and he attributes his success to God's grace and the "hard work of so many people." Indeed, both grace and people have abounded in Kinh's journey, which has spanned over the last fourteen years.

The youngest of a "big Catholic family with seven siblings," Kinh lived out his early years in the city of Vinh, Vietnam. After leaving high school in 2009, he spent two years working as a bricklayer before joining the Society of the Divine Word (SVD). From 2011 to 2015, he studied Sociology at a university in Saigon, and after "a long time of discernment," he left the SVD novitiate community in 2016. He thought it was the end of his priestly vocational journey, but just two years later, God called him to New Zealand, and he became a diocesan seminarian for the Archdiocese of Wellington in 2019. "God's work is always a surprise," he said, reflecting on the challenges and blessings of his calling. "[Being far from home], I often felt homesick, especially during my first year. But I have also experienced many blessings, the biggest one [being] that I am a member of the Archdiocese of Wellington. Whenever I'm back in my diocese, I always feel loved by the people."



Te Kupenga – Catholic Theological College 2023 Graduates  
From left to right: Huong Dinh, Joseph Long, Kinh Nguyen, and Suu Nguyen

Kinh is currently in his fifth year of formation at Holy Cross Seminary, and as such, he is in his "pastoral year," a period in which a seminarian stays in a parish and immerses himself in the day-to-day life of its community. Kinh relayed that the experience has been "dynamic," and that his CTC education has been a "big help" in his ministry. "Having a strong theological background is helpful when you're asked to give a talk to children or adults, or when you're asked questions about liturgy," he said. Having had a taste of the administrative, liturgical, and pastoral demands of parish life, Kinh expressed gratitude for the joint support of Te Kupenga and Holy Cross Seminary, and encouraged other students to seek this support if and when they need it. "If you don't understand something, just be brave and ask your lecturers for help, as I did frequently. Sometimes I was afraid to bother them too much, but out of my love for knowledge, I always overcame that fear. And whenever I did, I always received wonderful assistance from my lecturers. After a while, I realised that they like students coming to them for help!"

Kinh's reflections come from a place of humility and thankfulness, and out of a desire to grow. His goal is to conform himself to Christ as he continues his pastoral placement, and as such, when I asked him which saint he would like to be trapped in an elevator with, he said he'd like to be stuck with the Blessed Mother. "I admire all the Saints, especially John the Baptist, my patron," he said. "But I think Mother Mary knows Jesus better than anyone else, so having time with her would lead me closer to Jesus."

### Fourth Year Seminarians | Embarking on Pastoral Year

At the end of the Seminary Year, 2023, we farewelled our fourth year seminarians, as they embark on their Pastoral year in 2024. From left to right in this image, Bishop Colin Campbell (*Interim Rector*), presented Emilio Capin (*Arch-diocese of Wellington*), Ryan Sy (*Diocese of Auckland*) and Linh Cao (*Diocese of Christchurch*), with a Holy Cross candle to share the light of Christ on this next stage of their formation. Please keep them and the seminary community in your prayers.





## Ordination to Diaconate

*Congratulations!*

Deacon Matthew White with Archbishop Paul Martin after Matthew's ordination to the diaconate in St Teresa's Pro-Cathedral in Wellington on Sunday 12 November. Matthew was a seminarian at Holy Cross Seminary from 2019-2021.



## Farewell - Staff leaving the Seminary at the end of 2023

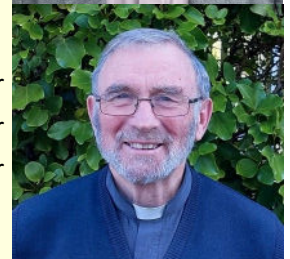
### Fr Pat Breeze SM (*Spiritual Formator*)

We would like to thank Fr. Pat Breeze SM, a Marist priest, for his valuable contribution to the formation of the seminarians here at Holy Cross Seminary. As Spiritual Director, Fr Pat has been a wonderful source of encouragement and support to the seminarians as they grow in their spiritual lives through God's grace.



### Fr Peter Costello (*Priest in Residence*)

Through his 30 years service and ministry as Priest for the Diocese of Christchurch, Fr Peter was able to share a wealth of knowledge and experience with our seminarians. Thank you Fr Peter for your support of the staff and seminarians in 2023. We have appreciated your presence here as Priest in Residence and will miss your sense of humour!



### Lisette Demeer (*Chef*)

Lisette worked for Holy Cross Seminary for 21-years taking a break while remediation works took place. We were so blessed to have Lisette return to the Seminary this year. Having set up the kitchens again and ensuring everything is running smoothly, Lisette is retiring her chefs hat. Enjoy your retirement Lisette. We will miss your lovely meals, and your joyful presence at Holy Cross Seminary.



## Thanks, Farewell and God Bless

Fr. Pat Breeze SM

I have enjoyed my year here at Holy Cross Seminary as the spiritual director. It has been my privilege to be part of the formation program, guiding and encouraging the seminarians in their relationship with the Lord. They have all been sincere and open in their desire to grow as disciples of the Lord and thereby serve the church as prayerful and holy priests.

It has also been a great joy to be a part of the many celebrations, liturgies and other events during the seminary year. The support and friendship I have found from the rector – Bishop Colin, and the other formators has also been a great blessing. I will look back on my time here with gratitude.



*Seminarians and staff preparing for the recording of the Shine TV Mass. Seminary chapel.*



## Ministry of Lector



From left to right: Ignatius Tung Tran, Bishop Steve (Auckland), Bishop Pat (Bishop Emeritus of Auckland), Bishop Michael (Christchurch), Bishop Colin (Rector of Seminary), and Gerson Badayos.

On September 11th, Gerson Badayos of Wellington Archdiocese and Ignatius Tung Tran of Christchurch Diocese, both third-year seminarians, were installed to the Ministry of Lector. The person who reads from the lectern is often called a lector or reader. Lectors play a vital role in the liturgical life of the Church by proclaiming the Word of God to the congregation. The installation ceremony in the seminary is part of its celebration of the feast day of the Exaltation of the Cross, which we celebrate to honour the cross on which Jesus Christ was crucified. The cross is the universal symbol of the Christian faith and represents Christ's victory over death.



To all those who support Holy Cross Seminary, through prayer, supporting students in their pastoral placements and for those who support us financially. With your support we can train seminarians to be the future priests of New Zealand. We remember you all, in our prayers for all benefactors.

### Individual Donations

Individual donations made directly to Holy Cross Seminary greatly aid necessary funding for staffing and student education, formation, accommodation, teaching and administration needs and costs. Such donations are very appreciated and gratefully received.

### Online Donations to:

Holy Cross Seminary Ponsonby

Bank Account - 06 0199 0093928 00

Please include 'Donation' as reference and your name and send us an email so we can send you a receipt.

If you require a receipt please contact us with your details at [office@holycross.org.nz](mailto:office@holycross.org.nz)