



**REDEMPTORIS MATER MISSIONARY SEMINARY  
ARCHDIOCESE OF TORONTO**

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April 4, 2021  
*The Resurrection of the Lord*

**Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,**

As we celebrate the Feast of all Feasts, the most glorious Day in which, through the power of Christ's Resurrection, death was conquered and life shone anew, through this letter, we reach out to you to wish you our warmest and heartfelt Paschal greetings. May the Risen Lord make you partakers of His victory over all that weighs heavily on us and fill you with the joy of His unshakable love.

The past months of the global pandemic have affected us all in various ways. Many of the plans we had made were shattered into pieces. This pandemic shows how frail and unpredictable our life is in this world. We have had to send the seminarians away into parishes, the courses moved to online platforms, the two newly ordained priests could not have their relatives come from abroad to celebrate their ordinations, the seminarians were not able to return to see their families during the summer vacations, at the end of November there was an outbreak of Covid-19 at the Seminary and many of us tested positive, and, last but not least, after having postponed it, we were eventually obliged to cancel the 2020 Fundraising Dinner altogether.

However, we clearly heard the voice of Christ saying to us: "Why are you afraid? Have you no faith?" (Mk 4:40), and we witnessed that God provides even in the midst of a storm. All of us at the *Redemptoris Mater* Missionary Seminary tangibly experienced "that with him on board there will be no shipwreck. [...] He brings serenity into our storms, because with God life never dies" (Pope Francis, Sagrato of St. Peter's Basilica, March 27, 2020).

**What are the *Redemptoris Mater* Missionary Seminaries?**

The *Redemptoris Mater* Missionary Seminaries (from the Latin, "Mother of the Redeemer") are one of the most important fruits of the conciliar renewal. In the document from the Second Vatican Council we read, "Let priests remember [...] that the care of all churches must be their intimate concern [...] To accomplish this purpose there should be set up international seminaries [...] for the good of the whole Church" (*Presbyterorum Ordinis* 10).

## **How were these Seminaries Born?**

In 1991, the Interdicasterial Commission, created by Pope St. John Paul II to deal with the serious shortage of priests in many parts of the world, recognized that the idea of the Council “has found application in the ‘Redemptoris Mater’ seminaries which prepare diocesan priests for the new evangelization according to the programme of the Neocatechumenal Way [...] This would realize a new form of ministry: the diocesan missionary” (The *Osservatore Romano*, March 18, 1991). The *Redemptoris Mater* Missionary Seminaries, then, are not seminaries of the Neocatechumenal Way, but truly diocesan seminaries which depend on the local bishop. The seminarians receive the same theological formation as the other seminarians of the diocese, including a year of pastoral internship in a parish, with the addition of one or two years of itinerancy (missionary experience), either here in Canada or anywhere else around the world. After ordination, they are assigned to a parish of the local diocese before they can be sent on mission elsewhere, at the discretion of their bishop. Experience has shown that combining a way of initiation to the Christian life – the Neocatechumenal Way – with the formation of the future presbyters is a great help for the psychological, affective, and human development of the candidates. The adult Christian life must be the foundation of every priestly life. The faith formation received in a small Christian community of the Neocatechumenal Way is an integral part of the seminary formation. Here, they learn prayer, obedience, the meaning of the Cross, the gift of communion, etc., and so are able to discern and confirm their vocation.

## **The *Redemptoris Mater* Missionary Seminary of Toronto**

The *Redemptoris Mater* Missionary Seminary of the Archdiocese of Toronto was first called to life in September, 1997, during an international gathering at the Neocatechumenal Center in Porto San Giorgio, Italy, at the request of His Eminence Aloysius Cardinal Ambrozic, and was officially erected on the 21<sup>st</sup> of June 1999. Currently, we have ten seminarians from eight different countries. Twenty-five priests, from 12 different countries were ordained from our Seminary. Among them, the current Rector, Vice-Rector, and Spiritual Father, live and work here at our Seminary, seven are Pastors and six are Associate Pastors in various Parishes of the Archdiocese, three priests are working as *fidei donum* in Ottawa, Vancouver, and Whitehorse Dioceses as Pastors, one as an *Itinerant Catechist* evangelizing in various dioceses across Canada, one as an itinerant in England, and two have already retired, but are still active in ministry in Vancouver and Montréal.

## **Renovations and Projects**

We have just finished some renovations, refurbishing the kitchen and living room spaces. However, in order to better fulfil its own objectives, the Seminary still lacks the proper spaces and settings for two other important formative tasks: service at table and at the altar. Hence, we need a dining room and a chapel within our Seminary, which may also reflect the distinctive aesthetical identity of its combined diocesan and missionary formation. These new areas are intended to be a true catechesis, helping the seminarians to feel welcomed

and loved through the beauty and the dignity of the Seminary premises. This prepares them to love those who will be entrusted to them in their priestly mission, for only the one who has received love can love others in return.

## **Why Help?**

Now, as in the past, any work carried out at the Seminary is made possible thanks to generous benefactors like you. The needs, of course, are still numerous and the projects costly. Because of the cancellation of last year's Fundraising Dinner, we are facing a new financial situation. We are in need of funding to help us continue to manage our day-to-day operations. The seminary formation includes costs associated with room and board, university tuition for international students, health and car fleet insurances, travel expenses (both local and international), chapel and liturgical refurbishing, as well as the personal needs of the seminarians who, as international students, have no personal source of income. We recognize the continuous substantial support of the Archdiocese of Toronto, ShareLife, and countless benefactors like you, who have always shown us God's providence through their great generosity. Until now, we have seen wonders and we are confident that "the One who began this good work will bring it to completion" (Phil 1:6).

## **How to Help?**

1. To donate online, please go to the link below (also accessible directly from the Seminary website):  
<https://donorbox.org/redemptoris-mater-missionary-seminary-of-toronto>  
Credit and debit cards are accepted.
2. Cheque donations can be mailed to:  
Redemptoris Mater Missionary Seminary  
2661 Kingston Road  
Scarborough, ON M1M 1M3

## **Next Fundraising Virtual Event**

This year as well, we will not be able to gather physically for the Fundraising Dinner. It will be replaced by a virtual event.

It will happen on **Sunday, the 16<sup>th</sup> of May 2021, at 5:00 p.m.**

We cordially invite you to connect with us for a wonderful opportunity to hear a word from the rector, the seminarians, to enjoy some music and entertainment and know the seminary through a virtual tour.

You will soon be able to find the link to the event on our website: [www.rmmstoronto.org](http://www.rmmstoronto.org)

## Thank you!

There are no words to express our heartfelt thanks to each one of you for your material support and, especially, for your prayers. Without you, the work of formation at the *Redemptoris Mater* Missionary Seminary would not be possible. We hope that we can count on your support with a financial donation, for which an income tax receipt will be provided. Please continue also to “ask the Lord of the harvest to send labourers into His harvest” (Mt 9:38). Be assured of our prayers for you and your loved ones.

Blessed and Happy Easter!

Sincerely,

*Formators and Seminarists*



From left to right: Jesús Fidel (ESP), Lucas Castro (CAN), Abraham De Paz (USA), Carlos Torres (COL), Tomasz Tylka (POL), Fr. Giuseppe Scollo, vice-rector (ITA), Fr. Tomasz Skibinski, rector (POL), Fr. Antonello Murgia, spiritual director (ITA), Abraham Villegas (MEX), Francesco Buttitta (ITA), Mirko Ljuba (CRO), Sebastian Novoa (COL), Matteo Bertozzi (ITA)