



YOUR SEMINARY

I write to let you know we have come to the difficult yet prudent decision to move academic courses online for the remaining few weeks of this semester. Formation and ECSP courses will remain in-person with additional attention to distancing.

This is due to the fact that COVID cases in Wisconsin have reached record levels and will continue. There are just too many risk factors to proceed with offering in-person academic courses on campus for the rest of the semester. We need to try to keep our residents, faculty, and staff as safe and sound as possible by limiting the coming and going of non-residents so as to try to maintain as much of a bubble as feasible. Residents also have to limit their coming and going for only essential purposes with prior authorization. The goal is to sustain the other aspects of priestly formation. We want our seminarians to return to their homes at the end of the semester in good health.

I have also consulted with Fr. John Hemsing, rector of St. Francis de Sales Seminary for his input and he agrees we need to move in this direction for both institutions. In surveying other seminaries, we see they are responding in similar ways.

Consequently, as of Monday, 09 November, we are returning to Phase 2 protocols of our COVID-19 Response Operations Plan. See <https://www.shsst.edu/wp-content/uploads/2020/08/SHSST.COVID-19-Response-Levels.Operations-Plan-8.24.2020-002.pdf>

As mentioned, academic courses, except practica, will proceed in online delivery mode through the end of the semester. The liturgical schedule will be maintained as part of the spiritual formation aspect of seminarian formation. Since spiritual and human formation require in-person modalities, I will be working with the Formation Team on how best to do this for everyone's welfare. Cor Unum students will need to contact Dr. Brummond about the upcoming Apostolic Saturday.

Regrettably we will have to cancel the graduation ceremony scheduled for 11 December.

I know that for you, like for me, this situation is quite disturbing. With God's grace and with each other's help, we will get through it.

Thank you for your cooperation and willingness to do what is best for all of us. I will continue to monitor the situation as we go forward and inform you of how things are going. Let us pray for much improved conditions for the coming second semester.

In the heart of Christ,

Very Rev. Raúl Gómez-Ruiz SDS, PhD
President-Rector