

EDUCATION • PARISH • MISSION

# Ave✠Cruz



Volume 3 Issue 2 | The New Seminarians

Office of Vocations, Congregation of Holy Cross



## Ave Crux, Spes Unica – Hail the Cross, Our Only Hope!

We in the Congregation of Holy Cross profess this truth as the center of our spiritual tradition, and for 175 years, we have worked to bring the hope of the Cross to schools, universities, parishes and other ministries on five continents.

We are men with hope to bring, yet discerning God's will and taking this step in our lives was not entered into lightly or on our own – finding the right next step often comes by reaching out to a vocations director. Our role is to help you hear and answer God's call. Drop us a line and we will help you discover where God's call is leading you.

CONGREGATION *of* HOLY CROSS  
UNITED STATES PROVINCE  
OF PRIESTS AND BROTHERS

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## Men of Faith

Greetings! As you may have heard, our Vocations Director, Fr. Neil Wack, C.S.C., was appointed as an assistant provincial and secretary for the Congregation of Holy Cross, United States Province of Priests and Brothers. Please pray for him, for Fr. Bill Lies, C.S.C., our new provincial, and the rest of his administration as they continue to transition into their new roles within the Congregation. Thus, on behalf of the Office of Vocations, it is my privilege to address you and introduce to you our new men in formation. We have an incoming postulant class of eight men, seven who are new to formation and one who is moving over from Old College. In addition, we have two new freshmen Old Collegians. I hope this edition of *Ave Crux* serves as an opportunity for you to get to know our men in formation, to offer a prayer for them in their continued discernment, and perhaps to take some time to realize that their stories and backgrounds are similar to your own.

When I first started thinking about the seminary, I thought the men there would be so different from me that it would be difficult for me to connect and fit in with them. I can tell you firsthand that these men are no different than you. They are men of faith with a question in their hearts, a question of where God is calling them to be, and how He is calling them to use their gifts and talents in His service. I invite you to read through the short bios here, and if you feel God calling you to take some further step, don't be afraid to reach out. We are here to help you discern where God is calling you to be, and we invite you to take advantage of the opportunities we have to help you hear God's voice and follow him with courage and joy. May God bless you in your continued discernment.

Fr. Timothy Mouton, C.S.C.  
[vocation@holycrossusa.org](mailto:vocation@holycrossusa.org)

*Fr. Timothy Mouton, C.S.C., is associate director of vocations for the U.S. Province of the Congregation of Holy Cross. He also serves as an ir-residence priest in Fisher Hall, on the campus of the University of Notre Dame, assisting with Sacraments and being a pastoral presence to the men there. In addition, he is privileged to work as the chaplain to the Notre Dame Baseball team. Prior to his assignment in the vocations office, Fr. Tim worked as a campus minister, chaplain and coach at Stonehill College in Easton, Mass. Fr. Tim received his B.A. and his M.Div. from the University of Notre Dame. He took his Final Vows in September of 2014 and was ordained in April of 2015.*





Old Collegians pursue their academic interests as students at Notre Dame or Holy Cross College, while at the same time, they're introduced to religious life in Holy Cross through a process of spiritual formation in the context of community living.

The Old College Undergraduate Seminary is housed in the University of Notre Dame's original building, which was constructed in 1843. It is more than a residential community; it provides a well-rounded life that includes prayer, recreation, conversation and shared meals.

# Welcome Old Collegians



## José-Miguel Guevara-Hernandez

Austin, Texas

I first heard the call to a religious vocation in my freshman year, through an affirmation letter from my father at the time of my Confirmation. That was the first time I remember anyone telling

me that I had the potential to be a great priest. Still, it was not until my senior year of high school that I took the time to explore this possibility when I was introduced to Holy Cross by my theology teacher, Mr. Chris Ochoa, who had been a Holy Cross seminarian. He had several stickers and posters that caught my attention, but I never thought to ask about them until that point. One of my theology teachers, Mrs. Jess Ochoa, then urged me to read the *Constitutions of the Congregation of Holy Cross* after the topic of hope came up in a seminar discussion. After reading the *Constitutions*, I found myself wanting to learn more about Holy Cross and how the religious lived out this “only hope” found in the Cross of Christ.

After visiting during a Come and See Weekend, I was left with much to think about. The spirituality described in the *Constitutions* took on life in the encounters I had with the seminarians and religious I met. I couldn't help but want to be part of this community of brothers that held each other up and pushed each other toward greatness.

If you are discerning a vocation, I'd encourage you to pray, be patient, and be open. Ask God to be the guiding force in your life. God will never lead astray those who are honestly trying to follow Him. Sometimes the path is unclear and it takes faith to keep walking, but saying yes to every step is the only way to reach the destination. In the end, you will be able to look back and say that there is no other place you would rather be.

More about José-Miguel ...

**Family:** Youngest of two children of Juan Guevara and Carol Hernandez

**Home Parish:** St. Vincent de Paul Parish, Diocese of Austin

**Education:** St. Dominic Savio Catholic High School, 2018; entering Old College through Holy Cross College-Notre Dame Gateway Program

**Hobbies:** Playing guitar and piano, reading, going for walks

**Special Awards/Recognition:** National Hispanic Scholar



## Liam Johnson

Naperville, Illinois

I first heard God's call when I was in Krakow, Poland, for World Youth Day. I had always felt a strong connection to God, as well as St. John Paul II, my Confirmation saint. During this trip, I felt a strong push to start thinking about the religious life. My dad, who has been

adamant about helping me find what is best for me, first introduced me to Holy Cross. I participated in the Summer Seminary Immersion Program (SSIP), a two-week academic summer program, and fell in love with Holy Cross - its charisms, the brotherhood of the order ... Holy Cross truly seemed like a family to me - a community that gets along well and truly love each other.

I believe that God is calling me to the religious life, and since applying and being accepted to Old College, I have been praying more regularly, reading more books, and embarked on a pilgrimage in Rome in June to deepen my faith and learn more about myself. These actions have been the most helpful way for me to dispel doubts ... simply immersing myself in God, whether by prayer, going to Mass, or reading a new religious book.

The best advice I can give to those discerning is to find someone, whether a teacher, priest, or anyone, who can be a spiritual guide for you. Find someone who is knowledgeable about what you

are discerning and talk with them. This way, not only do you have a guide in your discernment, but you also have someone in your corner to support you no matter what.

More about Liam ...

**Family:** Second of four children of Matthew and Deborah Johnson

**Home Parish:** Saints Peter and Paul Parish, Diocese of Joliet

**Education:** Benet Academy, 2018; entering Old College through the University of Notre Dame

**Hobbies:** Most sports, movies, traveling

**Special Awards/Recognition:** Rev. Ronald Rigovsky, O.S.B. Outstanding Christian Service Award





After completing their studies at Old College, seniors traditionally move to Moreau Seminary to begin their Postulant year of formation, while at the same time completing their undergraduate studies.



# Moving to Moreau



**Hunter Ostapowicz**  
Grand Rapids, Michigan

I was first introduced to the Congregation by visiting Notre Dame for a football game. I did Internet research on the Congregation that led me to Basil Moreau and his writings. His spirituality is something that is worth sharing with others. He has a

deep sense of educating everyone in all aspects - mind, body, and soul - and the conviction that all people deserve to be educated in Christ. He drew me in enough to reach out and apply to Old College. Before this encounter, I felt a slight push in my heart to look into priesthood while visiting the National Shrine of the Immaculate Conception in Washington, D.C., as I have always been fascinated with church art and architecture (visiting churches has always been a hobby of mine). It has also been a doorway for me to pray and understand my faith, as well as helping me understand if this is the life God is calling me to live.

Being in the Old College program for the past three years has introduced me to community life in Holy Cross, and I have grown a lot. Talking with people has been helpful in quelling doubts and many resources helped me make the decision to explore my vocation - not just the writings of Blessed Basil Moreau, but also the websites of the Congregation and Bishop Robert Barron's *Word on Fire* YouTube channel. Prayer

has also been key. A relationship with Jesus Christ does not happen unless there is communication, and a vocation cannot be discovered if someone is silent. God can work through us in many ways; talking with others, and praying each day opens us up to anything God has in store. It helps us see the world through a certain "theological" or "God" lens that illustrates how He is working in our lives. I'm excited to continue formation at Moreau Seminary, bring what I have learned to the Postulant Program, and continue to see how He is working in my life.

More about Hunter ...

**Family:** Youngest of two children of Mark and Melissa Ostapowicz

**Home Parish:** Basilica of St. Adalbert, Diocese of Grand Rapids

**Education:** Holy Cross College senior, Notre Dame, IN; theology major, philosophy minor

**Hobbies:** Singing, listening to music, exploring, visiting churches



The Postulant Program at Moreau Seminary, located across St. Joseph Lake from the Golden Dome, is a one-year, pre-novitiate program designed for men ages 21 to 35, who are prepared to immerse themselves in Holy Cross Community life, while continuing their personal and spiritual discernment. These men have finished their college studies and are exploring their religious vocations, often through ongoing contact with the Office of Vocations and other members of Holy Cross.

# New Postulants



**Richard Bevington**  
Delmont, Pennsylvania

Just when you think that timing in life is the worst, God surprises you with gifts beyond your imagination. At the same time that I was beginning to seriously discern Holy Cross, I was also looking for the next step in my career. Knowing that it was time to move on from my

current job but fearing that starting a new position in a new city could prevent me from focusing on the intentional discernment I desperately needed, I thought that I would have to choose between career and good discernment. This is when I found myself with an offer from Fr. Tony Szakaly, C.S.C., for a one-year position in Campus Ministry at Stonehill College, which is sponsored by the Congregation. I was also the residence director of a hall at Stonehill where Fr. Tim Mouton, C.S.C., lived in-residence before he became associate vocations director. Having an apartment across the hall from Fr. Tim, I think, was God's way of saying "see, his life isn't that weird and scary." I got to see what living religious life really looked like, not just the happy pictures they put on websites.

Working at a chapel, having increased access to the Sacraments, and talking about Jesus for my job, were all true gifts in my discernment this past year. I was able to slowly discover the true center of the Congregation: Christ and the Hope of the Cross. Also, for me, any serious

discernment only began after I realized that I was really bad at discerning what I wanted in life, let alone listening to God's call. For anyone who is starting to ask big questions about their vocation - start small. Practice asking the little questions and learn to patiently wait for God's response - you will more deeply know that God is speaking to you, as it will be in a way that you uniquely understand, and you will all the more clearly hear His voice.

**More about Ricky ...**

**Family:** Youngest of two children of Rich and Lisa Bevington

**Home Parish:** Holy Cross Parish Easton, Diocese of Fall River

**Education:** University of Notre Dame, B.A., Liberal Studies, 2013; Harvard University, M.A., Higher Education, 2014

**Hobbies:** Talking to people about life, writing, playing four square, and making pancakes



## Matthew Gambetta

Denville, New Jersey

My call to a religious vocation was not a sudden one. For years, I thought of becoming a religious, but it was not a serious thought until my time at Notre Dame, when I began to more seriously contemplate what direction I wanted to take in my life. My faith

life during my time at Notre Dame increased substantially: I prayed more often throughout the day, I became more engaged in theology and ministry, and most importantly, I grew into the habit of going to Mass daily. I steadily concerned myself more with thoughts of vocation than of a career path in the business world, until I decided that I wanted to first discern a potential life as a religious before anything else. If I could discern what my vocation truly was, then I could seek to build my entire life around that vocation. After all, a vocation is concerned less with what you should *do*, than who you should *be*.

During the application process to Moreau, I was admittedly filled with many doubts about becoming a postulant. Yet, meeting and discussing the decision to enter Holy Cross with those already in formation and with professed Holy Cross religious helped a great deal in allaying any fears that I had about accepting the offer for admission. Indeed, my fears and doubts have not completely gone away, but one cannot be bogged down to the point of indecision

because of these; eventually, you must choose to either give in to these fears, or step boldly toward confronting them.

If you believe yourself called to a religious vocation, “Be not afraid!” Discern with a religious community (keep Holy Cross on your radar!) or with your own diocese with formal visits and retreats. Your decision to discern may not always be supported by friends and family, but if you are called to a religious vocation, do not let fear and doubt grip you, but take the leap of faith. You will be glad that you did!

More about Matt ...

**Family:** Oldest of two children of Louis and Mary Judith Gambetta

**Home Parish:** St. Mary’s Church, Diocese of Paterson

**Education:** University of Notre Dame, B.B.A., IT Management Major, Theology Minor, 2018

**Hobbies:** Reading, drawing, cooking



## Noah Junge

Leonardtown, Maryland

I was first introduced to Holy Cross in my time at Notre Dame, and I gradually became more familiar with both the men and the charism of Holy Cross. In August 2014, I met the recently ordained Fr. Pat Reidy, C.S.C., who became a shepherd to all of us in Keough Hall,

and I routinely asked for his direction in all facets of my life. It was not just him though; I began to meet more and more Holy Cross religious, and observed the life they breathed into the University of Notre Dame, as well as the life they breathed into all of the ministries in the United States, and across the globe.

Spiritual direction has been a tremendous gift to me in preparation for postulancy, as well as taking the time to go on retreat or pilgrimage when those opportunities and privileges were offered to me. Each step in the process was about the proper focus of zeal, so that it might be directed entirely towards God.

Talking with others who have experienced similar doubts helped to remind me of the humanity of these thoughts and how they accompany every decision. If I was without doubt how could I be sure at all about entering the seminary? Much of the world today is filled with pressure. Recall that this is not a pressure-filled endeavor. It requires much patience, much trust, but if you

are diligent, you will not miss God’s call in your life. In a generation that expects instant gratification, and can get answers at the tip of their fingers, a call by God is a much less obvious and instant entity. Yet, we must hope and pray that, in time, it simply becomes the least deniable thing about ourselves.

More about Noah ...

**Family:** Youngest of three children of Christopher and Mary Junge

**Home Parish:** St. Aloysius Parish; Archdiocese of Washington, D.C.

**Education:** University of Notre Dame, B.S., Civil Engineering Major, Theology Minor, 2018

**Hobbies:** Running, writing, conversation





## Robert McFadden

Columbus, Ohio

I found out about Holy Cross during my time at Notre Dame, getting to know some wonderful priests and brothers, many of whom I met through liturgical functions, as I was sacristan for Fischer O'Hara Grace Graduate Residence and participated in the RCIA program at

Notre Dame as a sponsor. I felt this deep calling to be part of Holy Cross when I taught both for Notre Dame and Holy Cross College, and I was inspired by Basil Moreau's Augustinianism, insofar as that he believed that the Cross was the revelation of God's love to the world and that we must seek to embody this love in our daily lives. In particular, I was moved by Moreau's application of this vision of the Cross to education. I also forged friendships with a couple of seminarians on campus and spent a lot of time visiting the brothers in Columba Hall, before finding a spiritual director who helped guide me through the process of hearing God's voice and helping me to confront doubts and fears.

I prepared myself to begin the Postulant Program by making an informal visit to Moreau Seminary. This visit to Moreau allowed me to experience daily life in the community and to gather data on what living the religious life might be like. I also adopted a daily habit of prayer and of going to Mass. By doing these two things, I have been able to deepen my relationship with Christ so that I can

become another Christ and bring the hope of the Cross to the world.

Please don't be afraid of what the Holy Spirit might be calling you to - fulfill your purpose as one made in the image and likeness of God. I encourage you to find your vocation through daily prayer, Mass, and a good support system.

More about Bobby ...

**Family:** Second of four children of Bob and Kathy McFadden

**Home Parish:** St. Andrew Parish, Diocese of Columbus

**Education:** University of Cincinnati, B.A., Classics Major, Judaic Studies Minor, 2009; Vanderbilt University, MTS, Theology, 2011; University of Notre Dame, Ph.D., Literature, 2018

**Hobbies:** Reading, photography, walking outside, running, sports, hanging out with friends, traveling

**Special Awards/Recognition:** Elliot F. Shephard Prize: Distinguished Research in Church History, Vanderbilt University



## Aaron Morris

Ashland, Oregon

I first came to know the Congregation of Holy Cross at the University of Portland where I lived in Villa Maria Hall. I was beating drums in the Villa Drum Squad, racing around the quad in a shopping cart at Villa's "Sunday Night at the Races," and socializing after an evening Mass in

St. Joseph's Chapel. As Fr. Gerry Olinger, C.S.C., hall director at the time, painted "Here walk the Proud Men of Villa" in artful Latin on the entryway wall, I knew there was a link between the comradery and zeal of the community and the fellowship and commitment of the Congregation of Holy Cross.

In those days at university, walking around the hall, a pastoral resident was there for a casual conversation or assistance. I remember Fr. Charlie McCoy, C.S.C., offering a few words of advice and a hug when I didn't even know how badly I needed one, and Fr. Gerry actually came all the way to my hometown to concelebrate Mass at my mother's funeral. At that time in my life, Holy Cross was part of my life in a seamless and enriching way. When I finally discerned the time was right to enter formation, Holy Cross was the obvious choice because of these experiences.

If you are discerning a call to religious life, I have some advice; things that I found helpful: Slowing down, doing things like turning off the music, phone,

computer, and TV is imperative. I don't mean for just a day, but frequently. Creating more time and space for God to enter in allowed me to hear His call. Hearing the call repeatedly in that silent space was the reassurance I needed to go for it. Secondly, receive the Sacraments! Thirdly, be involved in a church ministry. I've been involved in middle school catechesis which has been such a gratifying experience and a reminder of how important and rewarding the work of the Church can be.

More about Aaron ...

**Family:** Youngest of five children of Richard Morris and the late Sandra Morris

**Home Parish:** Our Lady of the Mountain, Ashland, Ore.; St. Elizabeth of Hungary, Aiea, Hawaii (current); Diocese of Portland and Honolulu, respectively

**Education:** University of Portland, B.S. Mechanical Engineering, 2012; worked as an engineer at Pearl Harbor Naval Shipyard

**Hobbies:** Backpacking, snorkeling, sailing, brewing beer, music, and really anything outdoors





## David Murray

Memphis, Tennessee

The priesthood was always something that I held in high esteem, but I did not seriously consider the idea that God might be calling me to a religious vocation until after graduating from Notre Dame. Early on, I was trying to keep my discernment to myself, as if this was

a decision I could just figure out on my own. However, conversations I had with family and friends from different parts of my life were extremely fruitful in calming fears, addressing concerns, as well as allowing me to see my discernment in different ways. As I look back, I now recognize the ways in which God was preparing me to more readily receive His call. A desire for serving God through serving others was instilled by my family early on, which led to an “easy” decision to join the ACE program to serve our youth in Catholic schools. ACE is a two-year, transition to teaching, graduate fellowship, that provided me with several opportunities to discern the vocation that God ultimately has in store for me.

As a Catholic school teacher, the commitment shown by Holy Cross to Catholic education and service was a perfect fit for me. More importantly, however, was the fraternity shown between CSC priests with whom I have interacted. The true sense of community and brotherhood is attractive to me.

My advice for others discerning comes

from the words of Fr. Tim Scully, C.S.C., during a discernment retreat a couple of years ago: “Well, what are you waiting for?!” It took me too long to realize that discernment is not simply a thought experiment that can be acted out in your head. Take the next step, whatever that is for you. Talking about it with your parents or friends, seeking out a spiritual director, scheduling a visit to a seminary, or deciding how you will dedicate daily prayer to discern that call. Take the next step, and the Holy Spirit will do the rest.

More about David ...

**Family:** Third of four children of Michael and Anne Murray

**Home Parish:** St. Thomas the Apostle, Naperville, Ill., Diocese of Joliet

**Education:** University of Notre Dame, B.S., Pre-professional Studies, 2013; University of Notre Dame, M.Ed., Secondary Education, 2015; high school science teacher; football, basketball and baseball coach; accompanist for weekly school Masses; member of parish choir

**Hobbies:** Reading, playing piano, watching and playing sports, cards





## Alexander White

Fayetteville, West Virginia

As a junior in high school, I was altar serving for a visiting priest. As I was holding the Roman Missal for the concluding prayer, he said to the congregation, "This young man in front of me is going to be a priest. And I've never been wrong before." I was

petrified. I revisited his words as a mentor at Notre Dame Vision after my sophomore year of college. Serving high school students as a pastor figure in faith was invigorating. I felt most alive, most myself, when I was serving in that capacity. I took that time to reflect, and I thought that God might very well be calling me.

My good friend Jimmy Henke is in formation with Holy Cross and his time in formation has seemed fruitful and worthwhile. The familiarity with the process made the "discerning a religious vocation" less daunting. Religious life can seem austere, foreign, and terrifying when viewed from a distance. It was only by getting to really know these people as people, putting myself in their shoes, and acknowledging that they were really just like me that I felt that theirs was a life that I could realistically live.

In preparing for the Postulant Program, Eucharistic Adoration has been extremely helpful. It may sound cliché, but I find a lot of truth in the fact that no

matter where I am or what I do, as long as I have Jesus, I have all that I need. I think that having seriously discerned a married vocation will afford me some real clarity as to how God speaks to me about a religious vocation.

Whatever it is that you're discerning, try it out! Date the girl. Take the position. Enter formation. Every step you take is worthwhile, since every step illuminates more clearly whether that vocation is or is not for you.

More about Alex ...

**Family:** Fourth of five children of Mark and Cindy White

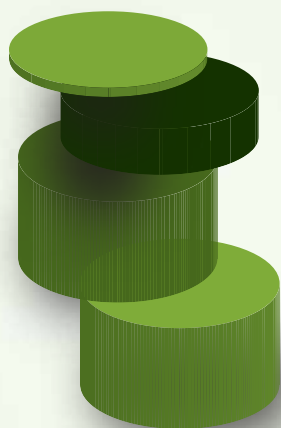
**Home Parish:** Saints Peter and Paul Parish, Diocese of Wheeling-Charleston

**Education:** University of Notre Dame, B.A., Theology, Italian Studies Minor, 2016; University of Notre Dame, M.A., Theology, 2018

**Hobbies:** Improv comedy, playing the piano, ultimate frisbee

# Holy Cross Seminarians & Scholastics by the Numbers

## Education



3%

Three percent of current seminarians entered formation with a Ph.D.

17%

Seventeen percent entered formation with a master's degree.

39%

Thirty-nine percent entered after earning a bachelor's degree.

41%

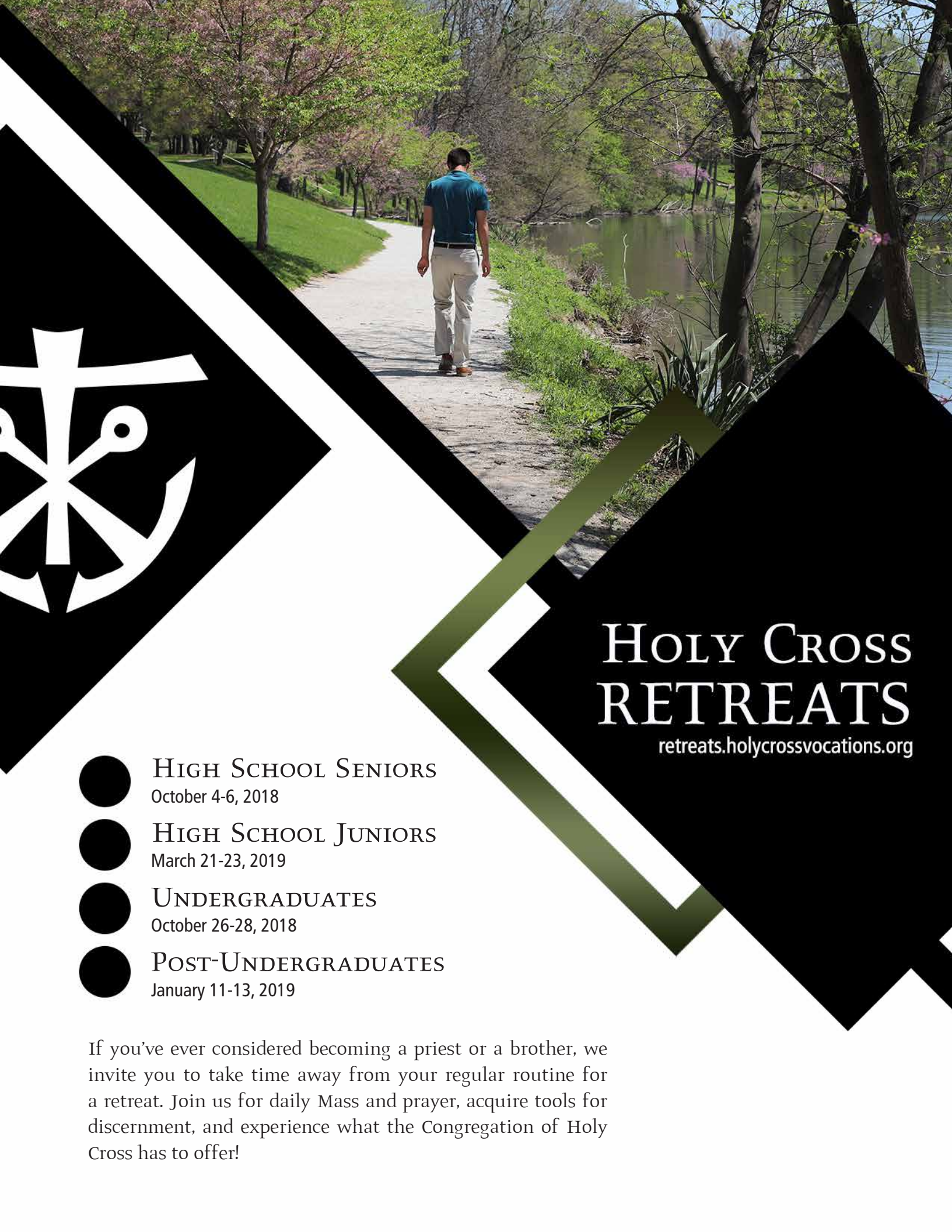
Forty-one percent of our current seminarians entered after earning a high school diploma.

## Geography



● Guatemala City, Guatemala





# HOLY CROSS RETREATS

[retreats.holycrossvocations.org](http://retreats.holycrossvocations.org)



HIGH SCHOOL SENIORS

October 4-6, 2018



HIGH SCHOOL JUNIORS

March 21-23, 2019



UNDERGRADUATES

October 26-28, 2018



POST-UNDERGRADUATES

January 11-13, 2019

If you've ever considered becoming a priest or a brother, we invite you to take time away from your regular routine for a retreat. Join us for daily Mass and prayer, acquire tools for discernment, and experience what the Congregation of Holy Cross has to offer!





# CONGREGATION *of* HOLY CROSS

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## Final Vows

August 25, 2018, 10:00 a.m. EDT at the Basilica of the Sacred Heart on the campus of the University of Notre Dame, or join us via livestream at [finalvows-live.holycrossvocations.org](http://finalvows-live.holycrossvocations.org)

Bryan Williams, C.S.C., Brogan Ryan, C.S.C., Karl Romkema, C.S.C., Michael Thomas, C.S.C., and Brian Kennedy, C.S.C., pose for a photo outside Moreau Seminary. They are preparing to profess their Final Vows on August 25, 2018.

Front Cover Photo: John Sebastian Gutierrez, C.S.C. (MP), welcomes new postulant Alexander White to Moreau Seminary.