



Memo

Date: February 11, 2019
To: International Priests
From: Msgr. James Schillinger, Director, Ongoing Formation of Priests
Re: 18th Annual Acculturation Seminar for International Priests

St. John's University Vincentian Center for Church and Society will offer the 18th Annual Acculturation Seminar for International Priests on June 17-21, 2019 at the Queens, New York campus, St. John's University, 8000 Utopia Parkway, Queens, NY 11439.

The seminar is an intensive, five-day residential program whose participants have already developed skills and have conversational ability in English. Topics include church development in the United States, sociological issues, counseling and self-care, church structure and collaboration and time management, among others.

The cost for the program is \$800 and includes tuition, room and meals. Please see the attached brochure for eligibility requirements and additional forms. For more information and to register, please visit www.stjohns.edu.

Ongoing formation funding is available for this conference.



About St. John's University

Established in Brooklyn by the Vincentian community in 1870, St. John's has campuses in Queens, Staten Island, and Manhattan in New York City, and in Rome, Italy; and three locations in Hauppauge, NY; Limerick, Ireland; and Paris, France. In addition to its undergraduate liberal arts college, the University has schools of law, pharmacy, business, professional studies, and education, as well as a wide range of continuing education programs. The student body numbers more than 20,000 and reflects the broad diversity of cultures which characterize metropolitan New York. St. John's is conveniently located close to LaGuardia and John F. Kennedy International Airports and to public transportation.

The Vincentian Center for Church and Society was established at St. John's in 1994 as a means of relating this Catholic and Vincentian University to the greater civil and ecclesial communities. The center sponsors a range of programs for Church personnel and conducts Vincentian research on poverty and social justice. Since 1995, the Vincentian Center for Church and Society at St. John's has offered programs in management for pastors and seminarians.

Faculty

Faculty for the **acculturation seminar** are drawn from St. John's University faculty (business, law, theology, psychology, speech, and anthropology), staff of the Vincentian Center, diocesan administrators, and foreign-born resident priests, as well as experienced pastors.

Program Coordinator

Rev. Patrick J. Griffin, C.M., Executive Director
Vincentian Center for Church and Society,
St. John's University

Comments about the Seminar

"I would highly recommend this seminar. It is like a box of tools given to a priest to be effective in his ministry."
—Diocese of Rockville Centre/Nigeria

"It was challenging to be taught by a layperson how to preach. I look forward to more such challenges."
—Archdiocese of New York/Dominican Republic

"Faculty are sincere, efficient, and very talented in communicating their topics."
—Diocese of Owensboro/Kenya

"Taking this course will strengthen one's confidence and set the right direction and objectives in ministering to the Catholics in America."
—Archdiocese of Atlanta/Colombia

"I have become more Catholic, in the true sense of the word. I'll be open to all possibilities and accept all cultures."
—Diocese of Brooklyn /Philippines, *The Tablet*

"Latino priests need to adjust to the more corporate style of US Church life."
—Diocese of Orlando/Colombia, *Our Sunday Visitor*

"It is what every international priest needs if he ever hopes to be able to find his left from his right in this country, ministry-wise."
—Diocese of Brooklyn/Nigeria, *The Tablet*

"There are priests here from 12 different cultures, each representing the face of Jesus in his own way. The unity within that variety was remarkable... the brotherhood... It was very enriching."
—Diocese of Brooklyn/India, *The Tablet*

"One of the greatest needs for all US priests is working with the intergenerational issues among recent immigrants arising out of younger people becoming 'Americanized.'"
—Diocese of Stamford/Slovakia, *Kindling*

"This program helps to make it easier to minister in an American environment."
—Director of Priest Personnel, Diocese of Rockville Centre, *The Long Island Catholic*

"It would be a mistake, a serious mistake, not to do all that is in one's power to form good priests, because the Church needs them badly."
—St. Vincent de Paul



ST. JOHN'S UNIVERSITY

VINCENTIAN CENTER FOR CHURCH AND SOCIETY

18th Annual Acculturation Seminar for International Priests

Queens, NY, Campus

June 17-21, 2019





Program Goals

In an intensive, supportive, five-day residential program, participants who have already developed “survival skills” and have conversational ability in English focus on these goals:

- † **Church Development in the United States:** Gain an overview of the development of the Catholic Church in the pluralistic, religiously diverse United States and discuss models of Church and roles of priests within that context.
- † **Sociological Issues:** Engage in discussions on culture, gender, race, family, multiculturalism, cultural bridges, and the acculturation process itself to discern differences between one’s native culture and US culture(s).
- † **Counseling and Self-Care:** Reflect on the issues of stress, creativity, self-knowledge, and personal growth, which the acculturation process engenders.
- † **Priest as Leader, Team Member, and Collaborator:** Grow in appreciation of the need in organizations for servant leadership and effective management skills.



- † **Church Structure and Collaboration:** Study overall church structure in the United States and the roles of clergy and laity within the parish and diocesan organizations.
- † **Interpersonal Communications:** Recognize the complexity and centrality of communication to ministry and engage in practice sessions which focus on cultural differences.
- † **Pastoral Communications:** Reflect on attitudes and skills which enhance pastoral communication, with special emphasis on reading and preaching.
- † **Time Management:** Learn time management skills which contribute to a healthy and productive work ethic and lifestyle.
- † **Immigration and Legal Issues:** Discuss legal issues, immigration, and pastoral concerns.
- † **Liturgical Sharing:** Share Liturgy (Eucharist and Divine Office) as a way of building community.
- † **Relationships:** Establish relationships with other international priests as a means of support.
- † **Understanding Boundaries:** Recognize healthy distance and content in relationships.

Eligibility

To be eligible for admission to the program, a priest must

- † Be recommended by officials of the diocese or the leadership of his religious community. A letter of recommendation must be forwarded directly to the Vincentian Center for Church and Society from the diocesan personnel office or major superior in the United States.
- † Be a US resident for at least six months and less than five years.
- † Demonstrate conversational proficiency in English.
- † Complete registration form.

Schedule

The five-day seminar is scheduled to be held June 17–21, 2019. The program opens on Monday at noon with a luncheon and closes on Friday at 1:30 p.m. after Eucharist and a closing luncheon.

Residence

To enhance the learning environment, each participant is assigned a private room within the student residence halls. Meals are provided on campus. Athletic and library facilities are available to participants.

Collaboration with Sacred Heart Institute (SHI)

The Vincentian Center collaborates with the SHI in Huntington, NY, for the acculturation program. The SHI is a cooperative effort of the Archdiocese of New York and the Dioceses of Brooklyn and Rockville Centre, NY, to facilitate the ongoing formation of priests and deacons.

Costs

Nonrefundable Registration Fee (Due May 17)	\$50
Tuition, Room, and Meals (Due on arrival)	\$750
Total	\$800

Applications/Class Schedules

Applications, class schedules, and faculty profiles are available at stjohns.edu/vincentiancenter.

Inquiries

Direct inquiries and other requests to Vincentian Center for Church and Society
St. John’s University
8000 Utopia Parkway
Queens, NY 11439

Tel 718-990-1612
Fax 718-990-1901
E-mail VCCS@stjohns.edu





Acculturation Seminar for International Priests

FAQ

The following questions about acculturation programs are frequently asked by bishops, priest-personnel directors, and congregational leaders:

Q. Is the main focus of the acculturation seminar to help international priests to speak better English?

A. The Acculturation Seminar offers an introductory session on accent modification, including techniques international priests can utilize so parishioners can understand them better. Accent modification is a resource St. John's offers through a semester long clinic, and all priests are welcome to participate in this skills-based clinic with individual coaching sessions and group sessions. The Acculturation Seminar goes beyond accent modification since effective interpersonal communication is a necessary skill in ministry and cultural differences can create misunderstandings and difficulties. The Acculturation Seminar presents a range of communication skills with special attention given to cultural differences in pastoral situations.

Q. Does this seminar offer an academic perspective or does the program go beyond theory into practice?

A. The program offers a sound theoretical base presented by experts in their respective fields, with a keen focus on practical application. For example, the legal framework in the US is presented with a discussion of case studies identifying legal issues facing parishes and the Catholic Church. Moreover, all of the sessions are designed to address the needs of international priests in particular.

Q. Does the seminar address difference between the perception of the status of women in US and traditional practices in many developing countries?

A. Yes, gender issues are addressed on two levels. The content of presentations - including interpersonal communications, law and counseling - addresses the issue of gender as it relates to the respective fields. In addition, the Seminar management team, as well as the faculty for the program, includes both men and women who provide a model of professional collaboration.

Q. With globalization and the increase in information about the US, is there still a need for an acculturation program?

A. While globalization has contracted the world, cultural differences persist especially in areas integral to evangelization, pastoral care and church management. Some of the more dramatic differences between cultures relate to family, work ethic, parenting, interpersonal relationships, professional boundaries, the role of women, religious practice, etc. The Seminar encourages discussions of similarities and differences among cultures. In a safe and non-threatening environment, sessions raise awareness of expectations of international priests working in the US as well as assisting priests to meet the challenge of refraining from imposing their cultural norms and perspective on others. The program emphasizes the need for ongoing self-study and offers strategies for international priests to use related to self-care.



- Q. What is the advantage for priests to attend a university-run residential program like St. John's? Isn't this more a diocesan function?**
- A.** Both are important and achieve different goals. First of all, St. John's collaborates with the Sacred Heart Institute which is a cooperative effort of the local dioceses. The University is a resource which is open to serving the Church. We have found that when priests from several dioceses, congregations and nations come together for a week where they pray, worship, study and share recreational and educational experiences, they develop into a genuine community. Their shared priesthood creates a natural bond but the program sharing builds a culture of openness and learning is facilitated. The priests also share challenges they have met and can offer support to their peers because of this openness. They begin to see more clearly the universality of the experience of acculturation and this gives them confidence that much of what they experience is quite natural and to be expected. The intensiveness allows them to become more committed to entering into the process of acculturation actively and with personal responsibility. They also set up actual and virtual networks according to nationality, geography or interest and this is positive.
- Q. How does a diocese or parish justify the cost for someone who may only stay here three or five years?**
- A.** The majority of pastors and many international priests who have commented on this question express that cultural competency programs are a double investment with good rates of return. First, it is an investment in the individual priest's formation and development; the global priesthood gains. Second and equally important, it is an investment which yields immediate returns to the people in the parishes and institutions where the priests serve; the Church in the US benefits. There is a consensus that this program contributes to the success of the international priest as a person and as a priest. This has immediate and direct results as it impacts his evangelization efforts within our diverse communities and within the presbyterate as well.

Please submit any additional questions or comments to us at vccs@stjohns.edu. Thank you.

REGISTRATION FORM

**EIGHTEENTH ANNUAL ACCULTURATION SEMINAR FOR INTERNATIONAL PRIESTS
ST. JOHN'S UNIVERSITY
JUNE 17 - 21, 2019**

**- Space is limited -
Please return completed registration form and verification form by MAY 17.**

**Registration form must be accompanied by a recommendation letter
from diocesan leadership or congregational major superior.**

PART I (PLEASE PRINT)

NAME: _____

PARISH/AFFILIATION _____

RESIDENCE ADDRESS: _____

CITY _____ STATE _____ ZIP _____

E-MAIL ADDRESS _____

PHONE _____ FAX _____ CELL _____

DATE OF BIRTH (MM/DD/YY) _____

EMERGENCY CONTACT:

NAME: _____ PHONE: _____

BACKGROUND:

Country of Origin _____ Home Diocese _____

Country of Ordination _____ Year of Ordination _____

Length of time in the US _____ Expected length of stay _____

Diocesan Priest _____ OR Member of a Religious Congregation _____

Name of Diocese/Congregation _____

LANGUAGE ABILITY:

Native Language _____

Other Languages _____

Fluency in English: Moderately GOOD _____ Very GOOD _____ EXCELLENT _____

EARNED DEGREES:

Degree	Field	Seminary / University
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____

PART II (PLEASE PRINT)

SUMMARY OF EXPERIENCE: Please provide a brief summary of your ministerial experience.

PART III (PLEASE PRINT)

EXPECTATIONS: Please describe your expectations of the program in terms of what you wish to learn and gain from this experience.

PLEASE NOTE: The residence halls are SMOKE FREE.

Signed _____

Diocese of _____

VERIFICATION OF PARTICIPANTS

**EIGHTEENTH ANNUAL ACCULTURATION SEMINAR FOR INTERNATIONAL PRIESTS
ST. JOHN'S UNIVERSITY
JUNE 17 - 21, 2019**

SUBMITTED BY OFFICE OF DIOCESAN PERSONNEL OR RELIGIOUS CONGREGATION

Note: This form is to be returned by May 17, 2019

FROM: (PLEASE PRINT)

_____ (Director of Priest Personnel / Provincial)

_____ (Archdiocese / Diocese / Congregation)

On page 2 is the list of the registrants/participants who will attend the Eighteenth Annual Acculturation Seminar for International Priests on June 17-21, 2019.

Mail to:

Vincentian Center for Church and Society
St. John's University
St. Vincent Hall, Room B-3
8000 Utopia Parkway
Queens, NY 11439

Or fax to: (718) 990-1901

Or e-mail to: vccs@stjohns.edu

LIST OF PARTICIPANTS:

NAME	ADDRESS
1. _____	_____ _____
2. _____	_____ _____
3. _____	_____ _____
4. _____	_____ _____
5. _____	_____ _____
6. _____	_____ _____
7. _____	_____ _____
8. _____	_____ _____

COST AND PAYMENT METHODS:

Non-refundable registration fee per person (due May 17) \$50
Tuition, room and meals (due upon arrival June 17) \$750
Total per person \$800

Please make check payable to: Vincentian Center for Church and Society, St. John's University.

Please select method of payment for the above students (check one):

- Enclosed is the Registration fee of \$_____ for _____ registrants listed above.
- Registration fee will be forwarded by each participant with their registration form.

Signed _____

Title _____