

## **PROTOCOLS FOR IN-HOUSE FORMATION**

### **DECLARATION**

Cognizant of the extraordinary circumstances we find ourselves in because of the COVID19 pandemic, and mindful of the demands of seminary formation, St. Joseph Seminary hereby presents the special protocols we are committed to observe for the School Year 2022-2023 which will officially begin on August 7, 2022 and end on May 1, 2023.

### **PURPOSE**

This document provides guidance specific to the St. Joseph Seminary that will allow this institution to manage operations safely and more effectively throughout the COVID-19 pandemic. The objective is not to eliminate all potential risks, but to provide a systematic and feasible path for operation within the pandemic environment.

### **I. BASIC ETIQUETTE**

Seminarians at this time of pandemic are expected to be “EXTRA” mindful of each other’s wellness and health. Basic care and concern are rudimentary. Courtesy and sense of decency as well as RESPECT for one’s SPACE are required to assist one another. It is but appropriate that each one must be more conscious of one’s personal hygiene, neatness of personal belongings and upkeep of one’s surroundings. Every seminarian’s cooperation is crucial.

1. Reasonable physical distancing must be always observed.
2. Masks must be worn at communal activities.
3. No spitting allowed.
4. Cover one’s mouth when sneezing or coughing with a handkerchief or tissue.
5. Properly dispose all used masks/tissue to their designated litter bag to prevent contamination.
6. Initial signs of cold, fever, flu or ailments must be reported to the Infirmarian and Prefects immediately.
7. Thoroughly wash hands with soap, as often as needed, especially before eating and serving.
8. Seminarians and staff are expected to sanitize daily all communal areas.
9. All students are required to have a daily 30-minute exercise at the minimum. No one is exempt. Everyone is asked to actively participate during sports time with one’s preferred games, while observing the minimum health protocols.
10. Activities undertaken when on seminary grounds whether in praying, eating, studying, sleeping, cleaning, playing, socializing, and performing tasks for the community must always be mindful of RESPECTING the SPACE of others.
11. The usual handshakes and ‘Pinoy touch (kalabit) or other physical greetings are momentarily prohibited. In the meantime, no “MANO” to greet an elderly. Respectful bowing of one’s head will do.
12. NO LOITERING. No student must be seen in public area or elsewhere when the time requires them to be in a particular place.

## **II. SPECIFIC PROTOCOLS**

### **A. Enrollment/Payments/Office Transactions**

1. Seminarians are not required to come to the seminary for enrollment.
2. Payments can be made online, bank deposits. Otherwise, parents/guardians may come physically to the seminary. The Cashier's office shall be strategically located to prevent visitors from interacting with the seminarians.
3. Other transactions shall be coursed through the Student Services.

### **B. Integration to the Community**

1. To pursue integration in the community, at least 92% of the seminarians must be vaccinated. Ideally, everyone is encouraged to be vaccinated and avail of the booster shots. The seminary will also try to make the booster shots available for those who will not be able to avail of it before returning to the seminary.
2. Prior to this, seminarians are to exercise prudence and preventive measures at home. Seminarians shall undergo quarantine and refrain from unnecessary exposure. He shall closely monitor himself on COVID 19 symptoms.
3. They must at least present a medical clearance by available doctors before they will be accepted back to the seminary. He shall declare the state of his health especially about medical conditions which might make him more vulnerable to Covid19 (e.g., any pulmonary conditions, diabetes, etc.).He may only report in the absence of any symptom.
4. Each seminarian will be asked to have a personal health kit (face masks, alcohol, soap, multivitamins, disinfectants, personal thermometer, paper napkin, etc.).
5. If local transmission is recorded, or if a seminarian travels from a place with recorded cases, at least a negative antigen taken not more than 24 hours prior to the arrival must be presented.
6. The first two weeks upon return shall be considered as preventive quarantine whereby group interactions are limited. After which, the community can transition to normalcy with the strict limitation on visitor interaction.
7. Teachers are also expected to follow the protocols mentioned above. To minimize exposure, the seminary shall provide board and lodging for teachers.

### **C. Arrival Protocols**

1. Seminarians' arrival will be scheduled in a staggered manner to ensure physical distancing.
2. Drop-off Area for Grades 9-12 will be at the garage. Drop-off Area for Grades 7-8 will be at the Covered Court.
3. Everyone, including family members, must go through the triage for temperature check and other sanitary procedures, such as hand-washing, etc.
4. Medical Clearance/Antigen will be collected at the Triage.
5. Isolation Areas are designated for seminarians who show symptoms of Covid and will not be allowed entry to the seminary, until clearance is given by a physician.
6. No visitor is allowed to go beyond the drop-off area.

## **D. Daily Operational Protocol**

1. There will be available physicians and nurses to oversee the health of the community.
2. Seminarians will be assigned specific bath cubicles and toilet bowls for hygiene and contact tracing purposes.
3. All kitchen utensils and commonly handled surfaces such as doorknobs, toilet flushers and similar objects must be disinfected.
4. Hand soaps will be provided in all restrooms.
5. Even sacred vessels such as the paten and the ciboria must be properly disinfected, with due regard for the consecrated nature of these vessels. For the moment, there will be no participation in the precious Blood. Concelebrants are to partake of the precious Blood only through intinction.
6. The norms laid down by the Episcopal Commission on Liturgy regarding the celebration and reception of the sacraments must be observed.
7. Individual confessions and spiritual directions may be done with both confessor/director and seminarian, in accordance to the minimum health protocol. Hence, provided that the privacy of confession is secured.
8. In the observance of physical distancing, seminarians will be assigned permanent places in the chapel, refectory, classrooms, and library. The places will be marked so that the seminarians are not left to just estimate their distances from one another.
9. The Dining Hall and the Function Hall shall be maximized for meals to ensure social distancing.
10. Visitors must not be allowed to have personal contact with the seminarians. The visitors are to be disinfected before they enter the premises but only until drop-off areas. Items shall be left in designated areas. The priest's garage will be utilized as drop-off point for visiting parents with the necessary protection. No physical contact shall be allowed.
11. No seminarian will be allowed to go out of the seminary except in emergency cases.
12. Exposure and interaction with seminary staffs need to be prudently restricted. No seminarian shall be allowed to enter the kitchen and the carpentry. Contact with any personnel must be avoided.
13. All contact sports are prohibited during the preventive quarantine period. Seminarians can go for single sports like badminton, lawn tennis, walking/running instead. Other forms of recreation like reading, playing instruments, and gardening are highly encouraged.
14. Seminarians shall bring their own hygiene kits and water bottles.
15. The areas where the community daily gathers must be disinfected faithfully according to the standards laid down by the Department of Health.
16. Human formation counselors may do their regular accompaniment with utmost caution, mindful of the minimum requirements. The room and equipment must be disinfected every after use.

### **E. Protocols for Workforces**

1. Personnel and teachers, especially those who stay out, those in-charge of marketing, errands, and the like, shall exercise extreme caution and strictly follow the protocols.
2. They shall undergo disinfection procedures upon entry to the seminary premises.
3. As much as possible, they shall prudently exercise physical distancing towards seminarians.
4. Symptomatic Teachers/Personnel will not be allowed to work until symptoms are healed.

### **F. Entry Protocols for anyone entering the campus**

1. Prior appointment should be secured before being entertained.
2. A visitor must present his vaccination Card.
3. A visitor must wear face mask.
4. A Visitor must undergo the triage which includes Temperature Check, Health Disclosure and disinfection process.
5. A Visitor must follow strictly all other protocols as posted in the campus

### **G. On Classroom Management**

1. Classrooms, furnitures, and all equipment must be sanitized daily.
2. Covid-19 protocols such as wearing of face mask, checking of temperatures and observance of social distancing shall be strictly implemented in classrooms during classes and study periods.
3. Group works shall be avoided.
4. Strictly no sharing of school materials.
5. The campus wi-fi shall be maximized for the submission of activities and requirements.
6. Students are encouraged to bring their learning devices (laptops, tablets, etc.). The seminary will provide iPads for seminarians without personal device.
7. Seminarians are discouraged to roam around in the classroom. They must always stay in their proper places.
8. Seminarians who are not feeling well will not be allowed to attend classes. Unwell seminarian/s must go immediately to the infirmary and be addressed by the infirmarians.
9. At the opening of the academic year, an orientation is to be conducted to educate students about important informations addressing Covid 19. This can be followed up and enriched more in the PE/Health class of each level.
10. Library hours will be scheduled by class. Given the limited space in the Junior High Library, each class will be divided into two. The library will open at 4:00-5:00 PM and 8:30-9:30 PM.
  - a. Monday: Grade 7
  - b. Tuesday: G8
  - c. Wednesday: G9
  - d. Thursday: G10
  - e. Friday: By request (first come, first served)
11. The Senior High Library is open to Senior High School Students within the academic hours with physical distancing measures in place.
12. Laboratory works may be transferred to bigger venues.

## **H. On Visitation**

1. Seminary visitation is scheduled only on Sundays.
2. Slots are plotted in a way to ensure physical distancing, with a 30-minute interval to make way for disinfection.
3. Seminarians will be assigned time slots to entertain visitors to ensure physical distancing. Time slots will be on a first come, first served basis.
  - a. 9:30-10:00 AM
  - b. 10:30-11:00 AM
  - c. 11:30-12:00 AM
  - d. 2:00-2:30 PM
  - e. 3:00-3:30 PM
  - f. 4:00-4:30 PM
  - g. 5:00-5:30 PM
4. Parents with two or more sons in the seminary will have to choose only one slot for their sons.
5. Unvaccinated persons and those showing symptoms will not be given entry to the seminary.
6. All visitors must undergo sanitary protocols before they are allowed entry to the visiting area.
7. Seminarians may entertain more than one visitor during his time slot provided that minimum protocols are strictly observed
8. Food may now be shared with utmost care.
9. Other visitors who come for official transaction to the seminary shall undergo all disinfection protocols.

## **I. Sunday Protocols**

1. While the seminary chapel is now a diocesan shrine with regular mass goes, it shall only be opened to the public on Sunday at the People's Mass at 8:00 in the morning. Outside this schedule, it is for the sole utility of the seminary's spiritual activities.
2. No mass goer will be allowed access to the seminary buildings.
3. Seminarians will have a separate mass at 6:30 in the morning.

## **J. On the Possibility of Infection**

1. Any seminarian exhibiting any of the known symptoms of Covid-19 shall automatically be brought to the infirmary for isolation and observation.
2. Parents shall be contacted immediately of the situation.
3. An antigen test shall be administered as a first step to identify whether the seminarian is infected with Covid-19.
4. If the seminarian is negative, he will remain in quarantine until symptoms are cured.
5. If the seminarian is tested positive, an RTPCR test shall be administered and remain in quarantine until the result is out, and until symptoms are properly cured.
6. Closest contacts shall also be placed under quarantine for observation and shall follow the same protocols as above.

7. Infirmarians and medical personnel shall be tasked to monitor seminarians on quarantine.
8. In case a seminarian incurs Covid-19 virus within the school year and is required to be quarantined at home or be confined in a hospital, special considerations should be rendered in terms of their academic requirements due to humanitarian reason.
9. If cases shoot up, seminarians will be asked to go home and transition for distance learning.