

THE CARDINALS' FORUM
@ Saint Charles Borromeo Seminary
August 25, 2020



on **“Co-Responsibility for the Church’s Being & Action in Parish Life”**

introduction by

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Welcome to the fifth annual Cardinals’ Forum at Saint Charles Borromeo Seminary!

We call this discussion series the “Cardinals’ Forum” in reference to the first endowed faculty chairs here at the Seminary, which were named in honor of two distinguished prelates in the Archdiocese of Philadelphia. Last year we added a non-cardinal to the list of endowed professors. And this year we are delighted to welcome our still relatively new Archbishop!

Whether you are joining us in-person or via Facebook Live, this evening our social distancing gives way to what we hope will be a coming together to explore a topic of contemporary concern --- namely, the notion of **“Co-Responsibility for the Church’s Being and Action in Parish Life.”**

Just last month, the Congregation for the Clergy promulgated an instruction on “The Pastoral Conversion of the Parish Community in the Service of the Evangelizing Mission of the Church.” As the undersecretary of the Congregation (MSG. ANDREA RIPA) [explained](#), that work “involves a certain reorganization in the way the pastoral care of the faithful is exercised, so as to foster a greater co-responsibility and collaboration among all the baptized.”

This idea of a shared responsibility in parish life harkens back to the words of Pope Emeritus Benedict XVI. [Speaking on this theme in 2009](#), he said “there is still a long way to go” in recognizing and encouraging pastoral co-responsibility, particularly of

the laity. In particular, he noted, this work “demands a change of mindset,” in which lay people “must no longer be viewed as ‘collaborators’ of the clergy but truly recognized as ‘corresponsible’ for the Church’s being and action, thereby fostering the consolidation of a mature and committed laity.”

How to change that mindset and cultivate co-responsibility, particularly in the formation of the next generation of parish priests, is the focus of our forum this evening. Our four panelists will each offer a few ... *a few!* ... thoughts on the subject from their respective fields.

Following their five-minute presentations, we will allot about 45 minutes to the audience – whether present physically or digitally – to pose some more ideas or raise some questions that will advance the discussion. We will conclude with a final word and a final blessing.

So, let us begin ...

Our first presenter holds the *John Cardinal Krol Chair of Moral Theology*. Formerly the President of the National Catholic Bioethics Center, he has returned to Overbrook to take up the faculty position he inaugurated back in 1990. Please welcome **Dr. John Haas**.

Our second speaker this evening holds the *John Cardinal Foley Chair of Homiletics and Social Communications*. A priest in the Oblates of St. Francis de Sales, he inaugurated this faculty position in 2013 and joined the seminary full-time in 2017. Please welcome **Fr. Thomas Dailey**.

Our third panelist was appointed last year as the first holder of the *Lucille M. Francesco Chair in Sacred Music* and continues to serve the Seminary as its Director of Sacred Music. Please welcome **Dr. Nathan Knutson**.

Finally, we are delighted to welcome to this forum – and welcome back to his alma mater! – an alumnus who was appointed the 14th chief shepherd of the Church in Philadelphia on January 23rd of this year. Please welcome **Archbishop Nelson Pérez**.

(for the discussion)

With thanks to each of the panelists, I would like now to open the floor for discussion. I invite you to share your thoughts briefly, by offering a related comment or raising a specific question in relation to what think or what you have just heard.

For the sake of the livestream, I ask those here in the auditorium to use the microphone located in the side aisle. Those participating online can post their comment or question, and we will share those that we can with everyone here.

Whether in-person or online, I ask you to be direct and succinct with your words, so that we can engage all those who wish to contribute to the discussion.

(for the closing)

Now it is my responsibility to bring this forum to a close! But first, let me invite our Archbishop to offer a final word on the topic of our discussion.

Thank you, Archbishop. Thank you, faculty presenters. And thanks to all of you for participating in what I hope has been an informative and insightful forum for everyone.

I invite us all to pray for the guidance and grace of the Holy Spirit, that together we might build up the baptismal priesthood of the entire people of God for the good of our parishes and our Church.

And now I invite our Seminary's Rector, Bishop Timothy Senior, to conclude our evening together with a Benediction.

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