



Return to Campus Protocols for Seminarians

January 2021

Dear Seminarians,

I wish all of you God's blessings on this new year of His grace. We are all looking forward to your return for the spring semester. We have done some planning and made special arrangements, similar to those in the fall, so that we can return to in-person priestly formation. It is only today that we have all the necessary information in place for me to communicate the following plan to you.

We are taking these steps with the safety of the entire Mount community in mind, and especially to mitigate the number of students and seminarians infected with COVID-19 introduced back to campus. The faculty, administration, and staff are looking forward to your return to campus for the spring semester!

We must emphasize that these plans are based on the current situations on campus, in Frederick County and the state of Maryland. Plans can change at any time based on changing conditions, recommendations, or decisions by public health or other authorities, even up to the time students begin to return to campus. **Please pay attention to your email messages throughout the week and read these instructions carefully.**

PREPARATION FOR YOUR ARRIVAL

- We strongly recommend you limit contact to only your immediate household from now until your return to the Seminary. Doing so will help reduce the risk of bringing COVID-19 to campus. Indeed, proper quarantining at home and following safety protocols at all times will increase your chances of a negative COVID-19 test when you arrive.
- As I wrote to you previously, I strongly encourage all seminarians to get a test for COVID-19 within the 5 days prior to your return to campus. If there is a grave reason why this is not possible, please contact Fr. Diego Ruiz (d.ruiz@msmary.edu). You will have to quarantine in your room upon your arrival until a negative test result is returned.
- After the COVID-19 test: If you test positive, you must isolate at home as directed by your local health care provider and follow their instruction for the time of isolation. You may not return to campus until your isolation is complete as directed by your health care provider. You must return with a copy of your positive test result and date. When you arrive on campus you should proceed to the Health Center in Lower McGowan to share this information and discuss your integration on campus.
If you test negative, you are still required to be tested upon arrival to campus.
- If you are ill or have ANY symptoms, DO NOT COME TO CAMPUS. Please contact Fr. Diego Ruiz (301-852-3779 or d.ruiz@msmary.edu).
- Once you arrive on campus and have a negative test, the University asks all seminarians and students not to return home or otherwise leave campus for extended periods of time.
- There is a sign-up sheet for arrival time windows for Thursday, January 14. Please be sure to sign-up as soon as possible so that the Seminary Administration and the Hospitality

Team know approximately when you are arriving. If there is a grave reason you need to arrive early or late, please contact Fr. Diego Ruiz (301-852-3779 or d.ruiz@msmary.edu).

Please sign up for your Arrival Time Window by Tuesday, January 12 at 8 pm at:

<https://www.signupgenius.com/go/70A0F4AA4AA2FA13-arrival>

- If you would like to be a member of our Hospitality Team, which means that you will have to arrive by 9 am on Thursday, January 14, please contact Fr. Diego Ruiz (301-852-3779 or d.ruiz@msmary.edu).

ARRIVAL FOR SPRING SEMESTER

- Spring arrival will occur on Thursday, January 14, 2021. Please arrive by 8 pm. If there is a grave reason you need to arrive early or late, please contact Fr. Diego Ruiz (301-852-3779 or d.ruiz@msmary.edu).
- There will be a Community Care Agreement for you to acknowledge on “MyMount.” Please complete this before you actually arrive on campus.
- When you arrive, please come to the lobby of Keating Hall. Your temperature will be taken, the Hospitality Team will ask you whether you acknowledge the Community Care Agreement, and whether you have a negative result from a COVID-19 test within the last 5 days.

TESTING

- All seminarians will receive a COVID-19 test on Friday, January 15, 2021, from 8 am – 10 am. (As we did throughout the fall semester, the baseline test will be the mid-nasal swab [nasopharyngeal (NP) polymerase chain reaction (PCR)] test administered by our health partners from Frederick Health)

Please sign up for your Testing Window Time by Tuesday, January 12, at 8 pm at:

<https://www.signupgenius.com/go/70A0F4AA4AA2FA13-covid1>

- Because it has not been clearly established whether previous exposure results in long-term immunity, our medical health partners have recommended that students and seminarians who previously tested positive are still required to take the COVID-19 baseline test as well as follow health and safety protocols such as wearing a mask and physical distancing.
- Following your test, I ask that all seminarians stay on campus. Saturday, January 16, 2021 is a day of “Shelter in Place” for the Seminary until test results return. Our Health Care Partners will work hard to have the results of the test done within 24 hrs.
- Frederick Health will inform you if your test is positive and make arrangements for your isolation.

ISOLATION/QUARANTINE

- If your test result is positive, or you are determined to be a close contact of someone with COVID-19, you will be expected to isolate or quarantine.
- The time period for quarantine/isolation will be based on recommendations from the CDC and the University’s health advisory panel.

QUESTIONS

If you have questions, please contact Fr. Diego Ruiz, I.V.E., (301-852-3779 or d.ruiz@msmary.edu).

CHECK LIST

- Limit contact with others from now until you arrive back at the Mount;

- Get a test for COVID-19 within the 5 days prior to your return to campus;
- Sign up for the time window of your arrival by Tuesday, January 12, at 8 pm;
- Sign up for your time window to receive a COVID-19 test at the Seminary by Tuesday, January 12, at 8 pm;
- Fill out the Community Care Agreement on “MyMount” on the day you are due to arrive but before you actually arrive on campus.

I am very grateful for your patience and “Gumby-like” flexibility with all these necessary steps for everyone’s health and safety. I thank you again for your cooperation in following the health guidelines that enabled us to stay on campus for the fall semester. Continuing to follow those protocols, especially the **4 W’s** of **W**earing a face covering, **W**ashing your hands frequently, **W**atching your distance (staying more than six feet away from others and avoiding large gatherings), and **W**anting to pray a *Memorare* at least once a day for Our Lady to protect our community, will help us safely return to and remain on campus.

MEMORARE

Remember, O most gracious Virgin Mary, that never was it known that anyone who fled to thy protection, implored thy help, or sought thy intercession was left unaided.

Inspired by this confidence, I fly unto thee, O Virgin of virgins, my mother; to thee do I come, before thee I stand, sinful and sorrowful. O Mother of the Word Incarnate, despise not my petitions, but in thy mercy hear and answer me. Amen.

In Christ,

Msgr. Andrew Baker