



S S P X



Ad Orientem

New Seminary Project Newsletter
Issue Number 1 March 2012

Grounds for Hope

Why does a seminary need an enormous plot of land? Does its location really matter? It is obvious that even the most beautiful buildings, if they stood in an industrial park or on a busy street corner, would fall short of the ideal. Life within the seminary's walls cannot stand in isolation from its environment; rather, it draws from that environment and is marked by it. From the moment they began searching for St. Thomas Aquinas Seminary's new home, the Seminary's superiors had the community's daily life constantly before their eyes.

Whether he is engaged in prayer or study, the priest in formation needs one thing above all else: silence. Noise of the world, be it the rush of traffic, the buzz of crowds, or the bells and whistles of TVs, radios, cell phones, and computers, is absolutely lethal to both prayerful and intellectual contemplation. On the other hand, more than 1,000 acres of

forest and farmland near the geographic center of the state of Virginia, in a county with fewer than 20,000 people, is the ideal contemplative atmosphere. The only sounds to be heard—those of the natural surroundings—assist rather than hinder the elevation of the mind to eternal truth. From the site, perched atop the highest point of the property, one can admire the panoramic views of the Blue Ridge Mountains, whose beauty raises the mind and heart to God.

However, all contemplation and no recreation makes for a listless, unhealthy, and depressed seminarian. On the extensive new property, the seminarians will find many opportunities to refresh their minds and exercise their limbs. Countless trails and logging roads crisscross the fields and forests, allowing for both casual strolls and more arduous hikes. Two ponds, totaling seven acres in area, allow for fishing and boating. The sheer quantity of land opens the

door to nearly limitless possibilities for athletic fields, courts, and the like.

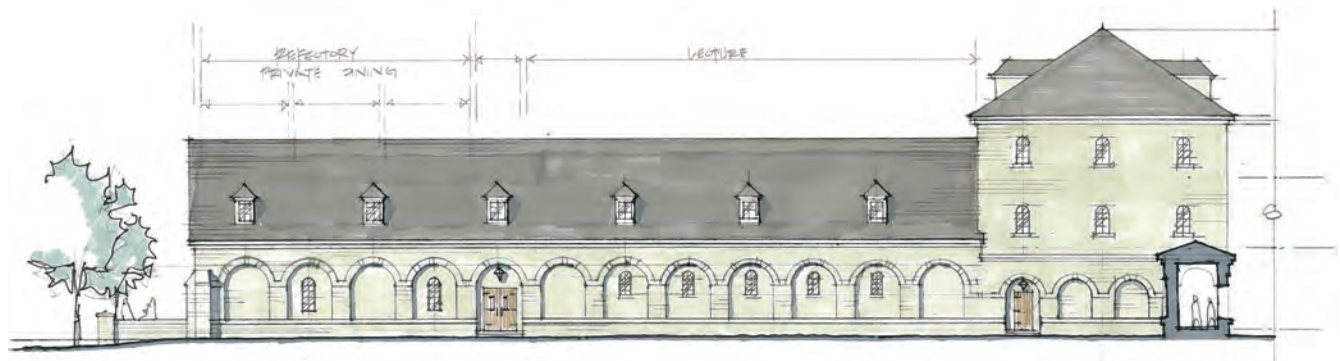
It would be a mistake, nevertheless, to confine the potential of the Seminary's new property to recreational activities. Part of the land was in use until quite recently for raising beef cattle, and the Seminary's hierarchy is already planning to resume this enterprise for the Seminary's use. Numerous other agricultural projects, such as large orchards and gardens, are already in the works, in the hope that the Seminary will eventually be more self-sufficient. In addition, an impressive development of vineyards in Virginia in recent years makes the Seminary community hopeful that it will be able to and produce its own wine for both altar and table.

The culminating event of every year at the Seminary is the ceremony of ordination to the priesthood in June. Thousands of visitors descend upon the Seminary to share in the joy of seeing new priests, to manifest their attachment to Tradition, and to receive first blessings. The Seminary's future home will be a perfect place for this event. There is plenty of space for the ordinations tent, plenty of space for camping, plenty of space for parking, and, in general, plenty of space for everything.

Without any doubt, the new property combines great natural beauty with many practical advantages for Seminary life. Nevertheless, at the moment, its excellence as a seminary's grounds remains entirely in potentiality. The site is chosen and marked out. The land is cleared and prepared, but there is no Seminary yet. A seminary in a bad location is deficient, but the perfect location without any buildings is no seminary at all. Please support this building effort and help the Seminary improve and perfect the formation of traditional Catholic priests for the glory of God, for the future of the Church, and for the salvation of souls. ❖



Verdant fields, inviting forests, and two large ponds are only a few of the features of this sprawling property.



Architectural drawings such as this one give just a hint of the buildings soon to take shape in Buckingham County.



This digital model shows one of the final steps in the planning and design phase of the new seminary project.

The Perpetual Mass Trust at the Seminary

A “thank-you” to all who have helped us begin our project

One year ago, the Seminary first announced its intention of relocating to Virginia. Your contributions in response to our appeal have enabled us to complete the architectural planning, which, for a facility of this size, is complex and expensive.

In order to show our appreciation to the benefactors whose generosity has allowed us begin the construction phase, we are instituting a Perpetual Mass Trust for all who have donated \$10,000 or more to the project. A novena of Masses will be said twice annually for all those enrolled in the Trust and their immediate families. In May, the intention of the novena will be the living members and, in November, the deceased.

Enrollment will remain open to all whose donations equal or exceed \$10,000 until the Seminary is completed.





The Society of St. Pius X is an international priestly society of common life without vows, whose purpose is the priesthood and that which pertains to it.

St. Thomas Aquinas Seminary is an international seminary of the Society currently located in Minnesota. *Ad Orientem* chronicles the construction of the new St. Thomas Aquinas Seminary in Virginia. To find out more about the project or to contribute visit <http://newseminaryproject.org>.

St. Thomas Aquinas Seminary

21077 Quarry Hill Road

Winona, MN 55987

(507) 454-8000

info@newseminaryproject.org