



Joseph Carola, SJ
25 Years in the Priesthood

During my regency assignment at Strake Jesuit College Preparatory in Houston, I began to discern a call within my call, that is, a vocation to work as a Jesuit in the formation of the clergy for God's greater glory and the salvation of souls. That call from the Lord continued to deepen during my theological studies. Three years ordained a priest, I was missioned to do a doctorate in patristics studies with the goal of teaching at the Pontifical Gregorian University in Rome. The Eternal City's Jesuit university contributes in an extraordinary manner to the formation of the Catholic clergy serving across the globe.

It has been an immense grace to dedicate my own priesthood to the formation of other priests. As a professor of theology, I teach, research, write and publish. But as I tell my students, they themselves are, in fact, "my books and scholarly articles." First and foremost, among my students, I serve as a priest formed by the charism of our Father Ignatius and his Spiritual Exercises. In addition to my academic labors, which encompass much of my day, I serve as a spiritual director for priests, seminarians and lay students. I also direct retreats and preach at the national seminaries in Rome on a regular basis. My greatest joy is to celebrate the Eucharist for my students.

