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A priestly incubator

by Tom Gallagher

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Here's a story that is well reported from the *Los Angeles Times*, Seminary works to fill a dire need for priests, about seminary formation at the Junipero Serra House of Formation in the San Bernardino diocese in Southern California.

The article explains that "With no local Catholic university or seminary to replenish an aging clergy, diocese leaders decided in 1985 to develop their own priests at Serra House." The men in formation now attend Riverside Community College and other local schools to work toward bachelor's degrees in philosophy or other subjects. They will complete formal training at seminaries in Camarillo or San Antonio.

An interesting historical fact is that Junipero Serra was a ground breaking, sickly Franciscan priest who helped develop what is now the State of California. In the U.S. Capitol is the National Statuary Hall Collection. Individual states donate statues to honor persons notable in their history. Each state can send two statues. For California, visitors will find a statute of Blessed Junipero Serra. Fr. Junipero Serra was beatified by Pope John Paul II in 1988.

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