



# THE GUARDIAN

With an exceptionally early start of Lent this year, we shall have two significant ceremonies at the beginning of the month: Candlemas and Ash Wednesday. Both days are very important at the seminary. We sing the high Masses while the grade school boys serve. The blessing of candles and the Feast of the Purification on February 2<sup>nd</sup> bring to a conclusion the Christmas Season. The decorations come down, and we find ourselves quickly entering the Season of Lent.

Ash Wednesday's solemn ceremonies have a beauty all their own. The chants of the feast, the violet vestments, the blessed ashes — all impress deeply upon us the need for penance. We all know we need penance. Lent is an ideal time to do that penance, to atone for our sins, to grow in merit and virtue. Let us all pray for one another that we have a good Lent and grow in our appreciation for Our Lord's Passion and Death for us.

Well, once again we have been disappointed by a mild winter. All the snow that had piled up during the first half of January quickly melted when the temperatures rose and a warm breeze moved through our region. Still, we hope to go skiing at least once in February. There is adequate snow at some of the local ski resorts, but a few more inches of the white stuff would be appreciated by the skiers amongst us.

## The greatest act of love

Brandon Odom, gr. 10

Here in Idaho at St. Joseph Seminary we have been absorbed in the joyful Seasons of Christmas and

Epiphany. The glorious Birth of Our Lord and Savior has brought peace and happiness to all Catholic homes across the nation. However, that same nation doesn't seem to place as much value in the less joyful, but equally important, Season of Lent.

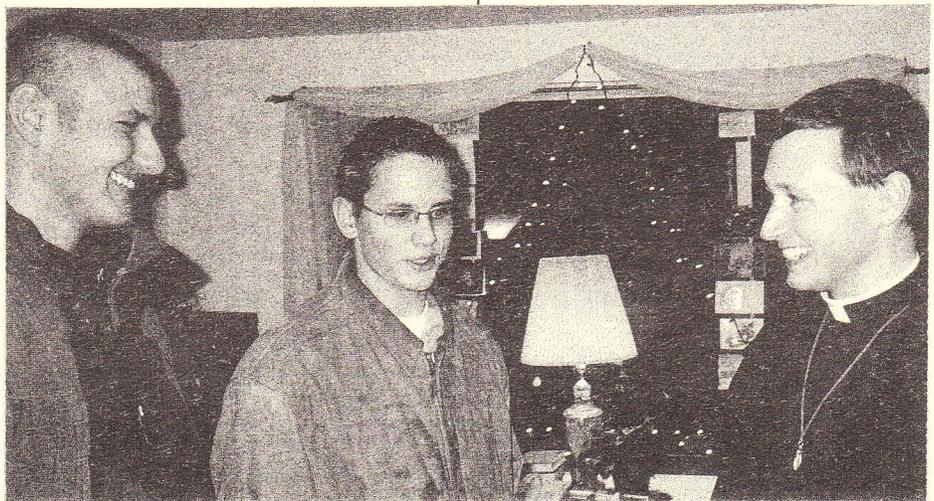
Many people think that Christmas is the most important feast of the year. But Easter is considered a greater feast, and Lent is just a preparation for Easter. This preparation should be made well. If Our Lord can come into the world and die on a cross for us, His unworthy servants, can't we do the same for Him by carrying our small crosses and doing small acts of charity and penance? How would you feel if you unselfishly risked your life for others, and in return they ignored you and didn't even have the decency to thank you? Imagine now how Our Lord feels. He didn't just risk His Life but died an unimaginably cruel and painful death on the Cross. And there are millions of people who have never

## February calendar

- 2 — Feast of the Purification of the Blessed Virgin Mary; Blessing of Candles; no homework
- 9 — Ash Wednesday
- 18-20 — Annual Lenten Retreat
- 23 — Mid-quarter
- 26 — Brandon's birthday

thanked Him or even given it a moment's thought.

Lent is forty days of preparation for the greatest feast of the year. It is in honor of the Forty Days' fast that Christ endured in the desert. This year, with Lent coming early, let us not waste time in getting into the proper spirit. Let us, as Catholics, not be counted among the millions who don't properly prepare for Easter.



The seminarians enjoyed their visit with the priests. Here Cavan and Gerard listen to a few stories from Fr. Gabriel Lavery, CMRI.

## Longsuffering

by Mr. Tim Duff

As a teacher I need to remember that, in a way, we are all students in that we may all learn from each other. When I notice a good quality in one of the seminarians I often ask, "Do I have this virtue?" It might be punctuality, prompt obedience, or fervor at prayer which catches my attention.

I would like to mention a virtue I have noticed not in a seminarian (though they need it with me as a teacher!) but in my own daughter Maria. It is the virtue of *longsuffering*.

As many of you know, Maria has the same muscle disease which took my little Joseph to heaven. Unable to walk, and barely any more able to crawl, innumerable are the day-to-day sufferings of this cheerful little eight-year-old.

Thanks to many prayers she is undergoing experimental treatment for her disease and is showing definite signs of improvement, yet even this treatment is a source of new suffering for her with biweekly visits to the ICU and endless pokes and prods. Yet she hardly ever complains, but shows a resignation beyond her years.

Maria touches the heart of everyone with whom she comes in contact. Stated simply, she is always a good influence on those around her. Can we say the same thing of ourselves?

In muscle she is weak, but in will and resignation and longsuffering she is stronger than many of us. I wish I were as strong.

## An evening with the priests

by Peter Linder, gr. 12

At St. Joseph Seminary we have the tremendous privilege of regularly having a Catholic priest around to give us direction and supervision. A few weeks ago, however, we had the even greater privilege of spending an evening in the company of 15 priests and with Bishop Mark Pivarunas. As you might have guessed, most of the priests were together because of the annual priests' meetings at Mt. St. Michael. The meetings ended on Thursday, and on that day Father took us to dinner with the priests at a parishioner's home.

When we arrived at our destination we met Mr. and Mrs. Tarnowski, who welcomed us into their home and, after taking our coats, invited us to enjoy some snacks. Soon the priests arrived who had assembled at Mt. St. Michael from different parts of the country. We met all of them and enjoyed some pleasant conversations with them while waiting for the bishop. When the bishop arrived, we prayed grace and enjoyed a delicious meal, as we listened to stories about all of the cars that Fr. Trough hopes to drive!

When we finished our meal, we mingled about the room to chat with the other priests so that we could get to know them. While we enjoyed our dessert, we were entertained by the bishop's stories about his hunting exploits with bow and arrow.

Then we enjoyed some Irish dancing by two neighbor girls, who are students at St. Michael's Academy. The Bishop was so impressed by their performance, he wrote a note to the teachers to dismiss them from their homework — a note including the signatures of fifteen other priests! We ended the night with the powerful blessing of the bishop and all the priests.

After having spent an entire evening with these extraordinary men, I have come to the conclusion that the notion that priests are always strict disciplinarians is entirely false. I had such a remarkably enjoyable time with these priests that I do not hesitate to say that they are the most friendly, high-spirited people I have ever known, other than my own family.

## Latin — the subject that kills

by Gerard Odom, gr. 9

*P*acem omnes homines laudant, et tamen nulla est pax. I bet you can't figure out what that means. I know I can't, but I'll be able to figure it out soon enough, because here at the seminary we're studying *Latin*.

The hardest and most frustrating subject ever to be studied at the seminary is Latin. The problem with Latin is that everything is backwards. Verbs go at the end of the sentence, adjectives follow the subject instead of preceding it, and everything else requires endings of at least six letters or more just to make Latin even more impossible to translate! But the most surprising thing is that we're passing Latin! As one student said, "Latin is a dead language — it killed the Romans, and it'll kill us, too!" The way I see it, no subject is a necessary subject unless it's going to save your life. It's the same way with Latin. I don't need to study Latin because I don't plan on going back in time to Ancient Rome any time soon! In the event that something that ridiculous does happen, my poor Latin would only make matters worse!

To be honest with you, Latin isn't as hard as we make it out to be. It's actually one of my favorite subjects. It does get very challenging, though. As Father often says, "The Romans made Latin as difficult as it is just so that you would have a hard time with it!" Truer words were never, nor ever will be, spoken! Latin is so hard because you always need to stay on top of everything. You have to memorize every little detail because it has to do with the lesson that's three hundred pages ahead of the lesson that you'll be studying two weeks from where you are! But all of that studying pays off when Father has reached the end of his rope with you, and you manage to translate one sentence correctly! It's amazing to find out how quickly your life can change after you've failed to put an "ant" at the end of your verb, instead of a "unt"! Actually, it's not that bad. Latin is an enjoyable subject, and we hope to continue studying it in the future.



*The sisters joined us for the opening of gifts on the Feast of the Epiphany.*



*Occasionally, weightlifting is part of our P.E. exercises.*



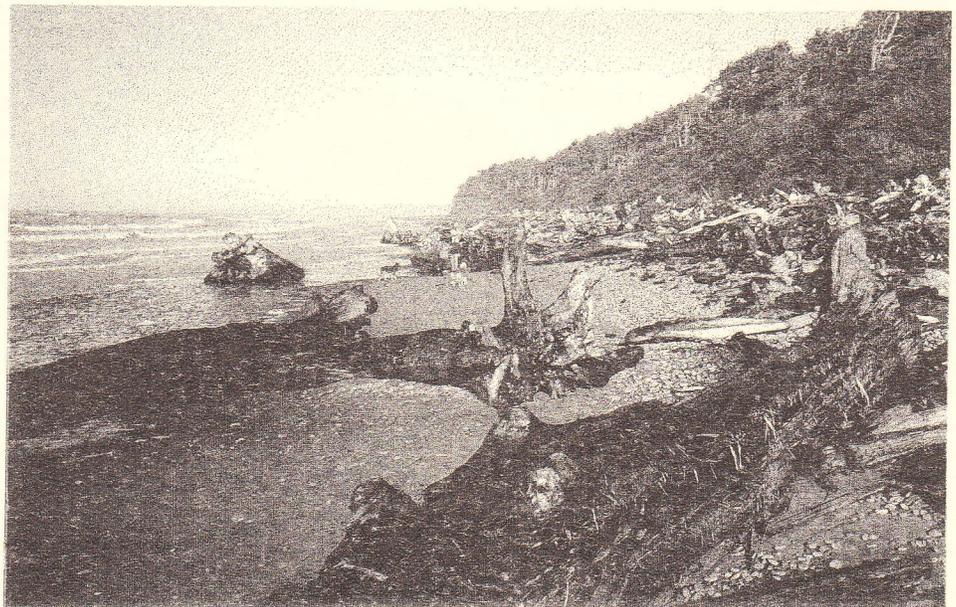
*Our snow has melted but the sledding was fun while it lasted.*



*Peter's left wrist was a casualty of sledding on a bumpy hill.*



*Cavan built a 'jump' on the sledding hill in early January.*



*During the Christmas vacation Fr. Benedict enjoyed a couple days of R&R on the beautiful Washington Coast.*

## A time for penance

The Season of Lent is upon us, and we all know what that means! Even non-Catholics know that Lent is the time to "give something up." But Lent is much more than that. Yes, we forego certain simple pleasures that we enjoy, but let us make certain that our penances during this season are meritorious. Let us not be as the hypocrites mentioned in the Gospel, who want to appear to others to be doing penance so that they may be praised by men. We want our reward to be from God, not men.

But what kind of penances should we undertake? As an old priest used to say, "If it doesn't hurt, it isn't penance." The penances that cost us the most are the best. This doesn't mean that we have to do something heroic and very difficult. The simple mortifications that go against the grain, against our own will and selfishness are the best. To put off doing something we would like to do, for example, is not as easy as it may sound. We could delay reading a piece of mail, do that dislikeable chore, or put off the task we enjoy. These acts of self-denial have great value.

If we really want to grow in grace, however, let us especially accept the contradictions that we have not chosen which come our way. Our Lady at Fatima told the children "above all" to accept the sufferings that God sends us. Do you have an illness? Are you troubled? Anxious? These trials, patiently born, without complaint, have a great reward.

So let us all resolve to spend Lent well. Write out your plan for Lent. Choose some things that you will give up. Decide how you will contradict and overcome your self-will and self-love. And especially be determined to bear with patience and without complaint your daily trials.

Let us also perform our Lenten sacrifices with generosity. Let us not complain of the cross, reminding ourselves that our penances are as nothing compared to what our dear Lord suffered for love of us. If we meditate during Lent on His Passion, our penances will become easy. May Jesus and Mary grant to each of you many blessings during Lent and may we all grow closer to Jesus Crucified. May God reward you for your support.

*Fr. Benedict Hughes, CMRI*

## Seminary Support Club

If you are not yet a member of the Seminary Support Club and would like to become a member, you may write to the seminary at the address below. Members pledge to pray for the success of the seminary and, if able, to send a regular financial contribution for its support.

## Do you have a vocation?

If you are a young man of high school age who has a vocation, then St. Joseph Seminary may be the place for you. Our four-year course of studies offers the regular high school curriculum, with an emphasis on Theology, Latin, choir and foreign language. A well-rounded program of daily Mass, prayer and sports complements our academic schedule. For more information, write to the rector of St. Joseph Seminary at the address below.



*The Blessing of Candles is an important liturgical ceremony since candles, which are a symbol of Christ, are used at every Mass.*

*The Guardian* is published monthly for the enjoyment of our benefactors and for the family members of our seminarians. This newsletter is free upon request.

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