



THE GUARDIAN

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Monthly newsletter of St. Joseph Seminary

January 2012

By the time you receive this issue of our newsletter, we will all be at home, on vacation with our families. Recently, we had a spiritual conference on the purpose of vacations for seminarians. Father explained the necessity of these periods of rest for body and mind, that we may return to our studies and spiritual formation with renewed energy.

In addition to the needed relaxation a vacation provides, it also is a test of what we have accomplished in the seminary. Will we have the fortitude to maintain our prayer life and resolutions and to practice the virtues that we have cultivated? We realize that as priests one day, we will likely be on our own much of the time. The serious obligations of the priesthood will be easier for us then, if now we are able to maintain our spiritual exercises when absent from the seminary.

Finally, our vacation periods away from the seminary remind us of the blessings we have in our daily routine. Here in the seminary it is so much easier to pray and practice virtue, with all the means of grace at our disposal. The beauty of our schedule and spiritual life becomes more apparent when we are temporarily absent from them. Please pray for us that we will not lose the graces we have gained, but will profit from our vacation time.

All of us agree that our time here at the seminary has been passing all too quickly. It seems that the school year only began a month or two ago, but now we are nearly at the mid-way point of the year. As we begin a new calendar year, let us all thank God for the time He has given us and resolve in future to use our time well to love and serve Him.

We ask your continued prayers for our seminary and for more vocations. We thank you for your prayers and support and assure you of our prayers for you.

Our Lord's loving Heart

by Aedan Gilchrist, gr. 12

Often I have the fault of forgetfulness in general everyday duties. But I admit that the worst of my forgetfulness comes when thinking of Our Lord's love. Often I find myself frightened by the potential of punishment from Our Lord for my sins. It seems that I often fail even in the simplest things, like sometimes being unable to count the right number of Hail Mary's for the decades of the Rosary.

My God, why do You continue to love me when I am so weak? Why do You love the ones who sought Your life as an infant? Why do You love the ones who slaughter the innocent unborn? Why do You love thieves, murderers, blasphemers, the envious, the jealous, the slothful, the liars, the adulterers and the sacrilegious? Why do You love the ones who crucified You?

I am frightened by Our Lord's might, for He is omnipotent and I am nothing. Why do I deserve mercy and the infinite love of God?

January calendar

- 4 — Classes resume
- 5 — Blessing of Epiphany Water
- 6 — Feast of the Epiphany; special observances
- 12 — Annual Epiphany season dinner and exchange of gifts
- 17-19 — Semester Exams (and Priests' Meetings)
- 20 — Semester Break; ski day
- 23 — Second Semester begins

What a proud thought would it be to believe that we deserve His love and His gifts. We deserve nothing but pain in this life and in the next.

But what a relief we find in the mystery of knowing that God loves us

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The seminarians are privileged to serve Mass frequently.

Our Lord's loving Heart

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despite our frailties. God loves us in an infinite manner, for God is incapable of incomplete love. What a consolation to my heart to know that God will be there at my side forever loving me, if only I love Him.

O my God, praised be Thy name for Thy mercy is unfathomable. I may never understand completely why You love me, but just let me love You and that will satisfy me for all eternity. Sin is caused by ignorance, indifference, weakness and, ultimately, pride. Please then, dear God, give me the gift of the knowledge of love and I will be enlightened, strengthened and filled with Your Majesty. Never again will I sin.

I chose to write this to you about Our Lord's love because this Advent has been an enlightening of my mind, after our reading much of the book *called The Incarnation, Birth and Infancy of Jesus Christ* by St. Alphonsus. It has helped me to better understand my God's love, for as I have said, I often find myself in fright of His Divine Majesty. The fact is, my dear readers, that sinners like you and me, if we turn from sin, can make God more happy than 99 just in heaven.

A night away from the seminary

by Patrick Gilchrist, gr. 8

Every year the seminarians go on seasonal trips. During the last full moon we visited a couple in Coeur d'Alene, who are parishioners of our parish, and spent the night at their home. Fr. Bernard was our chauffeur and we said the Sorrowful Mysteries en route. We arrived at the Slaters' home at 5 p.m. to receive a very warm welcome from Mrs. Slater. She had snacks and a card game ready for us. (I am sorry to have to tell you that Fr. Bernard was the winner!)

Soon there was the call for dinner and it was delicious! We had cod that had been caught in Alaska where the Slaters' son works on a boat. Dessert was orange jello with cottage cheese and Mandarin oranges, and even the salad was good!

Next the home theater. We watched an enthralling movie about trust and forgiveness. The story told about a father who lost his first son, and then blamed his other son because he did not want to blame himself. When the movie was over Mr. Slater showed us the hot tub and explained the rules. When he finished Mrs. Slater said that we could stay up as long as we desired and that they were going to bed. Finally, we too said our night prayers and tumbled off to bed.

The bear in the room where we slept was shot by Mr. Slater. It is 9 feet tall, and you can see the bullet hole, the gaping jaws, the 3-inch claws, and dark brown coat. This was not taxidermy — it was a bear hanging on a wall.

Mrs. Slater woke us up at 4:30 a.m., as had been previously agreed, to view the lunar eclipse. We went outside in a bitterly cold 30 degrees. We saw the shadow on the moon. We were without telescope and also without Jordan,

who wisely stayed in bed. He told us he could see it through the window.

I finally woke up again to the smell of French toast, sausage and orange juice. Another excellent meal concluded our stay, and it was now time to head home. Thank you, Mr. and Mrs. Slater, for your wonderful hospitality! We had a great time and eagerly look forward to our spring trip, when we hope to see the mules.

Keeping our resolutions

by Jordan Hartman, gr. 9

As the year comes to a close we might remember that we made resolutions towards the beginning of it to overcome something or to do better at something than we have done in the past. It is important to strive for perfection and to stick firmly to our promises, so that we may hold at bay, or even better, completely conquer our fallen human nature. And one very good way to do that is to make an annual resolution.

But that would be of little profit to us if we did not take our resolutions seriously or were discouraged by obstacles. The most likely reason for being discouraged would be, as St. John Vianney once said, that we rely too much on our own strength and resolutions and not enough on the power of God. It would be a good idea to ask God or one of the saints in our daily prayers for help to keep to our resolutions.

Another pitfall would be worldly distractions, which serve as great impediments in our spiritual life. Avoiding all these things leaves us more time, number one, to visit God in the Blessed Sacrament if possible, to pray to Him, and to talk to Him and acquire a habit of prayer which will help us to stay on the right path. Number two: we will find we have more time to fulfill our daily duty than we did when the video game we "had to play" took two hours to finish. Or we didn't have enough time to say the Rosary because of our favorite TV show. Prayer should always be our first priority. We should ever be aware that we will even be judged for every idle word that has come from our lips, not to mention every idle minute.

It might not be easy to give up some of these things, but then again, it's quite easy to get to hell and quite joyfully toilsome to get to heaven. So if you discover that what you have sacrificed is hard to give up, then it is most likely very pleasing to God. And God's grace will surely be sufficient for us to give up anything. And Mary! Ah, what a relief to our souls to know that someone with so much power, grace and influence is working so hard for our salvation. Surely, without Mary there would be a much slimmer chance of getting to heaven.

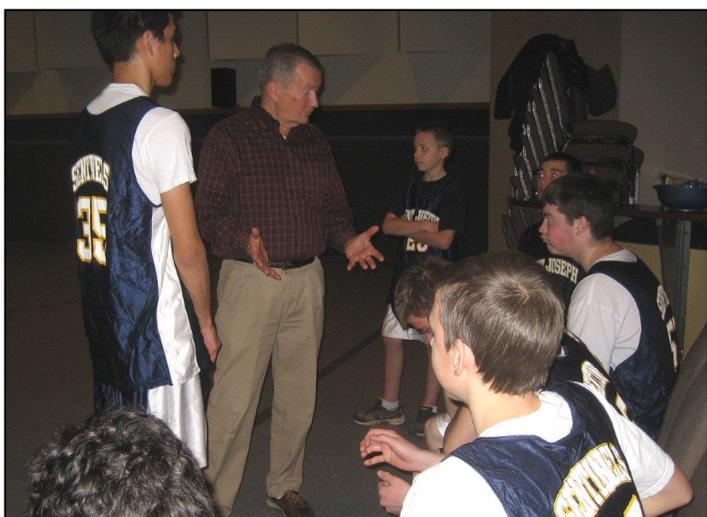
In conclusion, we must not hesitate to give up what we are most attached to and stay true to our resolutions. It is with confidence that we should face the temptation of giving up, and conquer our fallen human nature, with and for the love of Jesus and Mary.



At the conclusion of night prayers we process to Our Lady's shrine, singing her seasonal antiphon.



Working on our Guardian articles.



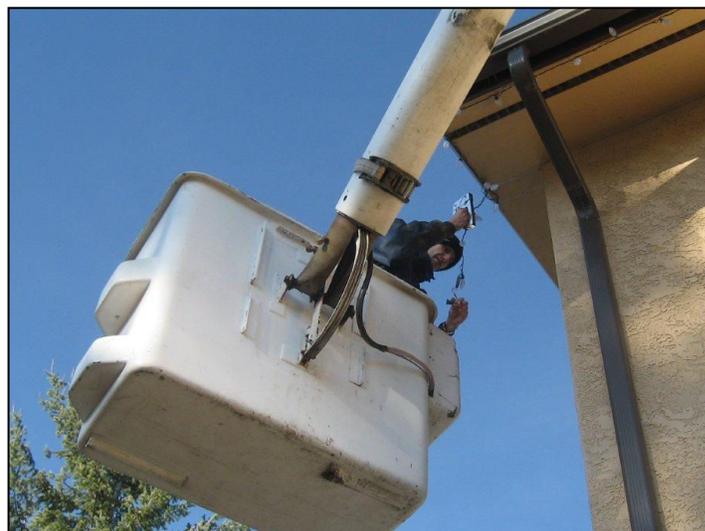
Our seminarians are joined by students from our parish school for basketball.



Enjoying a card game at the Slater residence.



During December we have been working on a puzzle, picturing the Madonna and Child, surrounded by angels.



Fr. Bernard put up Christmas lights at the church.

Send Your Angel to Holy Mass

O Holy Angel at my side, go to church for me,
Kneel in my place at Holy Mass, where I desire to be.

At Offertory, in my stead, take all I am and own,
And place it as a sacrifice, upon the altar throne.

At holy consecration's bell, adore with Seraph's love,
My Jesus hidden in the Host, come down from
heaven above.

Then pray for those I dearly love, and those who
cause me grief,
That Jesus' Blood will cleanse all hearts, and
suffering souls relieve.

And when the priest Communion takes, oh bring my
Lord to me,
That His sweet Heart may rest on mine, and I His
temple be.

Pray that this Sacrifice Divine, may mankind's sins
efface,
Then bring me Jesus' blessing home, the pledge of
every grace.

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.

shocking to them to hear God speaking through His prophet of the glory that would be given to Him by the Gentiles. Later, Our Lord Himself would say that *"many shall come from the east and from the west, and will sit down with Abraham and Isaac and Jacob in the kingdom of heaven, but the children of the kingdom will be put forth into the darkness outside. . . ."* (Matt, 8:11-12).

We Catholics recognize that this prophecy of Malachias can only apply to the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass, the "clean oblation." Imagine the days before Vatican II when hundreds of thousands of priests spread throughout the world offered daily Mass! Indeed, the prophecy has been perfectly fulfilled: *"in every place there is sacrifice."* Today, however, there are far fewer Masses offered to God, yet this sacrifice remains as infinitely precious as ever. For the Mass is nothing more nor less than Jesus Christ offering Himself to His heavenly Father, renewing in an unbloody manner the very sacrifice of Calvary.

Our seminarians not only have the privilege of attending Mass every day, but they also are able to serve Mass frequently. May they grow in appreciation of the priceless treasure of daily Mass. For those who are unable to assist at Mass frequently, we have printed here a prayer for sending your Guardian Angel to Mass in your stead. In other words, just as we can make spiritual communions, so likewise we should offer to God the desire to attend Holy Mass and unite ourselves daily to Christ in the Masses that are offered throughout the world.

I pray that you and your loved ones will be blessed by God in this New Year of 2012. Let us resolve to use the time He gives us to serve Him well. Again, thank you for your prayers and support. Be assured of a daily remembrance in our prayers here at the seminary, and especially in the daily Holy Sacrifice of the Mass.

Fr. Benedict Hughes, CMRI

The daily sacrifice

One of the greatest blessings of the seminary is the opportunity to assist at the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass every day. It would be impossible to overstate the blessing of daily Mass. In the Old Testament, we read in the book of the prophecy of Malachias: *"From the rising of the sun even to the going down, My name is great among the Gentiles, and in every place there is sacrifice, and there is offered to My name a clean oblation, for My name is great among the Gentiles, saith the Lord of hosts."*

This prophecy, uttered some 400 years before Christ, must indeed have been confusing to the Jewish people, who were permitted to have sacrifice only in the temple. But here the divinely-inspired prophet states that the sacrifice is going to be offered in *every* place. Furthermore, he makes it clear that these sacrifices will be offered by non-Jews, by the Gentiles. The Israelites had been so often warned against associating with the pagan nations around them, that it must have been

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