



THE GUARDIAN

Vol. XIV No. 4

Monthly newsletter of St. Joseph Seminary

December 2012

Advent is always eagerly awaited at the seminary. There is the anticipation of Christmas, the short month with our coming vacation, and the snow. (All seminarians like snow!) But Advent is also a time when we perform sacrifices in preparation for Christmas. We all write out a list of the penances we will perform, and submit it to our spiritual director for approval. We also have the Advent wreath and Advent prayers.

December is also important because of the feastdays to Our Lady. Of course, the Immaculate Conception is the greatest, but there is also Our Lady of Guadalupe and a couple others. Our Blessed Mother is a good example for us during Advent, as we prepare for Christmas, since she carried the Divine Infant in her sacred womb during the months leading up to His birth. We are currently learning some new hymns in honor of Our Lady.

As you know, there will also be ordinations in Omaha this month. Even though we begged Father to take us there, we understand the difficulty of arranging such a trip. Still, we are praying each day for the seminarians and praying to find God's will for ourselves. Perhaps one day it will be one, or several of us receiving Holy Orders. So we have a lot to pray for. We also pray every day for all of you who read this newsletter. We hope that you also will remember us in your prayers.

Por gloria mas grande

by Thomas Pulliam, gr. 9

When the seminarians went to the Slaters' house recently, we did many things, including watching a movie called "For Greater Glory." The

movie was about the Mexican Catholics or Cristeros who were martyred by the corrupt Mexican government. I will tell you what the movie showed, just in case you haven't seen it yet. It started out with the Mexican president, Calles, telling his men that Mexico wasn't going to let Rome "interfere" with their affairs. They started sending out soldiers to close the churches, to persecute the bishops and priests and to desecrate the Blessed Sacrament. There was a scene in the movie where a church was invaded while Mass was being said and the soldiers broke in and started killing all the parishioners.

Then came the point when all the male Catholics went to armed defense. They had the women get them the guns and ammunition. One of the greatest Cristeros was a man who was an atheist but converted before he died. Another was a priest who was shot in the head and lived four hours afterwards and was able to make his confession.

Then there was a very loyal Catholic boy who was martyred because he would not say "long live the Federal Government!" Instead, he would say, like all the other Catholics, the famous words of Fr. Pro: "Viva Cristo Rey!" He was tortured by a Mexican general by having his feet cut to ribbons, walking a very long time on salt and gravel, and then

December calendar

- 6 — Feast of St. Nicholas; mid-quarter
- 8 — Immaculate Conception BVM; Holyday of Obligation
- 12 — Our Lady of Guadalupe; ordinations in Omaha
- 21 — Half day of school; Christmas Vacation begins after classes

given one more chance to say the words the government told him to say. All he said in reply was *Viva Cristo Rey!* He was stabbed right in front of his parents and then shot.

I will end this article by saying that the Cristeros are good examples to us, never to abandon our Catholic Faith.



On the feast of All Saints we stopped by the Cataldo mission during a seminary outing.

The first snowfall

by Dominic Pulliam, gr. 9

Every year Fr. Benedict has the seminarians predict when the first snowfall will arrive. The rules are that the snow must be a minimum of two inches in depth and must last for at least twenty-four hours. So one morning we were all asked to write down our guesses. Michael guessed the fourteenth of November, while the rest of us had later dates in November. The first snowfall was on the twelfth, so Michael's guess was the closest.

When the snow was nice and frozen, we made a fort and a snow ramp on the bottom of one of the hills. It was cold and fun at the same time. It was also fun sliding on our stomachs because our coats were slippery, and since the snow was a little slushy we slid like penguins. I thought it was funny because we all have secret code names, but I will not tell you what they are. We even have secret codes that we follow that we also can't tell, because they are a secret.

As the snow starts to melt and the sun comes out, we try to have as much fun as we possibly can. So the night when we made the ramp, we went sledding from 7:00 to 8:30 p.m. It was a lot of fun. We made side walls on the ramp so we wouldn't go off course. The way I found how to go faster and further when I hit the ramp was to set the sled at the top of the hill on a little pile of snow. When it was set I would go back six or seven yards and start running at full speed until I got close to the sled. Then I jumped on the sled and went down very fast. It was terrifyingly awesome. Then it was time to go in for night prayers and then bed time. We all went to bed happy and exhausted.

A chaperone for life

by Jordan Hartman, gr. 10

It is said, and indeed it is true, that every living human on this earth has a guardian angel. Of course you can't see him, but he is there nonetheless. Doubting the existence of guardian angels is ridiculous. The Bible mentions guardian angels many times in both the Old and New Testaments. Furthermore, hundreds of saints were heard to talk about their guardian angels. Guardian angels have led saints through their visions and dreams, and conveyed God's messages to them. For example, in the 4th Book of Kings, it says that an angel slew in a single night, one hundred and eighty-five thousand enemies for King Ezechias. I bet he never doubted the existence of angels after that!

Many, however, too often forget to thank these wonderful custodians for the constant solicitude and prayers which they dutifully offer every day to keep us away from harm and the fiery darts of the devil. The angels protect us in more ways than we know, and it would be a great ingratitude not to at least acknowledge them for doing so. In fact, most people probably wouldn't live very long if they didn't have a guardian angel.

Blessed Christmas

The priests, staff and seminarians of St. Joseph Seminary wish all our relatives, friends and benefactors, a most blessed Advent and Christmas. May the Christ Child bless you and your loved ones.

With these pure souls as our guides through life, we have nothing to fear, except ourselves. How is it that we can sin every day knowing that these guardians of the Lord are always present? How it must pain them to witness us disobeying God by our own free will. It would be a wonderful resolution to ask ourselves what our guardian angels would say could they comment on our daily actions. For at this very moment your celestial, radiant angel is hovering at your side in prayerful obedience, waiting for your next move.

So let us remember our guardian angels who strive unceasingly, humbly and heroically for our salvation day after day. And also, let us strive to imitate them, in order to please almighty God.

The following is a poem about angels which I found in a book. I hope you enjoy it as much as I did!

Upon the thickly-peopled earth,
In ever ceaseless flow,
Full thrice ten thousand deathless beings,
Pass lightly to and fro.

Keepers of mortal men unseen,
In airy vesture dight,
Their good and evil deeds they scan,
Stern champions of the right.



New sodality members were received on Our Lady's feastday of the Presentation.



It's all hands on deck for making apple cider.



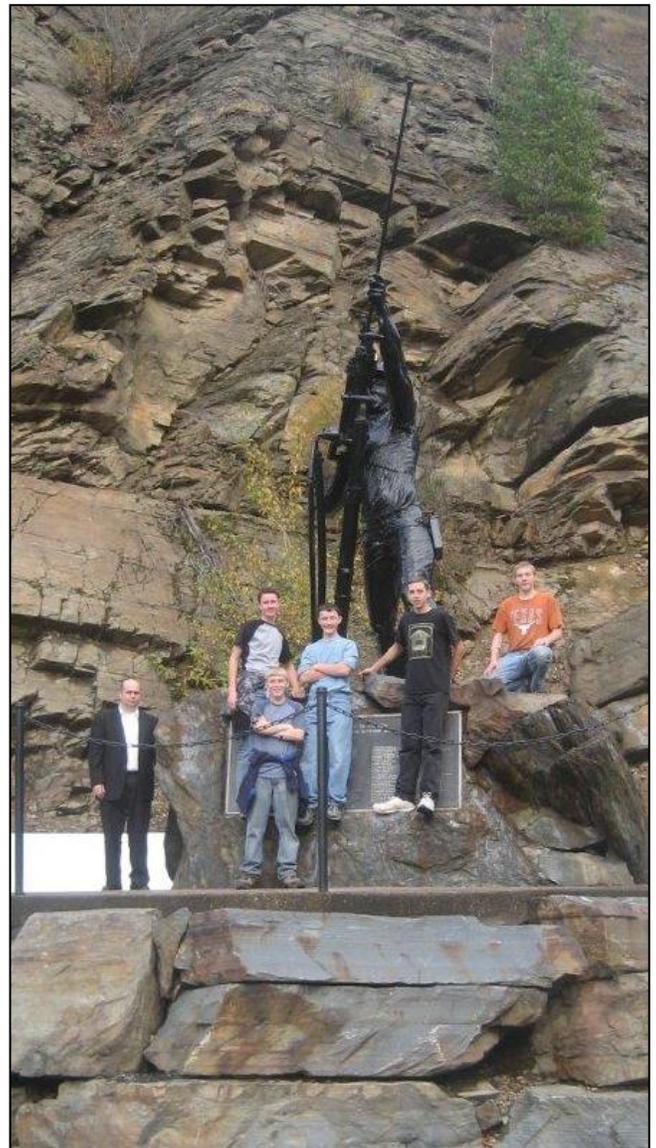
After the pressing, the cider is filtered.



Working in the parish hall kitchen, we helped our cooks prepare a delicious Mexican breakfast for the parish.



After a good preparation, we're now ready to serve the Sunday parish breakfast.



The Sunshine Miners' Memorial in the Silver Valley of Idaho commemorates the 91 workers who lost their lives in a terrible mining disaster in 1972.

Our night of sledding

by Nicholas Doll, gr. 9

On November 12th we received our first real snowfall of this year, which was about three or so inches; so the seminarians decided to go sledding. We used a large hill that was perfect for sledding. So we lugged the sled over to the hill and started sledding. At first it was not much fun until we broke a path we could use to sled down this hill.

After the path was broken in, we started picking up speed until we were going at a pretty good clip, but it was not much fun because we only had one sled. To remedy that, I started going down the hill on my stomach — now, we were having fun! It finally got to the point that the sled was abandoned; everyone was sledding like penguins down the hill.

After a while we were going faster than we were when we had the sled because now the path was almost ice. But sadly our fun was abruptly cut short because we had to go in for spiritual reading and night prayers, so we couldn't sled anymore. The next day we were going to go sledding again, but during the day it warmed up and the snow melted, leaving nothing for a night of fun. But hopefully more snow will come so we can sled down the hill again.

God's greatest gift

In the Gospel for the final Sunday after Pentecost, as well as that of the following Sunday, the First of Advent, we have Our Lord's prophecy of the end of the world. Among other things, Jesus describes the General Judgment: "And then shall appear the sign of the Son of man in heaven, and then shall all the tribes of the earth mourn; and they shall see the Son of man coming in the clouds of heaven with much power and majesty . . ."

With these words we can visualize that wonderful scene, but just what is this "sign of the Son of man"? Of course, it is the cross, the symbol of the death and sufferings Our Lord wished to undergo for us. As the *Imitation of Christ* points out, when that sign appears, all those who have carried their cross during life will rejoice; those who have spurned the cross will cower in fear. Are we carrying our crosses as we should, with patience and resignation?

St. Louis Marie de Montfort claims that the cross is God's greatest gift. That is certainly difficult to accept while we are enduring pain and suffering, but it is nonetheless true. God sends us crosses for our sanctification and salvation, as the Archangel Raphael explained to Tobias: "Because thou wast

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 Latin, theology, 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.



Our dog Victor gets a lot of attention from the seminarians.

acceptable to God, it was necessary that temptation should prove thee."

Our crosses come in all forms, not just physical aches and pains. There are sorrows and other mental trials, which can be even more painful than bodily suffering. Whatever they may be for each of us, there is no escaping the cross. Advent is as good a time as any to call to mind those words of Christ, "If thou wilt be My disciple, deny thyself, take up thy cross, and follow Me." For during Advent we meditate on the humiliation, poverty and suffering of the Divine Infant. Let us all resolve to spend this Advent well, and to ask Jesus and Mary for the grace to embrace God's greatest gift, to carry our crosses without complaint and self-pity.

As always, we thank you for your prayers and support of our seminary. We assure you of our daily prayers for you and your loved ones, especially during the upcoming Christmas season. May God bless each of you with all the graces you need.

Fr. Benedict Hughes, CMRI

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.

St. Joseph Seminary
15384 N. Church Rd.
Rathdrum, ID 83858-7650