



# THE GUARDIAN

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Monthly newsletter of St. Joseph Seminary

April 2020

We are all doing well at the seminary, as we prepare for Holy Week. From our teachers and families we hear about all the changes in society due to the coronavirus, but for us, things have continued as normal. The only exception is that when we serve Mass at the church, there are no people in the pews! But we seminarians continue with our classes and regular routine.

Speaking of our regular routine—it is amazing that Lent is almost over. It seems as though we just started Lent a couple weeks ago, but here we are, at Holy Week. At the seminary we spend a lot of time rehearsing for the ceremonies of Holy Week and hope to perform them as accurately and devoutly as possible.



*The seminarians assist Fr. Borja in the Asperges before High Mass on the First Sunday of Lent*

You probably know that the Mass and ceremonies here at Mary Immaculate Queen Church are live-streamed on the Internet. Just recently

Father Benedict showed us the statistics of people watching the Mass here at our church. So far, in just over a month, there have been about 4,000 views of the live-streamed Mass on the church website, including people from all over the world! So it is good that this service is available for people who don't have Mass.

We are not quite sure what we will be doing during Easter week, but one thing is for sure—we will enjoy the week without classes. There will probably be many recreational activities and just relaxing. Soon the year will be over, but in the meantime, we are praying every day for the current coronavirus epidemic to end and for the health of all our loved ones. We also pray daily for you, our friends and supporters!

## The Prisoner of Love

*by Jesse Sand, gr. 11*

He is in prison out of love. This King has been imprisoned for His subjects. These peasants, however, don't seem to have the time of day to go and visit their King who has suffered so much for their sake. Of course, I am talking about Jesus in the Most Holy Eucharist, who daily is languishing in a prison of love.

Our Lord has given us many gifts in our lives. The most special of these, however, is the Holy Eucharist. In this sacrament, Christ wanted to remain with us after His Ascension, and even more, he gave Himself for our soul's nourishment.

How insurmountable is God's love for us! Try to fathom that the Creator of the entire universe, the essence of all goodness and perfection, comes

## April Calendar

- 9-10 – Holy Thursday/Good Friday; special schedule
- 11 – Easter Vacation begins
- 12 – Easter Sunday; Gabriel's 16<sup>th</sup> birthday
- 20 – Classes resume
- 25 – Procession of the Greater Litanies
- 28 – Feast of St. Louis Marie de Montfort; begin preparation for Holy Slavery

into the souls of His wretched, sinful creatures.

This sacrament of God's love is not just a gift, it is also a requirement. For Christ said we must eat His flesh for life everlasting. Though the Church only requires Communion once a year, it is infinitely better to receive weekly or even daily. Only when we are in eternity will we see all the spiritual benefits we received from just one worthy Communion.

This sacrament has inestimable graces attached to it but to those who receive unworthily, only eternal death. For those who make bad Communions are, in essence, like Judas who betrayed Our Lord with a kiss, a sign of affection. What unimaginable pain this must cause Jesus in the most precious sacrament of His love.

Let us now, therefore, strive to appreciate Our Lord in this sacrament of limitless love and return as best we can, love for Him. God gave us this sacrament, because he knew we would perish without it. So let us use this sacrament to our best advantage.

## Don't Take Your Blessings for Granted

by William Riley, gr. 9

We take things for granted. Many people take things for granted because they have always had them. But when they are taken away, people tend to remember all that was good and all that they were able to do with them. For instance, when you have your mom around you don't really miss her or stick around her. But when you leave and stay at a friend's house for a few days or longer, you realize all that she has done for you. The same applies to your home and all the fun things you were able to do. And when you eat a certain meal or are able to sleep in longer and wear any type of clothes you want, whether it be a short-sleeved shirt and shorts or warm clothes, you and I tend to take it for granted.

There is a saying "you don't miss the water until the well runs dry." I'm sure we've all witnessed power outages and how there is no heat or A.C. and no ovens or lights, the fridges don't work and you realize how often we use them and how much we take things for granted.

Here at St. Joseph Seminary we are privileged to have Mass every day, confessions twice every week, and we live in the same house as Jesus Christ. You don't even have to walk 100 feet to be with Him. We get wonderful meals, have good teachers who care about our well-being, good friends and lots of sunshine. But when we get out into the world maybe there won't be good food and everything we used to have will not be there for us. I bet we'll look back and remember all of the wonderful things we had and wish we would have been more thankful for the many things we once had.

I was once told that if God takes something away from us, He is giving us a chance to stop and realize what it is that that thing helps us do and to help us appreciate it. The moral of the story is to be in the moment and be grateful for the gifts we have, even if they are few, because there are many people who have less than we have.

Be grateful for the gifts you get  
Even though the amount makes you fret.  
For no matter how little they be  
There are those who have fewer than we.

## The Last Gasp of Winter

by Gabriel Davis, gr. 10

Another winter has passed, the twenty-first in the minor seminary's history. Each day passing into the next, into bitter or sweet memories, winter has gone. We look back and ask "what have we gained." Well, we are all a little older and hopefully a little wiser. We have learned useful traits such as learning how to ski and make blarney stones; how to stay hidden in a pitch-dark gym, to making pies and baked goods and how to properly wash white shirts. We have benefited from a holy Lent and a three-day retreat and have advanced in our spiritual lives. We are, however, all closer to eternity than the winter before. An estimated 150,000 people have died each day this winter across the world. Dear



Following the Saint Patrick's Day talent show we posed for a group photo.

reader, you and I have survived this winter, so let us thank God every day for it and the time He has given us to serve Him better.

Winter, in my humble opinion, is the most important season of the year. With its many impracticalities and displeasures, it gives us opportunity for interior growth. To many, its solitude and quiescence is often thought of as boring and inactive. For us, however, it provides a perfect time of "soul searching" and interior correction. Never could I appreciate enough the harmonious growth that is so easily developed here at the minor seminary.

In our Henle Latin textbooks we read how the Romans in their conquest of Europe would hunker down during winter and make a winter quarters to gather strength and supplies before advancing. So should we, in our conquest of heaven, seek to calm down and refocus on our mission. Life is short, and we need to take every opportunity to remind ourselves of our purpose.

*Continued on page 4*





*Celebrating one of the three birthdays during the month of March.*



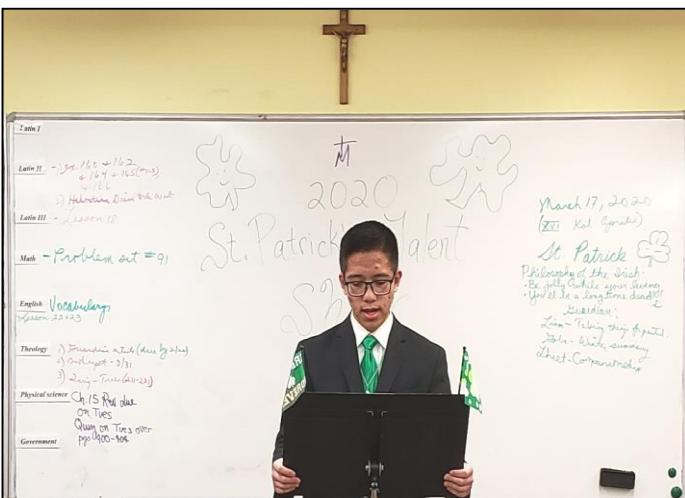
*The Stations of the Cross are recited every Friday in our church.*



*A scene from one of the spiritual conferences during the annual retreat.*



*Our seminarians played two basketball games versus the students from Saint Michael's.*



*Thiet sang three songs for the talent show.*



*Fortunately, we were able to host our annual Irish breakfast before the prohibition against group activities due to the coronavirus.*

*Continued from page 2*

## **The Last Gasp of Winter**

As soon as it seemed winter had passed, as soon as a break in the clouds was seen, we received the last gasp of winter on the 15<sup>th</sup> of March. With two inches of snow our hopes of spring were quickly blown away. However, winter's final tirade was brief and closing, only lasting three days. So, I believe, is it now with this school year taking in its last breaths before its close. We look back this past winter with great memories but we now look forward to the warm days to come.

## **As Iron Sharpens Iron ...**

*by Thiet Vincent Nguyen, gr. 10*

...so man sharpens his fellow man." (Proverbs 27:17) Many might wonder, especially Traditional Catholic young men who are discerning their vocation: how is it to live among seminarians who share the same motive in ascertaining their vocation? How does friendship join us together as spiritual brothers in Christ in the seminary? For the sake of our readers' curiosity concerning our relationships in the seminary, this article is dedicated to our fellowship as minor seminarians.

Every year, a group of both old and new seminarians from different states and places arrives at the seminary at the end of August. Though we are raised differently, in different customs, cultures, or ethnicity, we do get along in a short time with the warmth and spiritual bond created among us. The life of community, as most of us would tell you, can be a little rough with regard to charity, occasional misunderstandings and fraternal correction.

As a spiritual family, we minor seminarians are, in many ways, spiritual "brothers in Christ." We support one another by means of our spiritual and communal lives. Since we are only teenagers, of course, we are not perfect. We're still learning to develop both good spiritual and social habits. We're still trying to make our way to perfection. Some of us might have a hard time controlling our temper occasionally, or dealing with our inability to achieve high scores in our academic work. Some of us might make habitual mistakes regarding the seminary's rules, or might have a hard time doing our chores thoroughly and properly. But that's why we are here—to help one another. As contemporaries and friends, we are here to help each other to live our faith, to develop good habits and thrust off bad habits, and to get to Heaven.

Along with practicing charity towards one another, we also strive to keep one another in company. We do things together as companions. We have Physical Education as our last period of school. We play some football, frisbee, or soccer when we have good weather, and basketball or volleyball during winter

and rainy days. At supper, after listening to a reading from the New Testament, we socialize with each other at the dinner table. Every night after study hall, we have the hour of recreation to have good times and to bond. We play some pool, chess, ping-pong, practice singing, watch a movie (during weekends only), play some board games, or get some exercise at the gym together.

These are the times that create good memories among us that, hopefully, will always remain with us. They bring us together, to know more about our fellow seminarians, and to help us develop closer relationships as friends. I would like to thank God, Fr. Mary Benedict, and all of our teachers, staff and benefactors for making it possible for us to attend the minor seminary. Also, I would like to ask you readers to keep us in your prayers, so that we may persevere in our vocation and grow spiritually, by God's help.

## **Using God's Gifts**

As you are probably aware, we had a major remodel of our parish church here in northern Idaho, which lasted from early June, 2018, to April, 2019. On May 31<sup>st</sup> of last year we had the solemn blessing and dedication of the newly-remodeled church by His Excellency, Bishop Pivarunas. (And by the way, if you have never seen the video of the outside portion of that ceremony, you can view it on our website [www.miqparish.org](http://www.miqparish.org). It provides some spectacular birds-eye views of our church and grounds.)

Well, part of that remodel was a new sound system and the installation of a webcam to live-stream the Mass. The impetus to undertake this improvement was due, in part, to the urgent requests of a man in Japan who has corresponded with me. It was quite a task to get Internet access at the church, given the remote nature of our location, but it has been well worth it. Little did I suspect when we installed the system that within a year we would be broadcasting the Mass all over the world!

Since the proliferation of coronavirus infections, along with the accompanying government orders for avoiding gatherings and staying at home, our live-streamed Masses and ceremonies have been seen by thousands who are not able to attend the Holy Mass. You can imagine how grateful I am to that man in Japan, and to all those who worked so hard to set up the system and continue to take care of the daily transmissions.

Above all, thanks be to God for allowing us to use this means to spread and promote our holy Faith. We must take advantage of all the means God has given us, for His honor and glory. Be assured that we pray for all of you, especially at this difficult time, and are most grateful for your support—and your views of the live-streamed Mass and devotions!

*Fr. Benedict Hughes, CMRI*