



THE GUARDIAN

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Monthly newsletter of St. Joseph Seminary

November 2020

Since snow was forecast for last Friday (and it did snow... a lot!), we finished picking the remaining apples from our trees, to be turned into apple cider and applesauce. Altogether we made 36 gallons of apple cider. That first snowfall, by the way, yielded six inches, and it wasn't long before the snowballs started flying!

This week we are engaged in carving pumpkins. On Friday the children have their annual party in honor of All Saints, and the pumpkin carving contest will be part of the festivities. Then, on Sunday, we will celebrate the great feast of All Saints.

As you know, there is a wonderful indulgence that can be

gained for the Poor Souls from Noon of November 1st until midnight on November 2nd. At the seminary we make many visits to the Blessed Sacrament during this period of time, in order to gain this special *Toties Quoties* indulgence and thus release as many souls as we can from purgatory. We also will be making visits to the cemetery throughout November.

We have now finished the First Quarter of our school year and will receive our report cards in a few days. As you can imagine, we are looking forward to seeing how well we did and if we have made the Honor Roll. As the school year rolls on, we will continue to strive to excel and to make the most of

November Calendar

- 2 – All Souls Day; special observances for the Poor Souls
- 9-20 – Annual ping-pong tournament
- 21 – Presentation of Our Lady
- 26 – Thanksgiving Day; William's 15th birthday
- 27 – Feast of the Miraculous Medal; chanted Vespers
- 29 – First Sunday of Advent

our time here in the seminary. Thanks for remembering us in your prayers.



The consecration at the Pontifical High Mass.

Te Deum Laudamus

by Thiet Vincent Nguyen, gr. 11

Born in a far Eastern foreign country, I knew very little of the American tradition of Thanksgiving Day. Living in America for almost 7 years now, I really appreciate the tradition of Thanksgiving, when many Americans gather together to give thanks to God Who pours down many blessings on them and their forefathers in this land of liberty and opportunity. I am very grateful to God, Whose providence has enabled me to be here in America where I can freely practice my Catholic Faith and enjoy my rights as a potential American citizen. In this regard, I would like to analyze a brief history to commemorate Thanksgiving Day in this issue of *The Guardian*.

The first Thanksgiving Day is commonly believed to have been celebrated in the New World by the Pilgrims in October, 1621. The feast lasted three days, attended by 53 pilgrims and 90 Indians, gathering to give thanks to God for their first successful harvest after a year of devastating scarcity following their landing in the New World. According to Catholic tradition, however, the first American Thanksgiving was actually celebrated on the feast of the Nativity of the Blessed Virgin Mary in St. Augustine, Florida, in 1565. A gathering of 500 soldiers, 200 sailors and 100 artisans and family members, along with a huge crowd of Timucuan Indians chanted the *Te Deum* and assisted at the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass to pay their gratitude to God.

The beautiful tradition continued, as President George Washington proclaimed a Thanksgiving Day to be observed every year on November 26th in 1795. President John Adams declared the celebration to be observed in 1798 and 1799. As a deist, President Thomas Jefferson removed the observance of the Thanksgiving celebration. In 1814, the tradition was renewed by President James Madison, following Congress' resolution after the war of 1812. Finally, under Abraham Lincoln, a national Thanksgiving Day began to be observed since 1863, to be celebrated on the last Thursday of November. (This was later changed to the fourth Thursday of November.)

Thanksgiving Day is a very special day when Americans hold family reunions, dinner gatherings with turkey, stuffing, mashed potatoes and delicious pumpkin pies, and spend memorable time with our families. Let us especially not forget that Thanksgiving is about giving thanks to Almighty God. We should thank God for how fortunate we are compared to many others in this world. First and foremost we thank God for our Catholic faith, our family, our beautiful American heritage, our knowledge, and many other blessings that come from God. As faithful Catholics, we have the duty

to pray for the spiritual and temporal welfare of our nation, especially for this upcoming election; and to pray to the Blessed Virgin Mary that she may protect it under her title of the Immaculate Conception.

Edifying? Not Really

by Jonathan Lehnen, gr. 9

You might be wondering, "What on earth is unedifying in that seminary?" Well, meet our chocolate lab Victor, as I explain the rather entertaining, and sometimes ridiculous actions, of his daily routine.

A whimpering dog in a laundry room "prison" is what you often hear in the early morning. We make it continue on a little longer until we are done with Mass and *our* breakfast. Then one of the seminarians who is on dog duty (currently Arlin Wertish and I, by the way) goes upstairs, while the other gets a full two cups of food from the bin and dumps half of it in the metal bowl.

The person upstairs, however, is in more of an awkward position as he prepares to open that laundry room door. Once that door is open, WATCH OUT!!! You had better be ready for a rocket-crash if you are, in any way, an obstacle, as a wild canine bursts out of his prison and races down the steps at lightning speed to his long-awaited meal (without crashing into anything, except us if we are in the way). Once he is finished with the first half of his meal (which he gobbles down in probably 10 seconds or so), we let him outside to do his business while one of us puts the rest of his meal in the bowl. Then that ravenous wolf comes bounding back (sometimes running so fast he crashes into the bowl, flipping it and making a big mess, about which he has no qualms) to finish off the rest of his meal, only to beg for more after 10 seconds. (NOTICE: Do NOT get in the way of that dog and his food or else you will risk injury.)

So, once that interesting scene is finally over, one of the seminarians takes that hyper Victor for a walk around the property. That usually calms him down to a state of meekness—until the walk is finished. Once we are back to the seminary door, he once again bonds into the house and laps up as much water as possible, making a mess of water drops on the floor.

Thankfully, that is all to deal with in the *morning*. But then we come to the *afternoon* when we need to take him on another walk, after which the same things basically happen all over again. After supper, during which Victor is begging like crazy, we take him on *another* walk and everything pretty much happens all over again. Then, finally he is put to bed, awaiting the next morning's breakfast. Victor may not be edifying, but he certainly is entertaining.



The seminarians make frequent visits to the cemetery during November.



Our first snowfall of the year occurred on October 23rd.



Last Saturday the remaining apples were pressed into cider.



Choir practice is held on the last period on Tuesdays and Thursdays.



At the conclusion of the Conference the Rosary was finished inside the church.



Seminarians are enrolled in the Sodalitiy.

My Special Brother

by Anthony Strain, gr. 8

My brother Benedict was born with Down syndrome on our great-grandma's birthday in 2012. After he was born he had three open-heart surgeries to complete the septum wall in his heart. He had to stay in the hospital for some time after that. Every so often we would be able to go and visit him, and most every time we got some pictures of him.

When he was finally able to come home the kids of the family found that he had to be on oxygen, which seemed like forever. He also had to be fed through a tube into a button, which pokes through the stomach wall. It has taken him a while to learn how to speak, but thanks to watching some videos with sign language called "Baby Signing Time" he eventually learned some basic words. Over the years we have gotten more videos which have helped him to develop better speech.



Fall would not be complete without football at the park.

Ben wasn't walking without the aid of a walker until about the age of 5-6, and he still has a little bit of trouble walking outside by himself. Lately, he has been practicing jumping, kicking, spinning, walking up stairs and several other activities. Most of the time he is active. Sometimes he stands in his crib to watch a movie. He has a couple of favorites: Curious George, and Signing Time.

Every day is the same routine for him. Ben has four meals a day, and the way the meal looks you would not want it. While he is "eating" his meals he watches movies. Sometimes throughout the day he will read a small book, which he recently learned how to read, or look at pictures in other books. In his crib he plays with several things and his favorite one is his magnet tiles. We all like to play with him. Even though Ben has challenges, he brings a great deal of joy to our lives.

Disciples of the Queen

We have had a sodality here since the very first year of our seminary's existence. The Sodality of the Blessed Virgin is an organization that began in the Jesuit seminary in Rome in the 16th century. Since then, the movement has spread throughout the world, as groups of Catholics join together to honor Our Blessed Mother and advance in the spiritual life.

Membership in our sodality is optional for the seminarians. Interested applicants write a letter, requesting to join the sodality. (We have an entrance ceremony twice a year—in October and March.) Our sodality has two levels of membership: after new members—referred to as candidates—have been faithful members of the sodality for a year, they may petition to become professed members.

Requirements for members are simple. There are certain prayers to recite and two monthly meetings to attend. Above all, members strive conscientiously to live the seminary Rule and to be a good example to their fellow seminarians. Our sodality, therefore, exists as an aid to help seminarians grow spiritually and increase in their devotion to Our Lady.

Here at the seminary we always honor Our Blessed Mother in a special way on her feastdays. But really, every day is a feast of Our Lady. She is our queen and mother, and of all her children, she must have a special regard for those who are preparing to become priests. After all, she was the mother of the first priest, the great High Priest Jesus Christ. May she help our young men, through their devotion to her, to become more and more like her Son.

May God reward you all for your support, and may we all grow in our love and esteem for our Blessed Mother!

Fr. Benedict Hughes, CMRI



We took a break from classes to watch the burn pile go up in flames.