



THE GUARDIAN

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Monthly newsletter of St. Joseph Seminary

April 2007

March has been an unusually busy month. We began the month with our annual retreat. We have had our ping-pong tournament and quite a few basketball games. (This week will be our final week of basketball.) Last week a couple of seminarians traveled with Fr. Benedict to Great Falls, Montana for a funeral. Of course, we have the weekly Stations during Lent, and Sunday Vespers. We also recite extra prayers to St. Joseph during March for vocations.

A couple of weeks ago, we had our final ski trip of this year. The conditions weren't perfect (It was foggy most of the day.) but we had a great time. Some of the seminarians who had only skied before tried out snowboarding and enjoyed it immensely. Everyone is getting better, and we are already looking forward to skiing next year.

So, as you can see, we have been quite busy. Now we are concentrating on the Holy Week ceremonies, which require a lot of time in serving practice. We hope that you will all have a grace-filled Holy Week and a very happy Easter. Please keep praying for us.

A busy mind

by Caleb Short, gr. 11

I have now been here for almost two full school years. I am amazed at how fast the time seems to go by. This thought has led me to another: "How has the seminary benefited me?"

The time that I have spent here has been the busiest and probably the most productive of my life so far. It's superb to start out every single day with holy Mass. We spend just about all of the remainder of the day for classes and homework, save

about two hours of free time each day. This can be a sacrifice sometimes, but it is not without a benefit. "The idle mind is the devil's workshop." With the seminary schedule we are duty-bound to tell that nasty workshop owner, "Sorry Mr. Satan, We don't have time for you right now (and we don't plan on it later). We have to study for the Latin test on Friday. So beat it!"

Of course, we also have our crosses. Whether it is the seminarian who drives you crazy or the pains of watching another seminarian put hot sauce on fruit, they are there. The biggest for most of us is probably being away from home; but with a little bit of patience and some help from Our Lord, these crosses become bearable and even easy for us.

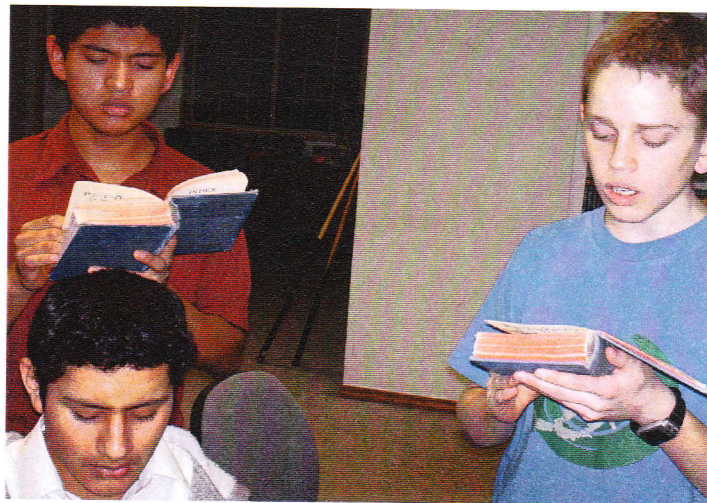
Then there are the innumerable benefits of being here. I have already mentioned the best, but there are plenty more. Living with the priests is probably one of my favorite things about being here. Being away from the putrid influence of the world is one. Another great thing is that the minor seminary is a very safe place to cultivate vocations. Had I not come here I probably would have given up the idea of becoming a priest before graduating from high school.

As you can probably tell, I am very glad to be here. It is wonderful to be able to spend so much

April calendar

- 1 — Palm Sunday ceremonies
- 5 - 6 — Holy Thursday/Good Friday
- 16 — Easter Vacation
- 20 - 22 — Classes resume
- Annual Forty Hours' Adoration
- 25 — Feast of St. Mark; chanting of the Greater Litanies
- 26 — Feast of Our Lady of Good Counsel; chanted Vespers
- 28 — Feast of St. Louis Marie de Montfort, begin preparation for annual renewal of Total Consecration to Jesus through Mary

time thinking of the things that are actually important and praying for the grace to do the will of God



Some of the seminarians enjoy singing hymns during recreation.

Our retreat

by Angel B. Gamboa, gr. 9

We started our retreat on March 2nd. The retreat began with silence, prayers and spiritual reading during supper. After the meal Father gave us the schedule and then the first conference began. We had five conferences about the five sorrowful mysteries of the Rosary; the conferences were approximately forty or forty-five minutes in length. Fr. Benedict spoke about the Passion of Our Lord Jesus Christ and about how He gave His life and all of His Precious Blood for us.

In our moments of silence, most of the time we made meditation about Our Lord or Our Lady of Sorrows and read books on the lives of the saints. We also made visits to the Holy Sacrament and meditated on the Way of the Cross.

We prayed some prayers together and some individually; most of the time was spent reading spiritual works in the chapel. We also had a night with exposition of the Most Holy Sacrament and everyone made an hour of adoration. The next morning we went to Holy Mass and had breakfast as Father read aloud. We also made the Stations of the Cross and chanted Vespers in honor of Our Lady.

The next day we went to Holy Mass and received Holy Communion. Later, we had breakfast and listened to spiritual reading. Our last conference was about the Passion of Our Lord Jesus Christ. We finished our retreat on Sunday with noon prayers.

What I learned at the retreat is to be more patient for everything. I also read something very important in a book on St. Benedict: "The wise are wise because they are quiet."

Raising money for a good cause

by Giovanni Ortiz, gr. 10

We must raise money in order to be able to go on our end-of-the-year trip. We have found several ways to do it. One of them is having a breakfast on a Sunday after both Masses. This type of breakfast requires the organization and cooperation of all of us to get everything done well.

Recently, we had our second fund-raising breakfast for this year. I will tell you how all this system of making breakfast works. First, we discuss what kind of breakfast we want to make and what kind of food the people might want to eat. After everything has been discussed, then we go on to the next step, which is to gather the materials needed. The next step is a little harder because everyone has to cooperate with cleaning and cooking beforehand. So our good friend, Mrs. Salgado, helps us to organize and get all the things moving along. She tells us what everyone has to do and helps us prioritize our list of tasks. After we finish with this, then we decide about who is going to the first or second Mass and who is going to help in the kitchen to get everything ready before Mass is over. Now that everything has been prepared, we just wait until Sunday.

On Sunday, We usually sleep until 8 a.m., but when we have these breakfasts we have to get up at 6 a.m. Then at 6:30 a.m. all must be in their assigned places, either in church or helping in the kitchen at the parish hall. After each Mass almost all the people go to the church basement to enjoy our delicious breakfast. Afterwards, the fun begins, which is cleaning up the kitchen, washing dishes, mopping the floor — in other words, putting everything back together the way it was before we took over the kitchen.

And this is how this system of trying to raise money works. I hope we raise enough money to be able to go on our annual seminary trip.

New strategies in basketball

by José Castellanos, gr. 10

With the new strategies in basketball, we are getting better and better. It's very fun because now we have another coach, Mr. Sullivan. So now we have both Fr. Gabriel and Mr. Sullivan teaching us new strategies. We now have new zone defense positions and we like it. And also it works very well.

I think our passing and lay-ups have improved, but we need to work on our shooting. In the practices we begin warming up by stretching and doing push-ups. Then we play a game of "bump" and the players who are eliminated first have to stay on the bench until Fr. Gabriel switches players. The ones who were out go in and the others play. Sometimes we just practice shooting and passing, or even sometimes we play bump for the entire gym class.

We are doing much, much better in our games against other schools. Fr. Gabriel said that the refs always tell him that we should continue playing as a team so we can get even better. So far we have won the same number of games that we have lost. Some of the players from the other teams are very tall, and some are closer to our average height. We enjoy basketball because we feel the adrenaline "rush" and appreciate playing a sport well as a team.

The newcomer

by Matthew Belanger, gr. 11

We recently received a newcomer. His name is Mr. Dan Sullivan and he's from the major seminary in Omaha. He is staying here until the school year is over, giving the priests a hand. So far we all enjoy having him around.

He has a wonderful sense of humor, too. He seems to have a humorous comment about almost everything.

Too bad he got sick, because now the joke is on him. He has been under-the-weather for days. His symptoms are: weakness and congested sinuses. As a result of the congestion, his eyes "water" at strange times. I like to call it "crying." He cries with perfect timing. But you would have to be there to truly find it funny.

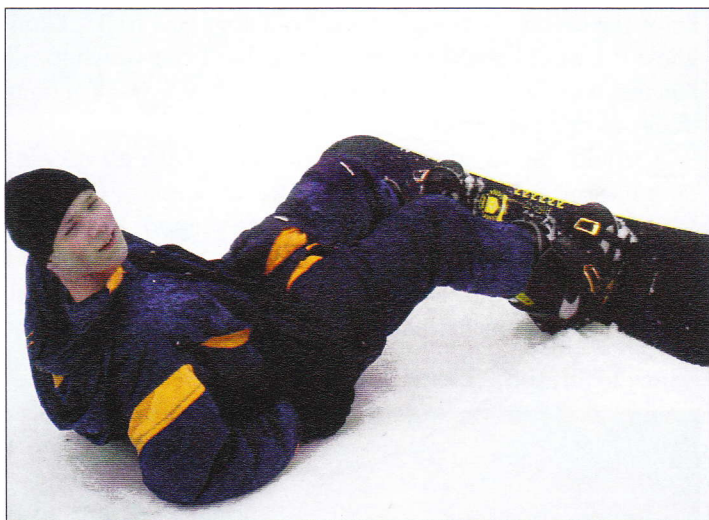
I wonder how long he will last putting up with us. . . .



Our seminarians congratulate their opponents after each basketball game.



There are many chores to be done around St. Joseph's as the weather improves



Matthew takes a break from snowboarding on Mt. Spokane.



The school children surprised Fr. Benedict on his feastday



What is Fr. Gabriel up to in the kitchen this time?



Mrs. Salgado, José and Giovanni serve at our annual breakfast in honor of St. Patrick and St. Joseph.



Bosco couldn't figure out what was so exciting about celebrating St. Patrick's Day.

A ski odyssey

by Matthew Belanger, gr. 11

(This article was written last month after our second ski trip.)

It all began when Juan, José and I went up chair lift number 3 in search of a larger hill than the bunny hill. Little did I know that the lift would bring me up higher than I had in mind.

When Juan and I got off the lift we found ourselves at a snow park with many jumps. I was not ready to try jumps, since this was only my second time skiing. So Juan and José went on their way and left me alone not knowing the way down.

As I went down the hill, I fell and could not get back up. I took my skis off to get up, but once I was up, I could not get them back on. So I started walking down the hill to find a good place to put them on.

I ended up in a deep forest with no sign of a ski path anywhere. After walking for about ten minutes, I finally made it to a ski slope. I found a place where I could get my skis on, then started to ski down as carefully as I could.

I made my way to a cat track, which I figured should lead me to the lodge. What I did not know was that it would lead me to the wrong one. I wanted lodge number 2, not lodge number 1. After traveling along the path, I arrived at a chair lift and asked the people there how to get back to the right lodge.

Before they could answer, I was scooped up by the chair lift and on my way up another hill. To make things worse, I lost one of my skis in the process. When I arrived at the top, I had to wait for my ski to be sent up. I also asked for directions to lodge number 2.

Evidently, I did not understand the directions. I ended up on a black diamond (the hardest difficulty level on the mountain). Fortunately, there were many trees around, one of which helped keep me from going too fast. I lost a ski from hitting the tree and could not get it back on. So, I was left walking down the mountain again.

After some time, I arrived at another lift and asked the employee how to get down the rest of the way. I was given a guide who brought me down part of the way and also showed me a few pointers on smooth turning.

I was now in sight of the lodge, so my guide left me. After falling a couple times and losing my skis again, I finally made it to the lodge.

Learning new tricks

I am often amazed at how teenagers adapt to new technology. They seem to figure things out by a sort of "osmosis," as they sit in front of a computer or use a new gadget. Now, I am just the opposite. The learning does not come so easily. Furthermore, reading instruction manuals is a chore that I don't ever seem to have time for. (That is one of the reasons I still have not found the time to figure out all the features of my cell phone.)

So, it was quite a big step when I finally got around to purchasing a digital camera for the seminary. At long last, then, you can have color pictures of good quality in *The Guardian*. A full-color newsletter has been planned for some time, but it takes me a while to get around to these kinds of changes.

Yes, technology is wonderful and something that we can use for God's honor and glory. I just wish it came easier. You know the saying — You can't teach old dogs new tricks. I don't know if I would qualify as an old dog, but I can vouch for the fact that it certainly becomes harder to learn new ways of doing things as one gets older.

I would like to take this opportunity to wish all of you a most blessed and joyous Feast of the Resurrection of Our Lord! We are most grateful for your prayers and support. I would like to say a special thank you to all who have contributed to our recent Lenten Alms Drive appeal. Your support is greatly appreciated and much needed. May God abundantly reward you.

Fr. Benedict Hughes, CMRI



The seminarians bake cookies in preparation for their St. Patrick's/St. Joseph's Day breakfast and bake sale.

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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