



THE GUARDIAN

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Monthly newsletter of St. Joseph Seminary

November 2007

How many apples are there on an apple tree? A lot. We have picked countless apples from our dozen trees — enough to last for some time to come. Mrs. Gallagher's apple crisp has been a big hit, but there is nothing quite like apple cider from our own press. This is just one of the many activities that have kept us busy this past month.

October has also been memorable for the number of visitors to the seminary. Recently, we have entertained three distinguished guests, in addition to the visit of the Fatima Conference guests. The first was Bishop Pivarunas, who took time during the Fatima Conference to come up to the seminary. We all enjoyed his visit and his stories.

The following week Mr. Alexander Kryssov, a seminarian from Moscow, Russia, visited us. He had been at Mt. St. Michael to attend the Fatima Conference, during which he received minor orders. We found his account of life in Russia fascinating, especially his explanation of how he found the Catholic Faith, despite the efforts of the communists to suppress it. Finally, we enjoyed a visit last week from Bishop Rodriguez of Mexico, who had traveled to the seminary to accompany our newest seminarian. Daniel Morales is a 14-year-old freshman from Mexico. His arrival, which was delayed by paperwork, brings to eight our group of seminarians for this year.

We are enjoying the autumn season at the seminary. The days have been interesting with the frequent visits of a pair of moose, who come to feast on apples in our orchard. We now look forward to November and our annual practice of frequent visits to the

cemetery, as we pray for the souls in purgatory during this month. Let us not forget these Poor Souls, who cannot help themselves. Suffrages offered for them are a great act of charity befitting the Mystical Body of Christ. Let us also remember to pray for one another.

“Cunochuchu”

by Juan Fernando Garcia, gr. 10

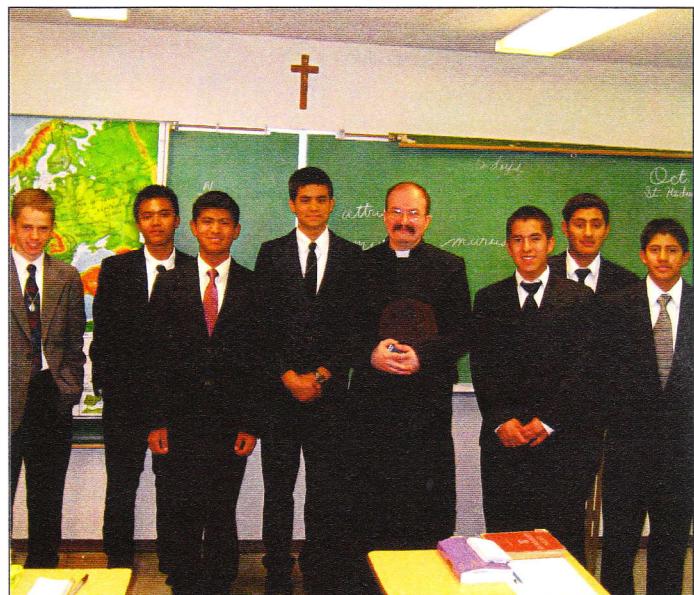
November is the month dedicated to the souls in purgatory. November 2nd is the special day for praying and doing penance for those who are waiting in purgatory to see the glory of God. People in the United States who are not Catholics probably do not know what November 2nd means because of ignorance or because they have lost their faith. But in Mexico where I'm from, it's one of the most important and traditional days of the year.

In a lake next to my town there is a little island in the form of a mountain called “Janitzio” where they celebrate the annual feast of “Cunochuchu” (the day of the souls). I went to visit this island a few times, but I went just one time on this holy day. Several days earlier the people there clean the graves and prepare decorations for the cemetery. In the

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November calendar

- 1 — All Saints' Day, (holy day of obligation); end of first quarter; no classes
- 2 — All Souls' Day; extra Masses, prayers and observances for the Poor Souls
- 13 — Giovanni's 16th birthday
- 21 — Feast of the Presentation BVM; chanted Vespers; seminary talent show
- 22-25 — Thanksgiving break; no classes
- 25 — Angel's 15th birthday
- 26 — Classes resume
- 27 — Feast of Our Lady of the Miraculous Medal; chanted Vespers



We enjoyed our recent visit with Mr. Alexander Kryssov.

“Cunochuchu”

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early morning of the celebration they go to Mass, and later they go to visit their loved ones in the cemetery, carrying offerings of *xempazuchilt* (flowers for the dead), food and some of the belongings of the deceased, because they believe that the departed soul is accompanying them. Then at 6:00 o'clock in the evening they go to their homes, or to the church, to pray for the departed.

Later, everyone prepares for the procession of candles through the streets by dressing in white clothes with reds cuffs and sandals. At the beginning of the line a few people carry the patron saint, followed by the others with candles. They walk up and around the hill until they arrive at the top. There the Indians dance and play instruments, and on the top of a pole about 75 feet long, on a circular platform connected to it, are five men with a rope, (the same length as the pole), fastened around their feet. This rope is tied around a circular tube. One man starts to play the flute; the other four men fall off, headfirst, turning slowly as the rope unwinds from the tube, until they come all the way down, and land on their feet. After that they light fireworks. That is how they conclude the day of the Holy Souls on the island of Janitzio, but each region has its own traditional feast for this day.

Celebrations are not really necessary for the departed souls. What they really need are prayers to free them from their suffering. The souls in purgatory are very blessed, and their prayers are heard by God, so they can help you in your needs. If you pray for them, you can free one or more souls according to your prayers and sacrifices. These souls will remember you forever, and will pray for you and your salvation.

Audio vocem Dei

by Caleb Short, gr. 12

Everything is quiet. Everyone is in a profound slumber and not a single person is moving, except Fr. Benedict. Fr. Benedict walks ever so softly over to the backbreaking instrument that teaches us mortification. Then a sound reverberates and tears through the entire seminary three solid times. Not a single nook or cranny is spared of it. Every single sleeping seminarian is forced to accept the plain and simple fact that it is morning and that he must get out of bed. *Deus vult!* It is His will that everyone comes to life again to serve Him another day. So the previously ‘dead’ bodies tumble from their places of repose onto their knees and offer their day to the One who brought them into existence. Then all get ready for The Holy Sacrifice. Although the instrument of mortification causes plenty of pain, there is something about it that seems to give it an exquisite resonance. God is calling. Yes, God is calling for them to do His holy will for the first time of the day.

There are other bells that preside over the seminarians’ schedule. The next most noticeable one is the class bell. It does a good job of keeping all the students at the right class at the right time and makes sure that any visitors are thoroughly startled. It is as loud as a shotgun, but the seminarians and teachers are used to it. Sometimes it seems to ring loudly for an extensive amount of time and at other times it seems rather short and quiet. It is always the loudest when someone is doing spiritual reading in the chair right underneath it. All is quiet, the reader is absorbed in his book and then instantaneously book and reader are almost ejected from the seat.

The favorite bell for most seminarians is the one after night prayers. It stands its post on the pew next to Father. Every evening it initiates the grand silence. Nothing seems more calming than its recollected ring. All becomes miraculously silent. It then becomes easy to think of God. After a few private prayers, the seminarians go to their rooms to become like dead bodies again!

The bells are a very important part of the seminary. They are the voice of God for us. They make it easy to know what is the will of God for us. What a joy it is, by following the call of the bell, to make all these little but honest efforts in trying to please Him Who is the infinitely perfect God!

Difficulties in speech class

by José de Jesus Castellanos, gr. 11

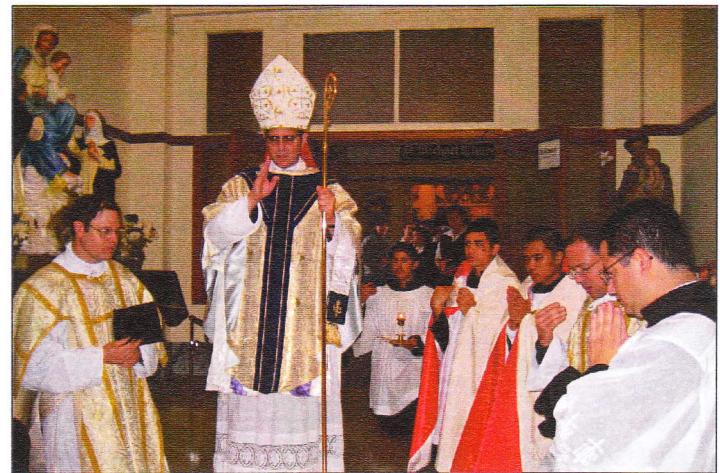
This year we are having a speech class with Mrs. Salgado as the teacher. I want to start by telling you how we all converse with each other in the seminary. We enjoy talking to other seminarians because we live together and so we need to be friends. Now we are having speeches in front of the class. (We go in front and talk facing the other seminarians.) And it is weird because, as I told you, when we are eating at the table or are at recreation we just talk. But when we are giving a speech in front of the class we get really nervous. My own personal experience is that when I’m giving a speech in front of everyone, my mouth gets dry and my brain is confused.

Then, Mrs. Salgado decided to videotape us so that we could see how we do on our speeches in front of the class. We were all really excited because we thought we had done well. But the next day when we saw our videotaped speeches, we were embarrassed because we thought that we had done a better job. After that, Mrs. Salgado gave us some poems to read. We practice reading poetry to give our voices more life instead of sounding like a monotone. She also gave us for homework an assignment to write some poems, and it was really, really fun.

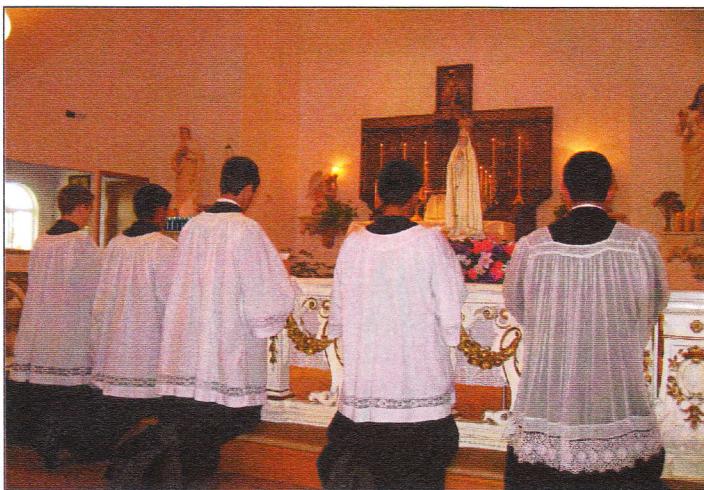
Now we are preparing to give speeches to the elementary school students here at our school. These speeches will be interesting. One of the seminarians is going to try to persuade the students not to chew gum. Another is going to explain how there are only two seasons in the Philippines. There are other intriguing topics, so it is going to be enjoyable.



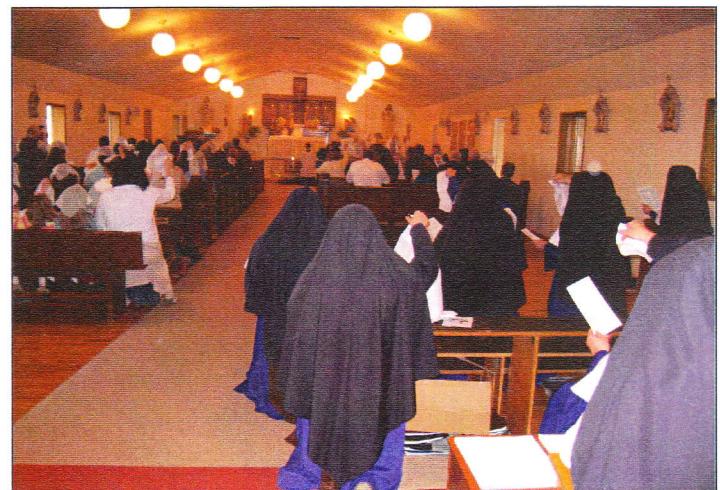
We honored Our Lady on October 13 by joining in the Rosary procession at Mt. St. Michael.



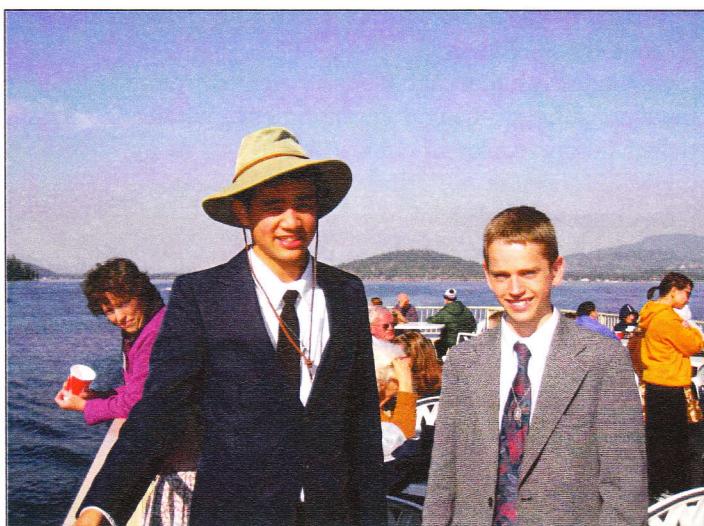
All the servers kneel at the conclusion of the Pontifical Mass to receive the Bishop's blessing.



The servers joined in with the songs in honor of Our Lady of Fatima, after the closing benediction.



The farewell to Our Lady of Fatima is one of the touching events of the annual Conference.



Marcellus and Caleb joined the Conference guests for a boat cruise on Lake Coeur d'Alene.



We recently joined other parishioners in planting trees on the hillside by the church, to beautify our grounds.

Pontifical Mass

by Marcellus Moylan, gr. 11

On October 12 during the Fatima Conference, His Excellency Bishop Mark Pivarunas came to Mt. St. Michael. It was an honor and privilege to serve for my first time at a Pontifical Solemn High Mass. I was the miter bearer and with Nino, who was the crosier bearer, we processed in behind the bishop. Although I had been in the chapel on the previous day I was still awed by its magnificent beauty.

A large number of the school children and some nuns made up the choir. They sang well, and their voices reverberated through the chapel sounding like surround sound.

There were thirteen people all together in the sanctuary; six of them were priests. The ceremony was so beautiful. A lady later commented, "It would be worth coming to this Fatima Conference just to be at the Pontifical Mass."

Since it was Columbus Day Bishop Pivarunas gave a sermon on the many problems in the United States today. He pointed out the evils of abortion, divorce, pornography, and the media and of so many other things devastating our country. From immorality he went on to America's falling economy and the agenda of one-world government. Then he brought in the urgent message of Our Lady of Fatima, who as a loving mother, admonishes her wayward children: "*Amend your lives. Offend God no more for He is already much offended. Say the Rosary daily.*" The Bishop emphasized the need for modesty, the family Rosary, keeping the Faith and standing up for the Faith.

I hope the Conference guests received many graces from attending this most beautiful ceremony of the Church as well as from the many lectures, prayers, daily Mass, the day of recollection, and the company of other Catholics. I thank God that I was able to be present at most of the events of the Fatima Conference and I hope, too, that I have received many graces and will continue to take to heart the message of Our Lady and live it every day.

Real heroism

The recent wildfires in California cannot but excite our pity for those people who have been forced to flee their homes. The raging fires spread so rapidly, that firefighters often feel hopeless in their attempts to contain the blazes. We

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 Theology, Latin, 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.

pray for all those affected by this natural disaster and for the brave firefighters, who endanger their own lives to help others. This calamity also serves as a fitting reminder of the far more fierce fire of purgatory and the sad plight of the souls detained there.

The Poor Souls suffer dreadfully. In addition, they can do nothing to lessen their pain. They cannot receive the sacraments, attend Mass, offer sacrifices, gain indulgences, or even pray for themselves. We, as faithful members of the Mystical Body of Christ, must come to their aid. If we have been moved by the sufferings of those who have lost their homes and possessions in California, much more should we be excited to pity by the dreadful pains of our fellow members of the Communion of Saints who are in purgatory.

While we must do what we can to alleviate the suffering of the Poor Souls, there is one act of exceptional heroism that has been performed by generous souls. This Heroic Act consists of making a donation on behalf of the faithful departed of all the suffrages we may gain during life, or that will be offered for us after death. We generously give these to Our Blessed Mother to distribute to those in purgatory whom she pleases. Many indulgences are attached to this act. If you would like more information about it, or how to make it, be sure to speak with your pastor.

We justly admire the kindness and dedication of those who put their lives in danger during times of natural disasters. But their heroism pales in comparison to that of those souls who give all for the suffering souls in purgatory. That is real heroism. Again, I thank you for your much-needed support of our seminary. May God bless you and your loved ones.

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.

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