



THE GUARDIAN

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Monthly newsletter of St. Joseph Seminary

December 2007

Imagine the excitement of our three new seminarians who had never seen snow until this morning, November 27. Yes, we awoke this morning to find three inches of the white powder blanketing our world. Up until now we have had only a few light "dustings" of snow, but not what we would call a real snowfall.

In a few days we will begin the season of Advent. This season is important for us in the seminary. We all write out a schedule of extra penances and submit it to our spiritual director for approval. We try to remember how Our Lord suffered as an Infant in the cold stable, lying on the rough straw. We try to offer up the little inconveniences we experience, without complaining. We hope that you will all have a good Advent, because our Christmas joy will depend on how well we spend the season of Advent.

We also will soon begin (on November 29th) our basketball season. We have a fairly good team this year, so we expect to do well. As you can see, we don't lack for things to keep us busy here at the seminary. We appreciate all that you do to support us and promise a remembrance of all our benefactors in our daily prayers.

So much to be grateful for!

by Marcellus Moylan, gr. 11

All of you dear readers of *The Guardian* in America have just recently celebrated Thanksgiving. You probably had your friends and relatives over for a big turkey dinner and perhaps got stuffed afterwards with the

abundance of delicious courses and too much pumpkin pie. This reminds us of the great quantity of food with which God has blessed America, and we thank Him for this with grace before and after meals

But with regards to the many other benefits received from Him, do we thank Him sufficiently? Usually we are eager, and rightly so, to ask God for favors, but when our petitions are granted, do we return enough thanks? Have we taken for granted our everyday blessings? Here in America we have so much of material goods that many other countries do not have, so let us be careful not to complain, even though we may not be as well off as our neighbor.

If it is important to thank God for our material blessings, then it is much more important to be grateful for the spiritual graces He has granted us. Do we thank him for creating us, dying on the cross for us, and for making us members of His Church? Do we thank

Him for the priests who instruct us in the Faith, offer the Mass, and give us the sacraments? Do we always thank Him for forgiving our countless sins against Him and for giving us His most Precious Body in the Holy Eucharist?

The more we think about it, the

December calendar

- 2 — First Sunday of Advent; parish celebration in honor of Our Lady of Guadalupe
- 6 — Basketball game
- 7 — Mid-quarter
- 8 — Immaculate Conception BVM; holyday of obligation
- 20 — Christmas Vacation begins

more we find things to be thankful for; it seems hard to remember everything that God has showered upon us. Then let us be grateful to God in the best way possible: by leading good and holy lives so that we may enter into paradise where we will be eternally praising God and thanking Him for His infinite goodness.



All the seminarians helped serve the funeral Mass of a dear parishioner, Bill Dinneen.

Venite ad Mariam

by Caleb Short, gr. 12

There are many different things here at St. Joseph Seminary that we do to keep busy, and I really do mean busy. Besides daily Mass, prayers, classes, homework, chores, and all the things that we are required to do, there is also a little something extra for those of us who want to do it. It is a nice little something extra, because its purpose is to give extra honor to Our Lady and to help us grow in the spiritual life.

I am talking about our Sodality. The name of our seminary Sodality is the Sodality of the Immaculate Conception. But before I go on, let me interrupt myself for a second and tell you what a Sodality of Our Lady is.

A Sodality is a society which has for its purpose to be a means of sanctification for its members by special devotion to the Blessed Virgin Mary. The first Sodality of the Blessed Virgin was started in a Jesuit college in Rome in the year 1563. In just a year it already had 70 members. From there it spread like wildfire. In thirteen years there were 30,000 Sodality members. Even more important are the spiritual benefits of these groups. Sodalities have given countless saints to the Church, like St. Francis de Sales, and almost 100 cardinals and nearly 10 popes. By their fruits you shall know them. If that isn't good enough evidence of the benefits of Sodalities, then what is?

Now that I'm done interrupting myself I will finish saying what I started to say with the little space that I have left. Most of the seminarians here are members of our Sodality. As members we promise to say certain prayers every day, like the daily rosary, and endeavor to grow in our love for Our Lady. Then there is the next best part of the Sodality, which we call apostolic action. We try to perform some group activity, usually every day. In the beginning of November we made a daily visit to the cemetery after homework. Usually we do some group prayers. Yes, even though we are really busy here at the seminary, we are sure happy to make time for Mary through our Sodality.

“La Morenita”

by Angel Bryan Gamboa, gr. 10

Another year is almost gone and another one is just about to begin. And every December I always wait for the Feast of Our Lady of Guadalupe. Last year I wrote her story, this year I shall write something quite different.

Our Lady of Guadalupe is often called “*La Morenita*” (The Little Brown One). She is very popular in the entire American continent and is especially well remembered in the month of December. The people honor her with processions, hymns and pilgrimages. We also have an ejaculation in her honor which we pray: *Santa Maria de Guadalupe, Reina del Universo, salva nuestra patria y conserva nuestra Fe.* This means: Holy Mary of Guadalupe, Queen of the Universe, save our nation and preserve our Faith.

St. Louis Marie de Montfort had a great love for Our Blessed Lady. Any time that something didn't go right, his only words to his followers were: “Don't worry, with Our Lady's help everything will be all right.” He also worked many miracles. When someone would ask him how he did it, he would reply with a humble smile, saying “It is not me, but it is our Mother who does all for us.”

La Morenita is just another name to call the Blessed Virgin. But if we call her in any name she surely will come especially in our difficulties, confusions, and temptations. The saints always called on Mary in the battle of temptation. Our Lady of Guadalupe is very well known and the best thing is that she is the patron saint of the Americas. This is why we more than anyone else ought to love her.

So let us all honor and pray to the Blessed Virgin Mary and ask her help, blessings and graces. And love God through Mary.

Getting ready for Christmas

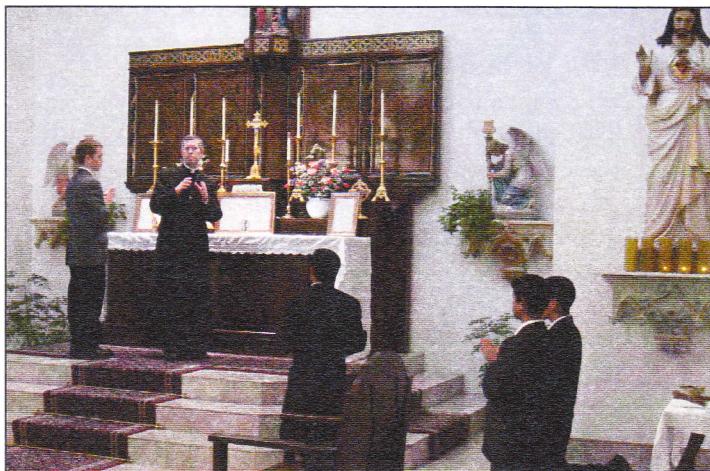
by Giovanni Ortiz, gr. 11

The beginning of another ecclesiastical year begins on the first Sunday of Advent, which is the first Sunday of December. For Catholics, this is a time of recollection on the arrival of Our Lord Jesus Christ into the world.

As a tradition in many Catholic places throughout the world, people spend this season in a penitential way of living to show their zeal and love for God. Here in the seminary we have the custom of following this penitential way. We perform it by first of all giving up the little things we like to do. Some of these are giving up a warm shower, being the last one in the food line, saying an extra decade for the Poor Souls in Purgatory, etc. We also perform it by increasing our prayers and reciting a Novena to the Holy Family that begins on December 16th. This of course, is the best way to open our hearts to God. Although sometimes it is hard for us to adopt new routines due to our busy schedule, nevertheless, we always try our best to please God.

Besides all these prayers we also think about our resolutions for the New Year. We strive to increase spiritually in the knowledge of God and also on overcoming some of our predominant faults that sometimes lead us to sin. All this brings up a good question and this is: how many resolutions should we make to be able to please God? Well, it does not necessarily mean that you must have a list of 20 or more resolutions if you are not going to fulfill fervently these promises. You may have a list of even one or two resolutions, which you will make an effort to fulfill fervently.

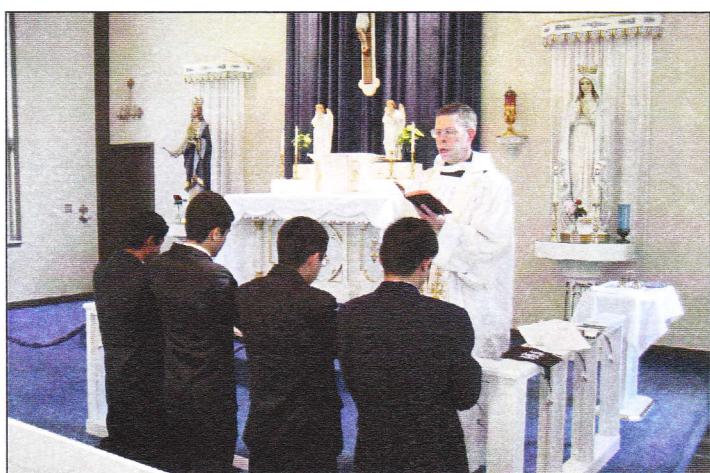
As a last thought I would like to remind you that Christmas is a time to reflect upon everything that Our Lord went through when he was born in Bethlehem. May all of you have a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year! You are always remembered in our thoughts and in our daily prayers.



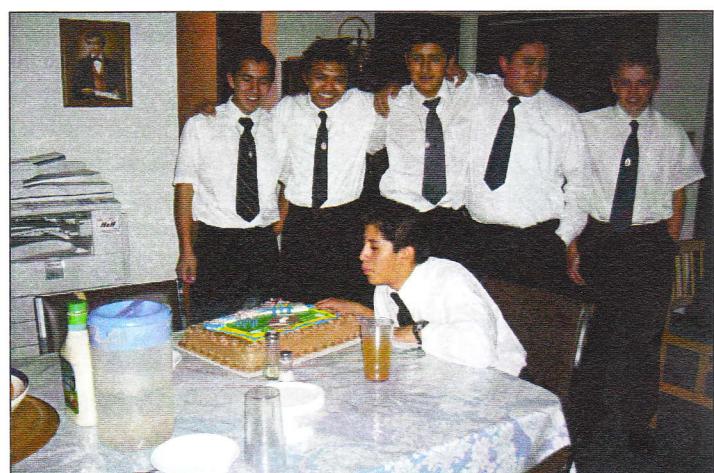
Many hours are spent in serving practice, especially for ceremonies, so that everything is done well for God's honor and glory.



Choir practice is an important part of our weekly schedule.



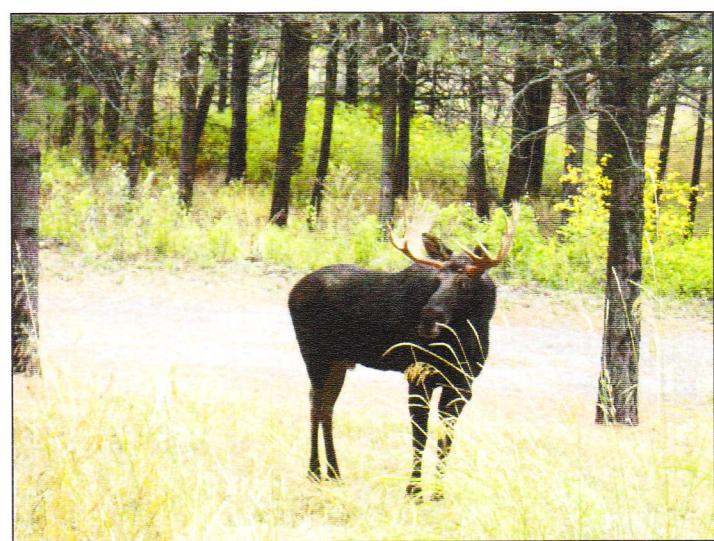
On All Saints' Day new members were received into our seminary Sodality.



Giovanni blew out 16 candles on his cake this year.



The seminarians pressed more than 20 gallons of cider from all the apples harvested from our trees.



This uninvited guest has been seen many times over the past few months eating apples from our trees, among other things.

Nice people in the world

by José de Jesus Castellanos, gr. 11

There are many nice people in the world. Here in the seminary we have Fr. Benedict, Fr. Gabriel, Mrs. Salgado, Mrs. Gallagher, and the two Mexican Sisters. The two priests, Fr. Benedict and Fr. Gabriel, give us classes every day and the Holy Sacraments. Mrs. Salgado gives us classes too and she also works long hours here at the seminary. Mrs. Gallagher helps in the kitchen to prepare our meals, and she also brings us many things like clothes, fruit, and cookies, and she also makes a wonderful apple crisp that everyone here in the seminary loves.

The two Mexican Sisters work almost all day on our meals, and they also work in the sacristy setting up the vestments. And they often make many different Mexican foods like enchiladas, tostadas, tamales, and many other favorite dishes. Every time they cook Mexican food they also make hot salsa; here at the seminary everyone loves salsa — even the American seminarians and the priests. So when the Sisters make salsa Caleb insists that he is going to get his share of salsa before the Mexican seminarians finish it. Sisters make a lot and it seems that it is going to last for at least three days, but we finish it in one meal.

So we are very grateful here at the seminary towards Fr. Benedict, Fr. Gabriel, Mrs. Salgado, Mrs. Gallagher, and the two Mexican Sisters.

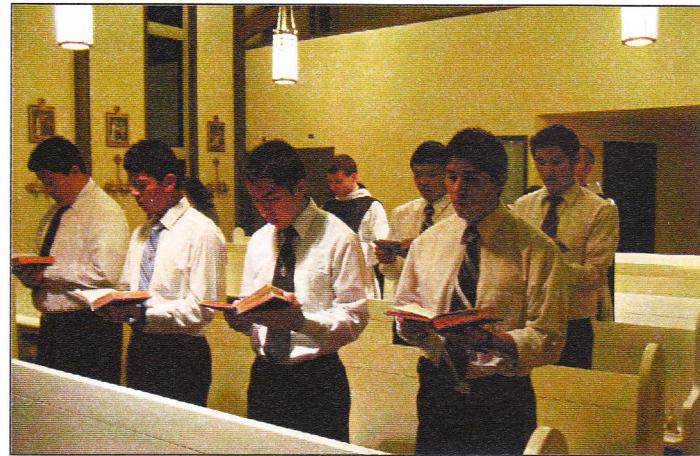
One hundred and counting

This is the 100th issue of *The Guardian*. Since we are all very busy here at the seminary, it is often no small task to get this newsletter out each month. On behalf of the seminarians, I would like to thank all of those who help us with each issue. My sister Marie Hughes spends hours each month arranging all the articles and photos in the proper format for printing. Our good Sisters at Mt. St. Michael print the newsletter. Then we all get together to prepare the monthly mailing, which is no small task. Finally, Mrs. Rosalinda Salgado takes the trays filled with hundreds of individual envelopes to the post office for mailing.

Afterwards, we enjoy a brief respite — until we have to start thinking about the contents of the next month's newsletter! We are most grateful to all of those who have

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.



An important part of a seminarian's formation is to follow the Liturgy of the Church. In this photo the seminarians chant Vespers with the priests.

helped us to keep the *The Guardian* going for over 8 years now. And we thank you, our readers, for your interest in the seminary.

We have also included with this month's mailing intention cards for our annual Christmas novena, which begins on the 16th of the month. Please return these cards soon, if you wish to have your intentions remembered in our novena prayers and Christmas Masses. I will especially remember all of you in my Masses during the Christmas season. May the Christ Child fill your hearts with His love and joy this Christmas, and may He grant His peace to your homes — that peace which the world cannot give.

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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