



THE GUARDIAN

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Monthly newsletter of St. Joseph Seminary

March 2008

As usual, our lives at the seminary have been busy with activities. In addition to the normal routine of studies, there have been some recent events to tell you about. In late January we all enjoyed a visit from Bishop Pivarunas and the priests. The priests under Bishop Pivarunas had gathered for a meeting at Mt. St. Michael. On the last day of their meeting they came up to the seminary to spend time with us.

The snow has finally stopped, but in late January and early February it was snowing almost daily. We still have mounds of snow around the seminary. Needless to say, no one misses the shoveling, now that the snow has finally stopped! On the other hand, the snow has provided good ski conditions this year. Altogether, we have enjoyed three ski trips this year.

By far, the best event of all was our annual retreat, which we recently completed. This year, Fr. Casimir Puskorius, who lives at Mt. St. Michael, came to give us the retreat. We are most grateful for his efforts and pray that what we have learned will make a difference in our lives.

Now there are only a few weeks left of Lent. We are all resolved to use this time well. We will pray for you, our benefactors, that you have a good Lent and a joyful Easter.

A crowded house

by Angel B. Gamboa, gr. 10

A few weeks ago, all the priests of CMRI got together for their semi-annual priests' meeting. It was really enjoyable to be able to speak to them individually, although there was not enough time to meet with every single

one. We seminarians tried our best to learn their names and where each priest is stationed. I already knew some of them, since I met them when I went to Colorado. Still, it is always nice to see them again.

As I have written before, singing is one of my favorite hobbies. During the priests' visit to the seminary, after dinner Fr. Casimir started playing the piano. At first, Juan and I were singing the songs he was playing. Later on, one by one the priests and seminarians started getting closer to the piano, and before I knew it, almost everyone was singing songs to Our Divine Lord and His Blessed Mother. We sang songs of joy and of sorrow. Each of the songs had its own effect on me, which is hard to describe. It is almost as if each hymn has its own way of praising God and His Blessed Mother, according to the occasion, whether it's a sorrowful or joyful one, or one of thanksgiving.

The time went by so fast that before we noticed it, the time to say "Good-bye

March calendar
14 — Feast of Our Lady of Sorrows; chanted Vespers
18–19 — Third Quarter exams
20–21 — Holy Thursday and Good Friday ceremonies
23–30 — Easter Break
24 — Nino's birthday
31 — Feast of the Annunciation; chanted Vespers; Fourth Quarter begins

and God bless you" came. All of us are looking forward to the priests' meeting next year, which seems like quite some time in the future, but time goes by extremely fast at the seminary. And I am sure that next year I will be saying, "Is it really 2009?" I hope, that all of you and your loved ones, have a very penitential Lent and a most enjoyable Easter.



The seminarians enjoyed a visit from the priests who assembled for their annual meeting in January.

Ad Jesum per Mariam

by Marcellus Moylan, gr. 11

God has been so good to me. I have received yet another grace — a retreat, in fact my very first one. It started on Friday with the Rosary, and the first conference was at 6:45 p.m. With St. Louis de Monfort's True Devotion to Mary in hand, Fr. Casimir began. He urged us to make the Act of Total Consecration to Jesus through Mary. To show the need for this he pointed out the scary reality of hell and the dangers facing our salvation. So he talked about the first step in making the consecration: renunciation of the world — hating the spirit of the love of money, love of fame and popularity, and the love of pleasure. That night we had Exposition; it was truly wonderful spending intimate time before Our Lord.

On Saturday we kept silence for the greater part of the day, had readings from Anne Catherine Emmerich's detailed book The Dolorous Passion of Our Lord Jesus Christ during meals, and had three more conferences. The first of these was about the advantages of the religious life and its vows of poverty, chastity, and obedience. The second was on knowledge of self. The last one on Saturday was a plea of a lover to us, to love Mary, to love this most benign Mother more than we ever have before, and to make others love her — doing this by making the Act of Total Consecration. Later on we made the *Via Crucis*, sang Vespers, and after dinner watched the movie *Thérèse*.

Sunday, the 24th of February, saw the end of our retreat. Breakfast was again in silence with the reading on the Passion. The fifth and final conference at 12:30 p.m. was on the knowledge of Jesus Christ, about the love of God to become man. Then Fr. Casimir spoke on the most sublime vocation: the priesthood. Priests are indeed other Christs, having the power to change bread and wine into the Body and Blood of Our Lord, as well as having the power to forgive sins, as Jesus did. The thought of that great dignity just awes us. With Father's blessing our retreat ended. Thank you, God, for such a grace.

Delicious bread

by Juan Garcia, gr. 10

Several Saturdays ago after our usual chores, Marcellus and I baked some whole wheat bread for the seminary. We used Caleb's recipe. Fortunately, before he left, Caleb showed us how to follow it and all the ingredients that are needed.

Since this was our first time making bread without Caleb's help, we decided to experiment. The first attempt at something can sometimes be such a great success that you want it to happen again, but if it is not, Oh Boy! So that's what happened in our experiment.

To start, we went over to the kitchen of the parish hall to prepare the bread, because our kitchen at the seminary is kind of small. For all this, we carried the products which the recipe indicates over to the church. Also, we carried some

ingredients for experiments for all our crazy ideas, such as apples, coffee and cinnamon.

The first bread we baked got burned, but just the crust. I think it was actually one of the most delicious batches we made. Later, we made six normal loaves which were very nice. Then, we made some apple bread. The bread was a bit uncooked in the center, but it was still good. Another experiment was coffee bread. We added one cup of strong coffee made with ground coffee beans and white flour.

Marcellus also made some cinnamon rolls. Instead of sugar he put in a lot of honey, and then he put it in the oven. After a little while, a bunch of smoke started to come out of the oven and I checked it. It was the honey that was getting burned. So I told Marcellus about it and he told me that it was okay, for the rolls were not ready, and he told me to put them back again. Then a lot of smoke filled the entire kitchen, and when it was supposed to be ready 20 pretty black carbons come out. Fr. Gabriel told us that we were crazy!

Finally, I made a batch of bread using baking soda, among other things, instead of yeast. This 'experiment' went to the chickens who just so happened to appreciate my efforts.

At the seminary everyone enjoyed the normal loaves and the apple bread Marcellus made; the chickens liked my bread. But, I learned a new lesson — never put honey in the oven and baking soda and other stuff in the bread.

Alone with Our Lord

by Nino Molina, gr. 12

Here at St. Joseph Seminary we have an all-night vigil on some of the Fridays during the Lenten season. This has been a custom in the seminary for some years.

Before Friday, Fr. Benedict gave us the schedule for the all-night vigil, and we were the ones to choose our time. The day came, and Fr. Benedict started the exposition around 8:45 Friday evening. Then, we said our night prayers and afterwards, we took turns for the time that we had chosen. I chose 1:00–2:30 a.m.

When it was my turn, I prepared myself for prayer. I entered the chapel and I was amazed at what I saw. The candlelights were so beautiful and wonderful, like the stars twinkling in the sky, which Almighty God made. Moreover, there were vigil candles on the walls around the chapel. I felt that I was in the time of Our Lord Jesus Christ. At that time of the night the place was so silent and the light was soft. It was the ideal time and place to meditate on Our Lord.

I knelt and bowed to Jesus in the Eucharist. Even though I could only see the monstrance and the sacred Host on the middle of the altar, I knew He was present there, under the appearance of bread. I conversed with Him for a while and after that, I asked Him to take away distractions during my prayer and give me perseverance and strength that my prayer might be worthy of Him. After that, I started praying the fifteen decades of the Holy Rosary.

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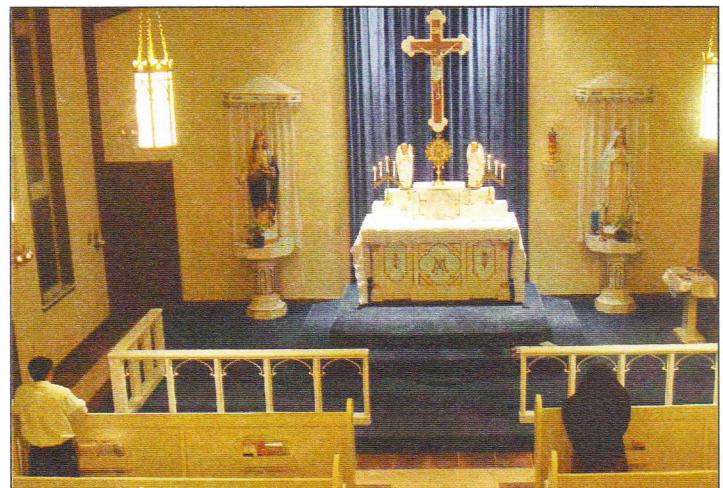
A seminarian assists Father in the distribution of ashes on Ash Wednesday.



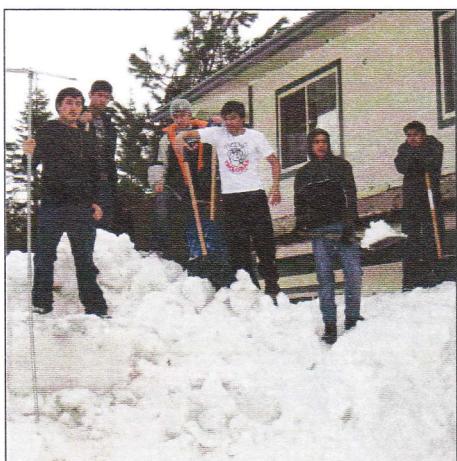
The seminarians' Lenten Retreat provided ample opportunity for quiet reflection with Our Lord in the chapel.



Fr. Casimir Puskorius gives one of several spiritual conferences during the retreat.



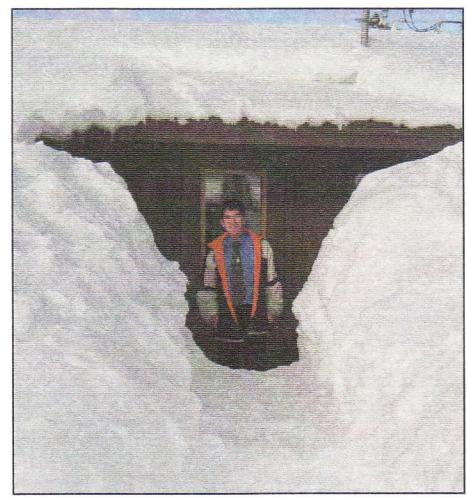
One of the greatest privileges of the retreat was our all-night vigil of adoration.



The seminarians had a real workout keeping the pathways around the seminary and church cleared of snow during January and February.



There were plenty of opportunities for snowball battles this winter!



Juan stands at the back door of the grade school.

Alone with Our Lord

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As soon as I finished the Holy Rosary, it was nearly time to wake up the next person to take his turn. Nevertheless I could not leave the place because God wanted to talk to me more — you can't see Him but you can feel His presence. I stayed for a while and then I woke up Marcellus for his turn. Then I went back to chapel to continue my conversation with Him.

It was so nice to communicate with Jesus; that is why I like Friday evening to Saturday morning. I cannot wait until the next all-night vigil, to converse with Him again. Although I talk to Him every day, still I like that time because . . . I can't explain. So when Lent is over we will have had three all-night vigils.

Overcoming Latin problems

by José Castellanos, gr. 11

How do we start our days of classes here at the seminary? Well, our first period is Latin, taught by Fr. Benedict. We usually start class by saying a prayer, singing a hymn, and then reciting the Pledge of Allegiance. Then we commence with a synopsis that Fr. Benedict gives us. For example he says, "I want the second person plural," so we have to go in order in our head saying the conjugated forms until we get to the one we want. Then we write it down and we keep doing it until we finish all the tenses.

Then we go over the list of new vocabulary words. After that we do some exercises translating from English to Latin or vice versa. Recently, we finished reading the story about how Hannibal did great damage in Italy for so many years. But then a really good Roman general defeated Hannibal and his army.

At the beginning when we started learning Latin I thought it was going to be very easy. One of the reasons why I thought it was going to be easy is because a large part of the vocabulary is similar to Spanish vocabulary. But now it is getting a little bit tough, at least for me, because of all the memory work that we have to do. For example, we have to learn about six new vocabulary words in Latin every day. And it is even harder when we have to learn different parts of the verb in Latin. If it has parts it usually has four, or sometimes three. Of course if we spoke the language every day like we did when we learned English, it would be much easier.

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.

Finally, I'm going to tell you a little bit about a particular test that Fr. Benedict gives us not so often. But when he gives it to us it takes a long time. In fact this last test that we had took me about three hours, even though it was an open-book test. It took others about 2–3 hours also. That's kind of what our Latin class is like, every day during the first period.

"Do not forget to do good . . ."

Holy Scriptures are filled with quotations assuring us of the spiritual value of almsgiving. Although we perhaps often do not think of it, the bestowal of alms upon those in need is a sign of a true follower of Our Lord, as we read in the 25th Chapter of St. Matthew's Gospel: ". . . as long as you did it for one of these, the least of my brethren, you did it for me."

In order to pay our bills and maintain our seminary, we are compelled to make an appeal each year for additional support. We choose the month of St. Joseph, our special patron, as an ideal time for our annual Alms Drive. This is particularly appropriate during Lent, for your alms to our seminary falls under the category of one of the three great works of penance — almsgiving. While your Lenten donation fulfills a critical need for the seminary, it also is a means of atoning for sin and drawing down God's blessings.

I would like to take this opportunity to offer a most heartfelt thanks to those who are regular contributors to our seminary. Your support is greatly appreciated and will surely be rewarded by God. St. Paul assures us: "And do not forget to do good, and to impart; for by such sacrifices God's favor is obtained. (Hebrews 13:16). We assure you all of our prayers for you and your loved ones, and we pray that you experience a joyful and blessed Easter.

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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