



THE GUARDIAN

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Monthly newsletter of St. Joseph Seminary

April 2008

We have had a wonderful Holy Week, although this year things were a bit unusual. We had snow on Holy Thursday (a little) and Good Friday (a lot!), not to mention the snow that is still on the ground from the winter. Needless to say, everyone is ready for spring and warmer weather!

As we begin our vacation during Easter week, we are reminded that there are only two months of school remaining. This vacation will be a welcome break from studies and should prepare us to make a good ending to a very good school year. We appreciate your prayers for us. Please join us also in praying for more vocations. May God bless you.

Vespers

by Marcellus Moylan, gr. 11

“Singing is praying twice,” but this is not the only benefit in taking an active part in the Office. When you join in the public prayer of the Church, that is the Divine Office, you pray with the rest of the Church, and therefore your prayer is more powerful.

Every Sunday evening at St. Joseph Seminary we chant Compline, and for the Sundays of Lent we also chant the beautiful hour of Vespers. For it to sound beautiful (or at least with a minimal amount of mistakes) we must endure the practice. Usually, this requires the memorization of the *Magnificat* antiphon, because that changes every week. It is easy following along, chanting with other voices and using the practice CD; but when the impending time of the test has come, it is a different story. You must sing solo, in front of the other boys and

Fr. Gabriel, who has a copy of the antiphon and marks every note that you get wrong. The only thing that is easy then is to mess up — as we often do.

Nevertheless, practice pays off for it is a great honor to be in God’s presence chanting His praises, and the ancient Gregorian tones are truly beautiful. The thought that I am praying with the rest of the Church is also very consoling.

Holy Mother Church encourages the participation of the faithful in the liturgy, and so they are invited to be present. Sometimes we have sung alone; sometimes a few of the parishioners have attended. I hope that all of those who do attend will be inspired by the wonderful psalms and not be distracted by our chanting slip-ups.

May God grant you all a joyous and blessed Easter season!

A Heavenly Treasure given to sinners

by Giovanni Ortiz, gr. 11

As one of our daily routines in the seminary, we read from a spiritual book. I recently finished a book called *The Blessed Eucharist* by Fr. Michel Muller. I enjoyed reading this book and would like to share with you, dear reader, some highlights from this excellent book.

The Blessed Eucharist in itself is the most important sacrament of all because it is God, our Redeemer. We Catholics must understand this and take it to heart

April calendar

- 1 — Feast of St. Joseph; High Mass and feast day celebration
- 4–6 — Forty Hours’ Adoration
- 8–10 — Stanford-9 tests
- 18 — Seminary spring outing
- 25 — Greater Litanies procession
- 26 — Feast of Our Lady of Good Counsel; chanted Vespers
- 28–30 — Rogation Days; procession
- 30 — Mid-quarter

because the Holy Eucharist is the center of our religion. It helps us to sanctify our souls and to grow and persevere in the love of God. This indescribable mystery helps abundantly so that we can be saved and not be damned to hell.

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The incensation of the altar during High Mass on Holy Thursday.

Heavenly Treasure

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In the course of history we have heard and read about numerous incidents that God worked through His sacraments. The Holy Eucharist is one in particular because there have been many people who have been saved and restored from illness after devoutly receiving the Holy Eucharist. Also, there have been stories that tell us about how we should treat this sacrament. And these stories often show us how people have been killed by the hand of God for their lack of reverence toward this sacrament.

Such is the story of an impious man in Germany. One day when the solemn procession of Corpus Christi was passing by his house, he stood before the window and wishing to show his contempt to the Blessed Eucharist he blasphemed and, worse, he spat upon it. Only several people noticed this impious act. But soon after he had done this, God punished him by causing him to expire in a most horrible death as a reprobate. However, this was not all. The outrageous scandal that he had given and the blasphemy he had uttered against God needed a public act of reparation. God used the following means: After the death of this impious man, terrible and frightful noises were heard in his house. People could not stand this any longer. They decided that a picture of him should be posted in the same spot he cursed the Blessed Eucharist, to show how God punishes scoffers. Having done all this, the house became as quiet as a desolate place and no frightening noises were heard anymore.

I hope that this example helps us to ask God to never let us fall into such a heretical state, and to always thank God for the abundance of graces we receive from Him daily when we receive Holy Communion.

Not curses, but praises

by Angel B. Gamboa, gr. 10

Not too long ago I heard a story of a man who wanted to know who was the holiest person in his parish. He believed that it could be one of the many pious people that he knew, and he asked God, "Is it one of those nuns that are there?" pointing out some nuns well known for their charity and goodness. Our Lord answered: "Their souls are pure and clean but yet they are not the holiest." He then saw a priest and asked the same question, and Our Lord said, "He is also very holy but not the holiest."

He kept asking God about different people who seemed to be very holy. Some of them were and some of them were not, but none of these was the holiest. At last he saw, in the middle of a storm, a wretched man who was so skinny that the wind carried him back and forth. His clothes were full of holes and patches, he had no shoes, he was wet and shabby, and yet he was singing, as he walked along the street. The man then said to the poor man, "What a terrible day, full of rain, wind and cold. It almost seems that the heavens are sad."

The little man then answered, "No, it is a great day. Look at it: it is nature, and nature always does the will of God! It is God showing His power over us. It is God giving us another day to praise Him. It is God Himself showing His love for us."

He then asked God whether this little man was the holiest person of his parish. And Our Lord said, "Yes, he is the holiest man in this place, not because he is poor, neither because he is little, but because he is always happy and accepts my divine will. If I send joys to him, he praises me. If I send him sufferings and torments, he praises me and rejoices even more, for one day of crosses and sufferings is better than a hundred years of happiness and prosperity."

The man's curiosity was satisfied and he learned the most important lesson of his life; he learned that he did not need to be wealthy or poor, weak or strong. All he needed to get to heaven was humility to accept God's divine will and to be happy with it. So my dear friends, let us all stop complaining about the weather, our trials, and all of our difficulties because all these things are God's will, and by accepting them without complaint, we can earn a high place in heaven.

Palm Sunday ceremonies

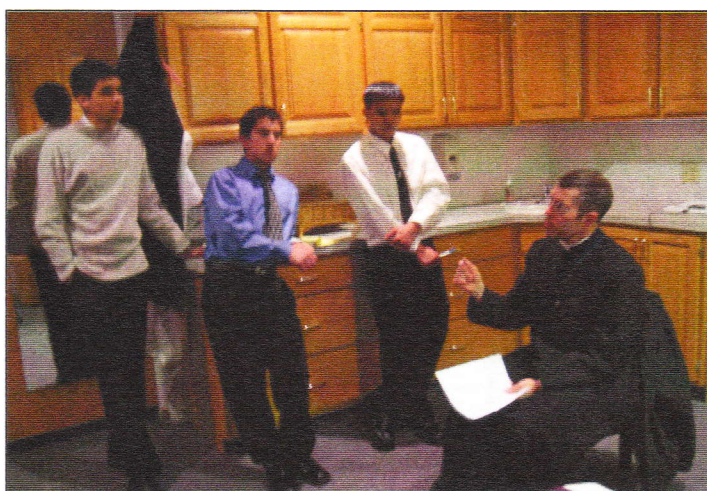
by Nino Molina, gr. 12

When we reach Holy Week, we first celebrate Palm Sunday, which recalls the acceptance and proclamation of the people when Jesus Christ entered Jerusalem as their King and Messiah before His Passion.

The celebration of Palm Sunday was so beautiful and wonderful, especially the blessing of the palms. It took almost an hour to finish the blessing and procession. The solemnity of the blessing and procession was so impressive because it contains the traditional Latin prayers and hymns which are so pleasing to God, Our Father. Furthermore, I felt that I was in the time of Our Lord Jesus Christ.

The traditional ceremonies were not like the Vatican II ceremonies in which the prayers and some rubrics were changed. I remember Palm Sunday in the Vatican II church. All the faithful gathered in the street with different styles of palms, and after that, the priest blessed the palms. As I recall, I did not hear the priest read the Gospel after the blessing. In the traditional ceremony the priest blesses the palms inside the church and the faithful have simple, plain palms — simplicity is beauty. In addition, the priest sings the Gospel. It is not necessary to have gorgeous palms or to have a nice style, but most important are the prayers and chants which give us more blessings and graces for our life and families.

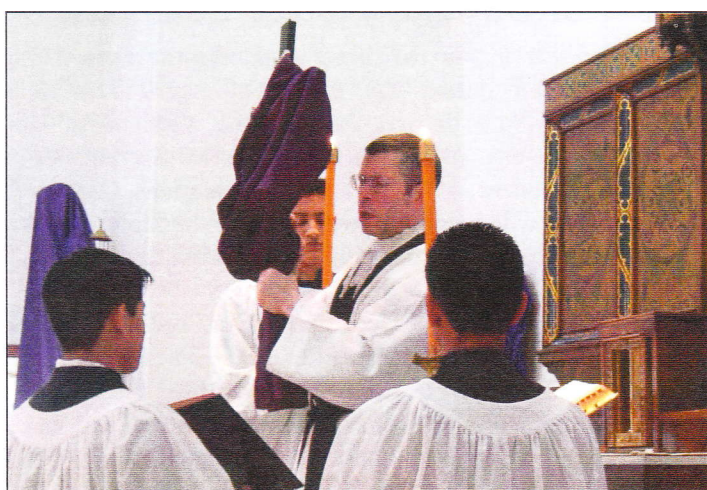
This was the first time I attended the celebration of Palm Sunday with traditional ceremonies. That is why I like the traditional rites — because of their solemnity. Let us pray for and encourage those people who go to the New Mass to convert to the traditional Faith, that they may see how beautiful and solemn are the ceremonies of the Traditional Mass.



Last minute rehearsal for Father and the seminarians before singing Vespers on Palm Sunday.



During the liturgy on Good Friday, Father transfers the Blessed Sacrament to the main altar from the altar of repose.



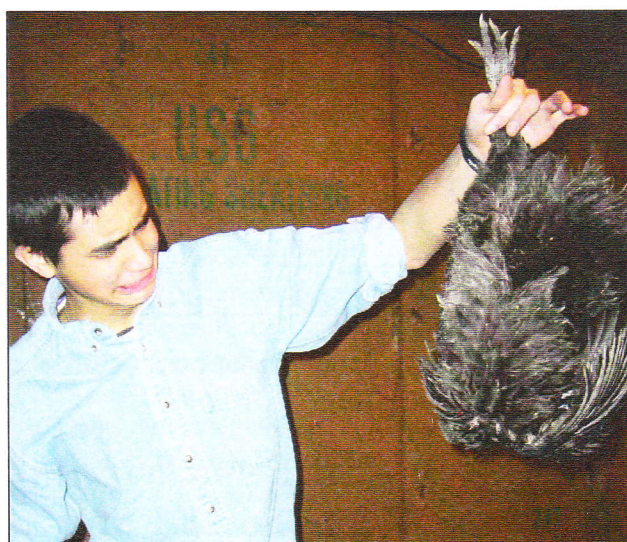
The Cross is unveiled on Good Friday as a reminder to the faithful of Christ's Passion and Death on the Cross.



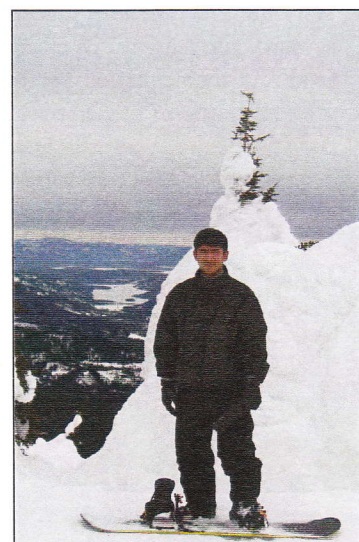
The beautiful Easter Midnight Mass is a feast for the soul.



Bosco is all decked out — even the seminarians' pet dog got an extra grooming while everyone was busy preparing for Easter.



Butchering time — who do you feel sorrier for, the chicken or the seminarian?



The abundance of snow this year allowed for one last trip to the slopes.

Our great patron saint

by José Castellanos, gr. 11

I would like to summarize a Sunday sermon from Fr. Benedict about St. Joseph during the month of March, which is, of course, dedicated to St. Joseph.

Well, when we think of Joseph we think of the one in the Old Testament and of St. Joseph, the foster-father of Jesus Christ and the spouse of Our Blessed Mother. Father told the story of Joseph of the Old Testament. His own brothers were jealous of him and sold Joseph, the son of Jacob, into slavery and later imprisoned him even though he was innocent of any crime. He was released by the Pharaoh due to his ability to interpret dreams. He interpreted Pharaoh's dreams, which nobody else could interpret. So the Pharaoh told Joseph, "Everyone is under your dominion except me, the Pharaoh." Then his father and his brothers found out that Joseph was not dead but that he was the second most important man in Egypt after Pharaoh. His brothers were very sorry and asked Joseph to forgive them, and his father was very joyful to know that Joseph was alive. His brothers then stayed in Egypt. That is how the Israelites ended up living in Egypt.

Joseph of the Old Testament foreshadowed and signified Christ, but he also in some way signified St. Joseph, the foster-father of Our Lord Jesus Christ. The fact that he was able to understand the meaning of those dreams reminds us that God revealed certain things to St. Joseph by dreams. One of them was when our Blessed Mother was with child. St. Joseph, being a just man, and not knowing how the Blessed Virgin could be with child, was in anxiety and was tormented by that thought. So Our Lord revealed to St. Joseph in a dream by an angel the mystery of the Incarnation of Jesus Christ. And we can ask: Why did Our Lord allow St. Joseph to be in such anxiety? We don't know exactly how long that was but we know that it was for a period of time. We can ask: Why did Our Lord let that happen? Why didn't He reveal the mystery right away? Well, St. Joseph was tried and tested by God and then purified by that doubt. God acts the same way with each one of us; He may test and try us, and then when we pass the trial, He purifies our souls.

St. Joseph had two other dreams: when an angel told him to take Our Blessed Lady and the Child Jesus to Egypt, and when the angel told St. Joseph to go back to the Promised Land.

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.

St. Joseph had a perfect death and the best since he died with Our Blessed Mother and Our Lord Jesus Christ at his side. It is with this thought in mind that we pray to St. Joseph for a good and holy death.

Love of Our Lord in the Eucharist

Every year in our parish we will hold the Forty Hours' Adoration during the month of April. This year's adoration will be fittingly held on the weekend of Good Shepherd Sunday. Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament is an important element in the training of seminarians. One day, as priests, they will require a great love for the Holy Eucharist. For priests are the guardians of the Eucharist, the sentinels of Our Lord.

A priest who had little devotion to Our Lord in the Blessed Sacrament would be a sad priest indeed. The life of the priest revolves around the Eucharist. There is Mass, distribution of Holy Communion, benediction, sick calls, visits, and care of the church. For a priest without devotion, such a life would be drudgery. Such a priest would be a soul to be pitied.

Thus, seminarians must acquire a love for Our divine Lord in the tabernacle from their earliest years. Those who wish it will pray daily for this grace—for a greater love and appreciation for their Eucharistic King. May our seminarians grow daily in this devotion.

As usual in our April mailing, we have enclosed a card for your intentions for Mother's Day. We assure all of you of a daily remembrance in our prayers for you and your loved ones, and we thank you for your support of our seminary.

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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