



# THE GUARDIAN

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Monthly newsletter of St. Joseph Seminary

May 2008

**I**t has been a cold April here in the northwest. Finally, however, spring has arrived with all its beauty, just in time for our annual May celebrations. We have the daily public Rosary and crowning of Our Lady's statue during May, in addition to various processions this month.

Our Saturday chores have been relatively light during the past month, but now with the snow finally gone, there will be ample yard work to keep us busy on Saturdays. There may be more work to do, but we are nevertheless glad to be able to get outside more—even if it means running the dreaded “lap” for P.E. again.

Our chickens finally started laying eggs on Easter Monday. We average a dozen eggs a day, plenty to take care of our breakfast needs. And besides, the chickens are relatively easy to take care of, so we are glad to have them.

We hope that you all have a good month, with daily prayers before your home May shrine. Perhaps we Catholics are best known for our devotion to Mary, who always leads us to her Son. May we be worthy to be called children of Mary.

## An ancient devotion to St. Joseph

by Giovanni Ortiz, gr. 11

**T**he St. Joseph cord is a powerful sacramental. It has helped to cure physical illness and it's a good way for us to safeguard the virtue of purity. By wearing this cord devoutly we obtain five wonderful graces: 1) St. Joseph's special protection, 2) purity of soul,

3) the grace of chastity, 4) final perseverance, and 5) particular assistance at the hour of death.

Since our seminary patron is St. Joseph, we have started this devotion. Fr. Benedict had us make our own cords and then he blessed them. He told us that the blessing of this cord is unique—it is the only blessing of a sacramental, other than in liturgical ceremonies, in which a priest uses incense in the blessing.

But you might ask how did it come into practice? And when did it first start? It came about through the miraculous cure of an Augustinian nun, Sr. Elizabeth. She lived in Antwerp, Belgium, in the year 1657. After suffering with an illness for three years, the doctors had given up hope of curing her. They diagnosed her with an incurable illness, and they expected her to die soon. But this sister, having always had a great devotion to St. Joseph, made a cord in his honor and had it blessed. Then she put it around her waist and prayed to St. Joseph. A couple days later, while she was praying before St. Joseph's image, she was miraculously freed from any pain of her illness. Her recovery was considered a miracle.

The devotion for this cord soon spread far and wide and was approved by the Sacred Congregation of Rites on September 19, 1859. It was also blessed and approved by Pope Pius IX. This cord is made of white thread or cotton, with seven knots at one end, in

## May calendar

1 — Feast of the Ascension of Our Lord; holyday of obligation; no classes
11 — Feast of Pentecost
12-14 — Annual Seminary outing
22 — Feast of Corpus Christi; outdoor procession of the Blessed Sacrament
30 — Feast of the Sacred Heart of Jesus; confirmation at Mary Immaculate Queen Church
31 — Feast of the Queenship BVM; chanted Vespers; procession

honor of the seven joys and sorrows of St. Joseph. It should also be blessed by a priest and worn around the waist.

I hope, dear reader that you will use and spread to others this devotion to St. Joseph. If you do so, he will always have you under his special protection, and he will help you in any difficulty or necessity. May we all grow in devotion to this great saint.



*The blessing of St. Joseph cords — each seminarian made his own St. Joseph cord.*

## Let us not seek appearances

by José Castellanos, gr. 11

On the third Sunday of April there was First Holy Communion here at Mary Immaculate Queen Church. Fr. Benedict gave a sermon that was very appropriate because it helped us think about Our Lord in the Holy Eucharist.

Father told us a story of a man who lived in India when it was still a colony of Portugal. It was there that this young man went to work and made his fortune. After awhile he returned to Portugal where he had lived before, and where all his friends lived. But now he was rich and he brought with him several boats full of all his wealth: gold, silver, his servants and rare spices.

He decided, however, to play a little game on his friends, so he clothed himself in rags and went to the house of one of his friends. When the friend opened the door, he saw only a beggar who said, "I am your friend Peter. I have just returned from India and need a place to stay." But the friend seeing how Peter was dressed with those rags said, "Oh, I'm sorry but I don't have any room for you to stay here." So Peter went to every one of his friends, but seeing how he was dressed, they refused to give him food or shelter.

Being thus rejected, he went back to his boats and unloaded all the riches in the same town where all his 'friends' lived. Then he bought a magnificent mansion, surrounded himself with servants, and purchased the finest horses. All his friends, seeing how rich Peter was now, regretted that they had not allowed him to stay with them in their houses, just because he was dressed like a beggar. The very person whom they rejected was really rich and able to buy anything he wanted.

It is the same with Our Lord and us — Jesus is in the Holy Eucharist under the poor appearances of bread and wine. He comes to us in the same manner that the rich man came to his friends, who rejected Him. So let us not be like those bad friends but welcome Him into our hearts and He will give us all His immense treasures.

## Neither gold nor money

by Angel B. Gamboa, gr. 10

It is now May and I almost did not realize it. It has now been one year and eight months since I left home to come here to St. Joseph Seminary. Looking back and also, thanks to one of the Sunday sermons, I realized how much time I have wasted. So my dear friends, I wanted to write a little bit about this to remind you of how precious time is for each one of us.

Some people say: "Time is money." Others say: "Time is gold." But neither money nor gold would buy a single minute, would it?

I would also like to remind you that, as time goes by, death also gets closer. Every hour we live is an hour closer to death. To realize how precious time is, think of this question: "What would you do if you knew that you were to die twenty-four

hours from this very moment?" You would probably think of kneeling down and imploring forgiveness for all of your sins and begging mercy from God.

Of course that would be the best thing to do, but why don't you do it now? Why do you have to wait until you are on your deathbed, when there is no time? Every minute is a new opportunity to praise God and gain merit for heaven. If we can grasp this thought and ponder death more frequently, we could become great saints. Every minute is a gift of love from God.

What is eternity compared to gold and money? The time that we have now is never going to come back. The time that is lost, is lost forever. Imagine how many good and profitable things you could do if you did not waste time. Do you realize how time is far better than money and gold? Let us repent for all of our sins and pray to God, giving thanks, and asking God for help to use well this wonderful gift which He is giving us right now, the gift of time.

## Adventures with the chickens

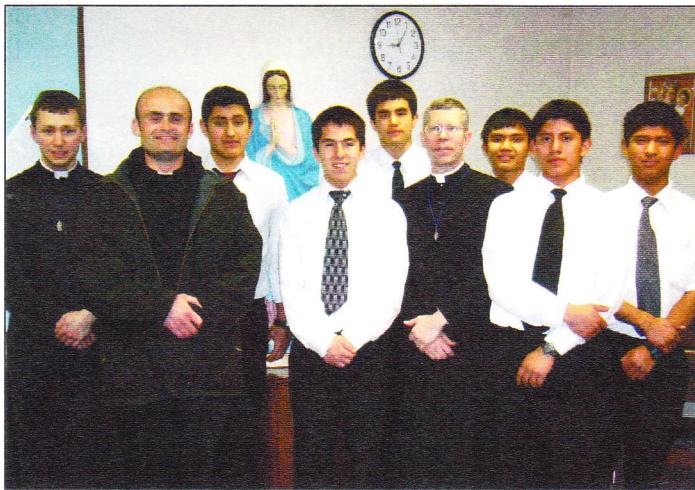
by Marcellus Moylan, gr. 11

Last year before the snows came, a coop was erected and 25 young chickens were transferred from the cold, dark basement to their lovely little home. It is due to Caleb's initiative and entrepreneurship that we have chickens. He arranged for their purchase and, using his carpentry skills and second-hand wood lying around the seminary, led the project of putting up a well insulated habitation for the fowl. A small pen was also built and fenced in on all sides; however, this pen was rendered useless until recently, when the snow had sufficiently melted to allow the chickens to at last enjoy the use of it.

On Holy Thursday Giovanni took a hen out of the coop, as she could not walk for some unknown reason. We decided that she had to be butchered. I assisted Gio in the messy task. But to our surprise, when we were cleaning out the carcass, we got our first egg. The hens were finally ready to reward our labor. Holy Saturday found Bryan, Juan, and me having fun making egg-laying compartments. We made six boxes and placed fresh straw in them. Then the hens began pumping out eggs; they gave us thirteen or fourteen a day.

For this last quarter the care of the chickens was entrusted to Bryan and me. We put some old linoleum over the leaky tarp covering the roof and shoveled excess snow out of their pen. We also made a chart to keep track of how many eggs we get every day.

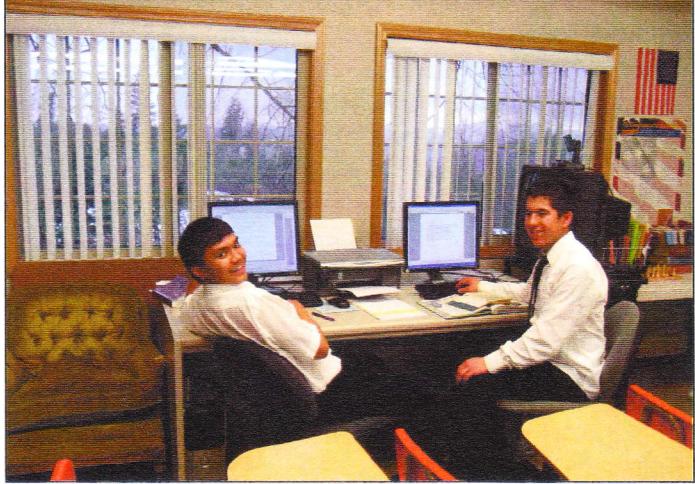
I enjoy caring for our poultry (except cleaning out the coop floor every other weekend). When I come to bring clean water, collect the eggs, and feed them, they move about excitedly and crowd around my legs, anxiously waiting for their meal. Then I put feed in their bowl, and all fight for space to get to the food which they ferociously devour. Soon warmer weather will come and then, hopefully, we will get some more chicks too.



*We all enjoyed a visit from Fr. Julian Gilchrist, before his departure for New Zealand.*



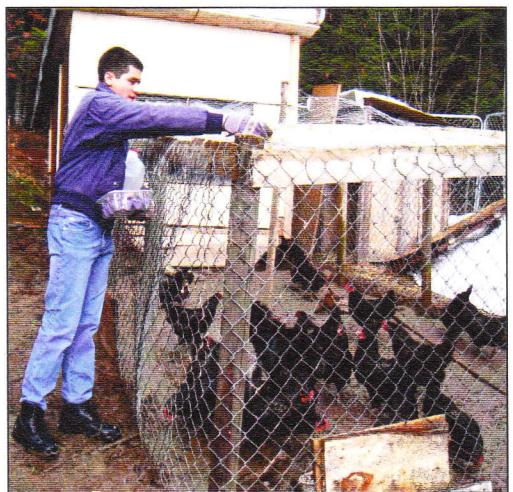
*In early April the seminarians sang a votive Mass of St. Joseph, which was offered for all who contributed to our annual Lenten Alms Drive.*



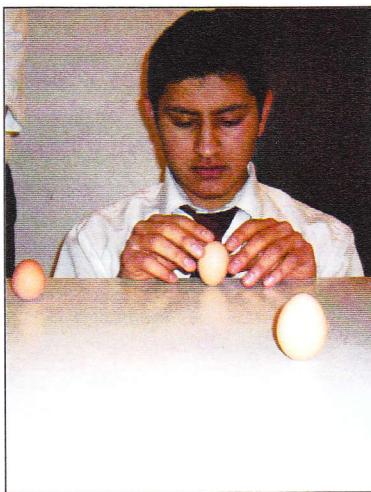
*Nino and Juan take a break from doing homework.*



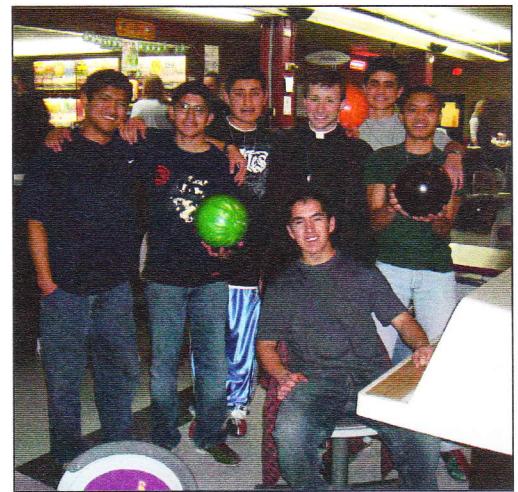
*A young man serves his first Mass for Fr. Gabriel in our Kalispell, Montana, mission.*



*Feeding the chickens is an interesting daily task for Marcellus.*



*The seminarians performed an experiment balancing eggs.*



*The seminarians celebrated the feast of St. Joseph with a game of bowling.*

## A knight of God

by Nino Molina, gr. 1

The spiritual book that I read during the month of April was The Perfect Joy of St. Francis. This book would seem more appropriate for the season of Lent, because it explains how St. Francis did his penances and about his relationship with God.

Anyway, I chose this topic for my article this month because I admire this saint. He did great penances, such as walking barefoot, begging for his food and at times sleeping in a stable. He also wore a rag for his habit. Moreover, he overcame the spirit of the world.

God called him through a dream and an unusual voice that he heard. When he knew that God called him, he responded. His father did not approve when St. Francis embraced the religious life because his father wanted him to become a knight. But finally, St. Francis did become a knight — not a knight of a king but a knight of God.

Nowadays, there are many young men who have a true vocation to be a priest or religious, but the spirit of the world dominates at this present time. That is why their vocations fade away. Also, some parents fail to support their children's vocations.

Once you notice that one of your sons or daughters has a vocation, do not hesitate to offer your child to God. At this present time, we need religious knights to fight against the devil and to spread the Word of God like St. Francis did. However, to become a great knight of God, we should undergo sacrifices and penances. Even though it is not now the Lenten season, we still need to do penance. In addition, we need to mortify our senses. Our penances and sacrifices are not enough to atone for the sins that we have committed against God. At least, we must try to never again commit sin and displease God.

Thus, we should not stop praying and adoring God. Pray for us who are seeking vocations to the priesthood or brotherhood like St. Francis did. Pray for us and God bless you all.

## The best of both worlds

Our seminary is unique in many ways. For one thing, the seminarians often obtain a first-hand acquaintance with

## 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.

the work of the priest. In former times, seminarians lived in a seminary sequestered from ordinary parish life. There certainly are many advantages to such an atmosphere. On the other hand, there is much to be said about the benefits of assisting the priests in their work.

Here at St. Joseph Seminary the students have such "hands-on" opportunities from time to time. Occasionally, one of the seminarians will accompany a priest on his travels to Mass centers in Montana. Of course, sacristy work and liturgical ceremonies form a regular part of their lives. In many ways, the seminarians are able to observe and assist the priests in the functions of running a parish.

Another opportunity that is sometimes present is that of helping the priests in the care of the sick and dying. Recently, in our parish, a man passed away who had been ill for years due to muscular dystrophy. The priests have regularly taken Holy Communion to him, but when his last hours approached, the seminarians accompanied the priest to pray the Rosary by the bedside.

I like to think that we have the best of both worlds at St. Joseph Seminary. On the one hand, we have a secluded location, far removed from the distractions of the world. On the other hand, the various opportunities of parish work remind our students that a priest is not ordained for himself alone, but to assist souls on their path to heaven.

Please continue to pray for these young men, that they will develop a great zeal for souls. As always, we thank you for your support, especially for the generous response to our annual Lenten Alms Drive. We assure you of our prayers for 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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