



# THE GUARDIAN

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Monthly newsletter of St. Joseph Seminary

July 2008

Several weeks ago we said our good-byes and began our vacation. Marcellus, José and Giovanni left for home or friends, while Nino, Angel and Juan stayed at the seminary. Soon, Juan and Angel will go home for several weeks, and Nino will head to the major seminary in late August. As you can see, there will always be someone at the seminary to serve Mass, do the chores, feed the chickens, etc.

One project that we started just before school let out is our garden. Due to studies and a lot of rain, we were not able to start it as soon as we would have liked. We hope, however, to return for school in a couple months to find a cornucopia of vegetables from our own labors.

We hope that all of you will enjoy your summer vacation; we can assure you that we will! Keep praying for us and for more vocations. May God bless you.

## "You'll love it here"

by Marcellus Moylan, gr. 12

Set in the purple, pine-covered mountains of Idaho's northern panhandle, is St. Joseph Seminary. Nine months ago, by the grace of God, I came to this place, and I believe this is one of the best things that I have ever done. The morning after I arrived Miss Sullivan greeted me thus: "Welcome to the City of Mary. You'll love it here."

These words have proven to be prophetic — I do love it here! There is the most holy sacrifice of the Mass and Communion every day, regular times for prayer, a beautiful variety of devotions and liturgical ceremonies throughout the year, spiritual

conferences every Thursday, confessions weekly, and ample time for private prayer. But something, which is unique and truly wonderful about St. Joseph Seminary is that, because the chapel is just down the hall, Our Lord is under the very same roof, watching over us, and radiating His love into our hearts. When I lie in bed at night, I smile at this comforting thought and thank God for being so near.

Another thing which I think is unique about St. Joseph Seminary is the proximity of the priests. We live with them in their daily lives, getting a taste of priestly work and duties, and seeing their human side more than others would; in a way this makes it easier to follow their example. With two priests here there are plenty of opportunities to serve at Mass. Whenever you have a question they have the answer. Fr. Benedict looks after us like a father, making sure our spiritual life is progressing and that our physical well-being is not neglected. Fr. Gabriel, ever affable and sincere, is always sharing his discoveries with us, and does not hesitate to descend to our level to talk or participate in an activity with us.

This past school year has been for me especially enjoyable and very beneficial. I hope in August I will see some new faces at the seminary: boys who are serious in their spiritual life and who understand the importance of a good formation, whether or not they want to serve God as priests. To these I hope to say, "You'll love it here!"

## Why so few vocations to the married state?

by Fr. Gabriel Lavery, CMRI

I suppose you're wondering why I would ask such a silly question. "Everyone knows there's no shortage of people getting married," you say, and you are right, but the question is not as ridiculous as it might seem. I ask it to make obvious the answer to another question which is frequently asked: "Why are there so few vocations to the priesthood and the religious life?"

The answer to both questions is that there is *no* shortage of *vocations* to either state, married or religious. Look at it this way: there are many people called to the married life, but how many of them actually cooperate with the *grace* of that vocation? We see young people treating courtship as if it were meant solely as an opportunity for mutual enjoyment and fun. Little thought is given to prayer and sacrifice as essential to preparation for their vocation

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Three seminarians made the Act of Total Consecration to Jesus through Mary on the feast of Our Lady's Queenship.



## So few vocations

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to the married state and its duties. They refuse to cooperate with their calling, but what is the result? Do they decide not to get married? No! They make bad parents and raise worldly families, but they still get married. Then, just because these couples still get married, we happily think there is no shortage of those following the marriage vocation.

The story is very different when it comes to religious vocations. What happens to a young man who is called to the priesthood, but refuses to cooperate with that vocation? What of a young lady called to the sisterhood, who refuses to cooperate with her vocation? Does the young man become a bad priest, or the young lady become a bad nun? No! They simply don't enter the religious life at all. We then wrongly conclude that there must be few vocations to the religious life.

In one sense it is better that they abandon their vocation, rather than entering into it anyway like bad parents enter into their vocations. It is better to have a shortage of priests and nuns than to have bad ones. On the other hand, it is very sad for them, since they lose many graces and the opportunity of consecrating their lives to God as his specially chosen ones.

It is also very sad for the souls that could have been saved by them. Yes, I said saved. Pope Pius XII, in his encyclical *Mystici Corporis*, said: "The salvation of many souls depends upon the prayers and voluntary mortifications offered for that intention by the members of the Mystical Body of Christ." Our Lady said the same at Fatima: "Many souls go to hell because there is no one to pray and sacrifice for them." What good could be done if there were more priests and religious to pray and sacrifice for souls — more Masses, more confessions, more parishes, more Catholic schools. The world and sin would be trampled under foot; but no, God has few young souls who will give their lives to Him.

Why won't they give their lives to God? It is because they have not received the proper training in the home. They have not been taught to truly love God from early childhood. Proper education requires a great amount of vigilance, patient instruction and timely warnings. As the famous educator, Bishop Dupanloup, said in the late 1800's: "I cannot express as forcibly as I wish how much constant, attentive, steady solicitude is required in everything on the part of parents, in order to preserve their young children from the evil that surrounds and attacks them on all sides. I recapitulate. It is during the tenderest age that it is necessary to be warmly solicitous and watchful over a young child; it is then that precaution should be carried into the most trifling details" (*The Child*, p. 185. Online copy available at [archive.org](http://archive.org)).

Why so few religious vocations? Because there are so few marriage vocations. Good parents who look on marriage as a vocation would raise good children who would also take courtship and marriage seriously. They in turn would raise good Catholic families. Religious vocations would come as a

matter of course from such families. Pray for the sanctification of families!

## Not yet

*by Juan Garcia, gr. 11*

For some weeks now we have been doing various projects. I want to tell you about a few of the things we have been working on.

The first thing I started to do was a grotto for the statue of St. Joseph that was on a wall on the west side of the building. This grotto is going to be in front of the seminary going up the hill where we have big rocks in the form of a quarter-moon. First of all, I started digging a line 3" x 4" all around the area where the big rocks are. Then I brought little rocks and put them in. After that, I started digging a hole in the middle of the rocks where St. Joseph is going to be. I have to dig out 3½ feet of earth until it is flat. The first part of the earth was soft, but then it started getting harder and harder until there were almost all rocks. I have not yet finished the grotto, but I hope to complete it during vacation.

Another project is our vegetable garden. Since food prices are going up all the time, we decided to buy some seeds and cultivate the garden. First, we had to borrow a rototiller, as the garden had not been planted for several years. Then we planted seeds of various vegetables.

The last thing is not important. What we are planning to do is to finish the fort we started when Caleb was in the seminary. We have a two level fort. We added some other things to it, but what we are now planning to do is to build a bridge from the second level of the fort to a large tree that is 15 feet away from the fort. That's our plan, but right now we don't have enough materials to start it.

All these recent projects are not yet complete, but at least we hope to finish St. Joseph's grotto. I want to thank all our benefactors and all the people who receive *The Guardian* for helping us to have a seminary and for praying for our vocations. Please keep praying for us. We also pray for you, and we wish for you a very nice summer and vacation time.

## Is it just rain or a storm?

*by Nino Molina, graduate*

The month of June was still a little bit cold for me, even though it was already spring. Nature returned after our long winter. The snow disappeared and it rained — a lot. The rain reminded me of the Philippines, where I come from.

One day, the surroundings were dark and it rained heavily. Moreover, the lighting was like a bright incandescent bulb that flashes on and off every few seconds. The sound of the thunderstorm was like a loud bomb explosion. The wind created a weird sound.

I asked Fr. Benedict if it was just a rain or a storm. He replied that it was a thunderstorm. I laughed; then I told Father

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*The seminarians assembled for prayers in the main church on the feast of Our Lady's Queenship on May 31.*



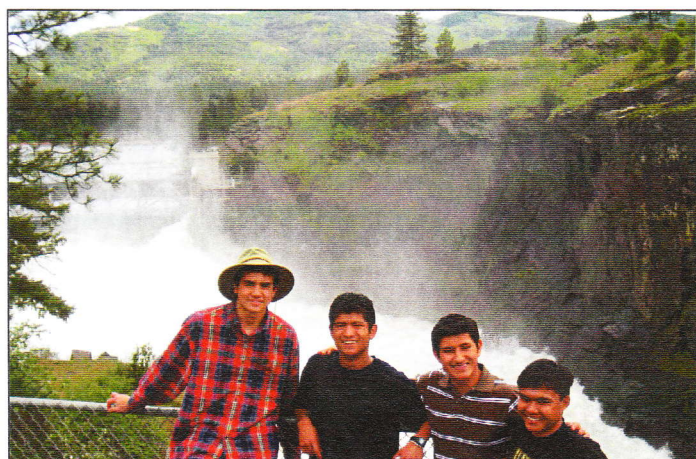
*Marcellus and Juan tilled and planted our garden before school let out.*



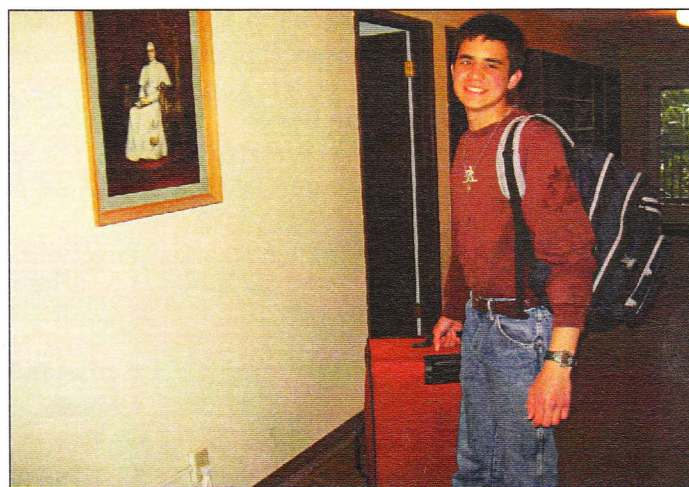
*Bryan has been keeping our lawn mowed.*



*All the pews were recently removed from our chapel to be refinished.*



*Some of the seminarians enjoyed a visit to local waterfalls during the spring, when the snow on the mountains fills the rivers and streams to overflowing.*



*Marcellus is packed and ready to head home for summer vacation.*



## Is it just rain or a storm?

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that it was only a rain for me. In the Philippines a storm can blow out a “nipa” hut roof and take down trees. The rain and wind there is like a wild beast. Sometimes we got rain all day long. To prepare for our rainy season, we would clean the canals, drainages and rivers.

I could not forget one incident two years ago. The rain was pouring so heavily that it caused a flood. The water was about 4 feet deep in the elevated places, but for the low places, you could see only the roofs. The rain started at dawn and stopped around 11 a.m. — it seemed normal for us.

The rain here was not fun because it was cold, not like in the places where I came from. You had fun in the rain because it was warm. We even played basketball in the rain.

No matter how cold, heavy or strong the rain is, we should be thankful to God. He created this element of nature which is one of the primary sources of our needs — without water, we cannot live. So, let us always pray that nature will not make a calamity because once it happens no one can stop it but God.

## Before asking, let us thank

*by Angel B. Gamboa, gr. 11*

Prayer is offered for four principal ends: adoration, thanksgiving, petition and reparation. Have you ever reflected upon this? Let us first focus on thanksgiving. We have a duty towards God to thank Him for all the graces and blessings that we receive from Him. It often happens that we take for granted everything that God gives us. We have much to be thankful for and not enough lifetimes to do so. Our human nature is always ready to ask and receive; however, it is not always ready to give and thank.

We must be exceedingly grateful towards God, especially for the holy sacraments and, above all of them, for the Holy Eucharist. Who are we to receive Him Whom the angels desire to look upon? Who are we to be able to say that we have Jesus in us when we receive Him in Holy Communion? Imagine if a Bishop were to go into your house. Would you not clean and prepare it? Would you not thank him afterwards? It is the same way with Our Lord. For Jesus Christ Himself comes down from heaven to be with us, poor sinners.

Also when we pray we ask, yet we often forget that we need to thank Him for what He has already given us. We

should always make sure that we try our best to prepare to receive Our Lord; nevertheless, we should always try even harder to thank God for so great a blessing.

So let us try our very best to thank Our Lord for all of His blessings everyday and always keep in mind that nothing in this life should be taken for granted.

## “Come apart . . . and rest awhile”

Everyone needs a vacation from time to time, and this applies to teachers as much as to students. The vacation period allows us to recuperate our strength — physically, mentally, emotionally, but above all, spiritually. During the school year we teachers are giving to our students constantly. We are giving our time, our energy, our attention, and we are giving from our spiritual resources. These need to be replenished.

That is why an annual retreat is so important. All religious make such a retreat — ours comes during the month of July. The importance of this spiritual exercise can be seen in a passage in St. Mark’s gospel (chapter 6, verses 30-31). After Our Lord had sent his apostles out to visit the various towns, preaching, healing the sick and exorcising the possessed, they returned to explain to Our Lord all that they had done. They were enthusiastic but also fatigued. We read that “there were many coming and going, and they had no leisure, even to eat.” So Our Lord in His goodness invited them to “*Come apart . . . and rest awhile.*” And this is what we do during a retreat.

Every person must sanctify and save his own soul. Those priests and religious who work in the active apostolate of teaching or doing parish work, must be careful to not neglect their own sanctification. A retreat allows us to concentrate on our spiritual well-being, to ask ourselves how we are doing in fulfilling our duties and especially in maintaining our spiritual health. We cannot be a source of inspiration and guidance to our young men if we are not strong spiritually. So, we ask your prayers as we make our annual retreat this month.

As always, we ask your continued prayers for our seminary. May St. Joseph intercede for us with Jesus and Mary to obtain more vocations and to form them well into other Christs. All of you, our friends and benefactors, are remembered daily in our prayers.

*Fr. Benedict Hughes, CMRI*

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