



THE GUARDIAN

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Monthly newsletter of St. Joseph Seminary

October 2008

Our seminary year began well, as we plunged right into classes. Following our tradition, the early part of the year featured a trip to the lake for a couple days of fun and camaraderie. We all had a great time.

After a couple weeks of unusually hot weather, the temperature turned considerably cooler, with plenty of much needed rain. Fall has definitely arrived. We now turn our attention to harvesting the apples and finishing a couple of projects that are long overdue, especially completing the refinishing of the pews from the seminary chapel.

We especially look forward to attending and serving in the ordination ceremony at Mt. St. Michael next week. An ordination ceremony is one of the most beautiful and inspiring ceremonies one can witness. For each of the seminarians, this will be the first time we have witnessed a priestly ordination. We pray that this ceremony will inspire us to persevere in our vocations and will bring forth many more vocations. We thank you for your prayers and support.

Silence! The bell has rung!

by Angel Bryan Gamboa, gr. 11

Every night here at our home, St. Joseph Seminary, sounds a sweet bell which announces that the time for rest, peace and quiet has come. After the bell rings, no one is allowed to talk unless it is necessary. That little bell is more than just the announcer of silence; if we grasp it a little further we can look upon it as *Vox Dei*, the voice of God. Through this little soft sound the voice of God comes very calmly and is easy to follow.

Grand silence was a great challenge for me during the first few weeks or maybe even months. It was especially hard for me because I am an awfully loquacious person — of all the seminarians I was probably the one who struggled with silence the most. Through the grace of God and practice I have gotten used to keeping my mouth quiet at night time. I also found out that silence is a great help in our spiritual life. I have read and heard this many times, but it was not until I went home for this summer that I really understood it.

The silence that we keep at night is very helpful to prepare us for Mass the next day; it also helps a great deal to get a good night of sleep.

Every morning the voice of God also calls us to wake up and fulfill our daily duty. The bell to awaken us is bigger. Its sound is also nice, except when we are wrapped in a most profound and deep sleep. It is then that the real challenge begins. However, that bell is not the one that breaks the silence. Silence can only be broken when Fr. Benedict says the phrase *Benedicamus Domino* (Let us bless the Lord) and we answer *Deo Gratias* (Thanks be to God). If Father is not around we can talk only after the conclusion of morning prayers and Mass.

That is why, when someone speaks unnecessarily at night time, this phrase should be said: "Silence! The bell has rung."

October calendar

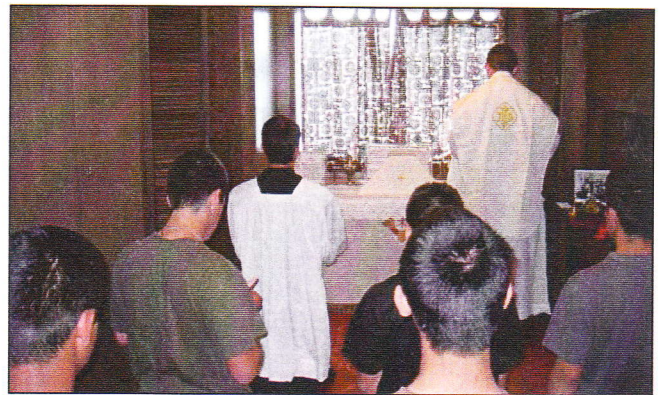
- 7 — Ordination ceremony at MSM
- 8 — José's 18th Birthday
- 11 — Feast of the Divine Maternity BVM; chanted Vespers
- 12 — Fatima Conference guests visit the seminary
- 17 — Fall outing
- 26 — Feast of Christ the King; renewal of seminary enthronement
- 29–31 — First Quarter exams
- 31 — End of First Quarter

"Go jump in a lake!"

by Forrest Nguyen, gr. 10

Ah, beautiful Lake Coeur d'Alene. The great outdoors! Camping! Going back to nature and kicking back to great food, great scenery and great company. All that and more was at this year's kick-off seminary camping trip at a cabin right on the shores of Lake Coeur d'Alene.

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Our daily private Mass at the cabin made the trip to the lake especially worthwhile.

The lake!

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As usual, Lake Coeur d'Alene was clear and pristine, but as usual for early fall, the lake water was growing colder. And, as usual, teenage boys are the authorities on fun — especially with seven of them! So with seven times the fun, “fun” turns a little crazy. And crazy is all seven of us jumping into the 60 degree lake! At first, the instant cold froze our sense of fun, but after three or four jumps, it froze the sense in our legs — but at that point it wasn't as cold! So from there we'd just swim around and have a great time. And, luckily for us, we had the cabin to pull back to after the feeling in our limbs died, but that didn't stop us from jumping right back in again!

For five hours there was a constant flux from sanity back to insanity: from inside to back outside. Towards sunset, though, sanity overtook “fun”, and we “cooled down” to some board games. But as the full moon came into full view, the seven of us couldn't resist the once-in-a-lifetime chance of a moonlight swim. This time the lake water was even colder, but swimming in it was incredible and indescribable under the moon. We were being so noisy, Fr. Gabriel and Bosco caught the bug and jumped in, too! We were really lunatics that night!

Endless varnishing

by Marcellus Moylan, gr. 12

I really should not complain: after all I'm only doing the easier part. Nevertheless, Forrest, the new seminarian from California, and I have spent hours putting coats of urethane on fourteen pews and two front kneelers. Earlier in the summer some lucky fellows were given the fun job of sanding off the old paint. This proved to be quite difficult, and so sandblasting had to be resorted to.

It was successful in removing the paint; however, along with that it also removed the soft part in the wood's grain — it dug in quite deep. The result was bare and beautiful, but rough, wood. Mr. Strain spayed three layers on the pews; that did not seem to do much. The wood remained coarse with its gouges.

Then I came back from my summer vacation and Fr. Gabriel put Forrest and me on the job. He helped us varnish the seat and back parts of the pews — I thought that was the only thing we had to do. It took us four hours, but that was not the end of the story.

The seat and back took another two coats. It was then decided to varnish the sides. These also took two coats. While the pews are out of the chapel we want them to be done well. (The transportation ordeal would be quite undesirable to go through again). Hence, the rear-facing panel was given a coat; it may need a second one — just to ensure that my friend and I don't, by any chance, get bored.

Once these pews have satiated their thirst for varnish, we will restore them to the chapel. It will be nice in there. Mr. Vincent put a dark, bamboo wood floor in the sanctuary, ridding it of the old blue carpet, and the rich echo brings to one's mind the cloisters of a monastery.

We all await the completion of this project. We especially await the return of the Blessed Sacrament to the seminary — to once again live right alongside Our Lord. Thank you, all who contributed to the glory of God's house. May He bless you abundantly.

Happy to be back

by Alex Odom, gr. 12

Praised be Jesus and Mary! Upon reading the title of this article, some of you might think my name looks familiar. Well, your thoughts are correct. I was a seminarian three years ago during my freshman year. After that school year was over, I decided to discontinue my stay at the seminary, a decision I regret because I missed out on the great spiritual benefits of being here. The two years following that freshman year, I went to school at Mary Immaculate Queen High School, the parish school here. During the last school year I realized what a great spiritual aid it is to be in the seminary. I'm not sure about my vocation, and there is no better place to sort that out and grow spiritually than here. Now I have returned for my senior year of high school.

During the first few days, it was easy to get back into the “swing of things.” The wonderful balance of prayer, school, and recreation was like a much-needed breath of fresh air. We pray often throughout the day: morning, noon, and night prayers, prayers between classes, and of course daily Rosary. But my favorite is singing Compline on Sunday evenings and Vespers on feasts of our Blessed Mother. I really enjoy singing, and singing for God and Our Lady makes singing twice as enjoyable. Also, singing is praying twice, so that is just all the more reason to sing.

Homework is a little difficult at times, but I guess without surmounting challenges we wouldn't make much progress. Recreation gives us the chance to release all the energy we have stored up throughout the day. Plus, after sitting in a desk for five hours, your body could use a little exercise! Prayer, school, and recreation. What more could we need?

I am very glad to be back at the seminary, especially since I'm graduating. The world is filled with good and evil under the guise of good. Whatever vocation God may be calling me to, being at the seminary will give me the needed knowledge to discern between good and evil and the strength to defend good and fight against evil, so that I may save not only my soul but also help to save the souls of those around me. Please keep all the seminarians in your prayers, for you are all in ours. May God bless you and Mary watch over you!



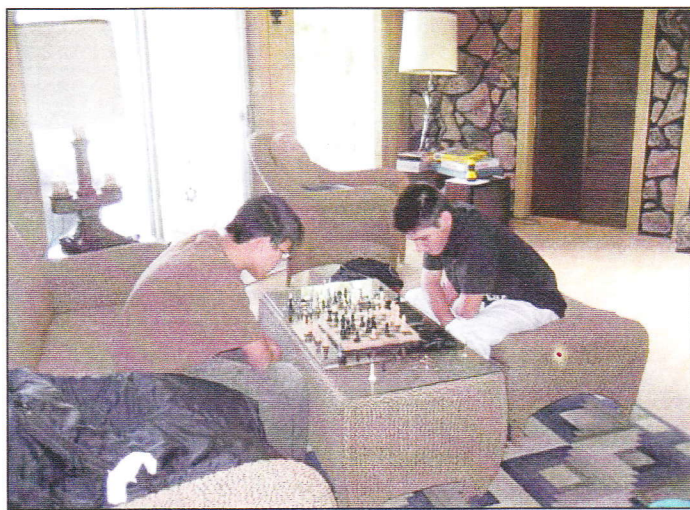
Each game starts with a rousing cheer for teamwork.



A campfire on the shore is a great way to spend an evening.



The seminarians used whatever means were necessary to reach each plum.



Our outing to the lake provided ample opportunity for some of our favorite board games.



Two students try to get their parts down in literature class.



Mr. Vincent installed a beautiful new wood floor in our chapel sanctuary.

Plums galore

by Juan F. Garcia, gr. 11

This year we had a copious harvest of plums. In our orchard we have five old trees, producing green, red, and purple plums. Some are small; others are big fat plums. We have a plum tree close to the church that produces the purple plums; those are the ones that I like the most. Each time Mass is over I pass by and pick two or three plums.

The season was passing quickly for the green plums and the larger plums. One Saturday, Fr. Benedict told us to collect as many as possible before they spoil. We gathered five boxes of the larger plums, but only one of the green plums. The red plums were eaten by the moose, and the branches they couldn't reach were wasted, because the plums were ready before we began the new school year. However, there were still a few of them at the very, very top. So we set up the ladder and I climbed up to the top branches. To my surprise I found that a woodpecker had beaten me to the prize. For our efforts we harvested a mere 14 plums from those upper branches.

The last ones we picked were the purple plums, but before that Mrs. Freddi, a member of our parish, gave us more good plums and vegetables. So, with all the plums we had, Marcellus and I made all kinds of things: plum cake, plum crisp, plum desserts, and even some plum bread. The Sisters and their home economics class also made very delicious recipes which every one enjoyed.

At almost each meal we have a bowl of plums on the table for whoever wants to eat more plums. Soon these will be gone and we will think about what we can make with all the apples and pears.

The happiest years of their lives

St. Benedict wished the word *peace* to be inscribed over the doors of monasteries, to remind those who entered what they sought. Peace of soul is a great blessing indeed, one that is worth more than all the money in the world. This beautiful peace, the sign of a good conscience, is a harbinger of everlasting peace and happiness.

Here at St. Joseph Seminary we are blessed with a beautiful life. I often reflect on its beauty and give thanks to God for this gift. Yes, there are crosses and we are all very busy. But the joy that comes from fulfilling the daily routine of studies, Mass, prayer, spiritual reading, recreation and

Seminary Support Club

If you are not yet a member of the Seminary Support Club and would like to become a member, you may write to the seminary at the address below. Members pledge to pray for the success of the seminary and, if able, to send a regular financial contribution for its support.

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.

meals can be seen on the faces of these young men. Here we are far from the noise and bustle of the world. Ours is truly a quiet and peaceful life.

Sometimes, however, we fail to fully recognize what we have, until we are removed from it. I believe that all our seminarians, whether they go on to the priesthood or not, will one day look back upon their time here and cherish it. They will be able to say that these years were among the best and happiest of their lives. May God grant that many more fine young men will come to join our ranks, will experience this peace, and will give their lives to His service.

Let us all remember during this month of October to honor Our Blessed Mother, as she requested at Fatima, with the daily recitation of the Rosary — something we should be doing every day. As usual, we will pray our daily Rosary during October before the Blessed Sacrament exposed. We will not fail to remember you, our benefactors, in these October devotions, and we ask for your continued support, so that we may continue this work of forming young men after the Heart of Christ. May God bless 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.

St. Joseph Seminary
15384 N. Church Rd.
Rathdrum, ID 83858-7650