



THE GUARDIAN

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Monthly newsletter of St. Joseph Seminary

February 2010

Quite the contrary of the past several years, our winter this year has been mild in the extreme. Whereas we were shoveling snow off the roofs of buildings, now there isn't even snow on the ground! We have had a little snow, lots of rain, and temperatures mostly above freezing. So tomorrow we head up to the mountains for a welcome ski day!

During the past month, there has been one major change here at the seminary. Fr. Gabriel has been assigned to teach at Mt. St. Michael, and we now have Fr. Bernard as his replacement. Yet despite the change in personnel, the seminary continues to function just as it always has. The two priests work together, so that there is always one here. We are still getting to know Fr. Bernard, but we like what we have learned so far.

January is also the time when the priests get together for a meeting. They travel to Mt. St. Michael from their various parishes and spend hours discussing whatever it is that priests discuss. Then, on the last day of the meeting, they all come up to the seminary for a visit. This year's visit was particularly enjoyable, as they stayed for most of the day. Not only does that mean no classes, but it means that we get to meet all these priests and learn about how they came to know their vocation. It truly is a blessing to have had this time with the priests.

Now we are heading into February and soon it will be Lent. We always have a retreat near the beginning of Lent, usually given by a priest who does not reside at the seminary. We ask your prayers that Our Lady will shower us with graces during the Lenten retreat.

We will pray for you as well, that we may all have a grace-filled Lent.

Truly an incredible day

by Robert Prado, gr. 12

Last week we had the pleasure of having over to our seminary, sixteen priests and one bishop as a part of the annual priest meeting of the CMRI.

It was an amazing sight, at least for me, because I have never seen so many priests together at one time. At first it felt like the room was going to explode with the holy and powerful aura they produced. But all our tension was broken soon enough as we found out that the priests actually were human and challenged us to game after game of ping-pong, chess, pool, and yes, even Connect Four.

Then we had lunch, a wonderful meal prepared by our cooks, and over which we were able to speak more to the priests. I had the privilege of sitting next to Frs. Gronenthal, Gerard, and Macias and their stories alone held me spellbound for the whole meal.

Oh, but this was not all. After lunch Fr. Benedict announced that we were all to go bowling, the seminarians included. That means us! We were overjoyed and couldn't wait to get down to the bowling alley. Again, here as it had been in ping-pong and pool, the priests took the crown, bowling strike after strike, and leaving us floundering in their wake. But among the din of Fr. Bernard's deafening sixty mile-an-hour heater (well, it seemed like sixty!) we got to talk more to the priests and enjoy their company which we did to the fullest.

February calendar

- 2 — Purification BVM; Candlemas ceremonies: blessing of candles and high Mass; chanted Vespers
- 3 — Annual blessing of throats
- 9 — Basketball game
- 11 — Our Lady of Lourdes; outdoor procession; chanted Vespers
- 17 — Ash Wednesday
- 20 — Zachary's 17th birthday
- 24 — Mid-quarter
- 26–28 — Annual Lenten Retreat

The day ended with a fabulous dinner, again prepared by our hardworking cooks. Stories, more stories, jokes and laughs, made for hilarious entertainment as we satisfied our post-bowling appetites. Then it was "good-bye," "thank you," and "see you again soon," as the priests left one by one until it was just the seminarians once again.

So, in this way we made the most out of the blessing that was the priest meeting, truly an incredible experience, even an unforgettable one.



Fr. Gabriel holds the ritual while Fr. Benedict blesses the Epiphany Water.

The apostle of unity

by Juan Garcia, gr. 12

The Church Unity Octave reminds us of a fascinating story of church history in America. Lewis Wattson was born in Maryland in 1863. Joseph Wattson, his father and an Episcopal minister, was saddened by the bigotry among clergy and instilled Catholic devotions in his children, including the Rosary. Lewis eventually became an Episcopalian minister and was assigned to the position of priest-rector at St. John's Church in New York. Crowds gathered because of his eloquence, scriptural knowledge and deep spirituality.

Years passed and Lewis' dream of founding a preaching order had not yet been realized. Voices seemed to reproach his hesitancy. He loved St. Francis, considering him the embodiment of the Gospel. Eventually, an Episcopalian nun who shared his vision, Sr. Lurana White, began to correspond with him. Eventually, they founded the Society of the Atonement in Graymoor, New York, in 1898.

One day, when he was away from home preaching in the city, he missed the train. As he waited several hours for the next train, he decided to pay a visit to a nearby Catholic Church. There he poured out his soul to God and prayed to see the truth and to have the courage to follow it, regardless of the consequences. He began an intense study of both Anglican and Catholic works, and his soul flooded with peace and joy. He had nothing more to fear, discovering that the claims of the Roman Catholic Church were true.

He felt his mission was to lead the Episcopal Church back to unity with the Catholic Church. As of yet, however, he did not understand that the Episcopal Church was not part of the Catholic Church. What opened his eyes was the fact that Modernism was infiltrating the Church, and even making inroads among the Protestant sects, destroying the faith of many ministers. In addition, though devoutly admitting the doctrine of Papal infallibility, Lewis was yet far from really understanding its implications; so, when the decision of Pope Leo XIII regarding the invalidity of Anglican orders was promulgated, it was some time before he had the grace to accept the fact that he was not validly ordained.

On July 27, 1900, Lewis made the three vows of poverty, chastity and obedience before the Episcopal bishop of Delaware, taking the name of Paul James Francis of the Atonement. In October of the same year, Paul officially committed the Society to its unique vocation to work for Christian Unity. He preached that the Anglican Reformation was wrong, and that Anglicans must make submission to the jurisdiction of the Holy See. Close friends now turned into enemies. Despite the lack of support, the small community published a monthly periodical, *The Lamp*.

People wanted the bishop of Delaware to institute proceedings against "Father" Paul as a heretic. He replied by a letter to the Bishop that he would be willing to stand trial for

heresy, but warned that this would be a new kind of heresy. The accused could be charged only with believing more than was strictly required by the Anglican formularies, namely, the Immaculate Conception and the Infallibility of the Pope. The force of this argument seemed to impress Bishop Coleman. The trial never took place, but the threat of deposition remained as Paul boldly continued to write on Anglican submission to the Holy See. Eventually, Paul Wattson, along with his community, entered the Catholic Church. After seminary studies, he was ordained a Catholic priest.

In 1907, he received a letter from an Anglican suggesting that one day each year be set aside to pray for Church unity. This idea appealed to Paul, but he considered one day insufficient; instead he began the eight days of prayer between January 18th and 25th. And that is why we now have the Church Unity Octave.

Time off school work

by Zachary Odom, gr. 11

What is life without the little inconvenience of work? Such a life would not be life, for God told Adam after he had sinned in the Garden of Eden: *"By the sweat of thy brow thou shalt eat bread."* Work, I admit, can be fun at times, but mostly it is a pain. The work we had to do recently at the seminary, thank goodness, was fun.

The work began one Monday when Fr. Benedict came in during our first period (Latin), and told us that we had to move everything out of the storage room. The storage was above the seminary sacristy, and the things we had to first get out of the way were books. The books were schoolbooks, the thick kind from the 50's that we had to take down in boxes to the classroom, and line up against the far wall. This was the first part, mind you.

The work continued during parts of each day of the week, with us having to move junk and antiques alike from the storage room to other locations. Once we finished moving everything from the room, Mr. Vincent began the demolition of the room, which will be incorporated into the convent. Since Mr. Vincent was busy destroying the room, we were appointed to move the debris out of the room and load it in the truck to be taken to the dump.

After we finished this task, we looked into the room and saw that it was a complete skeleton of what it had been. Thinking that our work was done we were congratulating ourselves, but it wasn't until we got outside that we noticed the drywall from the room lying on neat little pallets. Of course it had been raining last week, so we had to take them down to the carport to keep them dry.

After this, we were finally finished, and after we were done taking showers to rid ourselves of the dirt, grime, and itchy fiberglass, we were happy not only because we were finished but also because we realized that we had gotten time off schoolwork. And everyone knows that type of work really is a pain.



The seminarians join in the extensive chanting during the blessing of Epiphany Water.



We celebrated the Feast of the Epiphany with a Solemn High Mass.



Marty made a great stir-fry dinner on a recent Saturday.



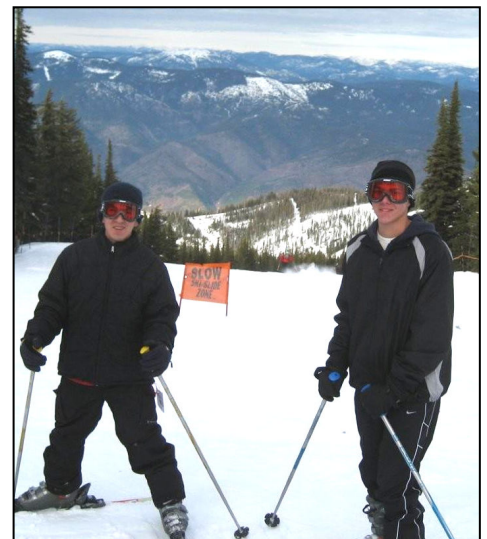
The seminarians help Mr. Vincent in the remodel of the storage room for the convent.



Zachary and Marty prepare to ride the gondola to the top of Silver Mountain.



The seminarians check their equipment before hitting the slopes.



Juan and Robert get ready for another downhill run.

Finding the truth

by Martin Concepcion, gr. 8

Throughout almost my entire life I was blind to the truth that what I believed in was absolutely wrong. But sometimes there was that moment while I knelt there in the pew thinking to myself: is this really respectful to our Savior, or is what I'm doing the exact opposite? Are these people really worthy of holding Christ our Savior and Redeemer in their hands and administering Him to the people? I am absolutely sure that I'm the last person who would be worthy of that great privilege. Why does the priest ask the people such outlandish and ridiculous questions that don't even pertain to the reason why we are there sitting in the church while the Mass is going on?

All these things struck me and I knew that this was totally wrong, so my parents told me about how the Mass wasn't always like this — a silly place where you talk about what all the celebrities have recently done to be the gossip of the world, who's performing on the Super Bowl introduction, men wearing street clothes and young women wearing things that would make them be shunned by the eyes of God, and all of that ridiculous nonsense.

My father and mother enlightened me on how the real Mass was before the Second Vatican Council came into play. They told me about how reverent it was and all the beautiful pictures in the churches of Christ and his saints with vivid colors and beautiful faces that my young mind can't manage to put into words. They also informed me about what they learned in their schools, how people dressed, how when they received Communion the priest was the one holding the Host and he was the only one who held It, how women covered their heads, and last but not least, which really saddened me, was the dramatic changes that took place.

They had to witness all the changes in their schools and what they were learning, and it happened so fast that they didn't even realize what had been happening to their religion. It was like they were being brainwashed with absolute lies. That's why I'm here, learning about the one and only true Catholic and Apostolic Church.

“Thy will be done.”

In the Gospel we read that Our Lord sent his disciples two-by-two into every city and town that He was going to visit.

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 Latin, theology, 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.

They were to travel without care and without possessions. St. Louis Marie de Montfort tells us something similar about the “apostles of the latter times.” They must be detached and be ready to go wherever they are sent. In the religious life, priests are often tested in this way.

Last month, we received word that Fr. Gabriel Lavery, CMRI, who has been with me for 4-plus years here at the seminary, was being transferred. This transfer was to take place in mid-January, and his replacement would be Fr. Bernard Welp, CMRI, a priest ordained in October 2008.

Such changes can be a source of trial for both priests and laity. We all become accustomed to the *status quo* and don't like to be shaken from our comfort zone. As religious, however, we realize that our superior makes known to us the Will of God. Thus, we obey regardless of the sacrifice involved. Laity also must be resigned to God's Will in such changes of residence of their clergy.

For the seminarians, this change has been a good lesson in what it means to be a priest, especially in these times. When Our Lord walked by the Sea of Galilee and saw Peter and Andrew, and then James and John, mending their nets, He invited them to follow Him. Immediately, they left all and followed the Master. There will always be changes in our lives. We may never be asked to adopt such an abrupt change as were the apostles; nevertheless, let us always strive for greater detachment and complete conformity to the Will of God, for He knows what is best for us.

As always, we thank you for your support and especially for your prayers for our seminary. Especially, we ask your prayers for more vocations. May God reward you abundantly.

Fr. Benedict Hughes, CMRI

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