



THE GUARDIAN

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Monthly newsletter of St. Joseph Seminary

January 2016

Finally, it has started to snow. The problem is – when will it stop! For the past two weeks we have had frequent snowfalls, which means more work to shovel the walkways. But then, the snow-covered grounds are certainly a beautiful handiwork of the Creator.

We hope you have all had a wonderful Christmas this year. The celebration of Our Lord's birth is always a topic of extensive conversation and jubilee. We now wish you a happy New Year and hope that the remainder of the Christmas Season, which lasts until February 2nd, is filled with blessings for you. With a new year also come New Year's resolutions. It is a good practice to pick a virtue or a good habit to develop this year. We all have at least some little fault that can bear a good deal of correction.

Returning to the seminary in a few days brings us from one home to another, filled with the Christmas spirit. The seminary may be a cloister for the most part, but that does not exclude all the customs and decorations which are part of the Christmas tradition. These customs include a Christmas dinner and singing around the Christmas tree with the eventual opening of gifts. Each year, we pick names out of a bowl and get a gift for the person we have chosen accordingly. This little tradition brings life to the seminary and removes any bit of contention. We also write the initials of the Magi and the year above our doors in chalk, blessed on the feast of the Epiphany, and are ready to challenge a New Year with its trials and temptations.

With the start of every New Year also come new activities. Many days bring new snowfalls to our door driving us

out of our shells to perform the much-debated snow shoveling drill. When that is all completed, we might sled on our towers of accomplishment, formed by the swish of snow being ejected from the shovel. But to top off our activities, we are brought up to the Silver Mountain Resort in Kellogg, Idaho, to take an adventure in skiing or snowboarding.

We hope you are also enjoying the snow, despite the fact that you have to move it aside to drive or walk any place. But this monthly publication of *The Guardian* also must travel through the snow to come to you. Once again we wish you a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year!

Fitting Gifts for the Christ Child

by Mark Vincent, gr. 11

The Liturgical Year began with the season of Advent, which paved the way to Christmas. But something seemed to be missing in the sequence of events. We know that on the very night when Jesus was born, shepherds tending their flocks came to adore their newborn King. We also know that a trio of Magi from the East came from afar to worship Our Lord. Their appearance in Bethlehem, however, did not occur until some time after His glorious birth. I would like to review these points with you, and to explain their significance.

The journey of the Magi, as we well know, began in the Orient, or as some would call it, the Far East. The question may arise as to how they came to acknowledge that something great had happened. They were informed by a Divine revelation that that they should

January calendar

- 5 — Classes resume; annual blessing of Epiphany water
- 6 — Feast of the Epiphany; special observances
- 14-15 — Semester Exams
- 18 — Second Semester (Third Quarter) begins
- 22 — Semester Break; ski day
- 26-28 — Priests' meeting

look for a new star that should arise and follow it to the place where a great King was born. Hard as it was, they began a great journey across the eastern plains and deserts, seeking the King of glory.

When they arrived in the province of Palestine the star disappeared, and they sought King Herod who, they expected, would know of the matter. He called together the elders, who pointed out from the Scriptures that the Messiah was to be born in Bethlehem. Herod asked that after they found the Child, they would return to tell him where He was, that he himself might go and "worship" Him.

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This group photo was taken a couple weeks ago, before all the snow arrived.

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Fitting Gifts for the Christ Child

After they left Herod's palace, the star again appeared, leading them to the exact place where Jesus lay. They discovered Him wrapped in swaddling clothes and lying in a manger; they then worshiped the Redeemer. Under these poor conditions, they found the King of Kings, the Lord of Lords, Jesus Christ, who had not a place to rest His head, even in infancy. Here, they offered their gifts of gold, incense, and myrrh. Gold signifies charity, frankincense is a symbol of prayer, and myrrh depicts penance. God revealed to them in a dream that Herod intended to kill the Christ Child and told them to go out of Bethlehem another way. They fled from Palestine and returned home, and their story has given rise to various customs down through the centuries.

Here at Mary Immaculate Queen Parish, we commemorate this feast by having three boys go up to the Nativity scene, dressed in the garb of the three kings. There they offer gifts to the Christ Child, symbolizing those the Magi presented to Our Lord. These contain a collection of various sacrifices which the school children chose throughout Advent. Hopefully, we also present a load of sacrifices to our King every year at Christmas. Let us likewise resolve to present those sacrifices which we have performed, in a manner pleasing to God, before the crib of Him who left heaven to redeem us.

Shooting for Heaven

by Joseph Vines, gr. 10

As the cold sneaks into the close of the fall season, the grass is showered with frost and the outside activities reach their nadir. The gym is now frequented and basketball is our substitute for the sports we played before the cold came in. Now we are mainly focusing on how to perfect the sport in our own way and how to improve the skills we develop in practice.

As we start to play and run around, one would notice that we are in shape. But to better improve our stamina and overcome early fatigue, we force ourselves to run. We run through the forest, we run up and down the outside stairs, we run in the gym, and we run into each other. The spirit of basketball has come over us and we can't help but tell ourselves to get better. We don't do it for ourselves though; we get better to increase the honor of God. All of our time working is folly if we don't first think of the One we're working for.

There is a hidden meaning in all the things we do. Whether it be playing basketball or chopping wood; God should be the King and center of our lives. We have to be perfect for God in all that we do. If it be praying, then we should put all our attention on God and humbly converse with Him. If we are shooting hoops, we should strive to be perfect for the love of God and for His greater glory. If we are cleaning bathrooms, we should strive to clean that sink to the best of our ability,

making it spotless; because God is watching and we would never want to offer Him an imperfect gift. We should be happy all the time, even in crosses, because we know that's just one more thing we can give to our Creator, Who is worthy of all praise and adoration.

Let us resolve this year to become saints. In everything we do, we must remember that God is watching and will see the effort we put in, so let us never stop running, running towards that final end, heaven. May God bless you, and may we never stop shooting for heaven.

Why it's Unique

by Benedict Pulliam, gr. 9

Being the only traditional Catholic minor seminary in the whole world is what makes St. Joseph's Seminary unique. Starting in the late 1990s, boys from around the world have come here to learn and to see if they had a vocation to the holy priesthood. Living here helped them to get a feel of how the religious life worked.

The seminary is a place of prayer and study. Our prayer life is a wonderful experience, and a habit we should all try to form in ourselves, especially in this age. Both the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass and the Most Holy Rosary of the Blessed Virgin Mary are offered and recited daily. We, as a group, also recite morning, noon, and night prayers.

We are all indebted to the staff and our various benefactors, for they too make the seminary unique. The teachers could be doing other things, but they chose to give up their secular jobs to teach us. The cooks are also a big part in our lives. They keep us fed with three nutritious meals a day. Each day they rise very early in the morning to start cooking our breakfast, and end up by preparing the evening meal. The benefactors are always a tremendous help to our seminary. They donate many things (for both work and play), which help to keep us occupied. For all these people I am thankful. Without them, we wouldn't even have a seminary.

Our many activities include hockey, basketball, soccer, ping-pong, piano, guitar, and other things. Occasionally we have work that keeps us busy if there is nothing else that will. Sometimes when we hear the word "work," we quickly find something else to do, but there are times when we would rather work. Board games are really fun, if you get a lot of people to play. One of our favorites is called *Aggravation*. This is a game in which you try to eliminate others while getting yourself home. Usually, some people team up on someone else, and try to get that specific person out. This game is very enjoyable to the seminarians' life. With all that goes on here, I can honestly say that we are usually kept quite busy.

Many people have devoted their lives to help out the seminary. This is a tremendous help to the priests and students of St. Joseph Minor Seminary. With all the help we get, it would be hard if they all suddenly left. Of course, I hope this

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The high school boys joined the seminarians in singing carols at our Christmas program.



The seminarians have ample opportunities to serve Mass.



Besides teaching the seminarians, Mrs. Gallagher cooks on certain days.



A friendly game of Aggravation – one of our favorite recreations.



We finally burned all the brush that had accumulated since last fall.



The seminary is not all work and no play, especially in the winter time.

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Why it's Unique

never happens, but if it did, our lives would be much harder. I hope that the spirit of charity throughout this seminary stays for all seminarians that come after us. May all those who help us by their prayers and works be truly blessed for all eternity.

Our Monthly Task

by Clayton Wright, gr. 12

Every month, following the printing of *The Guardian* at Mount St. Michael's, we fold, stuff, and seal nearly 600 newsletters to be mailed across the United States of America. Eight of us sit, stand, and run around the dining room table, just to stuff the envelopes with a newsletter and an occasional insert for novenas. We fold *The Guardian* by hand, because the folding machine jams and ruins *The Guardian*; thus valuable time is lost trying to fix the problem. Each bit of this is completed with military precision. With great effort all is done, with or without injuries, such as paper cuts or sprained digits.

It's interesting to note that our tongues are not violated by envelope glue. After stuffing, our system is as follows: Fr. Anthony has a sponge and bowl of water with which he moistens 8-10 envelopes simultaneously. Following Fr. Anthony's task, Ms. Salgado places the address labels, with alacrity, onto the envelopes, in zip code sequence (with Fr. Benedict's occasional guidance), then places them in the mailing container. The chaotic environment is usually not calm and serene, due to the good-natured teasing and telling of jokes by the seminarians. While all this is happening, the gentle sound of Gregorian chant is filling the air, in an effort to remind us that all our actions are for the love of God.

After all of the work is accomplished, *The Guardian* is mailed out so that you, dear reader, can enjoy a good read, that so much blood, sweat, tears and laughter have gone into.

The Conversion of Saint Paul

by Robert Kolinsky, gr. 10

On January 25th we celebrate the great feast of the conversion of Saint Paul. In his early days St. Paul (then called Saul) was raised a Jew. He was a very devout Jew and had a great intellect. At the age of ten he showed a lively interest in the study of Sacred Books. He completed his education in Jerusalem. During this time there was the worship of idols by the pagans. His soul was filled with hope that the coming of the Messiah would destroy the idols of the pagans.

At the age of eighteen he had not married. He was still in

Jerusalem when the Son of God concluded His public life by the crucifixion. Saul perceived Christ as a heretic and detested His followers. Saul even approved of putting to death the followers of Christ. One of those first martyrs was St. Stephen and Saul assisted at his death. He was more daring and stubborn than the all the elders and was determined to destroy Christianity.

Holy Scripture tells us he was traveling to Damascus with an armed escort to capture and imprison Christians. Suddenly, Our Lord appeared to him as a bright light which surrounded Saul and pierced his eyes. Saul then heard a voice call to him saying, "Saul, Saul, why dost thou persecute me?" Saul asked, "Who art thou, Lord?" God answered, "I am Jesus, whom thou art persecuting." Saul struggled in his self-assurance; however, the reply became a revelation to Saul which turned to an outburst of a new life for him. His love for the Most High overcame his pride and he answered, "Lord what wilt thou have me do?" Our Lord answered, "Arise and enter the city, and it will be told thee what thou must do." All the others who were with him were speechless, because they heard a voice, but saw no one.

After the vision he was blind and was led into Damascus. There he stayed and one of God's servants Ananias, sent by God, came to him and told him that God was calling Saul to bear much suffering for His name's sake. He was converted and then baptized. During his life he obtained most of his knowledge directly from the Holy Ghost and was guided by God. Thus a great persecutor of the Church turned into a great saint.

Work or Relaxation – That is the Question

By the time you read this newsletter, the seminarians will have departed for their Christmas vacation, and we priests and teachers will be enjoying the quiet atmosphere of the seminary. We all need some "down time," and it is important that we use it well – to recharge our batteries.

It seems that every time a vacation period approaches, I have a list of tasks that I intend to accomplish. Normally, very little on the list actually gets done, but that is fine, as long as the important goal of rest and relaxation take place! For soon, it will be back to the grind of daily classes and regular activities, and it is important that we teachers are able to return to the routine with renewed vigor.

Likewise, I pray that you will enjoy this time of year with your families. Be assured that I will remember you in the Masses of the Christmas season, and I pray that God will bless you abundantly in this New Year. Thank you for supporting 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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