



THE GUARDIAN

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Monthly Newsletter of St. Joseph Seminary

November 2016

The month of November, as it does every year, brings many chances to pray for the Poor Souls. It is a good idea to take advantage of these opportunities to send more souls to heaven and their reward. It is also a time in which we begin our annual basketball season. We hope to become better as the season progresses. Early in October, we attended the annual Fatima Conference where we had a chance to listen to many informative talks by the priests.

Apple-picking has been officially closed for the season. We have picked so many apples, in fact, that jars cannot contain them. We were forced to resort to making apple juice which is stored in recycled milk jugs. Of course, this is no cause to complain, because we can drink apple juice with no preservatives or artificial flavors. Once the apple juice is consumed, it does not take long until we are wishing for more. But there is always next year—and the hundreds of quarts of apple sauce in the basement.

We recently spent the night at the home of our friends, Mr. and Mrs. Slater, who provided fun of all kinds as well as their delicious food, snacks and hospitality. Along with this, we played many games and had numerous pleasant conversations with our hosts. We have also discovered that all of us have a special liking for chess. Thus it will take its place alongside the annual ping-pong and pool tournaments.

We ask for your prayers as we remember to pray for you daily. But above all, pray for the Holy Souls

who cannot help themselves, but must await the justice of God with its separation and pain, until their release.

Ecce Ancilla Domini

by Mikael Leighty, gr. 10

Ecce Ancilla Domini; fiat mihi secundum verbum tuum. (Behold the handmaid of the Lord; be it done to me according to thy word.) These words of Our Lady are the humblest in the history of man.

God not only finds Mary worthy of being His mother, but He asks her consent before becoming the Word Incarnate. What respect! With the highest honor possible, she is praised! Silence overcomes her; the humility of this sweet virgin is horrified, thinking that it shouldn't be she. Her humility crushes Satan's head. Immediately, she obliterates any hint of self-praise from her mind and responds, "Behold the handmaid of the Lord; be it done unto me according to Thy word." In essence, she says, "I am only a slave and have nothing of my own, but if it is Thy will, let it be done."

At that moment she received Christ with joy into her womb. Christ became man and the redemption was at hand. Our Lady was the first living tabernacle and the most worthy. We, as Catholics, follow Our Lady's footsteps any time we receive Communion. We too become living tabernacles for the true body, blood, soul, and divinity of Christ Himself

November Calendar

- 1 – Feast of all Saints; Holyday of Obligation; seminary outing
- 2 – All Souls' Day; special observances for the Poor Souls
- 21 – Presentation BVM; chanted Vespers
- 23 – Annual seminary talent show
- 24-27 – Thanksgiving Break; no classes
- 27 – First Sunday of Advent



During October we daily prayed the Rosary in the seminary chapel before the Blessed Sacrament exposed.

just as Our Lady did.

During Mass, we too can receive Christ in Holy Communion, but He will not force us. How many of us respond as Mary did? "Behold Thy slave, Lord! I am here not because I am worthy but because it is Thy Will that I eat the Flesh of the Son of Man and drink His Blood." Many answer

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Ecce Ancilla Domini

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the call to Communion with pride, walking up like the Pharisees, wishing only to look beatified before men, or to receive Christ simply out of routine. Our thoughts should be on God alone who, in His infinite goodness, wishes to come to us physically and share His goodness with us.

Every time we receive the Holy Eucharist it is a powerful display of humility by God. We were made from the slime of the earth—dust which shall return to dust. God in His infinite majesty does not have to associate Himself with us, let alone be present in us!

Mary has given us the most profound display of humility. Every time we go to Mass let us say our own *Fiat* when God calls us to Communion.

A Wholesome Idea

by Mark Vincent, gr. 12

All Catholics should know and understand that the Church is the Mystical Body of Christ. At the top is the Church Triumphant who are the blessed in heaven, then the Church Militant who are those on earth. The third element is the Church Suffering, referring to the suffering souls in purgatory. These are the souls who through their neglect committed sins and are being punished for their misdemeanors.

This could happen



The easiest way to harvest all the apples – one seminarian climbs up into the tree and shakes the branches!

to each and every one of us if we do not have superior diligence in our spiritual life.

It is said that both purgatory and hell are located in the center of the earth. We know this from a vision of St. Teresa when she saw a soul rise glorious to heaven from the depths of the earth. In purgatory there is an acute pain which burns every sense, but especially that which did the most harm on earth. Souls that go to purgatory may be there for quite some time, extending possibly even to the End of Time. Even one forgiven mortal sin not yet expiated could confine one to its pains for many long years. Souls who have appeared on earth from purgatory have commented that a minute seems like a hundred years in purgatory, with not even the slightest respite. To imagine

the time frame they spend in purgatory should fill us with an awful horror of ending up in its chasm.

November is the month of the Holy Souls and it is in this month that we should use the best of our ability to help the Poor Souls in their exile of torment. He who helps them will have aid on the Day of Judgment. On November First and Second, we had the opportunity to perform the *Toties Quoties* indulgence, which is a plenary indulgence for the Poor Souls gained as many times as it is performed. However, this only lasts thirty-six hours. After that is over, plenary indulgences may still be gained once a day for various other prayers or by making the Stations of the Cross. There are many ways to gain the speedy salvation of those immortal souls who cannot help themselves but rely on our prayers.

I exhort all of you to make use of these many chances to show your friendship to these poor souls who are in purgatory suffering such great torments. We should pray for the souls of all deceased persons who, even if they seemed holy upon earth, may be suffering for some malicious fault they committed unseen by men. It is therefore a wholesome idea to pray for the souls in purgatory that heaven may rejoice at the entrance of so many saints who would have been held back, were it not for our intercession.

A Shining Example

by Kevin LeStage, gr. 9

As seminarians we have certain saints that we pray to, but one in particular that pertains to us would be Saint Dominic Savio. Dominic was born on April 2, 1842, in the province of Turin, in northern Italy, to humble but devout Christian parents. While still a boy he decided to become a faithful imitator of Jesus Christ and avoid anything that would distance him from the Lord.

At age seven he made his First Holy Communion and chose his famous motto “Death rather than sin,” and at age 12 he became a spiritual son of Saint John Bosco. Under the personal direction of this great Salesian saint Dominic became a tabernacle for the Lord and a model and example of God’s love. With his lifestyle, he was an apostle and missionary of Jesus.

Those who met Dominic said he was not only small in stature but rather frail and thin. He preferred to listen rather than speak. Humble and respectful towards all, he had a natural gift for settling arguments and quarrels which, at that age, often arose among his companions. Once, when two boys’ argument escalated into a stone fight, Dominic jumped in between them with a crucifix clutched in his hand and told them if they wanted to throw stones at each other they would have to throw them at him

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Everyone got involved in the football games at the park.



Chess has lately been a popular game at the seminary.



The seminarians attended the banquet and other events at the Fatima Conference.



It is a great privilege for the seminarians to carry Our Lady's statue during our October Rosary procession.



Our friends, Mr. & Mrs. Slater, treated the seminarians to a delicious meal at their home.



The seminarians follow the bishop into the church for his Pontifical High Mass during the Conference.



Mark gave a short explanation of life in the seminary to the attendees of the Fatima Conference.



Harvesting apples can hurt as Dominic tries to protect his head.

A Shining Example

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first. The boys felt ashamed of themselves and forgave one another. His sole interest was God and how to lead others to use all their strength to serve Him. What he lacked in physical strength was compensated by his moral stature—courage and acceptance of God's will whatever it might be. Dominic died just shy of age 15 on March 9, 1857. Like Saint Dominic Savio let us be missionaries of good example and good works, so that one day we may hear those blissful words of Our Lord: "Come ye blessed and inherit the kingdom which was prepared for you from the foundation of the world."

Listen to the Voice of God

by Dominic Lehnken, gr. 10

Whenever you hear a bell, you should always think of it as the voice of God. Here at the seminary, we have five different bells. We have the one that gets us up in the morning and another for the end of class or five-minute warning for prayers or class. We also have a bell to announce the silence after night prayers till morning. Then there is the church bell and the bells for Mass.

Now what do I mean when I say think of a bell as the voice of God? What I mean is, when a bell rings we have to be ready for prayers or whatever it might be. Think of it as God commanding you to do that, or what you are supposed to do at that particular moment. During Mass, when the bells ring once before the consecration, God is saying to us that we should get ready for His coming into the host and chalice. Also during the consecration, the church bell is rung to tell the world that Our Lord has come.

Here at the Seminary we have a bell that makes me jump all the time. This bell is very loud and sort of sounds like it is angry. This bell announces the end of class and is our five-minute warning bell for prayers and class. It also helps us to get things done quickly and to keep on schedule.

My favorite bell is the bell at night prayers that announces the "Grand Silence." This bell sounds as if God is telling us in a soft manner to be silent. After the bell is rung we have to be quiet the rest of the night, only talking when it is necessary. This time is my favorite time of the day, besides Mass, because it is peaceful and you can think about God while you are getting ready for bed. After Mass the next morning, Father says *Benedicamus Domino* and we answer *Deo gratias*. This breaks the Grand Silence and now we are allowed to talk.

Another bell is the one that wakes us up in the morning. This is the most depressing bell because, of course, you have to get up. But once you are up, then you're fine. So right after that bell rings, we kneel down next to our beds and pray our morning offering. Then we get ready for school and go in for Mass.

So, whenever you hear a bell, always think of it as the voice of God. Don't act as if you have all the time in the world and walk as slow as a turtle. Hop to it right away so that you please God and obey Him at the same time.

True Charity for the Poor Souls

During November we usually have a sermon or two on charity for the Poor Souls. Often, however, we are inspired to help them from selfish motives. We think to ourselves: "If I help the Poor Souls now, then I will have intercessors in heaven to help me when I arrive in purgatory." And that is true.

But would it not be much better to alleviate their sufferings, and especially to release these souls, purely out of charity? After all, they are our brothers and sisters, fellow members of the Mystical Body of Christ. In other words, we *owe* them this charity. Further, Our Lord tells us that whatever is done to another for love of Him, is truly done to Himself.

One means of practicing this unselfish charity for the Poor Souls is by making the Heroic Act. This generous action delivers over to the suffering souls not only what we do for them during life, but even what will be done for us after our death. That truly is an act of selfless love. Think about it. If need be, ask your pastor or spiritual director for more information about this donation for the souls in purgatory. For they truly need our help, especially today, when so few souls assist them, due to the universal loss of faith.

Saint Francis de Sales avows that all the works of mercy are contained in this one work of alleviating the suffering of the Poor Souls. Let us, then, be generous and do all we can to help them—not just for what we might get in return, but solely out of true charity.

We are grateful for your support of our seminary. I pray that we will all grow in love of God and our neighbor this month, as we seek to respond to the invitation of Holy Mother Church to help her suffering children. Be assured of a remembrance in our prayers for you and your loved ones.

Fr. Benedict Hughes, CMRI

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