



THE GUARDIAN

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Monthly newsletter of St. Joseph Seminary

January 2020

By the time you read this, we will all be home, enjoying the Christmas vacation with our families. You can imagine how much we have looked forward to this vacation period, after four months of classes, homework and study.

In January there will be two events in particular here at the seminary: the visit of the bishop and priests during their meeting and our first ski trip. There hasn't been much snow yet this winter, but there should be plenty by the time we go skiing. For some of us, it will be our first time skiing, but for all, it will be lots of fun. You can be sure that we are eagerly anticipating the opportunity to visit Silver Mountain.

In mid-January we reach the end of the First Semester. We are wondering what changes there might be in the Second Semester, but we will just have to wait to find out. In the meantime, we hope you are all enjoying the Christmas season with your families. Please keep praying for us.

Home Again!

by William Riley, gr. 9

For a freshman seminarian, going home for Christmas will be a very exciting journey. For some of us this is the longest we have ever been away from home. It will be

very exciting to finally see and spend time with our family again. The last days before seeing our families again, are filled with anxiety and it feels as if they could not go faster.

As the days draw near, we begin to think of the things we will need for our trip home. We begin to fear we have not packed everything we will need, and very minutely search our bedroom for any last stragglers. Before we leave, we try to finish our homework so we might have undisrupted time to spend with our families; so we spend every minute we have wisely.

We finally are home after either a short plane trip or a long car ride. When we arrive we will probably be tired, and because we are on vacation we will enjoy sleeping in. After we have our fill of sleep, we will talk with our family concerning the good days, the bad days, and what we will look forward to when we go back to the seminary. It will be so good to see our extended family, and to hang out with our cousins and friends. For some of us, we will go snowboarding and skiing. For others it will be swimming and hunting, and for the remote few, it will be simply relaxing on the couch. Some of us will be going home to new sights and places. And we long to see the pets we have left at home.

January Calendar

- 5 – Blessing of Epiphany water; seminarians return
- 6 – Feast of the Epiphany of Our Lord; classes resume
- 17 – End of the Second Quarter
- 18 – Begin Church Unity Octave
- 20 – Third Quarter begins
- 22 – Priests' visit to the seminary
- 24 – Ski Day

When at home we must all remember to give thanks and ask Mary to thank God for us. We must never forget to keep up our prayer life. For those who have joined the sodality, we must always remember to be true to the promises we have made to Mary. We would like to wish you a Merry Christmas; we will keep you all in our prayers.



The seminarians are taking advantage of what little snow we have at the seminary.

Shadows

by Jesse Sand, gr. 11

The Guardian Angels are angels of God who have been commissioned to care for each one of us personally. These powerful spirits of God have mainly one goal, and that is to ensure our eternal salvation. To reach this goal they perform many services for us.

The first of these as listed by The Guardian Angels Our Heavenly Companions is protection from many dangers to body and soul. Most of these acts will be unknown to us until we are born into everlasting life. There have, however, been some extreme cases where divine intervention cannot be denied, but these are quite rare. As quoted from the book I have mentioned above: "It has often been said that no child would attain to maturity were it not for the protection of his Guardian Angel." Is this not true? Think how many times you may have had a close brush with danger or even death.

Another service our heavenly friend performs is that of inspiring us with heavenly thoughts and urging us to perform acts of piety and charity. They also warn us of dangers to our souls such as bad companions, books, movies, etc. Since our Guardian Angels have the beatific vision, it comes as no surprise that they will punish us by taking away their consolation when we have sinned. Like a loving parent they carefully admonish us and urge us to repentance and confession.

Probably one of the most important works of our Guardian Angels is protection from the demons at the hour of death. However, this privilege is only for those who have been faithful to their angel in life. If this requirement has been met, we can then rely on this heavenly warrior to fight off the demons, who are then in a final vicious battle for our soul. If we win this battle for our soul but still have some atonement to be made in purgatory, our lifetime companion will not abandon us. Constantly at our side, he will encourage and comfort us in our terrible pains. Then without delay, when expiation is complete, our heavenly guard will personally escort us into our true home. Let us then pray to our Guardian Angel so that we may partake of these benefits and thus save our eternal soul. Holy Guardian Angels, pray for us!

The Duty of a Sacristan

by Gabriel Riley, gr. 10

In Rathdrum, Idaho, Masses are offered daily by our priests here at the *City of Mary*. The daily weekday Mass is at 7:00 at the seminary. Father Benedict offers it on most days, but Father Philip offers this Mass on Mondays. The priest that is not offering the public Mass has a private Mass at the church, with one of the seminarians serving.

In some parishes there is a sacristan. I would like to explain the duties of a sacristan according as I have learned here at the City of Mary. Every quarter of the school year a different head sacristan is assigned, along with two assistant sacristans. For the Second Quarter Father chose me as the head sacristan, along with Joseph and my brother William as assistant sacristans.

The head sacristan has many privileges and duties that I would like to make known to you. His duties are the following: assigning servers to serve Mass, setting up vestments the night before and then putting them away after Mass, preparing and then taking down after Mass, and seeing to it that the sacristy is well cleaned. The role of an assistant sacristan is to help the head sacristan and do whatever is assigned by him. I made up a method, which is that I assign one of my assistant sacristans to set up vestments every other night with me.

Whoever sets up vestments also sets up for Mass the next morning. The two assistant sacristans usually pitch in to put away the missal, cruets and whatever is left after Mass. While they are doing that I assist the priest in the sacristy by putting away the vestments. One of the assistant sacristans is also assigned to fill the holy water fonts so that the parishioners may sign themselves in the form of the cross when entering the house of God.

A good sacristan should be known as a slave of Our Lord Jesus Christ. A sacristan has the privilege to prepare for the coming of Our Lord into our hearts at Holy Communion. I think that is one of the most awesome things a person can do. I think that there should be a sacristan in every parish ready to prepare for the Mass, the most beneficial sacrifice offered daily to Almighty God.



William helps to put up the Christmas lights at the church.



Under Father Philip's direction the seminarians and high school boys sang at the school Christmas program.



What kind of science project is Gabriel preparing this time?



All the seminarians enjoy playing board games during recreation.



Following the Christmas program the seminarians joined the students and teachers for a group photo.

Table Reading

by Joseph Strain, gr. 9

H ave you ever wanted to read a book and were unable to get the chance? You may be able to squeeze in a few minutes of reading every now and then, but then you're thinking about something that you just read about for a long time. A good time to read good books could be in the evening with a group at the dinner table. Here are some suggestions for different types of books that you could possibly read.

Spiritual Reading: you can do this at any time, but if you wanted to, you could also do it for table reading. You can read books about saints, because they set examples for young Catholics. Or you could read sections from the Bible. The stories in there can serve as history lessons for us. If we think about it, it was the prophets in the Old Testament that gave us the prophecies, which Our Lord fulfilled in a short amount of time, and there were many prophecies about His life, passion and death. One more kind of spiritual reading book that I would suggest is a



Both Fr. Benedict and Fr. Philip were able to attend the ordination ceremony in Omaha this past month.

book for meditations. They talk about a certain topic for every chapter and there are different meditation books for different topics.

Short Stories: if you have a group of maybe younger children that have a good imagination and enjoy funny stories, then why not read to the group about the life of famous people or look for small short funny books that interest both yourself and your group. When I was in seventh grade, my teacher used to read short stories at lunch during Advent and Lent. Some of these stories were

amusing and quite nice. So short stories would do very nicely on some occasions for reading at the table, especially if there are many young imaginative minds around.

To finish up this article I would like to also suggest reading a book about manners. My family did that and that was when most of us learned that we were holding the forks the wrong way! This might help improve your lives, especially if you are at restaurants.

If you want to do this sometime, go right ahead. And if you enjoy it, then keep on going.

The Value of Self-discipline

Most students probably don't think about the fact that their teachers need a vacation just as much—if not more—than they do. A good vacation refreshes mind and body and helps us to resume our duties with renewed energy once the vacation has ended. So if we don't get anything else done besides this, then we have had a good vacation.

Somehow, I never seem to learn this lesson. Every year as Christmas vacation rolls around, I have a list of things I am determined to get done before classes resume. And, of course, very little on that list gets done, but that's okay. The vacation has been well-spent.

But for the boys, what is the purpose of vacation? Besides being a necessary time for recuperation of mind and body, it allows them to test their resolve. Here at the seminary they have a daily prayer routine. Here it is easy to fulfill these daily spiritual exercises, because they are done in common. But at home, they will have to recite most of these prayers on their own. There won't be the reminder of the bell, there won't be the other seminarians heading to chapel, there won't be the superior seeing to it that they follow the schedule.

We all need self-discipline, but for a priest, that quality is indispensable. Priests are usually on their own. As such, they must have self-discipline to maintain a good prayer life and not put off their spiritual obligations. Where can that indispensable quality of self-discipline be learned if not in the seminary? So it is here that future priests lay the groundwork of their character that will help them one day to persevere as faithful priests.

Please continue to pray for these seminarians, that they will form those good habits which will last a lifetime. And pray that many more will come to join their company. Be assured that we also pray for all of you and your needs and intentions, especially that God will bless you and your loved ones in this New Year of 2020.

Fr. Benedict Hughes, CMRI