



# THE GUARDIAN

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*Monthly newsletter of St. Joseph Seminary*

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## From the Rector:

Our final day of school was June 5. That afternoon the seminarians packed the large rented van with all the luggage, and early the next morning they were off with Father Philip, who graciously offered to drive them home. Right now the seminary is quiet and peaceful.

The following week we attended the funeral of our own Brother Mary Joseph, CMRI. He was our oldest lay brother, who had been a religious for over 50 years. Brother Joseph was most devoted to Our Lady of Fatima and her Rosary. As we laid to rest a dear brother, the thought that came to my mind was the words of Our Lord: "He who perseveres to the end, shall be saved." Through all the ups and downs of life, Brother Joseph persevered to the end.

Later in June we religious (Father Philip, Brother Louis and I) spent three days in retreat—something we do every year. The annual retreat is a welcome time of prayer, reading and reflection, a time to recharge our spiritual batteries. It is truly a great grace for us. The retreat was followed by the vows ceremony on June 27<sup>th</sup>, which was held here at Mary Immaculate Queen Church this year, due to coronavirus restrictions in the state of

Washington, where Mount Saint Michael is located.

Now we set our sights on preparing for the Boys' Camp. We are expecting fewer campers this year, but regardless, we will maintain the tradition of hosting a boys' camp, as we do each summer.

In the service of Jesus, Mary and Saint Joseph

*Fr. Benedict Hughes, CMRI*

puts into a nutshell the feast of the Commemoration of all holy Popes, a feast that falls on July 3<sup>rd</sup>. Of course, there were anti-popes and bad popes, but that doesn't mean there were not many holy popes. There are, in fact, many popes who were not canonized but are saints in heaven. And that is why this feast was established: to honor all the holy popes that have lived.

The first of these saints honored is, of course, Saint Peter, the prince of the apostles and the first pope. There have been approximately 300 claimants to the papacy since then, and of these, 261 have been true popes, even if some of them were unworthy. Of the rest, 33 were anti popes, or men who falsely believed that they were the true pope, when there was in fact a true pope already on the throne. And finally there have been the modern apostate

"popes." They are false popes. But the true church certainly does not celebrate them; it celebrates the true popes who now are in heaven.

There are about 85 popes who have been proclaimed to be in heaven. Of these, more than three quarters were in the first 5 centuries of the Church's existence. Almost all of these were martyred under the Roman emperors who persecuted the Church.

*Continued on page 2*



*The seminarians had the privilege of carrying Our Lady's statue during our annual Queenship procession.*

## **Omnis Sancti Pontifici et Confessores, Orate Pro Nobis**

*by William Davis, gr. 10*

This Latin prayer, taken from the litany of the Saints, when translated comes out to "All ye holy Pontiffs and Confessors, Pray for us." Although this is one part of a much bigger prayer, I believe that it

*Continued from page 1*

## **Omnis Sancti Pontifici et Confessores, Orate Pro Nobis**

The rest were canonized due to the outstanding holiness of their lives. Since there are many other popes in heaven who have not been canonized, the Church set aside a day in which all of the holy Supreme Pontiffs are honored.

On this day, therefore, we should pray to all of the Popes in heaven so that they may intercede for us, so that God might give us a true Pope to follow in these dark and dreary days.

## **God's Beauty and Wisdom**

*by Gabriel Davis, gr. 11*

The rain continued. We had endeavored to wait out the storm which had blocked our passage across the lake, but it was decided to send Thaddeus and myself to scout out where the thoroughfare was located. (Now Upper Priest Lake and Lower Priest Lake are connected to a river that is called a thoroughfare, and our plan was to canoe up this thoroughfare and camp at the pass of Upper Priest Lake.) We lowered the canoe into the wind beaten water and everyone prayed a silent prayer that we would return. The rain still continued...

Between May 31 and June 3, to conclude this past school year, nine seminarians and two adults, Fr. Philip Marie and Brother Louis Marie, had our annual camping trip. I will try to express a picture of the experiences of that trip, but especially what happened that first stormy day.

After two hours of endeavoring to conquer our fear as we fought waves that ever threatened to capsize the canoe, Thaddeus and I safely returned to the other seminarians, having found where the thoroughfare led into Lower Priest Lake. We then proceeded to fill three of our four canoes with those things most essential, and without further delay set out with six of our most stout canoeers. Then came the real difficulty: the battle of the current. Due to the torrential rain the night before we found it impossible to continue. Fr. Phillip and I, having dropped behind, managed to catch ourselves in a tree that had fallen across the river. We eventually reached shore, our morale quite

broken. We could not reach our destined campground, the rain continued, we had yet to make another trip. We were completely drenched, and we were unable to even make a fire. The camping trip which we had been planning for months seemed a failure.

We did not, however, give up here; our story had only begun. The next day with camp pitched we offered Mass with the now lazy flowing water of the thoroughfare in the distance. Indeed the site where we were forced to make camp was perfect in every way. We were between both lakes and thus able to explore both, we had set up camp, and according to a local fisherman, we were "on the perfect fishing spot."



*Idaho's scenery is spectacular. Here is a view overlooking Lake Coeur d'Alene.*

There is still so much that I have neglected to write, such as: a hike in a silent forest, canoeing in the dark, bullet shells and a bloody pillow, a meeting with an old fisherman, and numerous other experiences. Having conquered overwhelming circumstances in the wilderness to find ourselves in an almost celestial camping spot, it became easy to see a connection between this world and our heavenly reward.

Indeed, this whole experience could be seen as a life lesson, showing that no matter how bad things may be for us here on earth, if we persevere in loving and trusting God, the clouds of life will pass away and the Sun of heaven will shine so brightly that we will know nothing but eternal happiness and the glories of God's beauty and wisdom.



*Our campsite at Priest Lake was in a wilderness area.*



*The procession departs from the outdoor shrine of Our Lady.*



*During the procession the parishioners carry bouquets of flowers to present to Our Lady at her shrine.*



*Two seminarians head off into Priest Lake during the camping trip.*



*A fearless seminarian explores some rapids during the camping trip.*



*The best part of the camping trip was daily Mass each morning.*

## Here I am, O Lord

by Thiet Vincent Nguyen, gr. 11

Finally, it's the end of the year! I've officially finished my third year in the minor seminary as a sophomore.

It's definitely a long journey, but time here actually flies very quickly with our daily occupations of laboring, learning, and growing spiritually. After all, during the lengthy course of these three years, I often asked myself: "Why am I here? What is my vocation? What has God called me to become?" In this *Guardian* I will express some of my thoughts on vocation, my experience with vocation and the necessity of vocations in our modern time.

First of all, what is a vocation? Vocation is often vaguely used as a term for "the calling from God to religion or the holy priesthood." Many would think today that having a vocation is having a calling from God to the religious life. When a young man thinks about vocation, he should think that a vocation is a calling to a state of life here on earth. One could serve God in many ways, either as a religious or a lay person, whether to the religious or secular life, or what his career will be, though entering religion is definitely a better calling in life. I have heard people who entered the marriage life say: "If only I had a chance, I would have chosen the life of religion or the holy priesthood." I never heard, however, a religious express his desire to go back to the secular life and get married.

A vocation to the religious life is not a thing that every human being possesses. A true vocation to religion comes from the motive and desire to serve God out of your love for Him and should not be enforced by parents or acquaintances. Think of how much merit one will gain sacrificing earthly pleasures to be closer to God and to serve Him more perfectly. Many people would think that the life of religion is a big cross because of the earthly delights one must offer up when entering. This however is not true. A religious may not have all the earthly enjoyments here on earth in this life, but he inherits something that is greater to obtain happiness in the next life. Imagine how joyful a man must be when he knows that his salvation is secured in a place where the world, the flesh and the devil are kept out of his surroundings. Furthermore, he also will be able to secure the salvation of others through the prayer and penance he offers to Almighty God every day.

This thought has led to my decision when I applied to the minor seminary. I have had for a long time the desire to find out my vocation. I thought to myself: "Why don't you give it a try?" – a trial to see if God is truly calling me to the religious life or the priesthood. Though I did have some struggle of being away from home at the beginning of my first year, later it just faded away. I know I am in an environment where I am supposed to be. This is where I am kept busy all the time with a lot of work, from academics to daily chores. This is where the spirit of the world is hidden from my sight. It is the perfect place to grow spiritually through God's grace.

Overall, as time passes away speedily in our age, many young vocations are disappearing. This is the age when priests and religious are needed to guide faithful souls and bring back the souls of sinners. Over the last few decades, many sad things have happened to our world and to the Catholic Church, from the rise of secularism and modernism, the apostasy of the Conciliar Church after Vatican II and the effort to enforce a New World Order by many wicked people.

This is the time that young Catholics who love their faith should consider the importance of their vocation, especially those discerning the religious or priestly vocation. By doing this, they are contributing their efforts to restore the Catholic Church to Christ. They are also performing a great act of charity – to lead souls to the true religion, for St. Thomas Aquinas said: "The greatest kindness a person could render to a soul is to lead him out of errors." I would like to ask you readers to keep us in your prayers that we may be able to find out our vocation and to persevere in it; that we may be able to find God's holy will and say to Him: "Here I am, O Lord for thou didst call me. Speak Lord, for thy servant heareth" (I Kings, 3:9-10).