



# THE GUARDIAN

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Monthly newsletter of Saint Joseph Seminary

May, 2025

**W**hat a month we have had! April began with our annual Forty Hours adoration. On Friday night we took turns keeping Our Lord company throughout the night and spent additional time in adoration during the weekend. The opening and closing ceremonies of this devotion are truly beautiful beyond words.

Our Holy Week ceremonies came off without a hitch. (Father Benedict even said they were among the smoothest we have ever had here.) After a relaxing Easter week, we left for Omaha (from which we have not yet returned!), to witness the ordination of Father Martin Marie Sentman (one of our teachers), along with three other deacons to the priesthood.

We have truly been blessed with all the activities and special events of this school year. Now it is May, the final full month of school, and we have a lot to do. There will be the senior projects (due in the third week of the month). There will also be processions—the Rogation processions and two Rosary processions in honor of Our Lady. Then, at the end of the month, the bishop will come for confirmation and our senior graduation.

Before we know it, the conclusion of the school year will be upon us. Until then, we will do our best to have a successful conclusion to this school year. We are grateful for your interest and support of our seminary. May God bless you.

## The House of Benedict of Nursia

by Anthony Strain, gr. 12

**O**n our senior class trip at the end of March we visited two venerated places of the Benedictine order. The first one was Subiaco, and the second was Monte Cassino. In Subiaco we went to the cave where Saint Benedict lived after he fled from Rome. He was originally sent to Rome by his parents for his education; but when St. Benedict was in Rome his classmates were so scan-



*The blessing of the new fire and Paschal candle begin the Easter Vigil ceremonies.*

dalous that he fled and went to the cave at Subiaco, which is called *Sacro Speco*, meaning Holy Cave. This cave is 50 miles east of Rome, and it took us about one and a half hours to get from Rome to Subiaco by car.

St. Benedict spent 3 years in the cave at Subiaco, which at that time was practically inaccessible. He would get food every day from a hermit, who would lower it in a basket

## May Calendar

- 2 – Mid-quarter
- 13 – Diego's 14th Birthday
- 15 – Alexei's 16th Birthday
- 26-28 – Rogation processions
- 29 – Ascension Thursday; Holyday of Obligation (no classes)
- 31 – Feast of the Queenship BVM; Senior graduation; renewal of Holy Slavery

by rope from the top of the mountain. After he had spent three years there, he began the Benedictine order, and eventually a monastery was built over *Sacro Speco* at Subiaco.

Today the chapel that houses the cave is covered in murals that tell much about the life of St. Benedict and his followers. One in particular was the mural that illustrated the story of St. Placidus as he was drowning. This mural showed St. Benedict ordering St. Maurus to save St. Placidus from drowning. It then depicted St. Maurus walking on the water to save St. Placidus. The walls and ceiling were covered with such murals. The cave itself had a statue of St. Benedict, depicting him in his youth, along with a cross. In the cave we sang a beautiful Ave Maria, along with our prayers.

From the cave of St. Benedict at Subiaco we drove to Monte Cassino, where St. Benedict died. Unfortunately, *Continued on Page 2*

***Continued from Page 1***

this monastery was bombed during World War II by the Allies; but it was rebuilt in the early 1950's. Inside the basilica were many beautiful paintings, altars, a large pipe organ, and the relics of some saints, including the bodies of St. Benedict and St. Scholastica. The crypt below the



*A recent project was the construction of a new patio at the seminary*

main altar, like Subiaco, had many murals on the walls and the ceiling. As at Subiaco, we sang in the crypt, and we made sure to remember Sr. Veronica O.S.B.

We are all thankful to be home after this long trip. For two of us, this was our first trip on a plane, and for four out of the six of us, it was the first time leaving the USA. This trip would not have been possible if it weren't for those who donated and supported us. Thank you, and God bless you!

## **Cheerfulness, the Best Medicine**

by *Diego Diaz, gr. 8*

**“A** joyful heart is more easily made perfect than a downcast one.” These wise words were spoken by one of the greatest saints of God, St Philip Neri, the cheerful saint. St. Philip Neri was a sanguine by nature, cheerful always. He had his sad moments, but he was never depressed, and look at how much he did for the Church. St. Philip Neri loved God with an extreme love, above many other saints. One time, when he was in

an ecstasy, he broke two of his ribs because his heart was so inflamed with the love of God. He even wore his cassock with two unbuttoned buttons because his heart was too big with the love of God! How much he loved God!

Now, the question is, how can you love God if you have no joy in your life? Well, you can't! How are you supposed to! St. Philip Neri knew this and was always happy, cheerful, and that is why his love for God was so intense and so perfect. St Philip Neri also said that cheerfulness is the devil's worst nightmare.

Wait, but what if I am a melancholic? How am I supposed to love God if I'm sad all the time? Well, maybe you should pray to St. Philip Neri for help. He is the best example for us to follow if we truly want to love God—we might not want to break a rib though. We should always strive to be cheerful like St. Philip Neri, not just because we want to love God, although that should be our main goal, but also because you can do so much!

Which person would you much rather have as your friend, somebody who smiles all the time, which is contagious, or somebody who is sad all the time (which is also



*A scene from the opening Mass of the Forty Hours.*

contagious) and never talks? Another question: which one of these would you trust with your spiritual life? This is why St. Philip Neri won so many souls to God—because he was so cheerful.

If any melancholic gets offended after reading this, I am deeply sorry; I did not mean to offend you. In conclusion, if you are happy, you can love God and save souls at the same time. I hope reading this has brought a smile to your face. St. Philip Neri, pray for us!

## **Why Do We Keep Sending You Return Envelopes?**

Over the years people have asked why they receive a return envelope in each mailing. Some members of the Seminary Support Club give a donation once a year or only from time to time, so it seems to them a waste. The reason is that we must have the same enclosures in each envelope to get Standard Rates for a non-profit mailing. That allows us to send out a mailing for about 25 cents postage per envelope. Compare that with 73 cents for First Class postage, and you can see it is quite a savings when you send out several hundred envelopes.

What should you do with unused return envelopes? Some people on our mailing list collect them and return them after a year or so. That is fine, but don't do that if it costs you a lot to mail them back! It is actually fine if you just discard unused return envelopes or use them for some other purpose. It is even more economical to discard them rather than to mail them back. Again, we are obligated by the U.S. Postal Service to send them out in each envelope that we mail, so that is why you continue to receive them. Thanks for your support!

*- The Staff of Saint Joseph Minor Seminary*



*The blessing of the Easter Water*



*A view of the choir during one of our many High Masses last month.*



*A view of the sanctuary during the Easter Vigil Mass.*

## All for Our Heavenly Queen

Good Catholics look forward to the month of May each year. We go “all out” in honoring our heavenly Mother and Queen. No doubt, you can recall the May shrines you decorated in your homes, churches and classrooms. I recall how, in Catholic grade school, we were so proud of our own May altar, thinking that our classroom had the best one. We would consider it a privilege to bring a bouquet of flowers with which to adorn our May shrine.

All this is good and important, but let us never forget that what really matters is our interior devotion. St. Louis Marie de Montfort tells us that there are five qualities or characteristics of true devotion to Mary. The first of these is *interior*. One whose exterior practices of devotion are not inspired by an interior love is just going through the motions and will obtain little grace from his practices.

Let us, then, resolve to honor Our Lady, during this month in particular, with many devotional practices, inspired by our tender love for our heavenly Queen. There is no such thing as too much devotion to Mary, as long as it is true devotion. Remember, we will never honor Our Lady as much as she deserves!

May Our Blessed Mother reign in your hearts and in your homes. May she intercede for each of us, that we may be more pleasing to God. Be assured of our gratitude and prayers for you, our benefactors. May you experience the wonderful joy of the Easter Season.

- Father Benedict Hughes, CMRI



*The weather cooperated for our Palm Sunday Procession.*



*O Salutaris Hostia! Closing procession of Forty Hours.*



*Seminarians lent a hand in cleaning during construction of the new convent.*

*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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