



THE GUARDIAN

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Monthly newsletter of Saint Joseph Seminary

August, 2025

The summer is quickly winding down, and we find ourselves only a few short weeks away from another school year. Our annual Camp Saint Joseph was held last week, bringing together 80 boys, 5 priests, and 10 additional counselors (mainly religious brothers and seminarians.) As usual, there were numerous events and competitions to engage the campers throughout the week.

As we look forward to the beginning of another school year, we will be busy over the next few weeks with cleaning, organizing, and preparing the seminary building. Our staff will again include three priests, four religious brothers, and several dedicated lay teachers. The number of seminarians will be slightly down from last year, yet we continue to provide a quality formation for teenage boys of high-school age who are considering a vocation to the priesthood. Early training is essential to a future priest. Our awareness of its importance makes all the sacrifices and labors here worthwhile, as we continue the daily task of teaching and molding these young souls who have come to our seminary.

You also have an important role in this work. Your prayers and support of our seminary are most beneficial, and we appreciate your cooperation in our efforts. May God deign to bless our seminary and lead many fine young men to join our ranks! And may He bless you and your families.

*In the service of Jesus,
Mary and Saint Joseph,*

Fr. Benedict Hughes, CMRI

The Patron of Priests

The month of August brings us the feastdays of many wonderful saints, but for those of us who are involved in preparing young men for the ranks of the priesthood, the most significant is that of Saint John Marie Vianney on August 9. In 1929 this great saint was proclaimed by Pope Pius XI as the patron saint of all parish priests.

Baptized as Jean-Baptiste-Marie, after Saint John the Baptist, young Jean-Marie was born just three years before the infamous French Revolution broke out. As a result, churches

August Calendar

- 9 – Feast of Saint John Vianney, patron of priests
- 13 – Fatima Rosary Procession
- 15 – Holyday of Obligation
- 23-24 – Seminarians arrive; orientation
- 25 – First day of classes for the new school year
- 28-30 – Annual outing to Lake Coeur d'Alene



This year's boys' camp was a great success.

were closed but he eventually was able to make his First Holy Communion at a Mass offered in a barn. The ancient faith lived on in France, however, despite the difficult years following the revolution.

As a young man Jean-Marie was conscripted into the army. Under unique circumstances he deserted the

army and went into hiding. Later, he was able to pursue his studies for the priesthood. The academic struggles of the young Vianney are well-known, but the fact is that after a pilgrimage to the shrine of Saint John Francis Regis, he was able to acquire all the necessary learning to become a priest.

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The Brothers built a new chicken coop to provide for the needs of our seminary.



As usual, we had a Rosary procession on the 13th of July, reciting the 15 decades of the Rosary.



Fr. Philip conducts regular counselors' meetings during the Camp.



Brother Anthony enjoyed a fishing trip with one of our parishioners.



Our dog Felix wanted to be wherever the boys were during the Camp.



A young server assists Father at Mass in the seminary chapel.



During the summer the Brothers had more opportunities to serve, with all the minor seminarians being home with their families.



Mr. Jackson gives the boys some instruction in martial arts and self-defense .



The first item on the agenda, after erecting the cross, was setting up the tents.



Boys line up to use the swing.



Carrying the cross from the church up to the camp site.



The boys take most of their meals during the Camp in our spacious parish hall.

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His bishop ordained him, despite the objections of some, after observing: "He prays well." The subsequent life of the saint fully justified the bishop's decision. If anything, his words were a great understatement.

The first assignment of the 29-year old Father Vianney was as assistant to the holy Fr. Balley, pastor of the small town of Ecully. Each vied with the other in practicing works of austerity. After a short stint of two years under the tutelage of this holy pastor, Father Jean Marie Vianney received the assignment of pastor at Ars, a village where the inhabitants were largely remiss in the practice of their faith. The young priest quietly entered the village which would be his home for the next 42 years.

The success of the new pastor in this forlorn village in southern France was phenomenal, although the resuscitation of Catholic faith and practice occurred only gradually. The conversion of his parish was earned more by the prayers and penances of the saint, than by his fiery sermons. He waged a relentless battle against dancing and drunkenness, eventually achieving a complete reform of his parish. Soon crowds came from near and far to confess to the holy priest, a work that kept him occupied for as many as 16 hours a day in the confessional.

Saint John Marie Vianney is an extraordinary saint. His piety and devotion, especially to Our Lady and Saint Philomena, were exceptional. But above all, his persistence in teaching and admonishing his flock eventually brought about a complete reform, to the point that visitors marveled at the fidelity and piety of the simple country folk at Ars. Saint John Marie Vianney, whose mortal remains now lie incorrupt in his parish church, will always remain an inspiration and model for all Catholic priests. May God grant that our priests become like this holy pastor!

The Purpose of a Minor Seminary

All traditional Catholics will agree that the need for well-trained and dedicated priests is urgent. The harvest is certainly great, but the laborers are very few indeed. How can we best remedy this situation? This is a question that greatly concerns all faithful Catholics.

Many boys show promising signs of a priestly vocation during their early teenage years, only to lose interest as they approach the final 2 or 3 years of high school. Why is that? Because even the best-trained boys are strongly influenced by our three-fold enemy: the world, the flesh and the devil.

This problem is not peculiar to our age. In Session XXIII, the Council of Trent declared that young aspirants to the priesthood should be formed in habits of piety and

discipline from their earliest years. Consequently, in our country prior to Vatican II, as elsewhere in the Catholic world, preparatory seminaries were common. The Church understands that boys who are called by God need an environment in which they can preserve their vocation during the turbulent years of adolescence.

A vocation to the priesthood is often compared to a seed. When a seed germinates the small plant needs to be watered, sheltered and nourished during the early stages of growth. So too, a vocation is a delicate seed that must be nourished and protected. Not only must a vocation be protected from the foul breath of the world, but good habits must be formed in the young men who will become other-Christians. During adolescence – that crucial period of physical, mental and moral development – lasting habits, either good or bad, are generally formed. In a preparatory seminary, perhaps even more than in the major seminary, a boy's mind and character are shaped, and his life receives a direction which often proves decisive.

It is for these reasons that the religious congregation of Mary Immaculate Queen operates Saint Joseph Seminary. The minor seminary is open to boys of high school age who have completed their grade school education and believe they may be called by God to the priesthood. Of course, only time will tell whether they in fact truly have a vocation from God. But even for a boy who does not have a call to the priesthood, the habits formed during his time in the minor seminary will be of great benefit in his future life in the world.

What is life in a minor seminary like? The minor seminary is similar to other Catholic boarding schools for boys. Students have a regimented life, which includes daily Mass and prayer, academics and recreation. The studies encompass the regular high school courses in Theology, English, math, science, history, computer skills and physical education, with a special emphasis on Latin and choir. Physical activity is also important, for sports offer an excellent means of character formation by its requirements for teamwork, responsibility and healthful competition.

Needless to say, regular confession, spiritual direction and spiritual conferences hold a prominent position in the routine of the seminary. Personal responsibility, cleanliness, order, self-discipline and striving for excellence provide the hallmark of the seminary formation. In short, the entire program of a minor seminary has for its goal the preparation of young men for the major seminary, while it safeguards their vocations.

Our minor seminary is named for Saint Joseph, who played such a prominent though hidden role in the early life of the great High Priest Jesus Christ. May Saint Joseph bless our endeavor and send us many worthy boys to become future priests!

A Prayer for Priests (Raccolta #660)

O God, who hast appointed Thine only-begotten Son to be the eternal High Priest for the glory of Thy Majesty and the salvation of mankind; grant that they whom He hath chosen to be His ministers and the stewards of His mysteries, may be found faithful in the fulfilment of the ministry which they have received. Through the same Christ our Lord. Amen.

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