



# THE GUARDIAN

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Monthly newsletter of Saint Joseph Seminary

December, 2025

**H**ow quickly the time has passed! During November we have celebrated wonderful feasts beginning with All Saints Day. We have also helped to free souls from purgatory by our efforts to gain indulgences, especially on All Souls Day.

Now, as we approach Thanksgiving, we are looking forward to the first major snowfall. We have a contest here at the seminary, trying to guess when the first snowfall will come. Although the snow reminds us of the work that has to be done with shoveling or de-icing the roads, we seminarians look forward to the joys of sledding, skiing and, of course, snowball battles!

Let us not forget, however, the meaning of this Advent season. While the secular world is absorbed in the festivities and decorating of their homes, we Catholics must be preparing spiritually by doing penance and extra prayer.

It is hard to believe that we will be going home in only three weeks for our Christmas vacation. Until then, however, we are resolved to prepare well during this Advent and strive to keep our attention on the Infant Jesus, who was born in a stable for us. We must especially remember never to complain of our crosses, knowing that what we suffer is little in comparison to what Jesus suffered for us. May we all grow in love for Him during this wonderful season!

## A Daily Task

by Leo Mansfield, gr. 10

**T**oday is Friday, the day I must get up early in the morning to put on my heavy -duty jacket, gloves and muck boots. If you're wondering why I do this, it is because I have to milk the cow. Every day a minor seminarian must milk the cow. On Tuesday and Friday, with a fellow companion, I must milk the cow. We must wake up to milk the cow at 5:30 in the morning, and again after supper at night, which is usu-

## December Calendar

- 1 – Classes resume at normal time
- 5 – Mid-quarter
- 8 – Immaculate Conception BVM; no classes
- 13 – Fundraising Dinner by the Senior Class
- 14 – Annual Christmas program
- 19 – Christmas Vacation begins after classes
- 31 – Louis' 17<sup>th</sup> birthday



*The seminarians sang several Requiem High Masses during November.*

ally at 6:00 p.m. Each milking usually takes about 30 minutes.

To milk the cow, you must first get her into her stall and feed her grain. Next, you clean the cow and

get the milking machine ready. Then you hook on the milking machine, which uses suction to stay on the cow without us having to

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hold it up. Then you wait and let it do its job. While you do that, the other person with you does the chores. He cleans the stalls, refills the hay, and fills up the water supply. After all this is done, you filter the milk, clean the machine, give the cow some more grain, and bring up the milk from the previous milking. We get about two gallons twice a day.



*The ATV is a big help for milking and many other necessary tasks.*

Let's be honest; nobody likes to milk the cow. It's mainly because you have to wake up early in the morning, and in the process of doing chores you get all muddy. You also have to milk in the snowy cold of winter, and it takes up a lot of your homework time in the evenings. But there are a lot of pros when it comes to having cows, like getting the milk itself and making cheese, yogurt, butter, whipping cream, and even ice cream out of it. The milk is a lot fresher, and it tastes better than store-bought milk.

We made a good amount of money for the seminary by selling our calf. We also got a lot of beef when we butchered the other cows. Finally, it is a good responsibility and experience for us, and it saves a lot of money, especially due to inflation.

Overall, it is very important to have cows. It does a lot of good for the seminary, and it teaches us responsibility. I'm still not looking forward to the next milking though.

## **Where Will You Put Our Lord?**

*by Louis Albin, gr. 11*

**T**he year is 1099, and the knights of Christendom have just completed their journey to the Holy City. Having fought their way through numerous foes, these men now number less than a

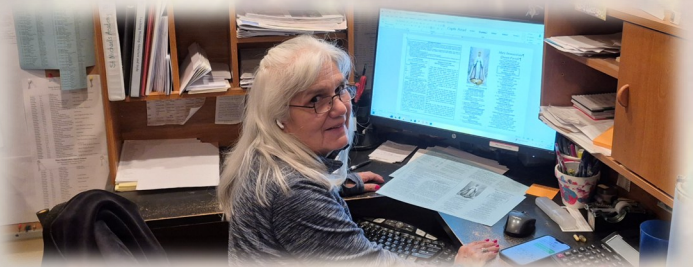
tenth of those who set out from Europe three years ago. Yet they lay siege to the City, reclaiming from the infidel the land where Our Lord lived and making it safe once more for Christian pilgrims.

Nearly five hundred years later, the same threat has risen again, and a fleet of nearly 40,000 Turks sails the Mediterranean, threatening to lay siege to Rome itself. The only thing standing in the way is the island of Malta, which contains only 2500 knights. Yet these brave defenders make their stand for Christendom and hold out against the besieging force for nearly four months until relief arrives. Besides these, there are numerous examples of those who have stood bravely for the Faith.

With that said, I would like to present you with a spiritual challenge. This battle will not force you to travel great distances as did the brave warriors on the Crusades, or to overcome while being outnumbered, with no hope of aid, as was the case with the knights of Malta. In fact, the only foe you will have to fight in this case is yourself. This challenge was given by Our Lord, in His words: "Be you therefore perfect, as also your heavenly Father is perfect." This may seem impossible, but if we truly prayed for God's grace as well as we ought, each of us would already be perfect.

In this battle for perfection, let us start by building up the virtue of humility, since we are told that pride is the source of all evil. Pride was the sin that caused countless angels to be plunged into the depths of hell forever. Pride also caused Original Sin, which has brought innumerable evils upon the human race. At His birth, Our Lord had nowhere to lay His head but a humble manger in a poor stable filled with animals. Why was this? Everywhere that the Holy Family went, they were rejected due to pride. Although the inns were filled with people, not one of these had the humility to sacrifice his place there for Our Lord.

Let us learn, then, from this lesson and make sure to keep our hearts open to holy things – namely, the grace that God offers us each day on our quest for perfection. As a wise man once said to me: "We should put ourselves in the stable to make room for Our Lord in the inn."



*Our secretary, Mrs. Salgado, types the bulletin and fulfills many other important tasks each week.*





*It looks like recreation on a typical Friday night at the seminary.*



*The seminarians put on a fund-raising breakfast in mid-November for the parish.*



*After Mass on All Souls Day we processed to the cemetery, reciting the Rosary.*



*We made around 70 pies for our fund-raiser, under Brother Simon's direction.*



*When the weather is too cold or rainy outside, we play soccer and other games in the gym.*



*A recent fall cleanup day was a good opportunity to be excused from afternoon classes.*

**Divine Infant Jesus, come down into our hearts.**



## The Seminary Life

by Liam Isakson, gr. 8

**H**i! This is my first *Guardian* article, and I'd like to talk about my first quarter. I have been here for three months, even though it feels like I've only been here a week, and I think that these may be some of the best months of my life. When I first got here, we went to a lake house, and I got to meet new people.

The best parts of life here for me are "no homework" days. We get those on holidays and special feast days. Another fun thing we enjoy is group activities, like cooking breakfast with everyone on Sundays, or playing a game outside like Hide and Seek or Cops vs. Robbers. We also have a dog, Felix, who is fun to play with, or just to go on walks with (although he can be annoying sometimes).

Another thing we do is to make seminary movies. This year we are making two of them, one a western and the other religious themed. Another great thing we have at the seminary is sleep-in days. We get to have those on Thursdays (for a half hour), Sundays and holidays. That is just the pros, but the cons are not that bad, like milking the cow, especially at nighttime when everyone else is hanging out together playing a board game or just talking.

It's also hard to take care of Felix, who is always making a mess of things. Another con is dishes. I don't hate doing dishes, but they just take up a bunch of time, when I could be doing homework or other things instead. And that's about it. Even with the cons it is really fun here, and I think all newcomers would like it here as well.

## Catholic Customs

**A**s we look back on our childhood, each of us reflects fondly on the customs observed in our home, which gladdened our hearts and made us eagerly look forward to the major feasts. Of

course, Christmas is especially a time for these family customs, although it is certainly not the only occasion for brightening the home with wholesome practices. Ideally, these family customs are based on the liturgical year. Advent, Christmas, Epiphany, Lent, Easter, Pentecost, etc.—each feast or season presents its own theme and spirit. By observing the season in the home, instead of merely in the church when you attend Mass, children (and adults), learn to love and practice the Faith better.

We are now entering the first season of the Church year—that of Advent. This is a time of joyful, yet

penitential, preparation for the celebration of the birth of Christ. Here at the seminary we keep Advent with our own customs. Of course there is the Advent wreath, hymns and prayers. We also have each seminarian make out a program of

extra penances to be observed during Advent.

The "Sacrifice Bowl" provides additional penitential practices. These have been suggested by seminarians over the years and include such simple things as keeping one's feet flat on the floor while sitting up straight in the desk during class. It is truly amazing how many simple sacrifices we can come up with if we put our mind to it. Remember, by practicing mortification during Advent, we prepare a place in our hearts for the Christ child to be born on Christmas morning.

Let us all make a good Advent, that we might enjoy a truly blessed, spiritual Christmas. Let us especially avoid the spirit of the world, which cannot satisfy the heart with all its ephemeral pleasures. Instead, let us cultivate truly Catholic customs, making our Faith the center of our lives—not just in church, but also in our homes. And may God bless you and your families, especially at this holy season.

—Fr. Benedict Hughes, CMRI



*Liam celebrated his 14<sup>th</sup> birthday this month.*