

THE GUARDIAN

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Monthly newsletter of St. Joseph Seminary

January 2007

You can imagine how excited we are to be going to visit our families for the Christmas vacation. Four of the seminarians will be going home (José and Giovanni will go to Mexico for the first time since they came here!) and the other two will stay at the seminary.

We have told you in past issues about the work in our chapel. Well, at last it is complete, and we once again have Masses in the chapel. We enjoyed helping Mr. Mark Vincent work on the chapel. Everyone helped out in different ways.

December has been a good month. We have made a good Advent and have enjoyed the snow. But there has been one big problem — our dog got into a fight with the neighbor dogs and is still healing. Hopefully, Bosco has learned his lesson and will mind his own business in the future.

We wish you all a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year.

The Immaculate Conception

by Juan Fernando Garcia, gr. 9

On December 8 we celebrated the feast of The Immaculate Conception. All people should have a great devotion to this good Mother, the most loving creature of God. Before the creation of the world she was in the thoughts of God; she was conceived without original sin, and she is always attentive to our supplications.

If we want things to go well we need to have a great love for and confidence in the Virgin Mary. She has a great interest in helping us. Because she knows our needs, she penetrates our

thoughts and seeks all the necessary ways to guide us on our heavenly journey. What she wants is the salvation of souls.

Wondrous fluff

by Caleb Short, gr. 11

Generally speaking the snow is a good thing. We enjoy sledding, skiing and snowball fights. On the other hand, every rose has its thorn. I might as well just get the bad news over first.

The number one bad thing about snow is shoveling. When a seminarian is sentenced (or volunteers) to do this job, it doesn't look so bad at first. But then he soon finds that underneath that hard packed snow — that happens when we don't shovel as soon as it falls — is one to two inches of solid ice. Forget the plastic snow shovels! Usually we have to use dirt shovels and tons of that ice-melting salt stuff if we want to get anywhere. Yes, it can take awhile to finish a shoveling job.

Another interesting "bad thing" is the snow on the roof. If it is above freezing outside, watch out. Every ten minutes we hear a thunderous crash until there is no more snow on the roof. It's even scarier when there are big two-foot long icicles dangling from the gutters. Every day we have to go underneath all this, but thank goodness, none of us has been hit or injured yet.

Then there are the good things: skiing and sledding being the best. Sledding is even more fun when we race. Sometimes we play "no rules" where you can

January calendar

- 3 — Seminarians return
- 4 — Classes resume
- 6 — Feast of the Epiphany
- 11 — Annual exchanging of gifts
- 17-19 — Semester exams
- 19 — End of Second Quarter
- 26 — Ski day

push other people off their sleds or do plenty of other mean things. We are anxiously waiting to go skiing also. We always have a great time. But this year half of the seminarians have never skied before, which means I will probably have to teach them. (It can take a lot of patience to teach someone to ski.)

Besides all the sledding, there's one other thing that I like about the snow — the fact that it is so beautiful. What a wonderful gift from God. But if these earthly things are so nice, how about the spiritual gifts that He gives to us every day, especially the Mass? We can't even comprehend their worth. "Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard the wonderful things that God hath prepared for those who love Him."



José and Matthew chose this year's Christmas tree from among the firs on our property.

The Nativity

by Angel Bryan Gamboa, gr. 9

December is my favorite month of the year because of two very significant feasts — December 12, the feast of Our Lady of Guadalupe, and December 25, Christmas Day. In Mexico it is customary to serenade the Virgin of Guadalupe on her feast and to offer flowers in her honor. Christmas Day is one of the most important spiritual events because it is the day in which we remember the birth of the Infant Jesus.

During Advent the seminarians prepare for the coming of Jesus into our hearts with some small, simple penances. Every day we pick a paper which has different penances. I am personally preparing by praying every day to the Child Jesus.

Close to the Nativity we have “Posadas,” a Christmas festivity lasting nine days. Each Posada consists of attending Mass, praying the Rosary, walking in procession, breaking piñatas and giving gifts of candy and fruit. We do this from December 16 through Christmas Eve. Also, after Christmas Midnight Mass, it is a customary to worship the Child Jesus by singing a lullaby. We then gather for dinner with all my brothers and family, and that is how we spend Christmas.

One of the most exciting games

by José de Jesus Castellanos, gr. 10

Here at the seminary we play basketball with the boys of the high school and with Fr. Gabriel, our P.E. teacher. Fr. Gabriel always shows us how to play well on offense and defense. We like to play basketball in our gym, and one of the most usual games we play is called “bump.” Lately, we have been learning how to shoot and pass better. Fr. Gabriel has us do shots and passes, and if we don’t do them correctly, we do twenty push-ups. Or he just doesn’t count the points if someone makes a shot, and this helps perfect our technique.

So far this year we have played several games with different schools. Before the games we do our stretches and practice drills. We lost badly in our first game, and so we practiced more for the next game. In the next game we played much better, and we won. We still only have one win, but we continue to train very hard to win more games.

The case of Galileo Galilei, Part III

by Fr. Gabriel Lavery, CMRI

In the last issue of our newsletter, we printed Part II of Fr. Lavery’s article on Galileo. Here we continue that article.

In our last installment of *The Guardian*, we saw that in 1611 Galileo was well received by the pope and cardinals in Rome. So what could have resulted in such serious trouble for him just five years later? There are four reasons for his trouble: his uncontrolled temper; his demand that his hypothesis be accepted as fact; his meddling in the Scriptures; and, his disrespect for Church authority.

Galileo would ridicule and bully his opponents to accept his theory even though he knew he could not conclusively prove his theory. In his work, *The Assayer*, he attacked a Jesuit in these words: “You cannot help it, Signor Sarsi, that it was granted to me alone to discover all the new phenomena in the sky and nothing to anybody else. This is the truth which neither malice nor envy can suppress” (Brodrick, p. 363). It is obvious that such an attitude would rouse his enemies.

In 1606, in his work *Trattato della Sfera*, he held the geocentric theory as not only useful, but indisputably true. Just a few years later he was demanding that the opposite view (heliocentrism) be held by all. He could not prove his hypothesis. In fact, Galileo erroneously believed that the tides were proof of the earth’s rotation. He ignored Kepler’s discovery that the tides were actually due to the attraction of the moon. All of this was only fuel for his opponents.

The third area of trouble for Galileo was the Scripture question. Both sides to the debate should have followed St. Augustine’s wise advice: “We do not read in the Gospel that the Lord said: I send you the Paraclete to teach you how the sun and the moon go. He wished to make Christians, not mathematicians” (Cf. Bandas, Rev. Rudolph G., *Biblical Questions*, p. 51). St. Augustine also warned against reading hastily our own opinions into the Scriptures and fighting for them as if they were the teaching of the Bible. Galileo himself, in his *Letter to the Grand Duchess Christina*, quoted Cardinal Baronius who wrote, “The intention of the Holy Ghost is to teach us how to go to Heaven, not how the heavens go” (Brodrick, p. 354–355).

The controversy over Scripture was due to certain passages that speak of the sun moving. For example, in the Book of Josue we read: “And the sun and moon stood still, till the people revenged themselves of their enemies. . . . So the sun stood still in the midst of the heaven, and hastened not to go down the space of one day. There was not before nor after so long a day. . . .” (Cf. Jos. 10, 12–14). Both Catholics and non-Catholics at the time understood this passage *literally* as meaning that the sun revolves around the earth. So Martin Luther had called the Catholic, Copernicus, a madman because his theory appeared to contradict this passage.

Of course, there really was no difficulty. As Leo XIII said in his encyclical, *Providentissimus Deus*: “There can never, indeed, be any real discrepancy between the theologian and the physicist, as long as each confines himself within his own lines, and both are careful, as St. Augustine warns us, ‘not to make rash assertions, or to assert what is not known as known.’” He also writes that in scientific matters, Scripture describes “things in more or less figurative language, or in terms which were commonly used at the time, and which in many instances are in daily use at this day, even by the most eminent men of science.” Even today we do not speak of beautiful earth spins, but of beautiful sunrises and sunsets.

In our next issue of *The Guardian*, we shall see how Galileo got into trouble for his disrespect of authority.



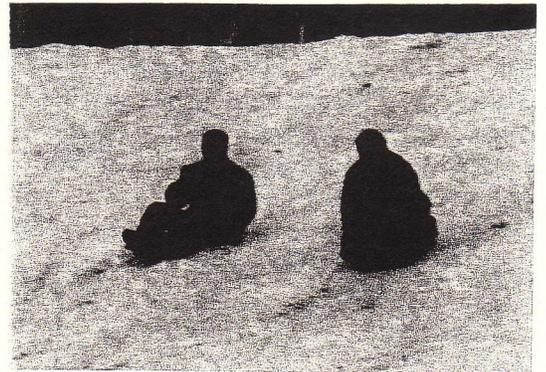
The seminarians enjoyed the Sisters' Christmas concert at the Met in Spokane.



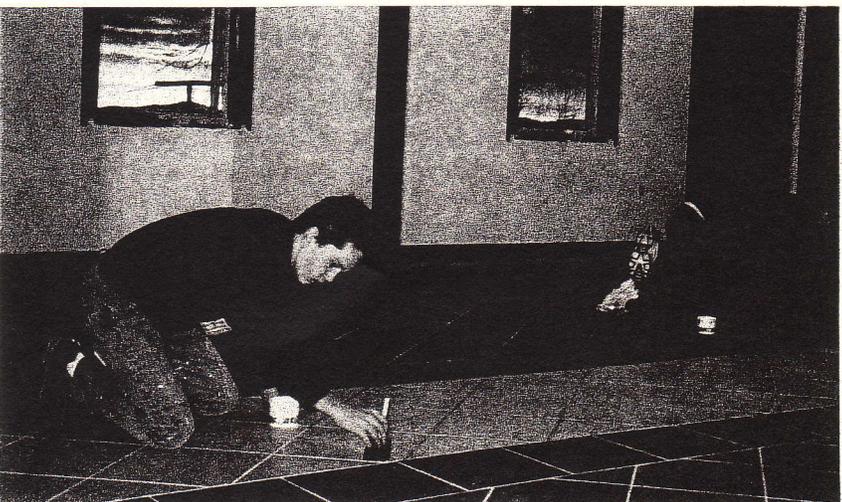
Several seminarians are seen returning to the seminary after attending Mass at the church.



The seminarians have enjoyed putting up the Christmas decorations.



Juan and Angel enjoy sledding on the various hills around the seminary.



The seminarians helped the men finish the new floor of the chapel by sealing the grout.



For two weeks seminarians had to daily clean and treat Bosco's wounds.

What a chore!

by Giovanni Ortiz, gr. 10

Usually one of the seminarians has to take care of and feed our stinky and crazy pet Bosco.

The past month Bosco had some struggles with our neighbor's dogs. I will tell you how this happened. It was November 20th, after school when he had his first fight with the neighbor dogs. Fortunately, we were close when we heard the dogs barking, and so Caleb went running to see what was going on. When Caleb got there, he saw that Bosco was stuck in the fence and one of the dogs was biting Bosco. So he picked up a stick and chased the large dog away. After being freed Bosco ran to the seminary. For awhile he seemed very dismal — he didn't want to eat or even go outside.

Three days later we went to the Odom family's house to celebrate Thanksgiving. When everything was over, we came back to the seminary and one of us noticed that Bosco had a deep wound on his right leg. So the next day Fr. Benedict and I took Bosco to the veterinarian. We had to wait awhile but finally Bosco was checked and the doctor found two wounds. He shaved around the wounds and also put some medicine on the wounds. The doctor told us Bosco had to wear a large cone-shaped collar and that someone had to clean Bosco's wounds until they healed.

Father told me to do it, and I think that this was a great sacrifice for me because the wounds didn't look so good, especially the one on his leg. During the first week Bosco didn't seem very happy at all. So we had to keep him inside the house, and one of us had to take him outside a couple of times a day. It was difficult to keep him in because he kept running into walls and furniture with that big collar.

Bosco is doing better now. He runs and plays as a happy dog should. We hope that this lesson will teach him not to aggravate the neighbor's dogs anymore.

Never take them for granted!

We usually don't think much of things to which we are accustomed. Sadly, this often applies also to spiritual blessings. Here at the seminary, as in every religious house, one of the greatest blessings is the presence of the Blessed Sacrament in our midst. We go into the chapel often each day for prayers, Mass or visits.



Blessed Christmas!

The priests, staff and seminarians of St. Joseph Seminary wish all our friends and benefactors a most joyous and Blessed Christmas. We will especially pray for you during the Advent and Christmas seasons.



Over the past four months, however, our chapel has been undergoing renovations. It has often been said that a remodel always takes longer than planned (and usually costs more!). Because of our busy classroom schedule, we have only been able to dedicate small amounts of time to this project.

At last, however, the chapel is once again in use with Mass and, of course, the Real Presence of Our Lord. Since we Catholics should always try to see the good that comes from our crosses, I hope that our lengthy delay in having our accustomed easy access to the Blessed Sacrament has led our seminarians to a greater appreciation of this blessing. Perhaps we will all now more frequently visit Our Lord and cherish more His Presence among us. May we never become so accustomed to this privilege as to take it for granted!

We pray that all of you will enjoy a most blessed Christmas season and the choicest blessings of God during the coming year. May we all cherish our Faith daily more and more, never taking for granted the blessings that we have received. Here at the seminary, we pray daily for each of you and for your needs and intentions. Thank you for all you do for us.

Fr. Benedict Hughes, CMRI

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