



THE GUARDIAN

Last year our snow came in late January and February. This year it started on the feast of Our Lady of Guadalupe. The following week we received 30 inches of snow in a 36-hour period, and it hasn't let up since. Let's just say that we are having a white Christmas.

One of our seminarians had difficulty getting home for Christmas, with all the flight cancellations, but he eventually made it out safely. While the majority of seminarians are with their families, a few have remained at the seminary. All of us are greatly enjoying this break from classes, as we rest for the long haul of the rest of the school year.

The end of another year reminds us how quickly time passes. Please pray for us, that we continue to grow in the love and service of God. We pray for all of you.

A year to be thankful for

by Marcellus Moylan, gr. 12

With Christmas approaching and 2008 coming to an end, I look back over everything that has happened to me in this eighteenth year of my life. Wow! It has gone by in a flash! I owe God a tremendous amount of gratitude for His loving care that I was able to spend it well.

I feel that this year has been for me the most beneficial to my growth in virtue and to my vocation. In this spiritual greenhouse I have been watered with showers of graces, nurtured each day with Mass and the Body of Our Lord, and enriched by the exhortations, advice, and example of the priests.

Being around Fr. Benedict and Fr. Gabriel daily and pondering the awesome dignity and power of being another Christ not only has deepened my love, respect, and affection for the priests but has also enkindled more keenly my aspiration to this profound vocation. This year my dilemmas and qualms have, for the most part, passed away — Deo Gratias! Next fall — God willing — I hope to join the seminarians in Omaha.

To the rest of the wonderful staff at St. Joseph Seminary I wish to express my gratitude: Mrs. Salgado, our secretary and Spanish teacher; Mary Antonia, our dedicated and solicitous cook; Mrs. Gallagher, our ever kind and generous English teacher and weekend cook; Mr. Porubanik, who diligently maintains the beauty of the sanctuary and the cleanliness of the sacristy; and Sr. Mary Fatima, always with a charitable or pleasant word to say — thank you for making this place a second home to me, a little foretaste of the love in heaven.

And to you, dear readers of *The Guardian*, thank you for your support and prayers, without which this seminary could not function. May you all have a very blessed Christmas and a grace-filled new year!

In her honor

by Alex Odom, gr. 12

A sodality has been established at the seminary, the Immaculate Heart of Mary Sodality. Any seminarian who wishes to join simply writes a letter to Father stating why he wants to enter

January calendar

- 5 — Classes resume
- 6 — Feast of the Epiphany, high Mass and special observances
- 8 — Seminary Epiphany celebration and gift exchange
- 20, 22 — Basketball games
- 27, 30 — " "
- 23 — Ski day
- 26 — Beginning of Second Semester

and then he is admitted on a feast of Our Lady, usually near the beginning of the school year. The day of admittance this year was December 10, the feast of Our Lady of Loreto, and the eager applicants who were received were Forrest Nguyen and myself. When a seminarian becomes a member of the sodality, he promises to keep the sodality rules: saying the Rosary and Little Office of the Immaculate

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Alex and Forrest were received into our seminary sodality on the feast of Our Lady of Loreto.

In her honor

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Conception every day, bowing his head at the recitation of the names of Jesus and Mary, attending sodality meetings, and faithfully wearing the Miraculous Medal. (These rules are not binding under pain of sin.)

Why a sodality? The first sodality was started by and for seminarians to help them grow in love and devotion to Our Blessed Mother. For this same reason Father established our sodality, to help us grow in love and devotion to Mary, something we greatly need. Mary was there when the Apostles, the first priests, began their work of saving souls. Who better then, to help seminarians prepare for the priesthood than Our Blessed Mother? Even if someone was not going to become a religious, devotion and love of Mary is one of the greatest things that any Catholic could possess. She is the powerful and spotless Mother of God and is most influential with Him. She is holier, more magnificent, and more pleasing to God than all the saints and angels in heaven. It would be nearly foolish not to have devotion and love for her, knowing how powerful and helpful she can be for us.

Those who are in a sodality receive graces they would otherwise be deprived of, which help them to increase in love for and devotion to Mary. A sodality, therefore, is most beneficial for not only seminarians but also for any Catholic. I advise any who are able to do so, to join one. If this is not possible, then strive with all your heart to love and honor Our Lady, and you will surely advance in your spiritual life. May God bless you and our most Blessed Mother watch over you!

Don't go down any more!

by Juan F. Garcia, gr. 11

This is now my third year in the seminary. I have learned many things here. Some of them I thought would never be real, or I should say, I would never experience them. This article is about our arctic cold. As you know I am from Mexico, and yes, it gets cool occasionally. You probably would call it just a little nippy.

The first year I was really impressed with the snow and skiing, and sledding, snowball-throwing, snowboarding, and above all shoveling. The second year I was astounded by the huge piles of snow. Now this year has been the coldest year I have ever experienced. When a news report said the temperature would go to -15° Fahrenheit, I thought that this would be interesting. Well this is how it turned out.

Saturday was the day it was supposed to get very cold, which it was. We went to sing a funeral Mass. When we went to the cemetery, it was blizzard-like. I think it was -10° F. When we arrived at the seminary, I checked the thermometer. It was -12° F, a new low for me, and every hour it was getting lower. I felt I was going to get a cold just by looking at the gauge dropping down, down, down. I didn't want to think

anymore of -15° F. However, Sunday was colder. Oh well! I thought, if I want to enjoy this weather, I better get used to it.

I'm sure you have as many stories to tell about snow as I do. Let's take this opportunity to thank God for all the wonderful things he has created for us. St. Francis of Assisi called this winter cover "Brother snow" for its beauty and cold. Could we be as accepting? May God bless you in this New Year!

The wolf and the goat

by Zachary Odom, gr. 10

“Beware of friendly advice from an enemy.” This moral comes to us from the Greek storyteller and philosopher Aesop. Aesop was a man renowned for his tales involving talking animals and morals on living. There is one such story entitled *The Wolf and the Goat*, which I will relate.

A ravenous wolf was searching for something to satisfy his hunger when he noticed a goat upon a high precipice of rock gnawing at the scarce vegetation growing there. Being unable to get at her, the wolf thought of a means to provoke her to come lower down. “You are risking your life up their madam, indeed you are,” he said in a welcoming fashion. “Pray take my advice and come down here where you will find plenty and better food.” But the goat, accustomed to the tricks of the astute wolf replied, “You do not care if I eat good grass or bad, what you want is to eat *me!*”

This story, for Catholics, is not just another simple story: it tells us how to live. In it the wolf signifies the Devil, the goat signifies Catholics, and the precipice, the Rock of St. Peter and the Church. As long as we stay upon the precipice of rock, the wolf will not be able to harm us. But the wolf will not be daunted by the precipice; he will try to persuade us to come lower down by offering us ‘good grass’. However, we cannot go down to the hungry wolf. We must be well accustomed to the tricks of the wolf and be content in eating the ‘scarce grass’ that grows upon the precipice. If we do this we will attain paradise, for heaven does not come by leisure, but by bearing hardship.

Our Lady's legacy

by Angel B. Gamboa, gr. 11

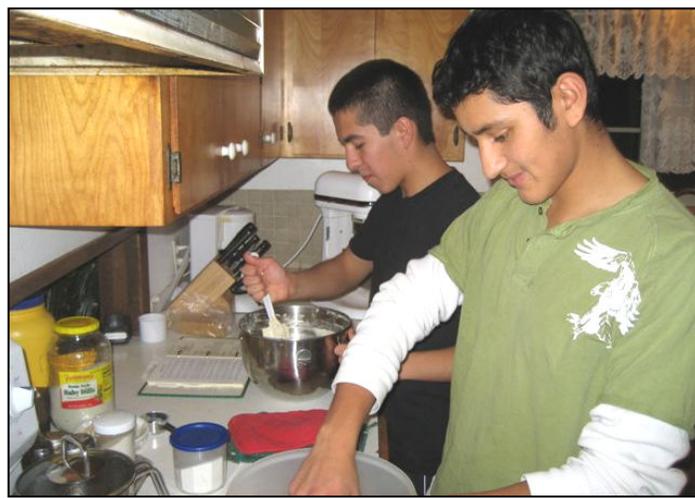
In December 2006 Fr. Casimir gave a very striking sermon on our most beloved Lady of Guadalupe. I learned one thing on that day: The more we learn about her, the more we realize how little we know.

I could not have a copy of his sermon as I so much desired because he did not write it. “However” he said, “I will provide for you some books from which I learned this.” After some time he sent me a Power Point presentation that contained many fascinating scientific facts about the blessed tilma of Juan Diego. Here are some of the facts:

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Fr. Gabriel conducts a demonstration for the chemistry lab.



Juan and José apply their culinary skills in making delicious cheesecake.



Juan helps Sr. Mary Fatima decorate the seminary chapel.



Bryan braves the cold to put the wreath over the front door of our church.



Our first good snow provided plenty of opportunity for sledding on the hill next to the seminary.



The seminarians keep the steps cleaned at the church.



It takes a while to clean off the seminary van after a big snow storm.

Our Lady's legacy

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Ophthalmologic studies were made of the tilma and revealed that when light shines on Our Lady's eyes the retina contracts, and when the light is taken away the retina dilates just like the human eye. The temperature of the tilma is always at 98.6° F, which is the identical temperature of the human body. A doctor, while analyzing the tilma placed his stethoscope below the black band at her waist and detected a heartrate of 115 beats per minute. That is the same rate of a baby's heart inside the maternal womb.

When the tilma was meticulously examined with laser ray, it was discovered that there were no signs of paint, either on the front or on the back. They found that the image floats 1/3 millimeter (1/100th of an inch) above the tilma without touching it. At a distance of 3-4 inches one can only see the tilma itself but not the blessed image. Science has not been able to find the origin of the image; NASA scientists say there is no element on earth like it.

The most amazing fact that I learned was that the word *Guadalupe* means "To crush the head of the serpent." The image portrays the quote from the book of the Apocalypse: "And a great sign appeared in Heaven: A woman clothed with the sun and the moon under her feet."

Furthermore, let us remember her most consoling words: "Am I not here who am your mother?" The black band above her waist is a sign of pregnancy, which indicates God's desire that the Blessed Child be born in the hearts of all peoples of the American continents. There is one question left for us: "Was He born once again in our hearts this last Christmas?"

Traditions

As with every institution, we have developed customs here at the minor seminary. Now in our tenth year, these customs have solidified into traditions which brighten the seasons of the year and make the time pass quickly. Everyone looks forward to these annual events.

January is a month laden with such traditions. Shortly after the seminarians return we have the feast of the Epiphany, with the blessings of chalk; gold, incense and myrrh; and the solemn blessing of Epiphany water. Before the high Mass we place gifts at the crib, inside of which are written the

Seminary Support Club

If you are not yet a member of the Seminary Support Club and would like to become a member, you may write to the seminary at the address below. Members pledge to pray for the success of the seminary and, if able, to send a regular financial contribution for its support.

Do you have a vocation?

If you are a young man of high school age who has a vocation, then St. Joseph Seminary may be the place for you. Our four-year course of studies offers the regular high school curriculum, with an emphasis on theology, Latin, choir and foreign language. A well-rounded program of daily Mass, prayer and sports complements our academic schedule. For more information, write to the rector of St. Joseph Seminary at the address below.

sacrifices we performed for the Christ Child during Advent. The High Mass includes the beautiful chant of the solemn announcement of moveable feasts.

During the octave, we have a dinner with all the seminary staff members, followed by the opening of gifts. Each seminarian provides a gift for another seminarian, whose name had been chosen at random before Christmas. We also open whatever other gifts have been given to us.

January is also a time for skiing and other outdoor activities in the snow, complemented by basketball games inside. In short, with the end of one semester and the beginning of the next, it is a full month. Such activities and traditions cause the time to fly by, reminding us that time is a precious gift. Let us all make use of it to win heaven.

As always, dear benefactors, we thank you for your prayers and support. Be assured of a daily remembrance in our prayers and Masses. May this new year be one of many blessings for you and those you love.

Fr. Benedict Hughes, CMRI

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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