



THE GUARDIAN

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Monthly newsletter of St. Joseph Seminary

May 2012

It has been a very wet spring here in the Pacific Northwest, but now we are enjoying the wonderful beauty of nature. We have also been spending extra time working outside: picking up branches for the burn pile, raking, fertilizing and caring for our spacious grounds. The warmer weather also means that we are making trips to the park for baseball, and you can be sure that we appreciate that.

Our liturgical life has also been extraordinary, with a beautiful Holy Week and recently, our Forty Hours devotion. Now, as we enter the month of May, we will have our annual devotions to Our Blessed Mother, adorning our May altar with fresh flowers each day and joining in the daily public recitation of the Rosary with the parishioners, to name just a couple of our May practices.

Of course, it is also our last full month of school, which means finishing various school projects and preparing for final tests. To be sure, the time is going by quite quickly, and before we know it, the summer vacation will be at hand. So we ask that you pray for us, that we will end the year well. Also, please pray for more vocations to our seminary for the coming school year. Be assured that we also pray for you, dear friends.

The duties and benefits of being a seminarian

by Jordan Hartman, gr. 9

In this article I would like to explain some of the small daily duties of a seminarian. If you had never seen or met a seminarian before in your life, what would you think of him? You

would probably think of him as neat and well-mannered, with a spiritually-inspired attitude and perhaps a wide range of vocabulary. But the truth is that you can get all kinds in a seminary. It can be a good thing if another person is a cross to you and you bear it as patiently and humbly as you can. However, be they intelligent or not, well-mannered or not, they can always be reverent in front of the Blessed Sacrament to show their love for our Divine Guest. Whether in chapel for Mass, prayer or spiritual reading, God is still present and we must be conscious of that.

Seminarians should be reverent in everything they do from genuflecting, to meditating, to praying, to reading, to serving or attending Mass. And the most important of all is receiving the Holy Eucharist properly which, of course, should be done anyway but especially by seminarians who are preparing for the priesthood. I don't mean to imply that as a seminarian you have to go into an ecstasy every time you make a genuflection, but perhaps

May calendar	
1	— Feast of St. Joseph the Worker; High Mass for seminary benefactors; no classes; seminary outing
4	— Mid-quarter
15	— Rogation Day procession
17	— Feast of the Ascension; Holyday of Obligation; no classes
19	— School jog-a-thon fundraiser
22-24	— Seminary spring trip
27	— Pentecost Sunday
28	— Annual Queenship procession

one that's just a bit slower. And I also don't mean to say that if you're not the greatest at praying or meditating then you can't go to the seminary. In fact it's

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On April 25th we had the first outdoor procession of the season, as we chanted the Greater Litanies.

The duties and benefits of being a seminarian

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the complete opposite! If you have temptations, or you get distracted while praying, or you don't know your Faith as well as you should, then the seminary is the perfect place to be where you can learn and grow spiritually strong.

The things I have already mentioned are the more important duties of a seminarian. But what about obedience to the rules? The priest is taking the place of God by telling you what to do. So if a priest tells you to do something then you should look at it as a command from God. Also, if you receive a correction from a priest, it is like a correction from Our Lord. Why must I obey the rules? "Because it's God's will," which is a quote I often hear from one of our priests.

Then you have obedience in the smaller things, like waking up when the bell rings in the morning (definitely a cross) or being on time or doing your homework to the best of your ability. But just because they're smaller doesn't mean they won't get you to heaven. What about St. Theresa's Little Way? And she is a great saint. You must pray for obedience and diligence in fulfilling your daily duties; it doesn't come naturally. And when you do achieve this you must carry out the duties with humility and remember that God is always watching.

The brightest day

by Aedan Gilchrist, gr. 12

After having climbed a steep hill to find a bench, I place myself in the right spot for perfect viewing of the usual scene. The steep hill has luscious green grass and golden crowned flowers, as the wind trickles past the trees to greet my face with its warmth, supplied by the sun, whose setting is but on the other side of the valley I overlook. The two hillsides of the valley (the steep one I'm perched on and the other rolling wave-like) watch over the valley town below as two great guardians. I look to the town below and watch. In this state I find myself in peace, contemplating God, His creation, my life and the lives of others, why we do things, why we even bother to live.

I see many different people walking the busy, lonely roads down in the valley. They pay no heed to the sun's warmth nor to the beauty around and above them. They've filled their lives with empty promises and filled their souls with even greater emptiness. Strangely, they wander around with a smile on their face but about what? They have truly done nothing for their benefit. I stare uneasily on my seat like a scientist scrutinizing a collection of bacteria with a magnifying glass. I peer deeper into the valley. I find that the deeper I look the blacker the town and its people become. I know these signs. I begin my desperate search for the cause. "There!" — the Darkness and its father the Jester.

Here I can tell you of the Jester, but of the nature of the Darkness itself only God knows. All I know is that it wants to consume the light. It can't consume the sun and so instead consumes the light of the souls of mortals. The Jester on the other hand is in what he believes to be a theatrical product of the autumn of man, keeping things in the twilight so he can continue his sick play of capturing souls and filling them with darkness. The Jester is laughing, taunting the souls and intoxicating them with the seductions of gluttony, lust and pride — all tools to blind his victims to the true light and painting a confused smile on their lips.

Horrified by this truth, I bring my perception out and realize what must be done. The sun has set but there is hope as out of the darkness comes a brighter day. I must start now to pray for a brighter day, one day so bright it will leave no shadow of darkness, one bright day that will scare the Jester away forever. I pray aloud but am not heard, knowing it is because of the weakness of my cry. I take out my beads and ask Mother Mary to petition her Son for me. She turns and, giving me a look of assurance, begins to pray. Her Son comes and bending down she kisses Him. In turn He kisses her, and from that moment not a shadow in the valley is left. The brightest day has come.

Thoughts on vacation

by Patrick Gilchrist, gr. 8

During vacation we Catholics seem to become lax and forget either to keep up with our prayer life, or for the students, to study and keep our mind refreshed with the knowledge that just seems to slip from our minds over the period of vacation. But more importantly, we become forgetful of our prayers. If we just went to the chapel for a visit — even if it is out of our way. If you think of how much God went out of His way to send His only-begotten Son to earth for us poor wretches to redeem us and to open the gates of heaven so that we would be able to enjoy life everlasting with Him, then you might think nothing of taking thirty minutes or even fifteen to spend with Him, because He is so lonely and desirous of our company.

The definition of the word *lax* means to be loose or open, being in a relaxed state. It also means deficient in firmness, and so laxity is not all bad. It does not mean that you have to be praying twenty-four-seven or studying all day, every day. It just means that you should not stop praying for a week at a time, even if you are only praying a decade a day or studying ten minutes a day. You should organize your life and set aside a certain amount of time for you to do what you need to do.

I am going to refer to the life of St. John Marie Vianney. When he went to Ars the people were very lax and very few would come to Mass, so he did not wait for them to come to him, but he went to them. At noon almost every day he went to someone's house and talked about what they liked to talk about. Then he would slowly change the subject so that

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Our Altar of Repose on Holy Thursday is in a small side chapel in our church.



The main altar in our church, as it appeared before the High Mass on Easter Sunday.



The opening ceremonies for Forty Hours concluded with the chanting of the Litany of the Saints.



The school children also had a part in the Forty Hours opening ceremonies.



There have been many chores outside over the past month.



A sure sign of spring — baseball in the park.

Thoughts on vacation

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sooner or later they would be talking about religion. In this way St. John Marie Vianney was able to bring sinners back to the fold. Before long the church was filled with parishioners.

And so during vacation let us not forget to keep up our prayer life as well as our studies, and when we think it is too hard or too much out of our way, we should think of Jesus and how much He suffered and went out of His way for us. Then we can say a little prayer like: "Jesus, Mary, Joseph I love you; save souls."

From their youth

This is the time of year when we wrap up the current school year and also look ahead to the next one. Consequently, it is a good time to ask the question: "Why do we have a minor seminary?" Of course, you readers of *The Guardian* know the answer to that question. It is because young men who are called to the priesthood need a proper atmosphere in which their vocation may be protected and nurtured, and in which they may grow in the practice of virtue, which must become habitual for a future priest. That is why the Council of Trent called for minor seminarians, insisting that young aspirants to the priesthood be formed in habits of piety and discipline from their earliest years.

The teachings of the Church only echo the Word of God. Holy Scripture states that "It is good for a man, when he hath borne the yoke from his youth" (Lam., 3:27). While it is true that there have been outstanding priests throughout the history of the Church who have turned back to God after having sinned; nevertheless, it is also true that the greater number have borne the yoke "from their youth." By welcoming young men into the seminary, we provide them with that opportunity to discern their vocation as they live a full life of Mass, the sacraments, prayer, instruction and youthful camaraderie with like-minded young men.

May God grant that many more youths will follow His call and enter the minor seminary. The devil does all he can to deter them, representing the life of a seminarian as too difficult and demanding. But with the assistance of God's grace and the intercession of our Blessed Mother, those who have a true vocation are enabled to surmount all obstacles and persevere along the path to the altar. And they are able to do

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 Latin, theology, 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.



Here you see another picture of the outdoor procession for the Greater Litanies.

so more securely, because they have "borne the yoke from their youth"!

Finally, I wish to assure you of my heartfelt gratitude to all those who support this important work with your prayers, encouragement and alms. It would be hard to find a more important work to support than that of the formation of future priests. May God reward you abundantly, and may He bless you and your loved ones.

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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