



THE GUARDIAN

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Monthly newsletter of St. Joseph Seminary

January 2014

Every month or season of the year has something special to offer us here at St. Joseph Seminary. For January there are the festivities of the Epiphany, the conclusion of the First Semester, the visit with the priests, and . . . skiing! That is something we all look forward to, so we hope there is plenty of snow up on Silver Mountain.

We also plan to work on our website. The seminary website was started about five years ago, but it hasn't been updated in a long time, due to the lack of someone with the knowledge and time to work on it. So one of the seminarians is learning how to make and manage websites so that we can keep it updated. Hopefully, it will be a means of attracting more vocations.

Please keep that intention of more vocations in your prayers. In another week one of our seminarians will be graduating — moving on to the major seminary. He will be sorely missed here, but we are glad that he is able to pursue his vocation in the major seminary. Hopefully, there will be others to take his place here.

We hope and pray for a good, spiritually-rewarding New Year, and we will also pray for you, that God will bless you in this year of 2014. May we all use well the time that God gives us to prepare for heaven.

The roots of life

by Jordan Hartman, gr. 11

Many objects and phrases have been used to explain human nature or the spiritual life. For example, a tree is one object used to describe how hardened men's hearts can become. I have found this analogy to be quite true.

The point, however, is focused on the roots of the tree. Perhaps you have heard it before, but I will continue to explain as if you haven't.

The analogy relates a young tree to us in our formative years. Our roots aren't very deep yet, so we are easily pulled out of bad habits. But as we progress in years, our roots go deeper and soon we find it almost impossible to break bad habits. That's the gist of it anyway. But this doesn't only apply to the young. By this analogy we can see that it is imperative to flee from sin as soon as the occasion presents itself.

On the other hand, it is neither enough to merely make good resolutions, nor to just flee from the temptation to sin. This is mentioned in *The Imitation of Christ*: "Many people seek to flee temptation and fall the more deeply into it, for by merely fleeing we cannot win the victory, but by humility and patience we may be made stronger than all our enemies." We must fly from temptation, and utterly stamp it out of our hearts as well.

But as I said before, this could be very hard to do if our "roots" are already firmly set in sin. If so, then it will take great prayer and perseverance to remove those bad habits and form good ones. But when one who was plunged into the fiery depths of sin, wrapped in the chains of his vice and as good as hell-bound, repents of

January calendar

- 5 — Solemn Blessing of Epiphany Water
- 6 — Feast of the Epiphany; Solemn High Mass; solemn announcement of moveable feasts and Epiphany blessings; opening of gifts
- 7 — Seminarian Rynan Golpe leaves for the major seminary in Omaha
- 21–23 — Semester Exams; Priests' meeting in Spokane
- 24 — End of First Semester; Ski day
- 27 — Second Semester (Third Quarter) begins

his ways and is set on the path to eternal joy, all heaven rejoices. And why? Because when that one, by the grace of God, resurrects from sin to the life of grace, it is an even greater miracle than for a dead person to be raised to life.

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Preparing to incense the altar at the Christmas Midnight Mass.

Roots of life

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When we start to travel the narrow path to heaven, temptation is inevitable. However, it is necessary for us to undergo and resist. During temptation we can prove our love for God if we shut it out right away. If we let it linger on our doorstep, it is more than likely that we will soon fall. Give the devil an inch and he will take a mile.

So, while enjoying your Christmas tree, don't forget your spiritual tree. Decorate it with good and wholesome habits and adorn it with humility and perseverance which together will keep your "roots" growing firmly in the right direction. If you do this, then your spiritual tree, just as your Christmas tree, will be for-evergreen!

Resolutions for the Newborn

by Rynan Golpe, gr. 12

Dear friends, as my introductory part of this article, I want you to ask yourselves and contemplate how did you do this Christmas? The reason behind this question is because my article for this month is all about our demeanor of this past year. Do you know that every action that we do every year will affect our Christmas Day? According to my own simple thinking, the reason why our actions affect Christmas Day is because it is celebrated in the last month of the year. Well, why are we celebrating Christmas Day? Is it because it is one of the national holidays that our government proclaimed? Absolutely not! We celebrate Christmas Day to honor and to commemorate the day of the Birth of our Savior Jesus Christ.

Jesus Christ was born "at midnight in Bethlehem in the piercing cold" in the stable, where His bed was made out of straw. How could that have happened? It happened to Him because of the conduct of the ungrateful men who reject His Kingship. He was born during a piercing cold night. It was not the world that was cold but the wicked, frigid hearts of men.

A couple millennia have passed since Our Lord became Man and He is still lying down pitifully in a manger. But oh! Pity not Him but pity us for our life here on earth is only mortal — a mortal life that is waiting for the time of judgment. This judgment is either the judgment of horror or the judgment of rejoicing.

Brethren, as the year starts, make a resolution to become a Christian with a goal in mind, a good resolution that will bless our Christmas Day. Every good resolution is equivalent to a piece of cotton or a soft feather that will serve as the new manger for the Baby Jesus on the next Christmas Day.

A well-deserved break

by Byron Ugolini, gr. 8

The school year so far has gone by too fast. The last time I looked at the calendar it was September. I'm really glad to get a break for awhile, although it's only two weeks. For

my break I'm going to enjoy being able to attend Mass at my parish and spending time with my friends and family, but there is always a lesson to be learned. I'm going to guess that this lesson has to do with charity (considering I have a hard time getting along with my brothers).

I have not only Christmas to look forward to, but also the feast of the Epiphany is coming up on January 6th. Before leaving on Christmas break, we draw names from a bowl, and you get a gift for the person you've picked — you also pray for that person. Our gift exchange occurs on the Epiphany.

When this Christmas break is over I will have to get used to the daily schedule, getting up very early for Mass and so forth. During this vacation I am going to try to get along with my brothers (although I may find it impossible), but I'm also going to try to make it to Saturday Mass at 8:00 a.m. at Mt. St. Michael's in Spokane, Washington. When I am home I usually go to Saturday Mass and then go to the Knights of the Altar meeting at the Mount. But I think I'm mainly going to sleep in the majority of the time during the break.

Something to think about

by Dominic Pulliam, gr. 10

Epiphanay. Why do we celebrate the Epiphany? This is a question most Catholics ponder in their minds. Well, I'm here to tell you why. The Epiphany is celebrated in the Eastern as well as in the Western Church in honor of three events. This feast commemorates the Magi visiting Our Lord, Our Lord's Baptism, and the miracle at the wedding feast of Cana. As you know, this feast is observed on January 6th. It is the commemoration of Our Lord's manifestation to the world. First, He was revealed to the shepherds; next He was made known to the Three Magi; and then to the whole world.

In a sense, we can use the Three Magi for an example of what a Christian should be like (when striving to get to Heaven). The Magi came from a far distance. So we start from a far distance from Our Lord while on earth. They had to endure, doubtless, many hardships to get to their destination. So we must carry our crosses as good Catholics should, just as Our Lord did during his Passion.

When the Magi finally found the Christ Child, He was in a poor, humble dwelling with Mary and Joseph by his side. How happy were the Magi to see our Savior after such a long journey. So how happy will we be, after fighting the good fight and carrying our crosses faithfully, to see our Savior in heaven with Mary and Joseph and surrounded with millions upon millions of angels singing their hymns of praise!

So the feast of the Epiphany is one to rejoice and celebrate — to meditate on what it means and to be thankful to God for coming down from Heaven to redeem mankind. Hopefully, dear reader, if we can all persevere and carry our crosses faithfully and devoutly, we too will be in heaven with Joseph, Mary, and all the angels and saints, singing hymns of praise and enjoying eternal happiness with Him forever and ever.



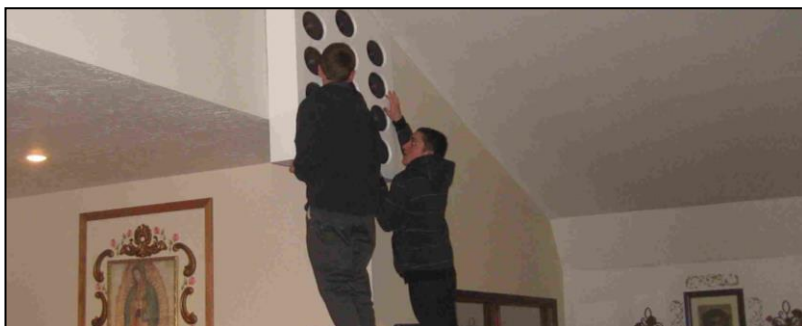
Devotions at the manger scene always precede our Christmas Midnight Mass.



Rynan, one of our seminarians, was the Master of Ceremonies at the Midnight Mass.



The seminarians use our new lift to install covers over the gym lights.



Vincent helps Frater Anthony install the new organ speakers in the church.



Byron and Rynan help with construction of covers for the gym lights.



Vincent helps to build the covers for the gym lights.

A fresh start

by Vincent Prado, gr. 10

I look at my calendar and think, “O my goodness!” This Christmas break really (unfortunately) flew by this year. Just a few weeks ago I was staring at my calendar and counting the days, if not the hours, up to my flight back to California. And now we are already back in school. Luckily, though, I spent almost three weeks with family and friends who are especially dear to me.

It being now 2014, it’s time to make the annual New Year’s resolutions. Almost all people in the world think of New Year’s resolutions such as: “Well, I’m going to give up smoking,” or “I’m going to lose 30 pounds this year,” and so forth. And although we may have some of the same ideas or views of resolutions that worldly people make, as Catholics we must turn our attention also to the wants and needs of our spiritual life. Instead of giving up smoking, which hurts our body, why not give up over-gratifying our senses, which can hurt our souls. Instead of losing 30 pounds, why not lose your inclination to pride or something to this affect. In my opinion a spiritual resolution can be much more effective to us than a physical one. As St. Francis of Assisi said, “It is better to have something spoiled in one’s body rather than in one’s soul.”

Aside from the actual New Year, I would also like to write about the new Church Year. We are still in the very early stages of the Liturgical Year, so there is still time to think about what we can do to better ourselves during the new Church Year. One of my goals for this new Liturgical Year is to say some short prayer every day according to that particular season. For instance: a Christmas prayer for the Christmas season, a Lenten prayer for Lent, etc. I encourage this practice, or anything similar to this.

So as you prepare yourself for both the New Year and the new Liturgical Year, think of your goals and what you would like to achieve both spiritually and physically. I will leave you with a fitting acronym for the New Year: CPPA — Create, Plan, Prepare, and Achieve your goals!

Painful separations

At this time of year I look back and recall those friends, relatives and parishioners who have passed from this world during the previous year. It is always difficult to lose a

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.

loved one or a friend, but we should also call to mind the joyful reunion in heaven for those who love and serve God. That reflection helps us to bear the separations we experience in this life.

Far less traumatic, but nevertheless real, are other separations we experience in life. For example, here at the minor seminary we witness the spiritual growth of young men who are preparing for the priesthood. We come to rely on their eagerness to help out wherever needed. And then — they are taken from us. Thus it is that Rynan Golpe, a young man who arrived from The Philippines only one year ago, will depart in a few days for the major seminary. We rejoice over his advancement but will sorely miss his presence.

When older seminarians move on, however, it is also an opportunity for younger ones to mature and take on a leadership role. As the oldest of our minor seminarians, Rynan’s absence will be a challenge and an opportunity for the others to step up and do their best to fill his shoes. Yes, he will be missed, but we will not forget to remember him in our prayers, that he become a holy priest of God.

Finally, we thank all of you who have supported our seminary over the past year. Please continue to support us — financially if you are able, and especially with your prayers for the success of this important work. Be assured that we remember all our benefactors daily in our prayers. May God abundantly reward you, and may He bless you and your loved ones in 2014.

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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