



THE GUARDIAN

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Monthly newsletter of St. Joseph Seminary

January 2017

December was particularly cold, but it certainly made for a white Christmas. In a few days we will be back at the seminary from our vacation. Shortly, the First Semester will be over and we will be looking forward to our skiing trips. We also enjoy the annual visit of the priests at the end of the month, which is always a great experience, meeting them and learning about their work.

January begins with the solemn blessing of Epiphany water and the celebration of the feast of the Epiphany. At our celebration of the Epiphany we will open gifts. In December we all chose the name of another seminarian from a bowl. That was the seminarian for whom we would provide a gift. It is always fun to see what the seminarians get for one another.

As the year rolls on, we keep busy at the seminary. Please remember us in your prayers and also pray for more seminarians. We pray daily for all of you. May God bless you and your families.

We Three Kings

by Dominic Lehnen, gr. 10

This month we celebrate a feast called Epiphany. This feast is when the three Kings or Magi came to offer their gifts to their newborn King, Our Lord Jesus Christ. These three Kings came from the Far East. They followed a star from their hometown all the way to Bethlehem.

Now what were the gifts that these Magi brought? They were gold, frankincense, and myrrh. Gold

symbolized that He was a king, frankincense symbolized that He was God, and myrrh is the ointment that is used to anoint the dead. After giving these gifts, God revealed to them in a dream not to go back to Herod, who wanted the newborn King to die because he didn't want to give up his throne. So the Magi went back to their home by another way.

At this time of year, we give gifts to show our love for others and to thank them for their favors to us. God gave us the best gift that anyone could ever give, and that was His only-begotten Son, born in a stable. God loves us so much that He gives His Son to us, who then dies for us on the cross. What are we giving Him in return, especially at this time? We should be giving God our heart that we may love Him. We should also thank Him for His many favors to us. Just like the three Kings, give gifts to others because Our Lord said, "Whatever you do to your fellow men, you are doing to Me." So when we give something to another, we are actually giving it to God.

So let us in this joyous season of Christmas, not only give and receive gifts, but also give every moment to God. In other words, never stop thanking God for sending His only-begotten Son to us. God gave us

January calendar

- 5 — Classes resume at the normal time; blessing of Epiphany water
- 6 — Feast of the Epiphany; special observances
- 12 — Seminary Christmas/Epiphany celebration; gift exchange
- 18-19 — Semester Exams
- 20 — Semester Break; ski day
- 23 — Third Quarter begins
- 25 — Annual Priests' visit to the seminary

every inch of His love; we should in return give Him as much love as we possibly can, especially during this season, because He deserves all our love.



Some of the action from our first basketball game.

Nap Time

by Mikael Leighty, gr. 10

Here at the seminary I personally find that we have a rough sleeping schedule. For anyone reading, waking up at 6:20 probably sounds fine and dandy, but for me, it is the greatest struggle of the day.

Before coming to the seminary I was a night owl. I would stay up late till two or three and wake up at Noon. Suddenly, taking your entire sleeping schedule and pulling it six hours back is not easy by any means. Daylight Savings is hard enough. Furthermore, going home every other weekend isn't much of a break from the schedule either. Now I can't fall asleep till one or two and wake up at 7:30. It's a struggle but its God's will. On the bright side, once I'm awake, the hardest part of the day is over.

Being older, you begin to miss the days in preschool when you had a daily nap. Those ungrateful young ones complain now, but they will sooner or later join the mentality: I need a nap.



A competitive chess game often draws a crowd.

Naps and sleep in general are one of our most precious temporal gifts. Our rest and the peace we have in it is like a reflection of what our eternal rest could and should be. On the other hand, when we have a rough night or we are sick, tossing and turning about, it's a reflection of how we would not want to spend our eternal rest. Another interesting thing about sleep is that it can be a prayer. By simply making an offering of our sleep to God before and after we slumber, we turn each sweet moment of sleep into an eternally sweeter moment of prayer.

Of all the prayers we pray during the day, it is by far my favorite, but, sadly, Father will not let me be overly zealous. Occasionally, I can clock some time in between classes, but for the most part I must be content with how long I slept that night. Thank God for sleep.

Dishes

by Kevin LeStage, gr. 9

Washing dishes is something we may not want to do but yet something that we all must for it is part of life, but more importantly, our daily duty. Here in the seminary we have two dish crews, morning and evening. The morning crew washes breakfast dishes and puts them away before lunch. The evening crew washes the dinner dishes and puts them away after night prayers. The people on each crew will switch from morning crew to evening every week.

So you can say we all get a fair share of dishes—it's just a matter of getting them done. There are some who like to take their time and others who would rather just get it done as fast as possible. I personally prefer to get in there and finish as fast as I can, so I can continue on with my other priorities, such as pool and chess. Washing suits me rather than rinsing, because if you rinse you have to put the dishes away also, and that takes longer. So overall, washing is the way to go.

Then there are those nights when doing dishes just gets in your way. Maybe you have more homework than usual or you would like to recreate. This is a perfect opportunity for sacrifice. If people only knew how much merit they could gain or how many souls they could release from purgatory by just doing the little things in life, like washing dishes or taking out the trash or any other little parts of our daily duty that we may not find agreeable. By just doing these small things with a willing spirit and not grumbling goes a long way in the eyes of God, for it is in doing the small things that we are able to achieve the more difficult things on our path to heaven.



Dominic launches the sled down one of our hills here.



On Sundays the seminarians help with supper preparation.



Robert shoots from the 3-point arc.



The classroom is the place where we spend most of each day.



This winter scene shows the view looking toward the church from the seminary.



The seminarians and priests gathered for this photo before Christmas.



On the feast of Our Lady of Guadalupe we invited the Sisters and staff members to join us for a Mexican meal, in her honor.

Making Progress

by Mark Vincent, gr. 12

We were prepared. As the referee blew the whistle, all our practice and hard work suddenly went into action. The cry of “defense” immediately rang out as we saw the basketball hurled to our opponent's hands. As soon as the ball crossed half court, the struggle began.

At first, we faced bitter opposition in getting points on the scoreboard. We couldn't figure out how we might get a point with a zone defense when we normally played man on man. We often stole the ball from the other team, but couldn't work it up to the hoop. By the end of the first quarter, the score was zero to fourteen.

By the second quarter, we were just starting to get the hang of things and figure our opponent out. We got our first couple baskets, adding up to roughly four to twenty. As the game went on, we learned that we could easily intercept passes and dribbles and go back to the offensive. We also learned that we could not do jump shots as easily, because the rims of the hoop had much more of a spring to



The seminarians assisted in putting up the Christmas lights on the church.

them than ours at the seminary.

The game seemed to go on with a gradual climb to superiority. By this time, we tended to dominate the flow of points and made rapid progress. We had found out that

lay-ups were a sure way to get points. By the fourth quarter, our progress had reached its climax. The score ended up being about twenty to thirty. We had come a long way since our beginning.

This was our first game and also our first chance of playing with a legal-sized court and with a full five-player opponent. At the gym for practice, we can do only three on three games with no chance to meet what it is actually like. We got what is, in a sense, the best training there is—learning on the job. We found out how to discipline ourselves to make things happen to our advantage and altogether found out what we were able to do.

We look forward to more basketball games throughout the remainder of the season. This is a great activity to help get in shape, get proper coordination and work together. We hope to have fun throughout the rest of the season and to win a few games as well.

God's Precious Gift

At the beginning of a New Year we instinctively think of the value of time. How much more time will God give us on this earth? Who among us will be called by God out of this world during the coming year?

These are important questions to ask ourselves, for time is a most precious gift from God. With this precious gift we can merit eternal happiness with Him in heaven. Yet how many people use this treasure to gain eternal happiness? Sadly, many souls squander the precious gift of time and fail, through their own fault, to attain heaven.

Let us not be among the number of these foolish souls, but rather join the wise virgins of the Gospel, who prepared for the coming of the Bridegroom. Doubtless, for some of you reading this article, this will be the last year of your life. It may be the last year of my life. Let us all, then, use well this precious gift of God, that we might secure a place with Him in heaven.

At the seminary we pray for all our friends and benefactors daily. We especially ask the Infant Jesus this month to grant you and your loved ones many blessings during this New Year of 2017. Thank you for your prayers and support of our seminary. May God grant that we will all be together one day in heaven, for that is why God created us!

Fr. Benedict Hughes, CMRI