



# THE GUARDIAN

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Monthly newsletter of St. Joseph Seminary

November 2017

**I**t has been a busy month, but the highlight for October was certainly the Fatima Conference. We attended all the lectures and events on Thursday and Friday, including the banquet, the bishop's Mass and the Rosary procession. On Saturday we stayed home to prepare the grounds and seminary for Sunday's Open House. We had a nice turnout for our Open House, and we enjoyed meeting so many people. Then, later in the day, we went back up to Mount Saint Michael for Vespers and the closing ceremonies.

The next week we received our newest seminarian. Nicholas is a freshman from western Washington, and he has already adapted just fine to our seminary routine. We are all glad to have a new member sharing in our daily life.

In late October, Father Benedict took us on an all-day field trip to Wallace, Idaho. This small town is the center of the Silver Valley and is called the "Silver Capital" of the world, because more silver is mined there than anywhere else. We toured the informative mining museum and visited the monument to the miners who died in a terrible accident in 1972. We also went up to Lookout Pass, on the border between Idaho and Montana, to view the beautiful fall scenery of the trees on the mountainsides.

Now we enter November, and our primary focus will be to help the souls in purgatory. We will pray our daily prayers for the Poor Souls, sing several Requiem High Masses, and visit the cemetery. Before we know it, winter will be upon us, with its snow

## November Calendar

- 1 – Feast of All Saints; no classes; seminary outing
- 2 – All Souls Day; special observances and visit to the cemetery; Second Quarter begins
- 6 – Nicholas' birthday
- 15 – Field Trip
- 23 – Thanksgiving Day

and colder weather. The year passes quickly, and we hope to use it well for our advancement. We also pray for all of you, our benefactors. Please continue to remember us also in your prayers.

## A Catholic Gathering

*by Robert Kolinsky, gr. 12*

**I**n the month of October we have an Annual Fatima Conference. And the Fatima Conference is when many Catholic lay people, priests and other religious get together for a series of lectures on Fatima, the state of the Church, and how we can all progress in the faith. It usually consists of about 300 to 500 participants. Some come from far and wide or just from the area of Spokane.

Now in being a part of the Fatima Conference, there is a good chance to meet with some other Catholics that you have not met before. We all come together as one and listen to the speeches that the religious give. Many of their talks emphasize the errors of Vatican II and the problems in today's



*The chapel at Mount Saint Michael was completely packed for the concluding ceremonies of our October 13<sup>th</sup> procession.*

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## A Catholic Gathering

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modern society. There are also breaks in between the talks and meals according to the specified times.

Another aspect of the Fatima Conference is that you experience the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass with all these people. And on one day the bishop offers a Pontifical High Mass in which some of us get to participate as servers. I mention this because the bishop's High Mass is the highest form of Mass there can be, showing it in all its splendor.

Now what is the real purpose of the Fatima Conference? Is it the gathering of the faithful, the conversation we may have with each other, or the sights to see? These are good things, of course. But the main reason for the Fatima Conference, as Fr. Benedict said in the closing comments, is to apply what we have learned during all the speeches—whether it is something new or already in our knowledge—to our everyday lives. We should not go about as before, for there is definitely a great amount of grace received during this time. And since we have free will, we can use that grace for the merits of both our souls and for the souls of those who are dear to us.

## The Beautiful Rosary Procession

*by Dominic Sherling, gr. 10*

For one hour before the 2017 Fatima Conference Rosary Procession, to commemorate the 100<sup>th</sup> year anniversary of Our Lady's apparitions in Fatima, I helped the Knights of the Altar at Mount St. Michael, placing candle sand bags to guide the faithful along the path in the dark night. The order in which the rosary procession began was dictated by Father Casimir Puskorius, who was on the roof of Mount St. Michael. In previous years Father Casimir led the Rosary adjacent to the procession, but this year he led the Holy Rosary from the roof top. At the end of each decade, Father began several verses of the hymn "The Fatima Ave," which was accompanied by trumpets.

On top of the normal decorations there was a magnificent amount of work put into the procession this year. Most of all, I would like to point out the gorgeous float that took many hours to perfect. I would like to give you an idea on how the float looked. The people who were dedicated enough to build the float took the CMRI sisters' truck and decorated it so much that you could barely even tell that it was a vehicle of any kind. The bed of the truck was filled with the stand to Our Lady's shrine, and all around Our Lady's shrine was a massive pile of roses of all colors. There were streamers hanging from the back of the truck, along with a beautiful white cloth that glittered in the moonlight.

One thing I was also astonished about, was the number

of people. If I were to take an estimated guess on how many people were at the procession, I would probably estimate at least 750 people. At the end of the procession, as we were all gathering into the chapel, an announcement had to be made out of necessity, to tell everyone to move up to the front pews to make room for the people who were still coming in. I think that this procession was the most populated procession we have ever had at the Mount.

As I conclude my article for this month, I think that you could say that Our Lady of Fatima was truly praised and honored at this year's Fatima Conference Rosary Procession.

## The History of the Church in Vietnam, Part 2

*by Thiet Nguyen, gr. 8*

In this article I will finish where I left off from the last article, which is from the 1960s to the present. Ngo Dinh Diem, after being voted as president of South Vietnam, received the finest approval from the people of South Vietnam and the countries around the globe. Most of the historians nowadays call him a "Kennedy of Vietnam." Meanwhile, up in the North, the Communists of Viet Minh, under command of Ho Chi Minh, had committed a lot of evil, nasty acts and genocide, especially against Catholics. Many seminarians of different seminaries who were approaching their ordination to the priesthood were drafted into the Viet Cong army. The Communists banned the teachings of the Church, though they promised freedom of religion. They banned the priests from celebrating Masses on Sundays, and distributing Holy Communion. They even poked chopsticks into the eardrums of innocent children who went to their catechism classes, and shot anyone who made the sign of the Cross.

They started what they called the "revolution of peasants." This bloody, murderous revolution spread throughout entire Asia, inspired by the Soviet Union from the early 1920s to the 1960s. The main goal was to murder all of the well-educated and wealthy members of royal families. Many royals were killed. Many priests and bishops were martyred. In the northern Communist State of Vietnam, the motto was "Chi, Phu, Dia, Hao, dao tan goc, choc tan re," meaning "the well-educated, the wealthy, the landowners and the royals, must be overwhelmed, must be demolished until we reach the root of them." Many peasants, workers, and servants betrayed their masters. Thousands of patriots from different parties, professors of different universities, and wealthy landowners were executed. About 2,700,000 Vietnamese were killed in this evil revolution, many of them being Catholics. Ngo Dinh Diem, knowing well what was happening in the North,

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*Everyone pitches in on weekends to cook breakfast.*



*The high school boys joined the seminarians on a field trip to a Silver mine on the border of Idaho and Montana.*



*Father Krysov, from Russia, joined the seminarians at the banquet during the Fatima Conference.*



*There seems to be a never-ending supply of pine needles to be raked and burned.*



*Dominic takes advantage of nice weather to wash the seminary van.*



*The seminarians have found a new game to play for recreation.*

## The History of the Church in Vietnam, Part 2

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created a program called “Follow our God to the Southern Land” for North Vietnamese refugees. He saved more than 2,000,000 lives from death penalties, live burials, and many other in-human tortures of the Communists. Diem, with his charitable, humble character, had set an excellent example by his strong faith in God. In the early 1950s, the number of Catholics was about 5,400,000. After he was elected as president, it reached up to about half of the total population.

Diem was the head of the state of South Vietnam Republic until 1963, the year of his assassination. According to the million hearts of South Vietnamese, it was a big crisis for the nation, especially to the Catholics. Many sources state that the assassination was done by Duong Van Minh, a military general and his co-conspirators. However, there are many documents that have been found that prove the Communists were responsible for Diem's assassination.

Nguyen Van Thieu was elected as the 2<sup>nd</sup> president after Diem's assassination. He was a Buddhist who converted to the Catholic faith and was a big anti-Communist. Thieu was in the Viet Minh's army to fight the French, but later realized the evil of Communism, so he left to join the loyal Vietnamese National Army. He encouraged the South Vietnamese for their liberty and freedom. The Viet Cong signed the Paris Agreement, which contains the agreements of freedom and independence between two nations so that in the near future, the country would be reunited peacefully. However, they broke the agreement by attacking villages and cities in South Vietnam. Thieu was the president of the southern state of Vietnam until the end of his term of presidency in 1975.

Tran Van Huong was elected as president. However, he was placed under house arrest by the Communist regime. He had been only one week as president. He resigned on April 28, 1975, and handed power to Duong Van Minh as the head of state.

After 3 days of Duong Van Minh as president, the Communists forced their army to Saigon, the capital of South Vietnam. Duong Van Minh commanded the last soldiers to their weapons for the safety of the people. On that day, April 30, 1975, thousands of people were killed by the Communists. Many South Vietnamese fled their

hometown for freedom.

On May 1, 1975, the Communists had obtained the control of the whole state of South Vietnam. They did many more evil things. They robbed people's houses and properties, burned religious pictures, crucifixes and Bibles in the houses of Catholics.

After the Viet Cong dominated the whole nation, they spread a lot of propaganda against the teachings of the Church. They tried to decrease the number of Catholics as much as they could. They wrote books that tell untruths about our Holy Church and spread false news in the newspaper. Nowadays, Communists still retain their ideology that the Catholic Church is their enemy, because the Church is the truth. And they absolutely hate to face the truth. That's what Communism is, now and always.

The Catholics of Vietnam now number 10,500,000 out of the total population of 94,500,000. Many of them are now in fear to practice their faith under the government of Communism. As a Catholic, and a son of Vietnam, I sincerely ask you to pray every day for the peace of the world and for the conversion and freedom of my homeland by reciting the Holy Rosary every day and fulfilling God's commandments.

### “A Holy and Wholesome Thought”

It is tragic that Protestants do not have in their Bible, the two books of Machabees in the Old Testament. (There are 5 other inspired books they are missing as well.) These 2 books tell fascinating stories of a difficult time in ancient Jewish history. Among others, is the story of a battle, after which Judas Machabeus, the general of the Jewish army, took up a collection. The money was sent to Jerusalem to have sacrifices offered for the soldiers who were slain in battle, because Judas thought it a “holy and wholesome thought to pray for the dead, that they may be loosed from sins” (II Machabees, 12:46).

Just as devout Jews in the Old Testament prayed for the departed, so also we Catholics pray for the souls in purgatory. Let us especially this month do all we can to help the Poor Souls, that they may soon enjoy the Beatific Vision. And may God reward you for your support of our seminary! We promise a remembrance of you in our prayers

*Fr. Benedict Hughes, CMRI*