



# THE GUARDIAN

If you read *The Guardian* regularly, you probably know that we seminarians really like the snow. There are plenty of activities to do in the snow, and we don't really mind shoveling it. But enough already! There has been so much snow in the past month that even we diehards are looking forward to spring.

That is one of the reasons why March is such a beautiful month. Nature awakens from her slumber, the birds begin to return and the first flowers bud forth. But March is also the month when we begin the important season of Lent. We receive the symbol of penance on our foreheads on Ash Wednesday and we make our annual Lenten retreat. We follow our practices of penances throughout the month.

We also celebrate wonderful feasts, such as that of our seminary patron Saint Joseph, and we recite prayers in his honor throughout the month. We will remember you, our seminary

benefactors in these daily prayers and we will pray that you have a holy Lent. Please also pray for us, that we will grow spiritually this Lent,

### A Paradigm for Seminarians *by Gabriel Davis, gr. 9*

**H**oly Mother the Church has wisely given us saints we may follow as examples and whose lives we can imitate. Without them we would be on our own to figure out the most secure journey to heaven. A ship without the guidance of a lighthouse is bound to have difficulties finding the harbor. Saints are our models. Out of all the great saints during this month of March, there is one who especially stands out for me and whose feast falls on March 9. His life is a paradigm for all Catholic young men. This saint is Saint Dominic Savio.

Saint Dominic was born in the area of Turin, Italy, of pious parents. At the young age of twelve he entered the famous school of Saint John Bosco and immediately showed signs of spiritual maturity beyond his years. He was exemplary by his exact observance of the rule, his charity and cheerfulness towards others and his love for purity and for the sacrifice of the Mass. His fear of mortal sin was so fierce that he would often say, "I would much prefer to die than to offend God by sin." He is known as

### March Calendar

- 6 – Ash Wednesday
- 8-10 – Annual Lenten retreat
- 17 – Saint Patrick's Day talent show
- 19 – Feast of Saint Joseph; no classes; sodality reception ceremony
- 20 – Annual ping-pong tournament begins
- 29 – End of Third Quarter

the teenage apostle for he died at the young age of fifteen, leaving behind a legacy to which all young men can aspire.

It is truly wonderful to be in the same atmosphere that Saint Dominic Savio was in one hundred and fifty years ago. To be able to receive the Blessed Sacrament on a daily basis, and to be taught and counseled by living representatives of Christ is beyond our comprehension. The education and spiritual growth that we receive here is the best in the entire world. So then why is it that there are only four traditional Catholic minor seminarians? If only every Catholic young man would understand the manifold benefits of joining the minor seminary, I am positive that this seminary would be packed with students. Since the moment I arrived here I have not regretted for one moment my decision on joining the minor seminary. For our faith's sake, we all must pray and do all we can to bring about much-needed vocations.

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*We had a High Mass for the feast of the Purification of Our Lady.*

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## A Paradigm for Seminarians

Even if we minor seminarians do not go on to become priests, the lasting habits and memories will immensely benefit us to safeguard and better protect our soul against the attacks of hell. For either you start your heaven here on earth or never at all. Let us then follow the example of Saint Dominic Savio and prepare our eternity now—not tomorrow or sometime in the future, “for you know neither the day nor the hour.”

## From Slavery to Apostleship

*by Thiet Vincent Nguyen, gr. 9*

More than 15 centuries have passed since Christendom began to exist in the green fields of Ireland. For there to be a Christianized Ireland, it must have experienced a long process of apostolic labor. It all started by one man, a man of wisdom and holiness, and of great love for God to bring back prodigal sons to the Heavenly Father.

St. Patrick was born into a pious Christian family in Roman Britain in the year 389 AD. His father Calpornius was an alderman, and later was ordained a deacon. As an impetuous young man Patrick gave very little care for his scholarship and was supine as regards the matter of spirituality. At the age of 16 Patrick and his companions were seized by Irish pirates and brought to Ireland to serve as slaves.

For six years he served as a shepherd, until he was encouraged by a strange voice in his sleep to leave. He providentially escaped by following the instructions of the Voice, finding a ship to take him back to Britain.

There, in his homeland by the help of grace, he renounced the carelessness of his youth and was spiritually converted. Patrick repented and wanted to atone for what he had done that offended Our Lord in his youth. He wished to give his life to God to labor as an apostle in order to bring the souls of the Irish people

to Him. He even heard the voices of the Irish people calling him back. He went to a monastery to study and was then ordained a priest.

His desire to preach the Word of Our Lord to the Irish pagans was at first rejected by his superiors, but later he was appointed bishop of Ireland. Patrick, with the help of Providence, successfully converted many pagan kings and people of Ireland. Many wonderful missionary works and fruits of early Christendom were planted in Ireland by this saintly apostle of Christ. Many pagan altars of the Druid religion were destroyed by this powerful bishop. A large number of converts were made under his guidance.

Often in his missionary labors Patrick had to face dangers, both interior and exterior. Many times his freedom and sometimes even his life were threatened. Patrick's behavior during his mission in Ireland also suffered much criticism from the clergy of Britain. Some of his converts were killed or put into slavery when the British Prince Coroticus and his army raided the Irish land. However, with a strong faith in God, he conquered all opposition of his enemies who wished to destroy his missionary work.

Many legends and miracles about this wonderful saint have been handed down from many generations. There is actually a miracle told that

the saint, under the power of God, banished the snakes from Ireland. This is only one among many miracles he accomplished.

The saint ended his journey in this world in the year of 461. The body of the holy bishop lies near the fortress of Saul, which was to be the future cathedral town of Down. Not only did he bring the faith into Ireland, but Patrick also set a good example of sanctity and humility for many generations of the Irish and of many other races universally through his holy life. St. Patrick, pray for us.



*A second ski trip to Silver Mountain was a welcome opportunity for all.*



*The Blessing of Candles on February 2<sup>nd</sup> took place in our temporary gym chapel.*



*Snow blanketed the seminary grounds throughout February.*



*The seminarians take a few minutes to inspect the progress of work on our church.*



*During his recent trip to our missions in Alberta, Father Augustine visited a beautiful Byzantine church.*



*The seminarians have a spiritual conference every Thursday.*



*Mr. Paul LeStage has spent countless hours repairing and painting the Stations.*

## Up to Our Knees in Physical Education

by Gabriel Riley, gr. 9

We have 7 class periods each day. In order it goes: Latin, algebra, English, theology, biology, economics, and then P.E. or choir. I would like to tell you about the 7<sup>th</sup> period during the winter. Physical education is the utmost. On Monday, Wednesday and Friday after the sixth period we dash upstairs and change into our outside clothes. Then we play what Father Augustine assigns us to play.

Sometimes we make up our own energetic games. For example, a seminarian here was not good at roller skating and handling a hockey stick at the same time. So, we invented a game called “Soc-key”—a game similar to soccer where you run on foot using a hockey stick to hit a volley ball into a 4-foot goal. It is fun once you get the hang of it.

Recently we went to play football in two feet of snow in the woods. It was hilarious because we could scarcely run in the snow. It was either you trample or you fall through the snow. Most of us tried to run but we all ended up falling instead. A seminarian lost his shoe in a pile of snow, so we are going to wait until spring to find it. In a whole hour we could only score one or two touchdowns at the most.

Whatever we play for P.E., you can be sure we have fun!

## Remember Man, That Thou Art Dust

by William Davis, gr. 8

That is the first part of the admonition that the priest says on Ash Wednesday, marking the forehead and saying, “Remember man that thou art dust and unto dust thou shalt return.” That begins the holy season of Lent. The word *Lent* comes from the Anglo-Saxon word *lencten*, meaning springtime. Since Lent is in spring, the Saxons connected Lent to spring and used a word of their own to name this holy season of fasting.

The first mention of fasting before Easter was in the council of Nicaea in 325. But it was more firmly established later on, and became a decree at the council of Laodicea sometime after Nicaea. During the early centuries, fasting and penance were exceedingly strict. Only one meal was allowed during the day. You could not have any flesh meat, fish, or dairy, not even eggs. In the

ninth century things considerably lessened in strictness. Fish was allowed and even encouraged in the late Middle Ages. In that same time dairy products were also allowed into the diet, but meat consumption was still prohibited.

The idea of Lent is that it is a 40-day preparation for the Passion and Resurrection of Jesus, with special attention to His physical sufferings. You don't have to fear Lent. I previously thought of Lent as a time of “miserable repentance,” but it doesn't have to be. You don't have to make all of those huge sacrifices or go into the desert and repent. Of course you can, but not all people are cut out for that. Just make the little, everyday sacrifices. Make your daily routine more holy. Offer up all you do to God.

Lent isn't just for doing penance for 40 days and then going back to your normal luxurious life. No, Lent is for fixing your bad habits and keeping them fixed forever. So let us keep in mind the purposes of Lent—that is, to fix our bad habits, perfect our good habits, and to prepare our hearts for the glorious Resurrection of Jesus Christ, Our God and Savior.

## Our Wonderful Patrons

In reading this month's newsletter, you have noticed that two of the seminarians chose to write about saints whose feasts occur this month. March is a month filled with wonderful patron saints, such as Saint Joseph, Saint Patrick, Saint Benedict, and Saint Dominic Savio—to name just a few.

The saints are wonderful patrons who show us how to live and who intercede for those who call upon their help. They were made of the same flesh and blood as we and experienced the same, or similar, temptations and struggles. They are our heroes, and we ought to learn about their lives.

Saint John Marie Vianney is an example of a holy priest who eagerly read the lives of the saints. He knew them so well that he often inserted anecdotes from their lives into his sermons to drive home the point he was making. Like him, all seminarians ought to achieve a knowledge of the saints and a sense of kinship with them.

Let us all strive to learn about the saints and especially to imitate their holy lives. They will teach us how to get to heaven. May we all join them in that place of bliss one day! Again, I thank you for your prayers and support and pray that God will bless you and your loved ones.

*Fr. Benedict Hughes, CMRI*