



# THE GUARDIAN

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Monthly newsletter of St. Joseph Seminary

March 2022

After the short month of February we have arrived at the start of Lent. Even though our human nature cringes at the thought of penance, we all know that we need this penitential season, so let us make the most of it. Here at the seminary each of us has made out a penance program, choosing some extra penances that we will perform.

As usual during Lent, in addition to our private penances, we also have our sacrifice bowl, from which we draw a slip of paper and perform whatever sacrifice is written on it. We pray the Stations of the Cross every Friday and also try to pray the Stations at least one extra time each week on our own. We also have the chaplet of our Sorrowful Mother every Wednesday.

March, of course, is also the month of Saint Joseph, our seminary patron. We have devotions in his honor every day of the month. In addition, on his

feastday we will have a Solemn High Mass to honor this great saint. Saint Joseph is a special patron for many needs and is particularly the patron of the Church and of a happy death. Let us all honor him this month.

Let us all resolve to make a good Lent and to honor Saint Joseph, the most pure spouse of Mary and the foster father of Jesus. May he assist us to be faithful seminarians and obtain more vocations for our seminary. We also pray for you, our benefactors, that he will bless you this month.

## “Death Rather Than Sin”

by Joseph Strain, gr. 11

One of my favorite saints is St. Dominic Savio. He was one of the first saints that I read about when I was younger and was so impressed by his life that I chose his name when I received the sacrament of Confirmation.

Dominic Savio was born April 2, 1842 in northern Italy. His family was a poor one, but they were devout Catholics nevertheless. He was a good student in school, never complaining or blaming others for anything that was done wrong in the school. The parish priest was so impressed by his knowledge of the faith that he

### March Calendar

- 2 – Ash Wednesday
- 7-8 – Annual Achievement testing
- 8 – Thaddeus’ 19<sup>th</sup> birthday
- 10 – Sodality reception ceremony
- 11-13 – Annual Lenten retreat
- 17 – Saint Patrick’s Day talent show
- 19 – Feast of Saint Joseph, seminary patron; Solemn High Mass
- 20 – Seminary-sponsored parish breakfast, in honor of Saint Joseph and Saint Patrick
- 25 – Feast of the Annunciation; end of Third Quarter
- 28 – First Day of Fourth Quarter
- 31 – Matthew’s 15<sup>th</sup> birthday

made an exception for Dominic to receive his First Holy Communion at the young age of 7, because at the time, you had to be at least 12 before you could receive Communion.

It was when Dominic received his First Communion that he made his resolution “Death rather than Sin.” He was always doing his best to pray as often as he could and encouraging others to pray as well. If he got to the Church before it was unlocked, he would kneel on the ground and pray, whether it was dry or wet.

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*William directs the seminarians in singing a High Mass, as Father Philip plays the organ.*

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## “Death Rather Than Sin”

Dominic's teacher introduced him to Don Bosco. Don Bosco wanted to test Dominic's intelligence by giving him a pamphlet on apologetics and expected him to tell him what the pamphlet was about the very next day. Dominic surprised him by approaching him 10 minutes later and reciting the pamphlet and explaining to him what all of it meant. After this, Don Bosco agreed to take Dominic with him to Turin to study for becoming a priest.

While he was at the oratory, he progressed in his studies, always asking questions if he did not understand anything, and encouraging all the other boys to live saintly lives. He never neglected his studies or to go to Church and pray.

Later, his health began to fail, and Don Bosco decided to send him home. Everyone thought that Dominic would recover and return to continue his studies. But Dominic seemed to know that it was God's will that he would not return. He prepared for death and died peacefully at home on March 9, 1857. Saint Dominic Savio is the secondary patron of our seminary sodality.

## The Spirit of Mortification

*by Matthew Mendieta, gr. 9*

**M**ortification—when most hear this term they think of the saints and their extreme acts of penance, their going without food for days on end and other severe acts they performed. Even when Lent comes around most people dread the time of penance and prayer. The word mortification means many things and can be carried out in many different ways.

Physical mortification is the most common but there is also the spirit of mortification. To practice the spirit of mortification one must understand that true mortification is the act of performing something contrary to the natural tendencies of the body, mind, or will, meaning to make small sacrifices when you really don't want to. Every saint that has ever walked this earth practiced acts of mortification, whether they were severe or slight.

By mortifying your body and spirit you will learn to discipline yourself and strengthen your will. The mortification of the senses is no easy task but to mortify your will is very hard indeed. For example, it would be mortifying your spirit if you had homework and your

friends invited you to play a game and you told them no. It would be hard indeed to do that. Another example of this would be you are at home and you don't really have anything to do. It would be an act of mortification to pray an extra rosary instead of watching TV or playing video games.

There are many ways to practice penance and prayers. Since we are starting the Lenten Season let us truly have the mindset of the saints and practice the spirit of mortification.

## Everyone Say Cheese!

*by William Davis, gr. 11*

**A**s has been stated in several *Guardian* articles in the past year, we have a wonderful cow that we call Matilda. But in this article I would like to elaborate on one of the products we make out of her milk, that being cheese.

Before I participated in the making of cheese I had always thought that it was a simple thing to take milk and magically turn it into that oddly flavored solid food that we've named cheese. But then I volunteered to help Father Philip make cheese out of the 12 gallons of milk we had stored. It was then that all my presuppositions concerning cheese came crashing down. As it turns out, making cheese is a long, tedious, and at points precarious task. You have to heat up the milk to just the right temperature, if it is too hot or cold it could ruin the



*The Candlemas ceremonies include a small outdoor procession, despite the cold temperature.*

cheese. You have to put several different special ingredients in it or it won't form correctly. But now we are only just beginning.

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*An interior view of some of the stained glass windows along the south side of the church.*



*A view of some of the action at one of our basketball games this season.*



*Matthew demonstrates his physics experiment as the other seminarians look on.*



*View of the church before Mass on the feast of the Purification.*



*On a recent Saturday the seminarians helped Brother Thomas in clearing some land for a cow pasture.*

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## Everyone Say Cheese!

The milk separates and some of it forms into a solid called curds. We have to very, VERY carefully separate the curds from the remaining liquid called whey. Yes, just in case you're wondering, there were many curd and whey jokes made, mostly by me, but they were all pretty bad. That only o-curd to me later on. But on with the process.

The curds float to the top of the pot and then you cut them with a special cheese-making knife at about 12 different angles, and all the while the temperature cannot vary more than a couple degrees or else you might end up with a different cheese altogether. Anyways, after we have cut the curds so they are all about the same size, we ladle them out and strain them in the unique process that makes this particular cheese into cheddar cheese. We put the curds, weighing about 12 pounds, which is a lot of cheese mind you, into a bundle of cheese cloth, which we then put into a perforated 5 gallon bucket. We then proceed to put close to 100 pounds of weights on it to strain out all the whey.

After this lengthy and delicate process was over, I looked up hopefully to Father and told him that I couldn't wait to try it and see how it tastes. To my naivete he answered smiling that we would have to wait close to four months in order to taste it, for this type of cheese, farmhouse cheddar, takes that long to age. I will admit that it was depressing to learn that it had taken close to three hours of anxiety just to learn that four more months were in store before I could try Father Philip's, and to a much lesser degree my, wheel of cheese.

Later on Mr. Keaveney took a picture of us holding the cheese before we put it into storage. As he was taking the picture he said that classic phrase, "Say Cheese!" and I could only think to myself the irony of how difficult it can be to master this art of cheese-making, and yet do my best to look happy while holding this hunk of stuff that I won't be able to taste until after Easter.

## The Beauty of His House

When Jesus made a whip and drove the money changers out of the temple, His disciples remembered that it was

written "The zeal for thy house has eaten me up" (John2:17). They were recalling Psalm 68, in which David says, "Zeal for your house consumes me." We know from the history of David how much he loved the house of God and wanted to build a splendid temple. But God told him, through the prophet, that he was not to build the temple; rather his son would do it. So David gathered together gold, silver and other precious materials in preparation for this task.

Seminarians likewise must have a love for the House of God—the chapel or church. For priests, in particular, are charged with the maintenance and beauty of God's house. Here the seminarians all take turns as sacristans, setting up for Mass and caring for the house of God.

As you know, we recently completed an enlargement of our church here. Part of that remodel was to include stained glass windows. Well, at last they were completed and installed at the end of January. There are 9 large windows, 12½ feet tall and 3 feet wide. They depict different saints, including St. Alphonsus, St. Louis Marie de Montfort, St.

Ann, St. Mary Magdalen, St. Patrick, and others. The atmosphere in the church has certainly benefited. When one is praying in the church with the sunlight shining through these windows, the effect is most conducive to prayer.

Now as the weather warms, we will turn our attention to beautifying the exterior of the church with better landscaping and flower beds. But as we seek

to beautify God's house, let us above all remember the reason—because God Himself dwells in the tabernacle. The church is His home. All the effort, time and money we expend on the house of God should be little in comparison to the love for God we have in our hearts. May we always be grateful for the Real Presence of Christ in our tabernacles and spend as much time as we can in His presence, especially during Lent!

As we meditate on the Passion of Our Lord during this season, let us especially call to mind the love we owe to Him, who has loved us so much. May we all grow in our love for God during this Lent. We again thank you for your support. Be assured of a daily remembrance in our prayers.

*Fr. Benedict Hughes, CMRI*



*The Sisters joined us for a celebratory dinner at the end of the Christmas season.*