



# THE GUARDIAN

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Monthly newsletter of St. Joseph Seminary

December 2023

**W**e have had a good month, praying daily during November for the Poor Souls. We have also made visits to our cemetery and try to gain as many indulgences as possible. In addition, we sang several Requiem High Masses this past month.

As usual, our lives are busy. We had our traditional fund-raising breakfast on the 3<sup>rd</sup> weekend of November. It was a lot of work but we enjoyed it. Hopefully, there will be enough proceeds to go skiing a couple of times this winter.

So far we haven't had much snow at all. The weather has been relatively mild, but we know that winter weather

coming of the Christ child. Christmas vacation with our families will be fun, but first we have to make a good Advent. Let us all resolve to spend this season well, that we might have a joyous and blessed Christmas.

## Lover of the Sacred Heart

by Anthony Strain, gr. 11

**I**n the book The Family That Overtook Christ, one of the most interesting things that I found was when Saint Bernard of Clairvaux was debating with his brother Nivard on humility. In this chapter of the book Bernard asked Nivard who he should appoint as master of novices for a new

## December Calendar

- 1 – Jorge's 19<sup>th</sup> birthday; mid-quarter
- 8 – Feast of the Immaculate Conception BVM; no classes
- 13 – John's 18<sup>th</sup> birthday
- 17 – Annual Christmas program
- 20 – Christmas Vacation begins after classes

by replacing them with something more precious, love for God.

Nivard told Bernard that his sermons sometimes made him sick. Bernard, according to Nivard, was always saying that we must humble ourselves and through that virtue consider our bodies vile. He said that the body is not a vile thing; it was made to the image and likeness of God. And if we were made exactly how God wanted us to be, then why consider ourselves vile? Rather, our mind and intellect are vile because it was through the fall of Adam and Eve that they became so.

Nivard also stated that humility is doing our daily duty for love of God and accepting our crosses for that same reason. St. Bernard of Clairvaux preached, in his sermons, humility as fear of God, but in his daily life and by his example, he preached love of God. Love for God is a virtue that is the crown of all saints, and one we should try to acquire in our daily lives.



*Here is a group photo of all 19 residents of St. Joseph (minor) Seminary and St. Louis Marie de Montfort (major) Seminary.*

is right around the corner. We are looking forward to sledding, skiing, and, of course, throwing snowballs!

We also know that Advent will soon be here. It is an important time when we make a list of penances and try to prepare our hearts for the

daughter house of Clairvaux. Nivard suggested that whoever Bernard chose should be a weaner of souls. Nivard said many religious were too attracted to the world, and that a master of novices should try to completely eliminate attraction to worldly things

## Our Seminary Fundraiser

by Louis Albin, gr. 9

With winter coming on, we seminarians are getting excited about going skiing. We usually make our ski trips in January or February, the coldest months of the year. However, to pay for these trips, we run seminary fundraisers which the parishioners of Mary Immaculate Queen Parish support. Recently, we ran a seminary breakfast at the church and also made pies for parishioners to purchase.

We began the endeavor on the second Sunday of November. We ran a sign-up table after each of the Masses so families at the church could order their Thanksgiving pies. There were six flavor options for the pies: apple, Oreo, Mint Oreo, Reese's, Butterfinger, and of course the classic Thanksgiving flavor: pumpkin. On the following Friday, we started baking the pies. Jorge Cruz, one of the seminarians, ran the project. We labored hard making the pies through all of Friday and Saturday.

On Saturday, several of us also began preparing for the Sunday breakfast. We made a dish of quinoa, eggs, and meat, as well as delicious chili. Several sides and desserts were also donated by generous members of the parish. Finally, we had everything prepared for the next day.

All the seminarians rose early on Sunday, so that we could serve the breakfast after all three Masses. We dished out food to all the hungry parishioners, and in return were given generous donations. The pies were also sold on that day – there were 67 of them! It was a lot of work, but looking back, it now seems an enjoyable experience. We should be able to have multiple fun ski trips this year from the profit we earned. I would like to give special thanks to all those who supported our seminary fundraisers.

## The Story of the Doubter by David Stone, gr. 12

Thomas was one of the many fisherman who Jesus called to be one of his apostles. Thomas, by nature, was slow to believe, always too apt to see the difficulties and the dark side of things. At the Last Supper Our Lord talks about the mansions in the kingdom of

heaven and Thomas asks, "Lord, we know not where thou goest; how can we know the way?" And Jesus responds with, "I am the way the truth and the life."

Also, when Jesus was going to the tomb of Lazarus in Bethany Thomas told the others: come let us die with him. After the resurrection, Thomas was not with the other apostles when Jesus came to them. Jesus walked through the closed door and told the apostles "Peace be to you," and He sat there and taught them.

After Jesus left, the apostles told Thomas saying: We have seen the Lord. Thomas would not believe until he placed his hand in Our Lord's side and put his finger where the nails were. So the next Sunday Thomas was with them



*The seminarians served the parish breakfast on a recent Sunday.*

and Jesus came again and walked through the closed door, saying: "Peace be to you." Then He said: "Thomas, come here and put thy hand in my side and thy finger in the place of the nails."

Before Thomas did this he exclaimed, "My Lord and My God." Thomas still did what he was told and put his finger in the place of the nails and his hand in His side. Jesus then rebuked him saying, "Because thou seest thou believest. Blessed are they who have not seen and yet believe."

We are those who have not seen but yet believe. The question is, do we believe like Thomas and repeat the famous saying "believing is seeing"? Little do we realize that it is in believing that we see. These things are written for our instruction. This is the story of the doubter given to us to learn from the mistake of Thomas and to believe without needing to see.





*Everyone is busy during a group study period.*



*Even simple things like a group ping-pong game are a source of joy!*



*One of Father Gabriel's missions is a monthly trip to Salt Lake City.*



*Everyone had a hand in making pies for our fund-raiser.*



*Our recent fund-raising breakfast was well-attended after each Sunday Mass.*



*We recited the Rosary as we returned to the church from our cemetery visit.*



## A Well-regulated Life

Our daily life here at the seminary goes on, day after day, without much variation. In fact, the schedule we follow has remained relatively the same, year after year, for the past 25 years. The reason is that the daily routine is so laid out that there is adequate time for everything: prayer, studies, sleep, recreation and chores. The well-ordered routine keeps everyone busy.

This routine also contributes to contentment and happiness. Sure, no one likes to get up early to milk the cow or prepare breakfast, yet the seminarians do so without complaint. Given human nature, there might be some interior grumbling on occasion, but they “offer it up” and fulfill their tasks. As we often point out to them: attitude is of paramount importance. A negative attitude spreads discontent to everyone, while a positive, cheerful attitude helps us to carry our cross and contributes to our sanctification.

The seminarians greatly enjoy their recreations, and they particularly enjoy one another’s company. One of the reasons for this is that they *want* to be here. We don’t accept any seminarians who are here only because their parents want them to be here. They have to desire it and are required to write a letter of intention before they are accepted into the seminary.

I must admit that it gives me great pleasure watching them having a good time. Years from now they will fondly look back upon their time here as some of the best years of their life. When we are busy doing God’s will, fulfilling our daily duty, and striving to grow in holiness, we are truly happy. Such is the life of a seminarian who cooperates with the instructions of superiors and strives to fulfill what is asked of him.

As we approach the most joyous time of year, we wish you and your families a blessed Christmas and all the blessings of God in the New Year of 2024. Please continue to pray for our seminary and for more young men who will respond to the call of Our Lord to “Come, follow Me.” May God bless you abundantly!

*Fr. Benedict Hughes, CMRI*



*We chant Vespers of the Divine Office on feasts of Our Lady.*



*The school children joined us for a visit to the cemetery during the Octave of All Souls Day*