



THE GUARDIAN

Vol. III, No. 7

Monthly newsletter of St. Joseph Seminary

March 2002

In a few days we will attend our annual retreat. The retreat is always a great blessing for all of us. A visiting priest generally comes here for the retreat, and Fr. Benedict travels to replace that priest for the weekend. We will give you a report on our retreat in the next issue.

A few days ago, on the first Sunday of Lent, we made our first attempt at Sunday Vespers. Mr. Duff had prepared us thoroughly, and so everything came off quite well. The parishioners who attended were appreciative, and we hope our efforts will aid all of us in having a good Lent.

Our basketball season is quickly drawing to a close. With a few games left we are 10-12. The cancellation of the Canada tournament was a big disappointment to us, but a couple of other games were scheduled to take its place. Although the season has been a lot of fun, we now look forward to warmer weather and some outdoor sports.

The snow has mostly melted, although there are still piles here and there, with about eight inches of the white stuff still covering our yard. Lately, we have enjoyed plenty of sunshine. Spring is definitely on the horizon. Lent certainly comes at an appropriate time of year, for our penance melts away the ice and cold of sin and bad habits, leading to the rebirth of the spiritual life. We hope that you will all have a good Lent and a blessed Easter.

The Sacred Liturgy

by Mr. Tim Duff

Besides his academic classes the most important training a seminarian could receive is in the Sacred

Liturgy. This is true because the Liturgy is the official public worship of Almighty God by the Church. How often we forget that the highest duty of man is to worship the Creator, both individually and as a society.

The Liturgy includes not only the Mass, but also the Divine Office. Consequently, as choir director I train the seminarians to sing High Masses and, recently, have focused on two sometimes forgotten parts of the Liturgy — Vespers and Tenebrae.

Vespers is the part of the daily Divine Office which is said right around sundown. Many older Catholics remember going to Sunday Vespers as part of the observance of the Lord's Day. The seminarians will join Fr. Benedict during Lent in chanting Sunday Vespers as a special Lenten devotion, both as a valuable training in Gregorian Chant, and because the Lenten Vespers are a bit easier to learn. I have been working with them on alternating the beautiful psalms in two choirs and learning the antiphons as well as the hymn *Audi Benigne Conditor*, which they learned last year for Lent.

Tenebrae, meaning "darkness," is a beautiful and moving ceremony during Holy Week. It is solemn Matins and Lauds for Holy Thursday, Good Friday and Holy Saturday, anticipated the night before. I am beginning to work with the seminarians on the beautiful chants and responsories. We will

March calendar

- 4 — Final basketball game
- 1-12 — Annual Ping-Pong Tournament
- 14-20 — Annual Chess Tournament
- 17 — St. Patrick's Day celebration
- 19 — St. Joseph's Day; no classes
- 21 — Fr. Benedict's feastday
- 24 — Palm Sunday
- 27 — Last day of classes for Third Quarter
- 30 — Holy Saturday; Easter vacation begins

also study the inspiring texts in English in order to understand better this wonderful act of worship of our crucified Savior.

I feel privileged to prepare our young men for the Liturgy, and ask your prayers for God's blessing on this important work.



Kevin assists Father with a baptism in Great Falls, Montana.

Ash Wednesday

by Philip Dunphy, gr. 11

Ash Wednesday is a very important day in the liturgical year. It opens the season of Lent and is a symbol of mourning and repentance. In the early Church ashes were used by public penitents along with garments of sackcloth. Now, all receive ashes, because all must do penance.

At the seminary each of us makes up a private schedule of prayer and penance to be followed throughout Lent. It is an excellent guide that keeps us focused during this season. Besides our own private penances we have some common sacrifices. Also, this year we sang a High Mass for Ash Wednesday, which included some beautiful Lenten chants.

We all should use Lent to perform penance and sacrifice. It is a time to strengthen our souls through mortification, helping us to fight temptation and come closer to God.

Enough white stuff!

by Charles Rodriguez, gr. 11

This year has been a record-breaking year for snow at St. Joseph's. By the time we had reached the second week of December, there was already enough snow to bury the cars. We have done lots of fun things in the snow: we pulled parishioners' cars out of the milk-white snow (this was great because we skipped a bit of class time!), we went skiing and snowboarding, and we raced down the hills around the seminary on our sled. Also, Michael had fun riding his snowmobile and giving us rides on it.

There are so many great and exciting things to do in the snow, but there is such a thing as too much snow! I don't know about the other seminarians but brushing off two feet of snow kind of gets a little boring after awhile. When we shovel snow off the roof, we can purposely jump off the roof into the heaping mounds of snow, but even that gets a little old after three months. Don't get me wrong! I love snow, but I think I am just about ready for spring now.

Spring at the City of Mary is so beautiful and alive compared to the dead, cold winter. I can't wait to see all of the flowers budding and blooming against the lush green background. I yearn to be able to ride my bike up and down the road. I wish that spring were here. In spring you don't have to worry about chapped lips with the moist, fresh air. You can feel free to pick flowers for Our Lady during the month of May. (I also like the fact that my birthday is in the springtime.)

Spring reminds me of Our Lord ascending into Heaven. He has already paid the price for our sins and is now gloriously sitting at the right hand of the Father waiting for us to join Him in eternal bliss. Oh, how I wish spring were here. . . .

. . . I'm tired of spring. It rains too much in spring and it taunts me, saying that I must finish school before I can go outside and play. . . . I wish summer were here!

A typical morning

by Kevin Cox, gr. 12

As the morning bell rings — ding, ding, ding — we struggle to get out of bed. Soon the automated bell also rings, and we can't help but get out of bed — well, maybe some can help it. The first one up rubs his eyes, yawns and stretches to wake himself up, and he checks the other rooms to make sure that everyone has gotten up. As each seminarian rolls out of bed, he kneels down to make the morning offering, in order that everything in his day may be done for God alone.

A little more lively now, each seminarian makes his way to the bathroom in order to prepare for the coming day. After washing up, each trudges back to his room to finish getting dressed and to fix up his room. By this I mean that we make the bed and straighten our rooms — we never know when Father will decide to inspect them!

After all this is done, each one makes his way towards the stairs and goes into the chapel for morning prayers. After prayers the remainder of the time before Mass is spent in recollection, unless you are the sacristan or are serving the Mass. Then begins the Holy Sacrifice, and thus begins each day here at the seminary.

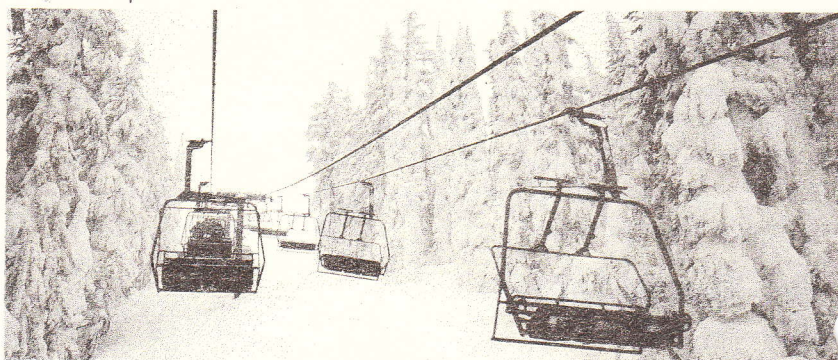
Our annual ski trip

by Matthew Dunphy, gr. 10

On a recent Thursday we had our annual ski trip. The day began with our normal 7:00 a.m. Mass. After Mass and breakfast we donned our skiing clothes and headed for Silver Mountain in Kellogg, Idaho.

At the base of the mountain we obtained our rental gear and lift tickets and boarded the gondola. At the top we put on our skis and headed for the slopes. The only problem was that the falling snow pelted our faces as we raced down the slopes. Since I didn't have any goggles it was a little rough. We all

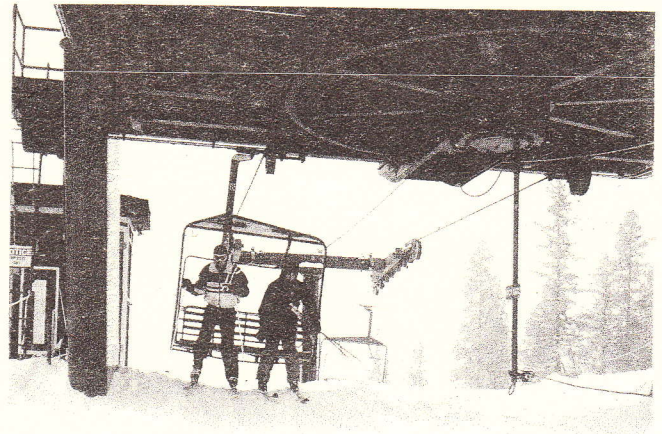
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The ride up the chairlift is a quiet time — good for praying an extra decade or two.



The seminarians are ready for a day of skiing.



Matt and Michael get off the chairlift at the top.



Michael skis down the slope.



Every basketball game starts with a prayer.



Remember, man, that thou art dust.



Father distributes ashes to one of the school-children.

Ski trip

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took it easy at first, but soon we were taking black diamonds and blues (the more difficult slopes). After lunch we went out and started to take some jumps. We are certainly not professionals, but it is fun to get off the ground into the air on your skis.

Although we were getting tired by the end of the afternoon, we didn't want to stop, so we managed to get in a few more runs before closing time. We were among the last ones to leave, so we certainly got our money's worth. After a full day of skiing we hopped on the gondola and went back down the mountain, grateful for the opportunity to take a day off and enjoy the beauty of God's creation.

A time for penance

by Michael LeStage, gr. 9

Lent is here again. Lent is a time of penance to help us prepare for the Easter season. If spent wisely, it can be the best time of year.

It seems that the time of year we are in is fitting for the season of Lent. Why? By just looking outside we see that winter is drawing to an end, and spring is almost on the horizon. Spring — that wonderful time when the earth comes back to life after many cold and relentless months. And just as spring is coming, so is the celebration of Christ's resurrection after the Lenten season.

So you see, if we persevere in the devout practice of Lent, Easter will be more eagerly anticipated. What are the advantages of putting your best efforts into Lent? One advantage of a well-spent Lent is a happier Easter season. The more we work for something the more we will appreciate it. So let us persevere with confidence through the Lenten season and we will have prepared well for Easter, the feast of Christ's resurrection.

Our holy patron

March is a welcome month here at the seminary, because St. Joseph is our special patron. There are special observances in his honor throughout the month. Our needs, both spiritual and material, are entrusted to his loving care. We

Seminary Support Club

If you are not yet a member of the Seminary Support Club and would like to become a member, you may write to the seminary at the address below. Members pledge to pray for the success of the seminary and, if able, to send a regular financial contribution for its support.

Do you have a vocation?

If you are a young man of high school age who has a vocation, then St. Joseph Seminary may be the place for you. Our four-year course of studies offers the regular high school curriculum, with an emphasis on Theology, Latin, choir and foreign language. A well-rounded program of daily Mass, prayer and sports complements our academic schedule. For more information, write to the rector of St. Joseph Seminary at the address below.

particularly remember our benefactors during this month in our prayers to this great saint.

Like Our Blessed Mother, St. Joseph observed with wonder the growing divine Child. The foster father of Jesus meticulously fulfilled his role as superior, bread-winner and protector of both the Holy Mother and her divine Child. St. Joseph is a hidden saint but a great one. After Mary herself there is not a greater saint in heaven than her spouse, who was chosen to be the guardian of the great High Priest, Jesus Himself, during His youth.

It was no accident that our seminary was named for this great patron, for a minor seminary is for adolescent youths who believe they may be called to the priesthood. Hidden away in the seclusion of the seminary — much like Jesus in the home of Nazareth — they strive to learn and imitate the ways of Christ. Who better can assist them in this task than St. Joseph? May he help our young men to follow the pattern of Christ.

We again thank you for your support and pray that St. Joseph will grant each of you a great love for Jesus and Mary.

Fr. Benedict Hughes, CMRI

The Guardian is published monthly for the enjoyment of our benefactors and for the family members of our seminarians. This newsletter is free upon request.

**St. Joseph Seminary
15384 N. Church Rd.
Rathdrum, ID 83858-7650**