



# THE GUARDIAN

Vol. IV, No. 1

Monthly newsletter of St. Joseph Seminary

September 2002

## As we begin our fourth year . . .

The past month has been a typical August at the seminary. Various projects that have long been planned are finally tackled. This summer's projects include: finishing our computer lab and setting up the remaining computers, staining and varnishing the window sills and trim in the classroom and living room, cleaning out the basement, washing all the windows in the seminary inside and out, and, of course, collecting books and planning for the school year—to name the more important tasks.

This summer I have had the valuable assistance of Frater Gabriel Lavery, Brother Sebastian Kosch, and several boys from the parish. Frater Gabriel is a seminarian in major orders from Omaha who spent nearly two weeks at the minor seminary. It was a pleasure to have his assistance on some of our summer projects, as well as a companion with whom to pray the Divine Office and our other daily prayers. Brother Sebastian, who resides at Mount St. Michael, has assisted me for a week or more each of the past three summers. His assistance as a general handyman has been most valuable.

The boys from our local parish who helped with some of the tasks were recently rewarded with an afternoon at Lake Pend Oreille for some swimming and boating. We went to the "old swimming hole" with its gigantic boulder from which the boys enjoyed jumping into the clear and deep water of the lake.

The past month has also provided me the opportunity to undertake some missionary travels that are difficult to manage during the school year. A trip to the Seattle area at the beginning of the month was followed two weeks later with a mission to western Montana for 2 baptisms and Mass and confessions for small groups of parishioners in several different cities. Next week I will journey to southern Idaho to provide Mass for an elderly Catholic couple who hasn't had Mass or the sacraments for years.

At the end of August our students begin arriving from around the country. Please join us in praying to Our Lady and St. Joseph for a successful year, and that God will bless our efforts with holy priests.

## Spes messis in semine

When the minor seminary began three years ago, there necessarily were several goals that had not yet been achieved. Some of these include a written handbook of rules for the seminarians, a school coat of arms and a school motto. The urgency of preparing the classes and giving the seminarians our attention caused such projects to be put on hold. Now that the seminary has been in operation for several years, however, we can turn our attention to some of this business left unfinished at our foundation.

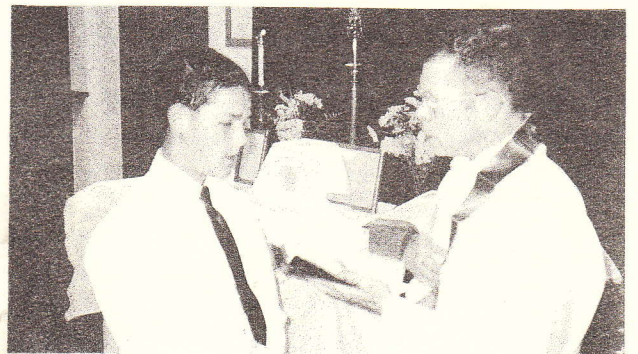
For starters, our school motto will be *Spes Messis in Semine*. This

## September calendar

- 2 — Seminarians arrive; orientation
- 3 — First day of classes
- 5 — Mrs. Salgado's birthday (our secretary)
- 6-7 — Annual camping trip
- 12 — Holy Name of Mary — chanted Vespers
- 13 — Dustin's 18<sup>th</sup> birthday
- 19 — Football scrimmage
- 24 — Our Lady of Ransom — chanted Vespers; no homework
- 26 — Football game
- 27 — Philip's 18<sup>th</sup> birthday
- 29 — Feast of St. Michael — Father's 23<sup>rd</sup> anniversary

Latin dictum, meaning 'The hope of the harvest is in the seed,' has often been applied to seminaries. Of course the word

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Father receives a catechumen into the Church in Great Falls, Montana.

## Spes messis in semine

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*seminary* comes from the same root as *semine*, meaning seed or young plant. The Latin *seminarium* is translated seed-bed or nursery of plants.

The larger meaning of the Latin dictum is that the success of the harvest of souls which the Church seeks is entirely dependent on the laborers. But the laborers will be capable to the degree that they have been prepared from their youth for the delicate task of saving souls. We could not possibly say too much about the importance of forming the young in discipline, the practice of virtue and the love of God from their earliest years. If we are to have holy priests, they must be well-formed from their youth.

This then is the purpose of our seminary — to train young men in the practice of virtue, to instill into them habits that will serve them well for the rest of their lives. You faithful are an important part of this program, for Our Lord Himself tells us that we must “Pray the Lord of the harvest that He send laborers into His harvest, for the harvest is great but the laborers are few.” Thus it is your task to pray for vocations and for the work of seminaries, and to support this work as far as you are able.

### Where have the seminaries gone?

In April and May of this year I received several phone calls from parents who were interested in our seminary for their sons. The interesting part about this is that these parents are not traditional Catholic — they attend the Novus Ordo. So why had they called us? They were desperately trying to find a seminary for their sons and in their search had stumbled upon ours via the Internet. (Our seminary is mentioned on the CMRI website: “<http://www.cmri.org>”) In two cases the boys had been attending a Novus Ordo seminary which was closing its doors. Of course I explained to them briefly that ours is a traditional Catholic seminary, but this did not seem to deter them. Unfortunately, none of these inquiries materialized.

This experience led me again to reflect on the devastation caused by Vatican II. The Church in this country possessed a plethora of seminaries — both major and minor — throughout the country. A prospective seminarian had no lack of options in choosing a seminary. But now, what has become of them?

A few weeks ago I was in the Seattle area and took advantage of the opportunity to visit the former seminaries of the Seattle archdiocese. These two seminaries were located on an enormous tract of land in Bothell, on the northern end of Lake Washington, just to the northeast of the City of Seattle. The minor seminary (which was the original major seminary) is named St. Edward's. The large and beautiful 4-story building is surrounded by recreation fields and courts for tennis and racquetball, with separate buildings for a gymnasium and a swimming pool. Over the main door is the motto: *Spes Messis*

*in Semine*. This property is now a state park; the main building is closed, and the outdoor grotto, sans statue of Our Lady, is used for weddings and picnics.

The major seminary is named for St. Thomas the Apostle. The buildings there are arranged in a quadrangle, surrounding a lovely courtyard and fountain. At the impressive main entrance are found the coat of arms of Pope Pius XII (during whose pontificate the seminary was built) and that of the local archbishop at the time, both mosaics. There also are bas relief sculptures: on one side of St. Thomas proclaiming “My Lord and My God” and on the other side of Our Lord with His apostles in a wheat field, as Jesus says: “Pray the Lord of the harvest to send laborers . . .” This building is now a private college. One can still enter the chapel, which is much the same as it was before. The altars, statues, stained-glass windows, choir stalls and beautiful mosaics of the 14 stations of the cross remain untouched. (How sad to see this magnificent chapel now empty — without the Blessed Sacrament or worshippers!) Evidently, the Catholic Church in this country spared no expense when it came to the education of future priests.

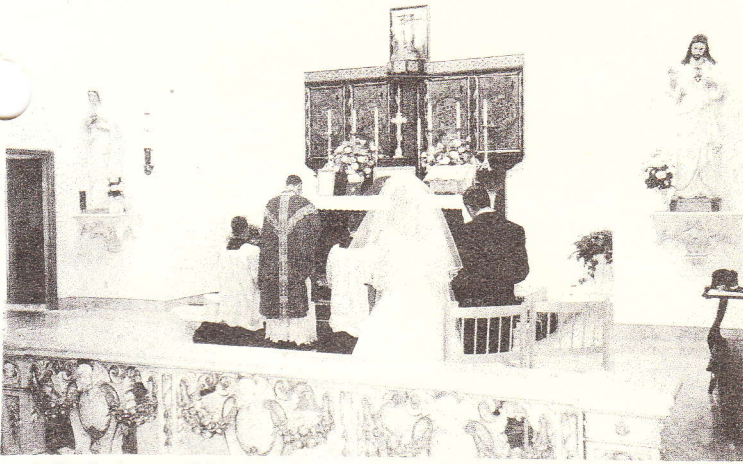
But now these beautiful buildings throughout the country have either been demolished, sold or lie empty, while we are reduced to a state much like that of the early Christians of the catacombs. How tragic the loss! One recalls, however, the consoling words of St. Athanasius: “They have the buildings but we have the Faith.” May we prove worthy of the gifts that have been given us, and may we one day see the return of the glory which belongs to Christ's Church on earth.

### Support a seminarian

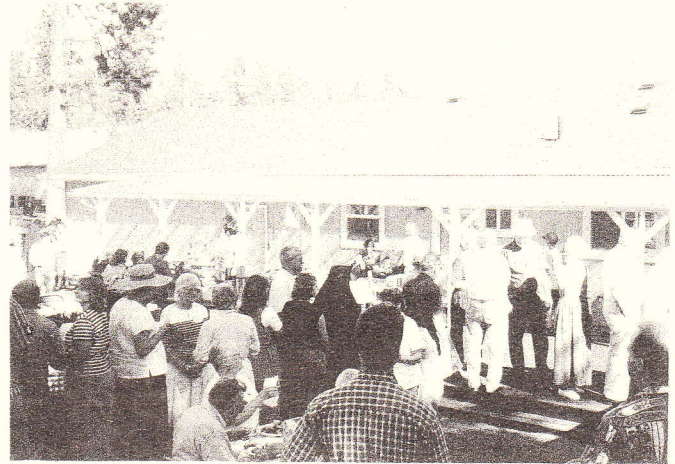
Once again at the beginning of the new year we prepare a budget to guide us through the material needs of the coming school year. While the budget has often been tight, the generosity of our supporters has made the work of the seminary financially possible now for three years. Our ability to maintain the seminary for the past several years, however, does not guarantee its success for the future. As you can imagine many, if not all, our seminarians come from large Catholic families, many of whom cannot afford the entire amount of tuition, modest as it is. At the same time, we would not want to ever turn away, for financial reasons, a young man who felt called by God to the priesthood.

To help resolve this difficulty, we have instituted a scholarship program for our seminary. Through this program, donors who are financially able and willing, contribute towards the tuition of a particular seminarian each month. They thus become sponsors of that seminarian. Those who would like to participate but are unable to afford the entire amount would contribute a part of the monthly tuition fee. This scholarship would then be matched with a deserving seminarian, who would thus become that donor's “adopted” seminarian.

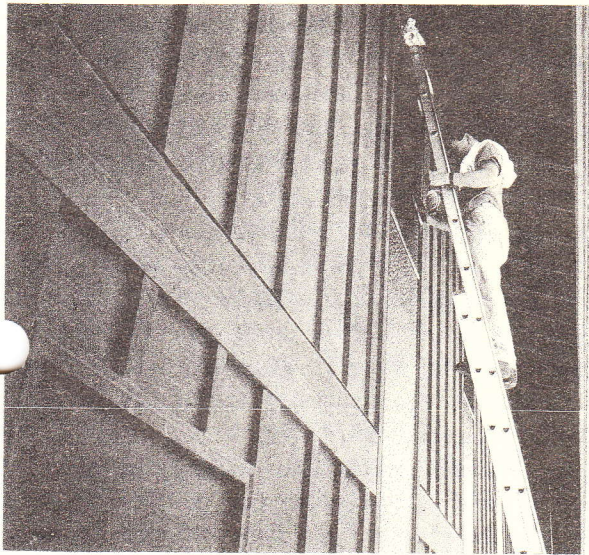
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*A Catholic wedding is always a joyous occasion — religious vocations come from Catholic families.*



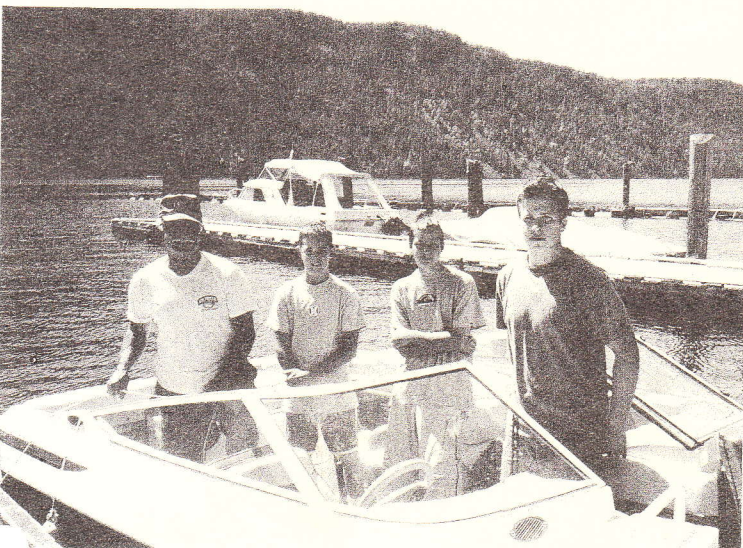
*Guests enjoy a summer barbecue to help support the parish building fund.*



*Frater Gabriel washes the windows of the seminary chapel.*



*A young man of the parish helps with the window-washing project.*



*Three young men who helped at the seminary are rewarded with an afternoon on the lake, courtesy of our seminary friend, Mr. Gary Petzinger.*



*Michael enjoys skiing on the clear, calm water.*

## Support a seminarian

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Similar programs have been in place in the Church in the past. Without such support, the work of seminary training could not continue. Imagine the blessing of being able to bring a young man to the altar of God, particularly a young man who would otherwise not be able to become a priest! If you are interested in this program, please contact us, as there are still some seminarians who need a part of their tuition paid through the scholarship program.

## Our glorious patrons

In His youth, Jesus was perfectly subject to Mary, His Mother, and St. Joseph, His foster-father. Seminarians who aspire to become other Christs ought to develop a particular devotion to these two saints. Appropriately, our school year begins in September, a month filled with lovely feasts of Our Blessed Mother. It is fitting that we should commence each recurring year during this month, when we celebrate several significant feasts of Our Blessed Mother, for who could better understand the importance of formation for future priests than the Mother of the First Seminarian? Under the vigilant eye of Mary, Jesus developed into manhood. She watched in wonder as the Son of God grew in wisdom, age and grace during those hidden years at the "seminary" of Nazareth.

On the Feast of Mary's Nativity we recall the blessed day when she was born into this world. A few days later we celebrate the feast of the Holy Name of Mary, reminding us that God chose this name for His immaculate Mother from all eternity, and that we should often invoke reverently that Holy Name. The feast of the Seven Sorrows of Mary reminds us of her love for us and of the terrible cost of our sins. The feast of Our Lady of Ransom (Our Lady of Mercy) reminds us of the tender solicitude of our heavenly Mother for all her children.

And so we begin a new seminary year under Our Lady's mantle. May we always strive to imitate her, however feeble our efforts. May she help these young men to grow in wisdom, age and grace — to become daily more and more like her divine Son.

At the same time, we must not forget St. Joseph, the other member of that Holy Family. Like Our Blessed Mother, he too

observed with wonder the growing divine Child. St. Joseph meticulously fulfilled his role as superior, bread-winner and guardian of both the Holy Mother and her divine Child. Saint 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.

Our seminary is blessed to have this great saint as our special patron. A minor seminary is, in some respects, like the home of Nazareth. Hidden away in the seclusion of the seminary — much like Jesus in the home of Nazareth — the seminarians 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.

## Only instruments

Our seminary will open its doors in a few days to five new students from across the country. They will arrive from Virginia, Ohio, Louisiana and California, and will be joined by two additional new students from our local parish. It is especially encouraging to see various sections of our country represented in the minor seminary.

The beginning of a new year offers a renewed opportunity to strive for excellence, to improve upon what we have done thus far. Our goal remains that of imparting a sound Catholic education to young men — who are growing up in a very anti-Christian age — with the hope that those who are called will follow the vocation to become priests or religious Brothers, while those who determine that the priesthood or religious life is not their vocation will become model Catholic gentlemen.

With each passing year I become more aware of the truth that we are only instruments in the hands of God. We must pray that His grace will work in the hearts and minds of these young men to lead them on the paths of sanctity. If there is any success to our work, it is due solely to His grace. I especially ask for the daily support of your prayers for the welfare and success of our seminary. Surely there can be no greater task than contributing to the formation and spiritual well-being of a future priest. May God reward your support.

*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.

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