



THE GUARDIAN

Vol. IV, No. 4

Monthly newsletter of St. Joseph Seminary

December 2002

Since our last newsletter there have been several events at the seminary that we would like to tell you about. The first was a field trip last month to the Seattle area. We enjoyed a tour of Whidbey Naval Air Station, where we stayed overnight. The next day, before returning home, we visited Ft. Casey State Park, also on Whidbey Island, where there are fortifications that were built during World War II to protect the U. S. mainland from possible Japanese attack. Following the ferry ride to the mainland we toured the Boeing wide-body assembly plant — where the 747, 767 and 777 planes are assembled — before returning home.

We also enjoyed a visit last month by Bishop Pivarunas, Bishop Yuri Yurchik, and Fr. Eugen Riesling. Bishop Yurchik is an Eastern Rite bishop from Donetsk, Ukraine, who had come, along with his translator from Germany, for a visit to Mt. St. Michael. The seminarians enjoyed Bishop Yurchik's explanation of his work and the Ukrainian liturgy he offers. He even demonstrated some of the Old Slavonic language by writing a few phrases on the board. We marveled at how the versatile Fr. Riesling, although a German, could understand the Russian of Bishop Yurchik and translate into English. Their visit was an education in the universality of the Church.

A few weeks ago we began our basketball practices. As the season is just underway, we will have to tell you more about it in our next issue.

Of course we are all looking forward to our first real snowfall. We are also looking forward to Thanksgiving and Christmas vacations. We hope that you have an enjoyable Thanksgiving, and we

promise to remember you and your intentions in our Christmas novena prayers.

Our Advent preparation

by Philip Dunphy, gr. 12

During Advent we prepare ourselves for Our Lord's coming at Christmas by performing a few penances and by practicing traditions.

One of the most common practices is that of lighting the Advent wreath. With its four candles the wreath symbolizes the four thousand years during which the human race waited for Our Lord's coming. At the seminary there are wreaths in the chapel, the main church and also on our dining room table. The wreath with its prayers and symbolism is a great practice for Advent.

We also have the practice of choosing a sacrifice from our sacrifice bowl. At the beginning of Advent, each seminarian writes out several sacrifices, such as: to drink only water at meals, to make extra visits to Our Lord in the Blessed Sacrament, to lessen your intake at a meal, and other such penances. These are then typed out on slips of paper which are folded and put into the bowl. Thus you do not know what sacrifice you are getting when you reach in and pull one out. Although for the most part these are not difficult sacrifices, they do bring about a

December calendar

- 5 — Mid-quarter
- 6-7 — Basketball tournament in Creston, B.C.
- 9 — Immaculate Conception (holy-day of obligation); no classes
- 12 — Feast of Our Lady of Guadalupe; no homework; basketball game
- 13 — Basketball game
- 17 — Basketball game
- 20 — Christmas vacation begins after classes
- 28 — Stephen's 15th birthday
- 31 — Robert's 15th birthday

good spirit for Advent. We also have other seminary practices, such as no meat at our breakfast meals.

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Bishop Pivarunas and Ukrainian Bishop Yurchik give a class on Church History and the Liturgy.

Advent

continued from page 1

The Liturgy sets the tone for Advent better than anything else. It gives us the proper spirit by reading the proper parts of the Advent masses. The purple vestments signify penance and contrition.

At the seminary we practice mortifications during Advent and learn from the Liturgy and our readings. We all hope to have an Advent filled with grace — one which is worthy of the King for whom we prepare.

Is confession calling you?

by Michael LeStage, gr. 10

Why do we have confession? Is it so we can humiliate ourselves by telling the priest the sins we've committed? Of course not. We have the wonderful sacrament of confession so that we can gain graces from the sacrament and so we can cultivate the virtue of humility. By going to confession we realize that we are not perfect. No one is perfect — we are all human and we all will fall at times.

What matters is how we go about confessing our sins. It is as if we erase the transgressions from our spiritual slate and have a fresh start to build on. How often do we disregard this sacrament as being not that important? Well, we know that a person in mortal sin who wants to receive Holy Communion must first confess his sins and have sanctifying grace restored to his soul before he can approach the communion rail. That is how powerful this sacrament is for us.

The saints say that the graces we receive from confession are boundless. First, we receive the grace that will help us overcome the sin we have confessed. Second, we get sacramental graces from this sacrament to help us live a good life. So let us always take advantage of the sacrament of Penance and go to confession as frequently as we are able. Here at the seminary we have the opportunity of going to confession several times a week if we wish. Just think, wouldn't you rather work off your purgatory time now than after death?

Chores

by Robert Johnson, gr. 9

Chores at the seminary are not too hard, although they can be troublesome. We recently finished digging a ditch for drainage of a basement room.

But most of the chores consist of cleaning our rooms, vacuuming and dishes — which I detest. Chores are best dealt with when you finish them quickly and correctly. And if you're lucky, you might be assigned to pick apples, and then you can always have a share for yourself.

Basketball at the seminary

by Seth Reed, gr. 9

Basketball season has started at the seminary. This is the first season in which I will be playing for the St. Joseph Sentinels, and I am looking forward to playing with the team. In basketball practice we are concentrating on the fundamentals of passing, dribbling and rebounding and other things pertaining to the basics of basketball. Most of us are just learning, but there are a few that have been playing a long time and are exceptionally good.

Conditioning is also a big part of training for basketball. We run stairs, weight-train and also run laps. Conditioning will help our endurance during the long basketball season, as we have about 25 games and only eight players. We also will be playing against some really good teams. We all are looking forward to an exciting and successful basketball season.

Seminary field trip

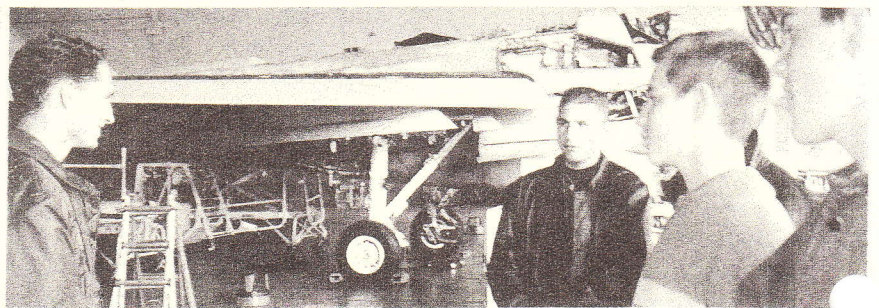
by Joseph Geckle, gr. 10

Last month Fr. Benedict took us on a very fine field trip to Whidbey Island where there is a naval air base. Our trip was arranged by Lieutenant Matthew Smith, a naval pilot, who generously sponsored our stay on the base.

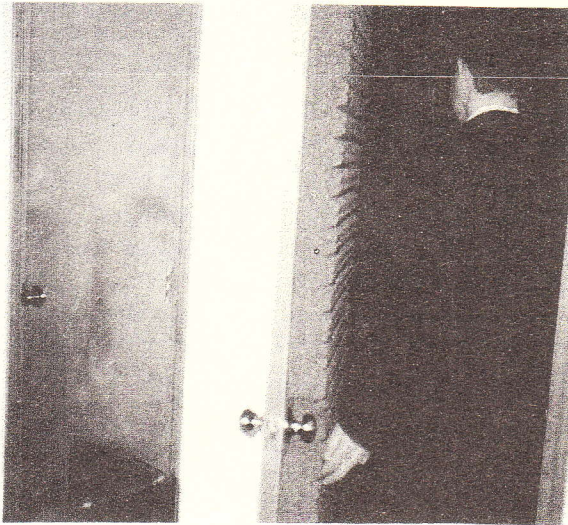
At Whidbey Naval Air Station there are two types of aircraft: the P-3 Orion, a four-engine submarine hunter, and the E-8 jet, which locates enemy radar and either jams or destroys it. We were given a tour of one of the hangars where the planes are repaired as well as a close inspection of each of the two aircraft.

We spent the night there on the base, and after Mass and breakfast the next morning we first went to see beautiful Deception Pass. We then headed back home, stopping on the way at the Boeing plant in Everett, Washington, where cargo and passenger planes are assembled. This building is the largest in the world in volume. We had a tour of this amazing place and learned much about how these giant jets are manufactured.

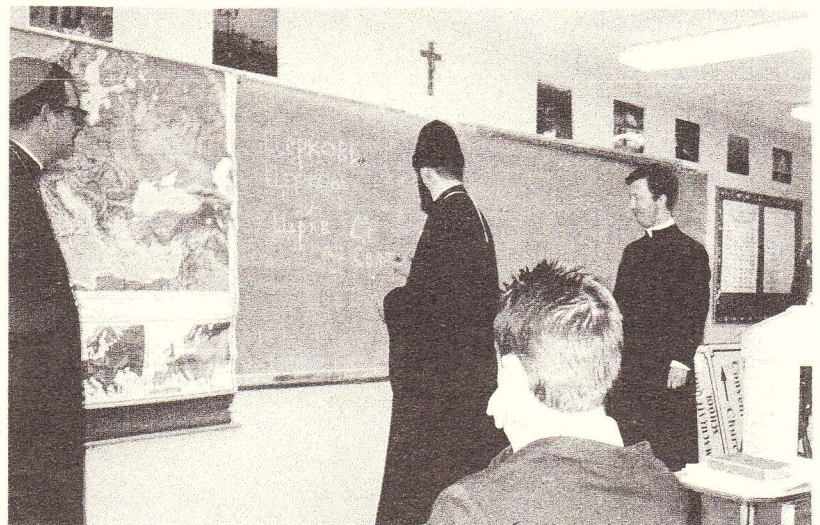
We arrived back at the seminary tired from the long trip, but all agreed that the seven-hour drive there and back was well worth it.



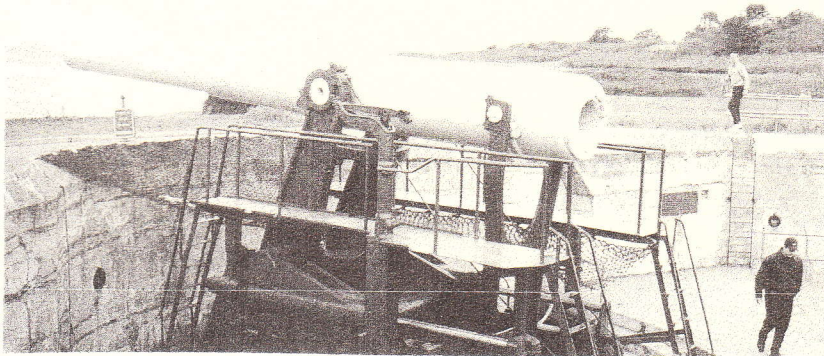
Lieutenant Matthew Smith (left) leads a tour through one of the hangars at Whidbey Naval Air Station.



Confession is a great source of sanctifying grace for Catholics.



Bishop Yurchik demonstrates for the class the correct spellings of a few root words in the Slavonic language.



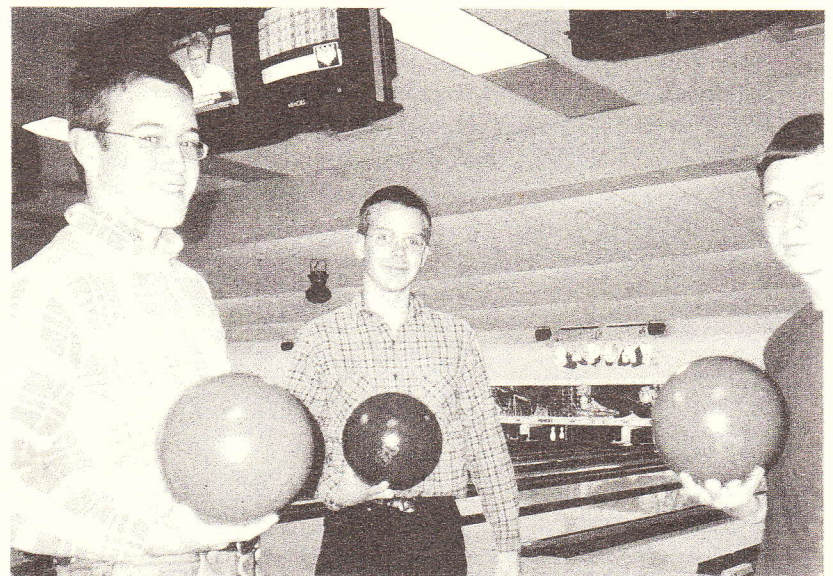
One of the remaining canons at Ft. Casey State Park is a stark reminder of the threat of enemy invasion along the West Coast during World War II.



The seminarians stand on the bridge overlooking Deception Pass.



While "on base" our happy travelers fill up on good wholesome American fare.



Every once in awhile the seminarians enjoy an evening of bowling.

"Weather" or not

by Dustin Carr, gr. 12

Once again it comes to that time in the year when Old Man Winter takes his toll on the people. With winter comes the snow in this area of the world. Some have an intense excitement for the coming of the first major snow of the year, while others just are not as enthusiastic.

There has been a definite change in the weather pattern the last few weeks. Many storms have passed through, one leading to a late October snowfall of about an inch. With the coming of November the rains came heavy at times, followed by a Sunday morning with a couple inches of snow. Most of the natives here expect by Thanksgiving the snow will be here to stay, although information collected through many weather sources indicates that the weather here is expected to be warmer and wetter than usual. With temperatures well below freezing in any common winter, warmer may not necessarily mean less snow, just heavier.

For the many who love the snow it is a great blessing. Even the ones that are not so keen on snow are eagerly anticipating the first major snowfall with great excitement. If the weather predictions are right, this could be a great year for the white stuff and an excellent year for all who enjoy it.

Month of the Divine Infant

December is one of my favorite months. Although brief, the Advent season has a unique charm, which is particularly evident in the pathos of the Advent chants and hymns. The spirit of "longing" which the liturgy of Advent inspires is a microcosm of our entire lives, which are filled with a longing for eternal union with the Christ Child.

Advent readings and meditations are particularly helpful in obtaining the spirit of this season. I recommend Bethlehem by Fr. Faber and The Incarnation, Birth and Infancy of Jesus Christ by St. Alphonsus, two of my favorites. Let us also make every effort to avoid the hustle and bustle of the world and its premature celebration of Christmas. Advent is a time of quiet preparation for celebrating Our Savior's birth.

Be sure to return to us as soon as possible the enclosed intention card with those names and intentions you wish us to remember in our Christmas novena prayers and Christmas triduum of masses. All of us at St. Joseph Seminary pray that

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.



Father and the seminarians get ready to take a closer look at one of the E-8 jets at Whidbey Naval Air Station.

you have a good Advent and a joyous Christmas. May God bless you abundantly.

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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