

THE GUARDIAN

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Monthly newsletter of St. Joseph Seminary

March 2004

Our seminary recently received a new member. Gerard, the younger brother of Brandon Odom, joined us in mid-January. He had been a student in our parish school and now is a seminarian. As Gerard indicates in his article (in which he slightly exaggerates!) the youngest member often gets stuck with the job of washing dishes.

We have now begun the season of Lent. The seminarians, as usual, sang the High Mass on Ash Wednesday and received the blessed ashes to remind us of the need for penance. Each of us has also submitted a penance program of extra penitential practices that we will perform. The recently released movie on the Passion, as well as our daily table reading on the Passion of Our Lord, will help us to focus on the sufferings Our Lord endured for love of us.

A tradition here at the seminary is an annual retreat at the beginning of March, with a different retreat master each year. This year's retreat will be conducted by Fr. Brendan Hughes, from Immaculate Conception parish in St. Cloud, Minnesota. This will also give Fr. Benedict a chance for a break.

We hope that all of you will have a very blessed Lent and that we will all grow closer to our crucified Savior. Please continue to pray for us.

An audience of One

by Mr. Tim Duff

The singing of Vespers is one of the most important things the seminarians do. I have been very pleased with the boys' progress in this area, and

especially the leadership that is beginning to develop.

We alternate between two choirs, and always in the past I made sure an adult was leading each side. But recently a couple of seminarians volunteered to lead one choir. Naturally, there have been a few mistakes, but overall they have done a fine job and are learning to chant with confidence, enthusiasm, and correctness. This must surely be pleasing to Our Lord.

One thing which helps the boys avoid nervousness is that it is just us — there is no one else in chapel. Or is there? Of course, it's never "just us." We always have our audience of One — Our Lord in the tabernacle. It is so important for high school students to remember that while getting along with and pleasing those in their peer group may be important, the most important One we must all please is Christ Our Lord in the tabernacle, Who awaits our attention, love, and service.

Finally, I think the seminarians realize that singing Vespers is an honor and a privilege, and is one of the very best ways to help themselves, their families and parish, and indeed the Church and the whole world at a time when so many are lost in this world because, as Our Lady of Fatima said, there is no one to pray for them.

March calendar

- 5-7 — Annual Retreat
- 12 — History field trip
- 14 — Fund-raiser breakfast
- 19 — Seminary feastday; special schedule
- 21 — Father's feastday
- 24-26 — Third Quarter Exams
- 26 — End of Third Quarter

A model for all

by Cavan O'Sullivan, gr. 10, and Brandon Odom, gr. 9

St. Joseph, the foster father of Our Lord, is believed to have been born in Bethlehem. He was a carpenter and a very pious man. After St. Joseph was betrothed to the Virgin Mary, an angel appeared to him in a dream and revealed the mystery of the Incarnation. The angel told Joseph to take Mary as his wife and that she would have a son named Jesus.

After the Magi's visit, the angel appeared again to St. Joseph to warn him

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The children joined the seminarians in our procession to Our Lady's shrine on the feast of Our Lady of Lourdes.

What I'm really here for

by Gerard Odom, gr. 8

Do the math. Six plus two equals eight, right? But if you take six seminarians, and add two adults, all of whom just ate, it equals one big mess. And the only thing worse than knowing that you have a class after breakfast is knowing that you have to clean that one big mess. Every morning I hear these three dreaded words: "Get going, washer!" There's nothing like a load of dirty dishes to ruin your morning.

For starters, you put away the previous night's dishes and any leftovers, and there are *always* leftovers. There's enough oatmeal left over to put five car models together! (No offense to the cook. His oatmeal is actually very good!) Then you wash all of the dishes and pray that they survive the whole process in one piece. (Yours truly had a bad case of butter-fingers one day!) Doing dishes isn't so bad as taking care of leftovers. Boy, we can't wait 'til Father gets that dog!

I've been late on a few occasions because of this boring task, and Father won't take excuses. The phrase "I had to do dishes" doesn't fly with Father. He just says, "Get 'em done faster!" To tell you the truth, it's not so bad. After all, if it's what God wants me to do, then I can't argue with that. I guess that's one of the reasons why I was put on earth: To know, love and serve God, and to do the dishes!

Praising by song

by Peter Linder, gr. 11

A unique part of our school curriculum as well as a class loved by all of us is choir. A big part of the reason why we enjoy choir is due to the fact that there is never any homework in this class. Most importantly, however, we are training our voices so that we can uplift the hearts and minds of others.

Although this may sound easy, singing is actually much more involved than any of us thought. We have to learn Gregorian chant — what more needs to be said? But for the sake of a more in-depth article, I must make you aware of the other difficulties involved. These consist of pitch, modern notation, pronouncing Latin, and the constant learning of new music.

On the other hand, it would be unfair and a little confusing if I tell you that choir is one of our favorite classes since I have only described the unwelcome points of this class. Several advantages are that we never have homework in choir and we earn graces in choir. As St. Augustine says, singing is praying twice. If you put forth some effort and keep a good attitude, you will receive a good grade. Our choir also has practical uses in the liturgy such as singing High Masses and Vespers. I personally enjoy the privilege of singing at High Masses.

One of the things we all enjoy is listening to Chris's incredibly deep voice. He makes up the entire bass portion of our choir. The rest of us, however, still need a lot of work, but

Mr. Duff assures us it will come with time. Overall, choir is developing our voices so that we may have a better prayer life.

The penitential season of Lent

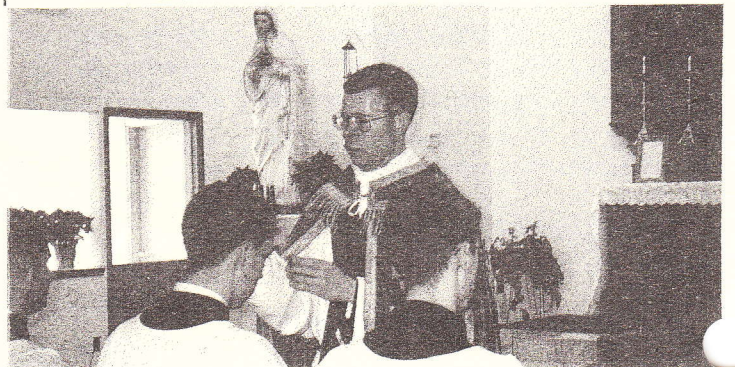
by Chris Strain, gr. 10

In the course of the Liturgical Year, we have already passed Christmas and now must concentrate on Lent. We have just finished the season of Septuagesima. In these last few weeks we prepare to meditate on the Passion of Our Lord. On Sundays the priest wears violet vestments to remind us of sorrow for sin, and how, as Catholics, we should perform at least some small penances. The Wednesday after Quinquagesima Sunday is Ash Wednesday. On this day, ashes from the burned palms of the previous Palm Sunday are used to remind us that ". . . *thou art dust and unto dust thou shalt return.*" During this time the priest wears violet vestments and we are encouraged to suffer with Our Redeemer. During Lent the Church requires those between the ages of 21 and 59 to observe the strict, penitential Lenten fast in commemoration of Our Lord's 40 days of fasting in the desert.

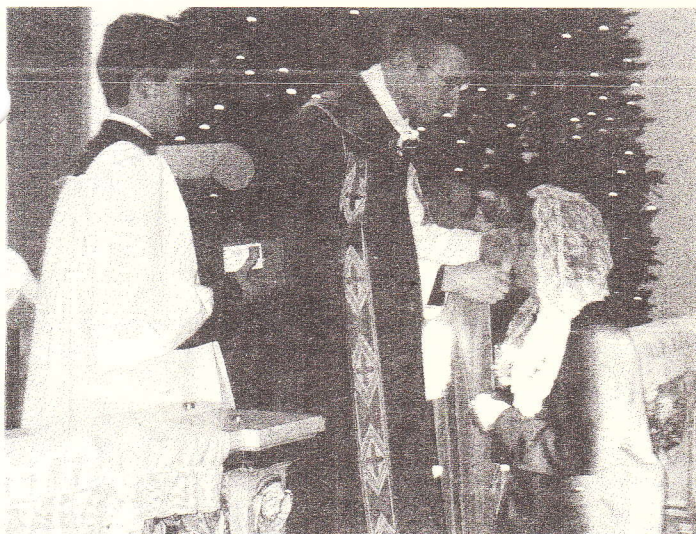
Quickly the weeks pass and we approach Palm Sunday. On this pleasant day the Jews praised Our Lord as King. They laid their cloaks on the ground and took palms from the trees to honor Him. What a beautiful sight this must have been. Then a few days later, they forgot how they praised Him and turned away. We now approach the Passion of Our Lord.

On Holy Thursday we commemorate the first Mass said by Our Lord — how He made the Apostles priests and washed their feet. On Good Friday we venerate Our Lord Crucified. We remember His Wounds and His infinite love for us. We recall the death of Christ and venerate the Relic of the True Cross.

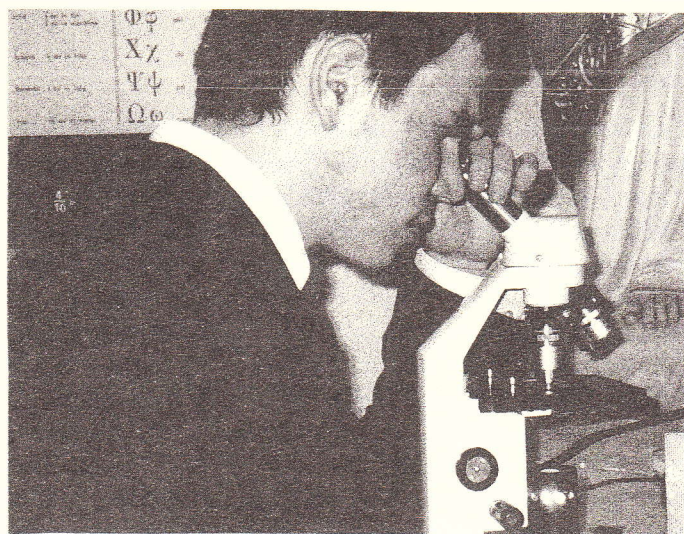
Finally, on Holy Saturday night we come to the crowning point of the season, the Resurrection. This is my favorite part of Holy Week, mainly because of the inspiring and time-honored ceremonies, for which I hope to be able to serve, and also because of the singing of the choir. We have the blessing of the New Fire, the blessing of the Baptismal Water and, at last, the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass. After all is over we go home and enjoy a week of vacation.



"Remember, man, that thou art dust . . ."



The blessing and distribution of candles on Candlemas Day marks the end of the Christmas season.



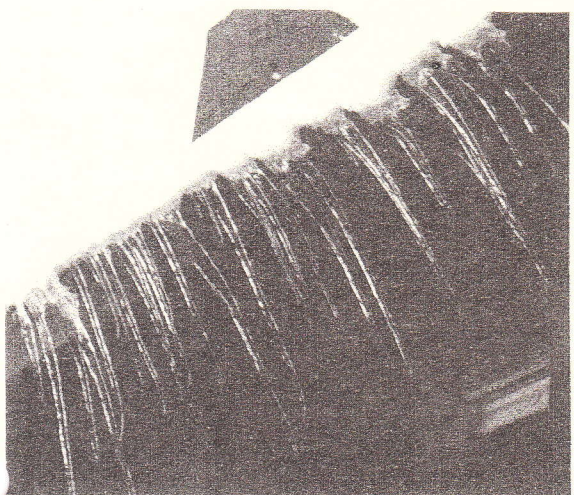
We are most grateful to those who donated our new microscopes for biology class.



On February 11 we held our annual Rosary procession to the outdoor shrine of Our Lady.



The seminarians and schoolchildren honor Our Lady by praying before Her image.



Icicles hanging from the roof is a frequent winter sight at the seminary.



We had one win and two losses in our final basketball tournament, held in Kellogg, Idaho.

A model for all

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to flee into Egypt to avoid King Herod. After Herod's death he returned with the Holy Family to Nazareth. We read again of St. Joseph at the time when Our Lord is 'lost' in the temple.

Although very little is known of St. Joseph, he has become one of the greatest role models for Catholics around the world. His intercession is so powerful that it seems petitions are granted even before they are presented to him. It is said that St. Joseph so perfectly answers prayers that people will get what they ask for, but not always exactly what they wanted. A good example is what happened one year to the Sisters of Mt. St. Michael, who wanted snow on Christmas. Eagerly they put a picture of snow-covered trees from a calendar under his statue and prayed a novena. They never got the snow for Christmas but on the first of March there was snow everywhere! One of the Sisters later discovered that the picture from the calendar was from March instead of December. This shows that St. Joseph has a sense of humor, and also proves the truth of the saying: "When you pray to St. Joseph, be careful what you ask for."

Up until the early 1600's devotion to St. Joseph wasn't very common. In 1621, however, Pope Gregory XV made the feast of St. Joseph on March 19 a holy day of obligation. Since then devotion to him has spread to all corners of the Church, and on December 8, 1870, Pope Pius IX made him guardian and patron of the Universal Church. St. Joseph is a perfect model for people in everyday life. St. Joseph is the patron of carpenters and of a happy death. His symbols are the flowering rod and the plane.

"Come, follow Me"

March is a very important month at our seminary, as it is the month of our patron, St. Joseph. Throughout the month we recite various devotions in honor of our great patron. But March is also important, because it is the month of vocations.

Not only the success of our seminary, but the welfare of Holy Mother Church and the salvation of souls are directly tied to vocations. When there are many devout young men and women who answer the call of God to serve Him, the Church prospers and many souls are saved. On the other hand, when those who are called reject that call to follow the world, or

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.

when those who dedicate their lives to God do so with complacency, the work of the Church suffers.

Our seminary will only be as good as the young men who enter it. We have often said that quality is far more important than quantity. Better to have a few holy priests, than many lay priests. We ask your prayers, especially to St. Joseph during this month, that he would send us fine young men to pursue God's call in their lives. Our Lord has told us that there is no other means of obtaining more vocations than that of prayer: "*Pray the Lord of the harvest that He send laborers into His harvest.*"

May our Catholic parents avoid the spirit of the world and form their children after the pattern of the Sacred Heart of Jesus. If they do that, then God will bless them by calling one or more of their children to His service. And those children, having learned the spirit of sacrifice, will respond to Our Lord's loving invitation, "Come, follow Me." They will respond with generosity and, through them, God will bless His Church.

May St. Joseph, along with Jesus and Mary, bless you and your families.

Fr. Benedict Hughes, CMRI

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