

THE GUARDIAN

Vol. V, No. 8

Monthly newsletter of St. Joseph Seminary

April 2004

March has been a busy month at the seminary. We began with an excellent retreat. That was followed a few days later by a class trip to Montana, as we accompanied Father on his Mass circuit. We enjoyed our school feastday on March 19 — it was great to have a day with no classes. The day was spent watching a movie on St. Thomas More, singing the High Mass and then, after lunch, going to the park.

Speaking of the park, the weather lately has been superb, and we are all getting spring fever. It sure is nice to be able to get outside and enjoy the fresh air and budding grass, trees and flowers. But we will have to be careful to not lose the spirit of Lent, as we have two more weeks to go. Passiontide is a time to redouble our efforts to meditate on Our Lord's Passion and to fulfill our Lenten sacrifices. The ceremonies of Holy Week will help us to bring the Lenten season to a successful conclusion.

Needless to say, we are all anxious for our Easter vacation. It has been a long stretch since our last vacation at Christmas, and the mind and body need a rest from time to time. We wish all of you in advance a most blessed and joyous Easter! Please continue to pray for us and for more vocations.

Sensational scenery

by Chris Strain, gr. 10

In the past two weekends here at the seminary we have been doing interesting things (besides the dishes). Of course we had our retreat, but we also went on a trip through Montana. A few smashed sardines were we, as we cruised along in a tin can. It wasn't that

bad, but after a while you start to get sore — especially Peter and myself who are at 6' 3". In the course of three days we met some very nice people who allowed us to stay with them. The food was outstanding, and all of us enjoyed the company.

We started off in St. Mary's, which was the first of the missions started by Fr. De Smet. We toured the museum and the various buildings, which demonstrated the resourcefulness and dedication of the missionaries, especially Fr. Ravalli. From the mission we went to a nearby nature preserve, before heading to the home of the Clark family in Stevensville for overnight. Mrs. Clark prepared a delicious meal of roast beef topped off with some sensational Irish soda bread. We slept soundly that night in preparation for a big day of travel and sightseeing.

Our first stop en route to Butte was the Big Hole Battlefield National Monument, where many Nez Perce Indians were slaughtered by United States soldiers in 1877. These Indians were fleeing from central Idaho due to an unjust treaty that was being forced upon them. In Butte we visited a beautiful church — the Church of St. Patrick — which was very impressive. We then went to a fascinating mineral museum, which had every type of rock imaginable, including some that glow in the dark. We also saw one of the biggest open pit

April calendar

- 8-9 — Holy Thursday; Good Friday
- 10 — Seminarians leave for Easter Vacation
- 10-18 — Easter Vacation
- 19 — Classes resume
- 26 — Feast of Our Lady of Good Counsel; Vespers
- 28 — Feast of St. Louis Marie de Montfort; begin preparation for Total Consecration; no homework
- 30 — Dedication of the new church at Sacred Heart of Jesus parish (Akron)

mines in the world. Finally, we saw an excellent video on the construction of the statue of Our Lady of the Rockies, a 90-foot statue that sits above Butte on the Continental Divide.

Helena, the capital, was our next stop. Upon our arrival we went to the Cathedral of St. Helena, where I took lots of pictures. The stained glass windows and architecture are utterly astounding. We then went to the hall

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The seminarians join the faithful of Great Falls, Montana, for a group picture after Mass.

Sensational scenery

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where Father offered Mass for the traditional Catholics of that area. Afterwards, the Morrissions, with whom we stayed that evening, bought us dinner at the Mackenzie Pizza Parlor. After that, we enjoyed using their pool table and putting green and then we said our night prayers and went to bed.

The very next morning we drove to Great Falls, about 90 miles away. Again, Father offered Mass, and then Mr. Gusick treated us to a great breakfast. Unfortunately, we had to leave for home right after breakfast, but we had a marvelous time — even though we were sore from the ride.

The deafening school bell

by Gerard Odom, gr. 8

“Ten seconds. Brace yourself.” Nine . . . eight . . . seven . . . six . . . five . . . BUZZ!!!! “Oops! Maybe it was only five!”

In case you're wondering what that was, it was just another incident in the seminary school day. Actually, this occurs several times during the day. Every time it occurs, it's grounds for a heart attack, and it's caused by one thing: the bell!

First off, the “bell” really isn't a bell. It's an annoying contraption of wires and a circuit box connected to a speaker, and its sole purpose is annoyance. The “bell” rings loud enough to wake the dead and can outdo a rock concert. With half a foot of foam around it, you'd think the bell would be soft, but like I said, it outdoes a rock concert. In fact, if that foam weren't there, we'd be replacing the seminary windows every three weeks. I see no real use for the bell, except as target practice. (Even a ‘blind’ person like me couldn't miss it with a shotgun!) Instead of sounding the death toll, Father could stand and make the noise himself. It would be just as good and a lot cheaper than replacing shattered windows.

The only person who has a problem with the bell is me, because I'm the only one who hasn't gotten used to it yet (and I don't think I ever will!) Father pities me every time it rings. “Poor Gerard,” he says, “we need to warn him when it's going to ring.” This never really helps. Everyone gets a kick out of it, though. Despite the fact that the bell is annoying, we wouldn't be able to have class without it, and we wouldn't be on time without it. And if we're late, Father gives us truckloads of homework, so I guess the bell really helps us out. Perhaps going deaf isn't so bad if it pays off in the long run!

A weekend with Our Lord

by Peter Linder, gr. 11

The weekend of March 5–7 was a special one at the minor seminary, for during that weekend we had our annual seminary retreat. Father Brendan came from Minnesota to give us the retreat, while Father Benedict went to a parish in San Diego for a few days.

During the retreat we were only allowed to talk during recreation periods and while doing dishes. This gave us plenty of time for prayer and meditation. We were given many things to meditate upon as we had five spiritual conferences (similar to Sunday sermons). The three main topics of these conferences were these: following your vocation, devotion to Mary, and carrying our crosses. I learned a lot from each conference especially concerning vocations. One very simple point about deciding our vocation was that it is a choice that we make, not a voice that we hear. This helped us to understand that God does not necessarily make it obvious when He wants someone to devote his life to Him.

On Friday after our night prayers, the Blessed Sacrament was exposed, and It remained exposed all night until Mass the next morning. In order that Our Lord be adored for the entire night we each spent one hour during the night in adoration of the Blessed Sacrament. It was a bit difficult to be awakened in the middle of the night because, at first, I had no idea what was going on. Other than having to wake up, I think we all enjoyed the opportunity to pray before the Blessed Sacrament during the quiet peace of the night.

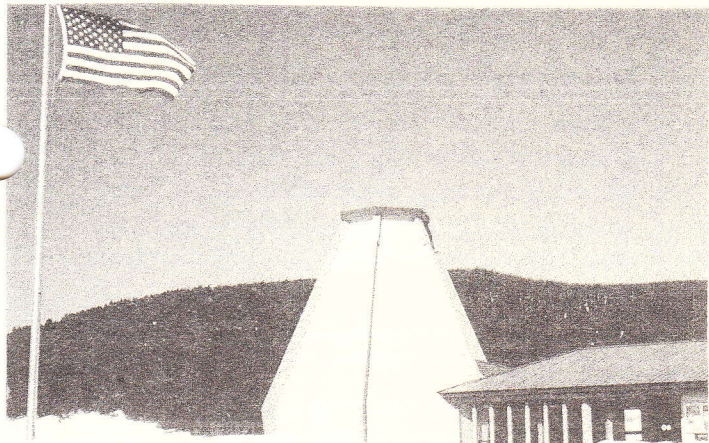
When the retreat had come to an end I think we were all a little bit closer to God. To summarize the entire retreat I would say that we all enjoyed it very much, and we all learned a lot about how to increase in our spiritual life. But we also learned that it is very difficult to remain silent most of the day!

Breakfast anyone?

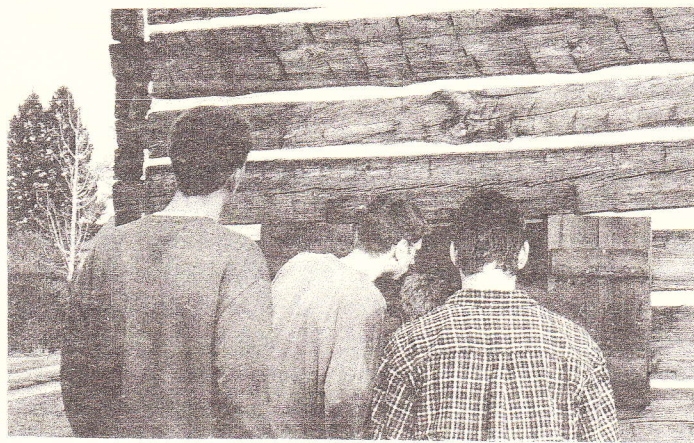
by Brandon Odom, gr. 9

Here at the seminary the hours turn into days; the days turn into weeks; the weeks turn into months, and so on. In March we have the feast of St. Patrick and the feast of St. Joseph, the seminary patron and the patron of the Universal Church. To celebrate these feasts the seminarians hosted a breakfast after Mass on Sunday, March 14. This year — as always — it was very successful. In addition to the normal breakfast items, we had Blarney Stones and Irish Coffee. (During the previous week, the seminarians had made the Blarney Stones — a delicious dessert — with the help of Mrs. Salgado, our secretary.) The Blarney Stones were dyed green; as for the coffee, we thought it best to leave that normal.

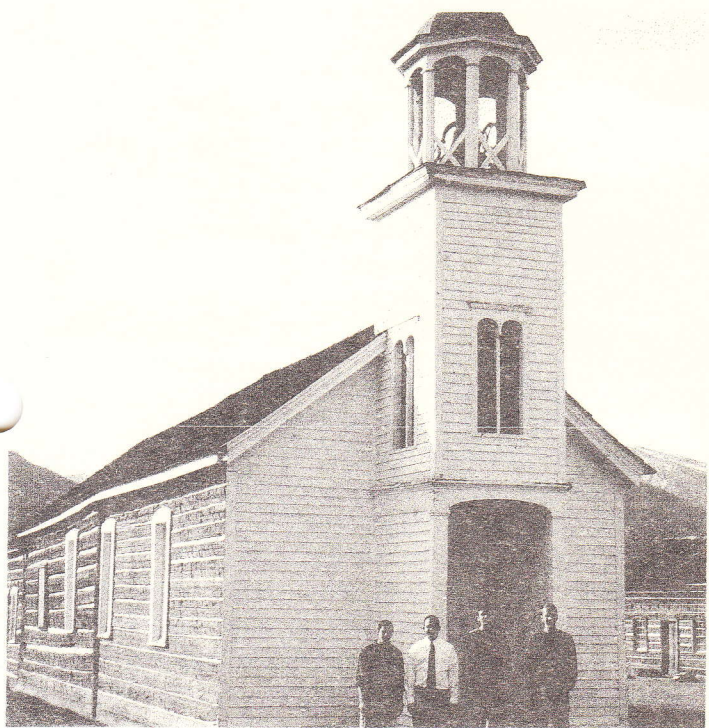
On the day of the breakfast we attended the early Mass. While the main parish Mass was being celebrated we were all rushing around in the kitchen, preparing the food. Mrs. Odom and Mrs. Salgado were very helpful, and without their assistance the breakfast would not have been as successful as it was. We prepared pancakes, biscuits and gravy, sausage and eggs. There were cinnamon rolls to top it off. Once again, everyone thoroughly enjoyed the breakfast. The only problem was that we ran out of coffee, so we'll have to remember that next time. Finally, the seminarians would like to thank all those who attended and would like to wish everyone many special blessings from St. Patrick and St. Joseph.



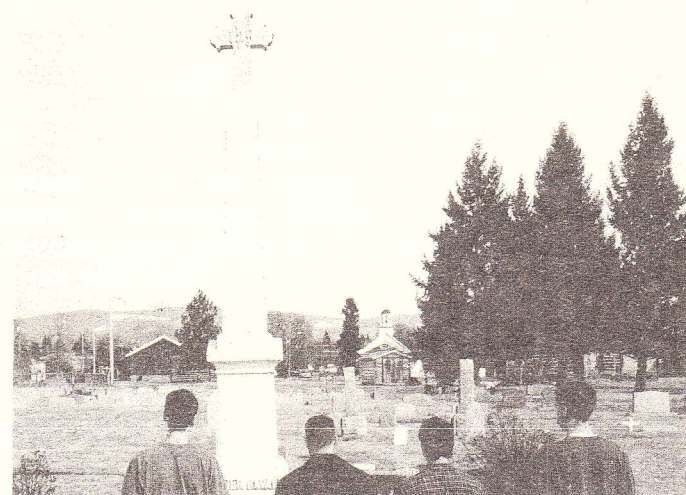
The Big Hole Battlefield visitors' center and museum has an excellent presentation on the plight of the Nez Perce Indians.



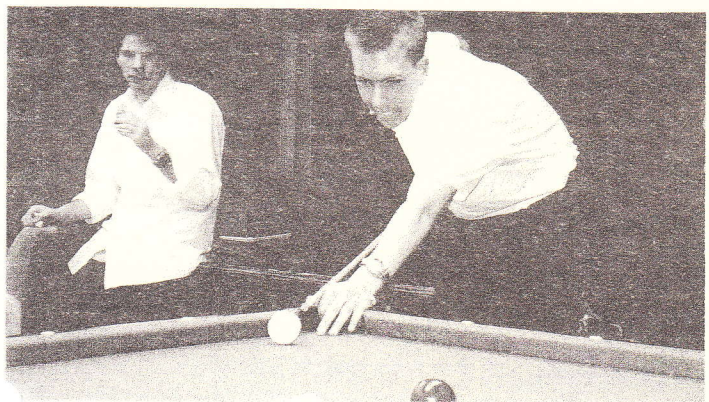
Inspecting Fr. Ravalli's pharmacy. The great missionary was: priest, teacher, carpenter, architect, painter, sculptor and physician.



St. Mary's Mission south of Missoula, Montana, was the first mission established by Fr. De Smet in the Rocky Mountains.



We prayed at the grave of the great missionary Fr. Ravalli at the mission cemetery. May he obtain for these young men a share in the zeal which animated him!



Chris is our pool champion for this year.



We enjoyed serving up a real Irish breakfast in honor of St. Patrick and St. Joseph.

The best subject

by Cavan O'Sullivan, gr. 10

Biology is the best subject! Why? Well, it is the best subject because of all the interesting things we do. After we use the microscopes, we have to draw a picture of what the object looks like. Once we looked at anthrax, which was interesting, but there are many other slides that we use. I can say that everyone enjoys this class. One of the things I am looking forward to is dissecting. We will be using white rats, large grasshoppers, fish, and many other things.

Another thing we have been doing is checking out bacteria. One of our experiments was to take different things and putting samples in the dish. Agar, which is a solid type of gel helps the bacteria to grow. We put the dishes under a light overnight, and there was mold and bacteria that you could see on the dish after 24 hours. The project was only somewhat successful because of the condensation in the dishes, which prevented the bacteria from growing properly. We are going to do it again next week, so we can get better results. The temperature has to be about body temperature so the bacteria can grow right.

Soon we will also have a skeleton. I think that will be fun as we learn all the bones in the body. For the rest of the year we will enjoy our biology class and will keep you posted on what we learn.

The Great Week

The busiest time of year for a priest is undoubtedly Holy Week. While the unique liturgical ceremonies are replete with meaning and beauty, they also require extensive practice to perform them correctly. Here at Mary Immaculate Queen Church I am privileged to have the seminarians to assist with the Liturgy and an excellent choir to sing the beautiful chants for Holy Week. All these elements contribute to the correct performance of the Liturgy, which is a very foretaste of heaven and an excellent expression of our Faith.

Seminarians must be imbued with love for the Liturgy if they are to become good priests one day. The Liturgy is the public worship of God by His Church, and the priest's greatest duty is the worship of His Creator. This attitude toward the worship of God is well-expressed in the opening antiphon of *Tenebrae* from Maundy Thursday: "*Zelus Domus tuae comedit me,*" meaning "*The zeal of thy house has eaten me up.*" The apostles recalled these words of Psalm 68 when Our

Seminary Support Club

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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.

Lord cleansed the temple, driving out the money changers. They also remind us of the love we should have, not only for God's House, but also for the ceremonies that take place therein.

Our seminarians will be privileged again this year to assist at Palm Sunday ceremonies, the Chanting of the *Passio Tenebrae*, the Mass of the Last Supper on Holy Thursday, the evening Holy Hour and Good Friday ceremonies. Those who live in the area will also help with the extensive Easter Vigil ceremonies on Saturday night. I pray that their participation in these ceremonies will leave a deep impression on their minds and hearts. Let us all make every effort to attend as many of the ceremonies of Holy Week as possible. Follow the prayers and actions of the ceremony in your missal and strive to penetrate their meaning. By doing so you will experience the joy, beauty and grace of this week, called by the faithful of the Middle Ages the Great Week.

May each of you be blessed by our Risen Savior on the feast of His Resurrection, the greatest feast of the year. As always, you are daily remembered in our prayers. May Jesus, Mary and good Saint Joseph bless you and your families.

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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