

THE GUARDIAN

Vol. V, No. 9

Monthly newsletter of St. Joseph Seminary

May 2004

After a spiritual Holy Week, we enjoyed a quiet and restful Easter week. Now we are back in the swing of things at the seminary and are trying to concentrate on finishing the year well. With warmer weather there also comes the opportunity for outings. Father is arranging a couple of outings which will add a nice conclusion to the year.

May is the most beautiful of months and fittingly belongs to Our Blessed Mother. We have several practices of devotion to Our Lady during her month here at the seminary. We decorate a May shrine in the seminary, and we take turns in preparing a daily bouquet of fresh flowers to be placed before our heavenly Mother. We also join in the public daily Rosary and in the other devotions in honor of Our Blessed Mother.

Some of the seminarians are also preparing with extra daily prayers to make the formal Act of Total Consecration to Jesus through Mary on May 31. Let us all strive to make this May one in which we grow in our honor and love of Our Blessed Mother Mary.

The greatest day of the year

by Brandon Odom, gr. 9

One of the best times of the year has to be Easter Midnight Mass. It's the greatest feast of the year and certainly the most welcome, after forty days of fasting and penance. I had the privilege of serving again this year, and it is truly an awesome experience. Being up on the altar during the *Gloria* of Easter Mass is the experience of a lifetime, and the graces are endless.

The ceremony started with a procession to the back of church for the blessing of the Paschal fire and Paschal candle. We then processed to the front of the church for the *Exultet* and the blessing of the Easter water and baptismal water. After all was completed the Mass began. Sounds easy? It actually took almost two days to prepare everything (not to mention the fact that the choir had been preparing for over a month). There was the preparing of the linens for the altar and the vestments for Mass. Everything had to be ironed and pressed to perfection. The decorating of the church and altar had to be completed, and, of course, we needed to have a serving practice. The serving practice was lengthy, and a couple of the servers couldn't make it. However, despite these difficulties, everything worked out fine.

At the end of the Mass as the choir sang the closing hymn, Father and the servers processed out of the church. After receiving Father's blessing and

May calendar

- 7 — Mid-quarter
- 11 — Ordination to the diaconate at Mt. St. Michael
- 12 — Field trip
- 20 — Ascension Day; Holyday of Obligation
- 31 — Memorial Day; Queenship Procession; Formal Consecration to BVM

exchanging Easter greetings, we went back around to the sacristy to unvest. After unvesting and putting things away from the Mass, we went downstairs for doughnuts. It's hard to beat half a dozen doughnuts at 2 a.m. on Easter Sunday!

Sweet silence

by Peter Linder, gr. 11

Every evening after night prayers we are supposed to be silent. It is

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Easter Vigil ceremonies begin with the blessing of the New Fire.

Silence

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written in the seminary rulebook, and we have been told many times not to talk after night prayers. But why is it important for us to practice the night silence?

The night silence is important because it gives us a chance to concentrate on what few thoughts we have toward our great God. It gives us a chance to practice obedience and also gives us a chance to see what the religious life would be like. Sometimes during night silence I am able to meditate on Our Lord, so if we didn't have night silence I probably never would have thought of Our Lord before I went to sleep. Thanks be to God!

The time after night prayers until morning prayers the next day is a good time to prepare for Holy Communion. It is certainly not easy to prepare for Communion while you are talking, so I guess that is another reason for night silence. If we think of the way Our Lord spent His time on earth, we know that He spent a great deal of it in silence. Therefore, we as Christians should have no problem following His wonderful example.

I think that I appreciate the night silence a lot more now that I have thought about it. After all, when Our Lord was on earth He never used His speech for idle talk, so why should we?

A special thank you

by Mr. Tim Duff

Due to the generosity of some special benefactors we have received donations for all of the science equipment listed in the February issue of *The Guardian*. The names of the sponsors and their intentions have been inscribed on the equipment, and present and future students will remember them in their prayers.

We now have a good start to our science lab. We have three excellent microscopes and a nice set of slides ranging from basic cell structure to bacteria types and species to human histology and pathology. Drawing on my medical school experience, I first have the students study normal tissue under a microscope and then the same tissue with a familiar disease. Finally, I have them locate the tissue or organ in a dissection.

For example, the seminarians will study this month a slide of the human coronary artery and then a slide of atherosclerosis of the coronary artery (the cause of heart attacks). We will then look at the coronary artery of a fetal pig. I obtain specimens with a red dye injected into the arterial system, and it is amazing how easy it is to see the coronary arteries. I even show them what a surgeon does in a coronary artery bypass graft. Speaking of dissections, there will be very few high school biology classes in the country whose students will do more dissection than our seminarians.

Other diseases we will study in this way include stomach ulcer, lung cancer, emphysema, cirrhosis of the liver, skin cancer, and iron-deficiency anemia. Again, a special "thank you" to our wonderful benefactors, without whom none of this would be possible. Another list of needed equipment will follow sometime this summer, as we hope to gear up for an advanced earth science lab in the fall.

Easter vacation

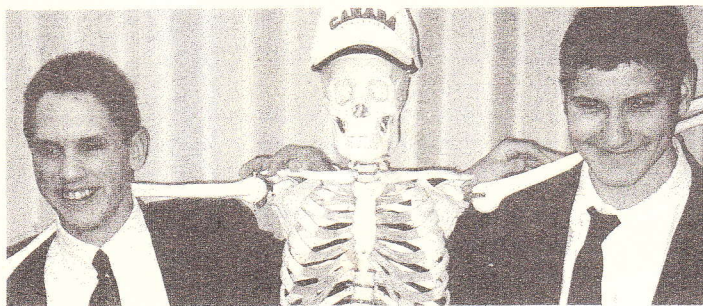
by Chris Strain, gr. 10

Easter week was our spring break. It was a joyous time, an opportunity for a little "R&R," which felt very refreshing after several months of school; yet all good things must come to an end. But, seriously, it isn't that bad being back in school. The first day we started off with several fun things, like writing about what we did over spring break. I'd like to share with you what some of us did during our vacation.

I helped my parents with a few odd chores, such as digging a path for a cement sidewalk about 20-30 feet long by about two-and-a-half feet wide. Next I moved on to cleaning up the yard, and with the help of my good friend Brandon, I was quickly able to move a whole lot of sheet metal and a ton of lumber to a corner on our property. As Brandon put it: "I had a wonderful time moving sheet metal. . . ." But it wasn't all that bad.

When I talked to the other seminarians about what they did, they told me a whole load of things. Gerard said he was attacked by his killer schnauzer; Cavan slumbered peacefully; and Brandon painted. (All of the previous is false except for the painting.) After reading most of a book called *The Spear* by Louis de Wohl, I prepared for the final episode of the school year. To sum up, all of us worked and rested during our break, and we all enjoyed it.

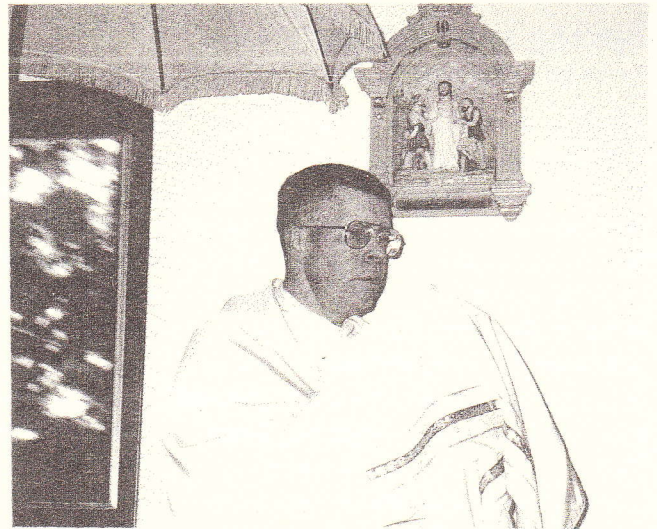
We just started studying Greek and Latin myths, which we hope will be fun, and if everything goes well, we might get out of here in one piece. The many days left of school will be met with renewed spirit, and we will soon find comfort in summer vacation. As we enter this month of May we will also be reciting the *Little Crown of the Blessed Virgin*, and we ask your much-needed prayers as we approach the coming end of our school year. God bless you all.



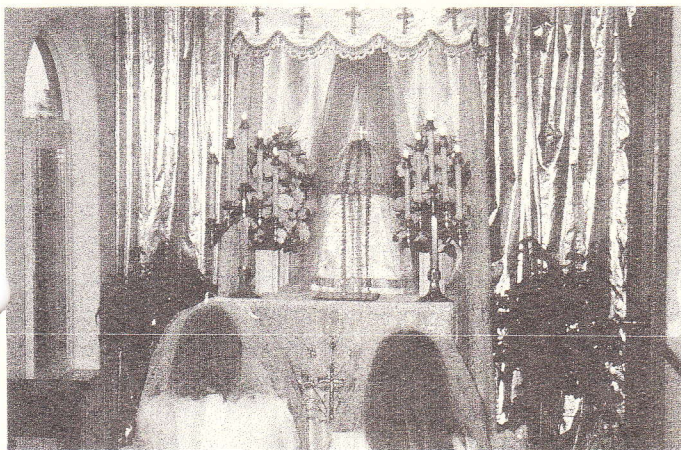
The seminarians welcome "Wilbur," a plastic skeletal model and the newest addition to the seminary.



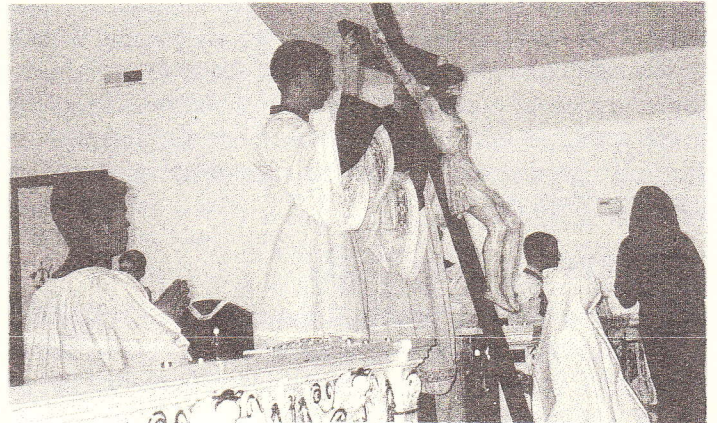
The seminarians assist Father in washing the feet of 12 men, representing Our Lord washing the feet of His apostles.



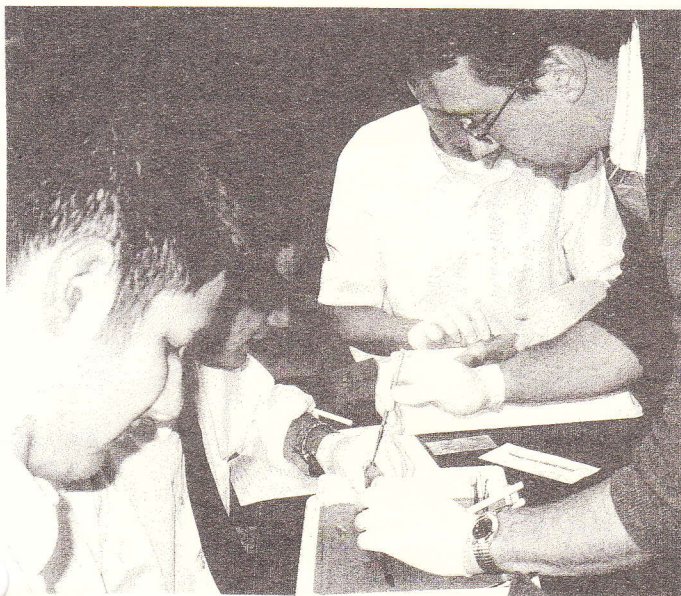
On Holy Thursday the priest carries the Blessed Sacrament through the church to the Altar of Repose.



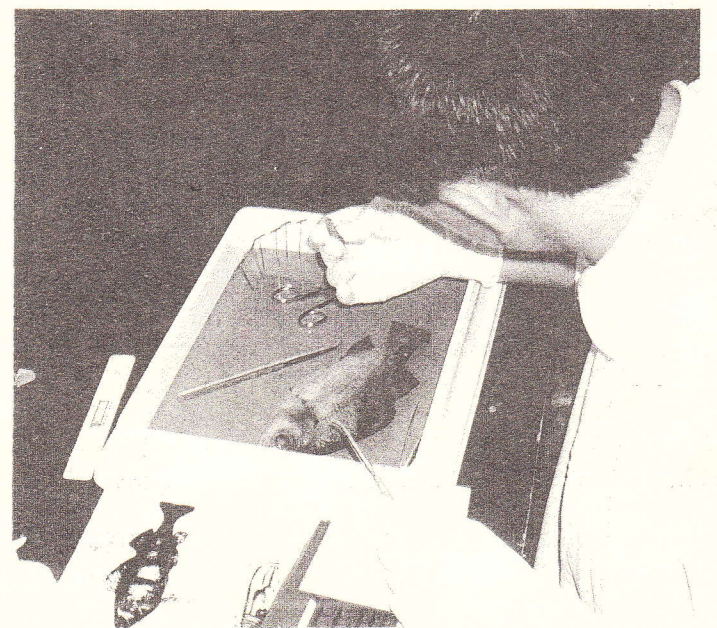
Two young parishioners kneel before the Altar of Repose.



The adoration of the Holy Cross on Good Friday is always a moving ceremony.



Mr. Duff shows the students how to perform the dissection of a perch in biology class.



A seminarian carefully inspects his lab assignment.

Spring is in the air

by Cavan O'Sullivan, gr. 10

Spring is here, the snow is gone, and the weather is changing. When the weather gets nice, we get to do more for P.E. We go to the park to play flag football and baseball. We also use the outdoor basketball court next to the park. We hope to also be able to play tennis this year at the tennis courts.

In the spring you also get to watch the grass come back and to watch the flowers grow and leaves grow on the trees. The rain is another thing that has to be dealt with, as it often rains in the spring. But we have many good days, and the rain is a good thing because it helps the flowers and the grass grow. During spring people are getting things organized and cleaned in their houses. Some people have garage sales, and that is one way to get rid of all that junk that has been piling up around the house.

Spring is a great time of the year, because it starts to warm up and you get that fresh breeze that comes along. The bad thing about spring is the mud. When we are running around outside after school we get mud on our shoes, so we have to make sure we have our shoes cleaned off before entering the house or we get it all over the place inside the building. So spring is a good time of the year, but summer is even better, as long as it is not hot.

Flowers for Our Lady

While academic preparation is essential for a future priest, the most important part of a seminary is unquestionably the spiritual formation of the students. A very important part of that is the development of the devotional life of these young men. They must learn to love Jesus and Mary with a tender and ardent devotion.

The month of May provides an excellent opportunity for the seminarians to grow in devotion to their heavenly Mother. While all Catholics must have a devotion to Mary, priests have need of an even greater devotion to her, who was the Mother of the first Priest. But we must guard against thinking that we have devotion, when we merely perform external practices, perhaps without any great interior piety. In other words, we must distinguish between *devotions* and true *devotion*.

This is not meant in any way to belittle any of the many pious practices of devotion to Our Lady, whether performed during May or at other times of the year. In this regard, let us

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.

recall the wonderful anecdote found in the life of the Curé of Ars. A woman, whose husband had died, approached the holy priest in confession. She was particularly distraught as her husband had been away from the practice of his faith for many years and had not given any external signs of repentance before his death. Consequently, she was filled with anxiety regarding the salvation of his soul. But before she could even pour out her grief, St. John Marie Vianney told her not to worry about the salvation of the soul of her deceased husband. He went on to explain that every year during May, when the man went out for a walk in the woods, he would return with a bouquet of wild flowers which he presented to his wife. Well he knew that she would immediately place them before Our Lady's shrine, and that is the primary reason why he continued this practice. His devotion to Our Blessed Mother had obtained for him the grace of repentance before he died.

Let us remember that every act of devotion towards Our Blessed Mother will be generously rewarded by her. She will never forget our acts of piety, however meager they may be. May you all grow in your love for our heavenly Mother Mary, and may she in turn bless each of 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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