



THE GUARDIAN

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Monthly newsletter of St. Joseph Seminary

December 2004

Every year toward the end of November we try to guess when the first good snowfall will come. We seminarians eagerly anticipate the event. All of the seasons are beautiful, but you can handle only so many days of rain or fog during November before you yearn for snow.

This time of year also brings us the Thanksgiving holiday. We all — teachers and students — need the break from school. But let us not forget the spiritual significance of a holiday devoted to thanking God. There is so much for which we owe God thanks. If we do not return adequate thanks for His benefits, we may lose them. Thanksgiving is also an opportunity for all of us to spend time with our families.

After the short four-day break, we plunge right into the final few weeks before Christmas vacation. Advent is an important season at the seminary. We all perform extra sacrifices, have Advent readings and hymns, and of course have our daily Advent wreath lighting and prayers. Let us all prepare well this Advent for the important feast of Christmas.

Life-risking indulgences

by Peter Linder, gr. 12

During the octave of All Souls' Day the Church grants a special indulgence. On each day of the octave, a person may release a soul from purgatory by making a visit to a cemetery and praying for the Poor Souls. Since our cemetery is about a five-minute walk away we had a great opportunity to gain this indulgence.

Some of us students are known to be big-time procrastinators, so we would usually end up going to the cemetery after night prayers. There are three different paths of various lengths that lead to the cemetery. At night it really doesn't matter which path you take — they are all equally dark and spooky when it is pitch black. Nearly every time we went to the cemetery, we had to do something to keep our minds off the sounds we heard, and the animals that we suspected were getting ready to pounce on us. Usually we would just talk, but on a few occasions, if we were especially frightened, we would pray the Rosary for protection. The last night of the octave was eerie. It was very dark. It was foggy. And we had no flashlight. On this night in particular we prayed the Rosary and we also ran at one point from a rustle that I heard in the bushes.

Going to the cemetery is not altogether a terrifying experience, although it may sound like it. For the cemetery itself is not at all scary. Rather, to us during our midnight adventures it was kind of like a safe zone. There is a really nice view from the cemetery during the day and at night it is one of the best places to look at the stars. In spite of the dark, gloomy path and

December calendar

- 2 — Monthly High Mass in honor of St. Joseph for our benefactors
- 6 — Feast of St. Nicholas
- 7 — Mid-quarter
- 8 — Feast of the Immaculate Conception (Holyday of Obligation); no classes; basketball game; Sodality reception ceremony
- 19 — Christmas program
- 21 — Christmas Vacation begins after classes

the loud suspicious sounds, the feeling of peace and consolation we got from knowing we had just released a soul from the fires of purgatory made each trip well worth the effort.



The seminarians made frequent visits to our parish cemetery during the month of November.

What's up in theology class?

by Peter Linder, gr. 12

The sixth period of every day at St. Joseph Seminary is Theology class. It is, without any doubt, the most important class, and Fr. Benedict teaches it. Early last year, we reviewed the Baltimore Catechism before moving on to our Theology textbook. This year, we are studying Bible History before beginning our regular textbook.

So far in Bible History we have learned a lot about the different things that happened in relation to God's Chosen People, and the many ways in which the sacrifices of the Old Law foreshadowed the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass. When reading about the time before Christ, we can see many of the mistakes that people made, and we can learn from them. We can also see how severely God punished certain people for their sins in the Old Testament, and from this we can get a faint idea of how severely God will punish us for our sins.

It was interesting to read about the amazing circumstances and events involved in the deliverance of the Israelites out of slavery and their journey into the Promised Land under the leadership of Moses. We have read quite a bit out of the Bible History book, and in order to give us some variety, Father assigned a project. The project was to draw and color one of the pieces of furniture kept in the Tabernacle (which was similar to a church), such as the Ark of the Covenant. Gerard and I only had to draw one thing, while Cavan and Brandon each drew two, less difficult things. I have never really liked drawing or been very good at it, but I actually enjoyed this assignment.

We have now finished reading about the Book of Judges, and we are beginning to read about the age when the Chosen People were ruled by kings. I am sure we will continue to enjoy reading about all the exciting events of the Old Testament. I think we will all be sorry to see this chapter of our studies come to a close.

'Judgment' day

by Gerard Odom, gr. 9

We can't wait for it to snow! Without a doubt, the only thing that is more anticipated than the final bell for school is the first snowfall. Nothing is more exciting than the first sled ride, or the first snowball, or the first call from Mr. Duff saying that he can't make it to school due to weather conditions. Nothing is more terrifying than flying off the road at fifty miles per hour after realizing, all too late, that you just hit a patch of black ice — the only one within a fifty-mile radius! Nothing is better than pulling your head out of the snow from a fresh 'whitewash,' or, better yet, mercilessly inflicting one!

Recently, we tried to guess the date of the first snowfall. Guessing the earliest feast of Our Lady within the winter season was the best guess anyone could have made, because as we noticed last year, it happened to snow primarily on feasts of Our Lady. Since this happened without fail every time, we believe that it will snow on every feast of Our Lady from now on.

Here we sit, still waiting for the first snowfall, still waiting to find out which person will be the first to get pelted with a snowball or be the first to wipe out on the sledding hill. Every day brings us one day closer to that joyous day, and when that day comes, heaven help those who get caught in the crossfire of it all!

Football anyone?

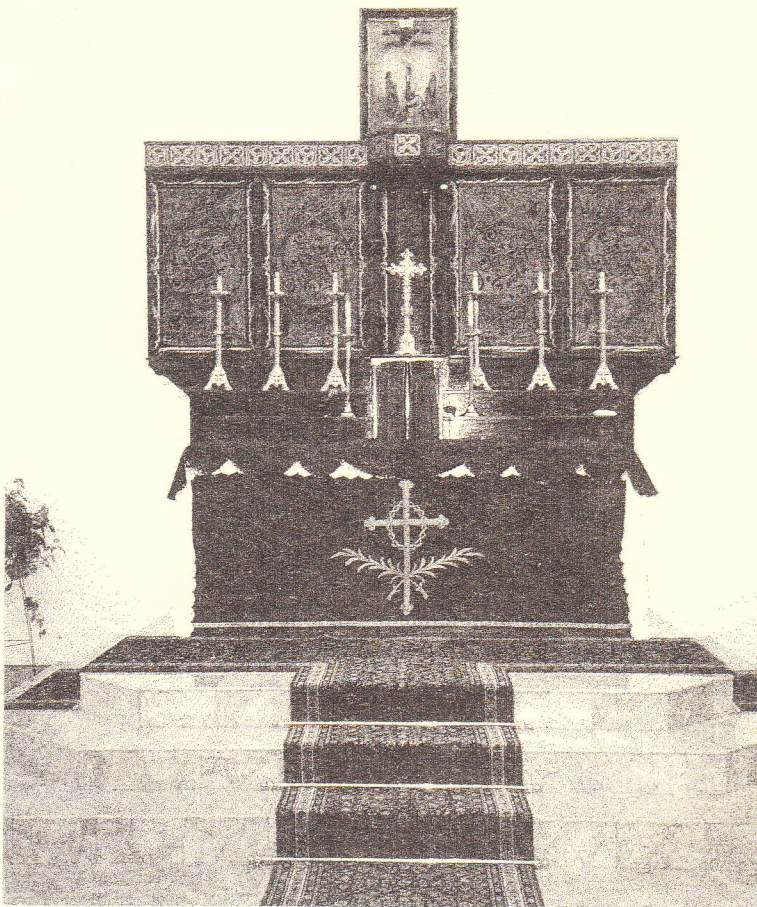
by Brandon Odom, gr. 10

Here in Idaho at St. Joseph Seminary we finally got going with flag football in late October. It was a chilly evening. The stadium was packed full of thousands of anxious fans — some waiting excitedly for the kickoff, while others waited impatiently for the beer and hot-dog man to get around to their section. The kickoff came, and the crowds cheered wildly as the receiver rushed down the field to return for a touchdown!

Well, that might be a bit of an exaggeration. There was no stadium and there weren't thousands of fans cheering. In fact there were only ten people on the sidelines and eight of them were players! It was chilly, however, and we did return to the field for a kickoff for a touchdown in both games. The first game was played a bit sloppily, since it was, after all, our first game. Our opponents played better because they had had seven games already. If we had had seven games to practice, I'm sure we would have won too! Unfortunately we lost our first game due to these facts.

The second game was a totally different story. It was a battle of offenses. We scored every time we had the ball. Neither of the teams had a very good defense, but our offensive players were excellent. It was our unstoppable (sort of) running plays against their great passing game. As I said, we scored every time we had possession of the ball except when it came time for two-point conversions. They seemed to get all of theirs, while we had trouble with ours. We were one touchdown ahead but they were tied with us because of their getting two points after every score.

We scored three touchdowns in the last two minutes and they had two. We needed the two extra points! We hacked! We plowed! We got 'em! There was time for one play left and they needed two points to tie the game. It was time for a great play. Peter intercepted the pass attempt on the final play of the game. They missed the two-point conversion. We won the game 52 to 50!



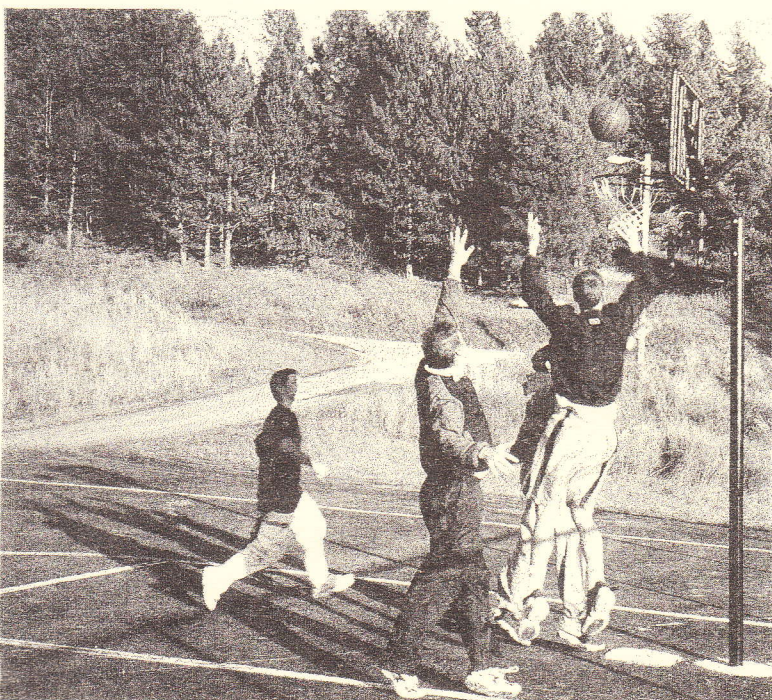
We had frequent Requiem Masses offered for the Poor Souls during the month of November. Here the altar has a violet frontal and a tabernacle veil in preparation for a Requiem Mass.



Mt. Calvary Cemetery, situated on the hill above the seminary, is a peaceful resting place for our Faithful Departed.



Peter prepares to pass to Brandon.



Mr. Duff joins the seminarians for a lively game of outdoor basketball.



Brandon runs with the ball for another touchdown.

Come, Lord Jesus!

The Season of Advent is, for those who spend it properly, a beautiful and beneficial time of year. The prayers of the Church include many quotations from the Old Testament to remind us of the longing we should have for our Redeemer. The Advent hymns express this ardent desire for the birth of Christ. Our penances purify us of our sins and failings that we might the better prepare to celebrate the great feast of Christmas.

Advent also includes several wonderful feasts of Our Lady and the saints. St. Andrew was the very first apostle and is fittingly the first one to be honored in the course of the Liturgical Year. As he brought his brother Simon Peter to Our Lord, we recall that we must also strive to bring others to Christ, by our words, our example and our prayers. A few days later we honor that great Jesuit missionary St. Francis Xavier. May we imbibe some of his zeal and self-sacrifice! At the seminary and in our parish we maintain the Catholic custom of honoring St. Nicholas, the patron saint of children. "St. Nicholas" annually visits the seminarians in the dead of night to leave a small bag of treats at the doors of their rooms. Since it is Advent, "St. Nicholas" prefers fruit and other healthful snacks, rather than candy.

We also celebrate three great feasts of Our Lady. The Immaculate Conception reminds us of the preparation by God for the Incarnation of His Divine Son. Who could ever comprehend the excellence of the Mother of God? We also celebrate the feast of the Transfer of the Holy House of Loreto on the 10th of the month. This feast, observed primarily in Italy, reminds us of the excellence of the house in which "the Word was made Flesh," miraculously preserved from impending profanation at the hands of the infidels. The Feast of Our Lady of Guadalupe is also important. The Madonna of the Americas showed her compassion in this apparition, in which she offered comfort and conversion to the Aztec Indians. Her words to Juan Diego are most consoling to all devotees of Our Lady.

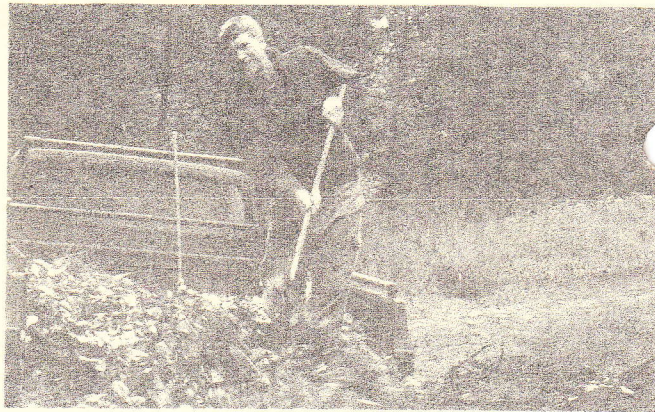
As we have done in past years, we invite you to return the enclosed card with your intentions for remembrance in our Christmas Novena and Masses at Christmas time. May we all spend this holy season well and prepare worthily for the

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.



Peter performs a typical fall chore of raking leaves.

coming of the Christ Child! I pray that our Divine Infant King will bless you and your loved ones during the coming Christmas Season.

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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