



THE GUARDIAN

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Monthly newsletter of St. Joseph Seminary

March 2005

It is hard to believe that Lent is nearly half over. We have made a good beginning to Lent at the seminary so far. Our annual retreat and other Lenten practices have helped us to spend this important season in the proper spirit. Now we only need to continue our practices of penance, as we look forward to the ceremonies of Holy Week and Easter.

Of course, Lent doesn't mean that we only do penance all day! We continue to enjoy our sports and recreational activities. Volleyball has lately become the favorite game at P.E. and we are also spending more time playing pool in preparation for the annual seminary tournament. The warmer weather (the snow has been gone now for several weeks) beckons us outside, and riding "the quad" (also called an ATV) on the paths around the seminary and in the woods is a popular after-school activity.

March is also a time to honor our patron St. Joseph. We pray extra prayers to him daily, and we are especially praying for vocations. Please also join us in this important intention during this month. We appreciate your prayers for us and assure you of ours in return.

The best one yet?

by Peter Linder, gr. 12

We are now in the season of Lent and Catholics throughout the world have made their lives more penitential out of love for Our Lord. Here at the Minor Seminary we also have altered our mode of living for this solemn season. A week before Lent we each wrote out a prayer and penance schedule. When we make this list of

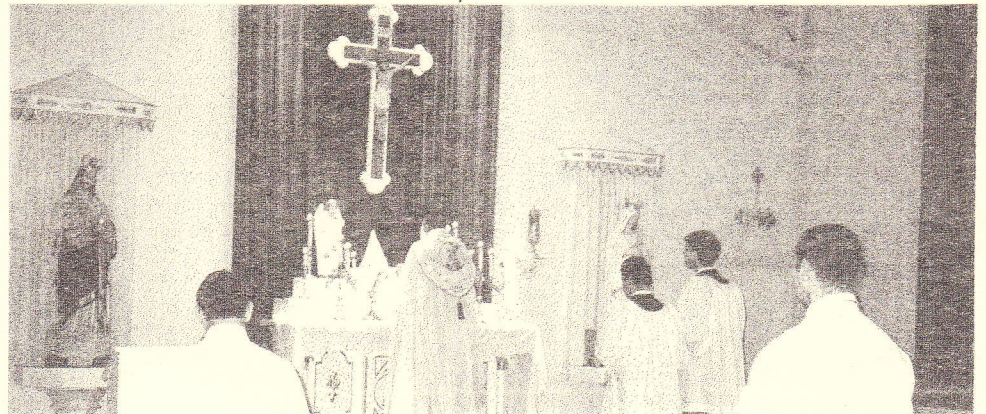
resolutions, we are reminded to avoid being too easy on ourselves, but at the same time to avoid trying to do something that we will not be able to keep up. We made these schedules a week before Lent began in order to be well prepared.

Other than our individual resolutions during Lent, we also do certain things as a group. Every Friday we go to the main church and make the Stations of the Cross with the younger students. The Stations are a very beneficial spiritual exercise. They remind us of how much Our Lord suffered for us, and so, help us remember why we do penance. Another special means of grace during Lent is the singing of Sunday Vespers, which is a part of the Divine Office. Mr. Duff taught us how to sing it, and every Sunday evening we get vested in cassock and surplice to chant Vespers in the sanctuary of the church. It is truly an honor to be able to chant the Divine Office in the presence of Almighty God. After taking part in Sunday Vespers a few times, I have come to the conclusion that it is the most splendid and uplifting way to pray.

March calendar

- 13 — Seminary Breakfast Fundraiser
- 19 — Feast of St. Joseph, seminary patron
- 22-23 — Third Quarter Exams
- 24-25 — Holy Thursday and Good Friday ceremonies
- 25 — End of Third Quarter; Easter vacation begins
- 27 — Easter Sunday

The season of Lent isn't to be taken lightly. Each year during Lent, the Church reminds us of the terrible sufferings that Our Lord went through on account of our sins. The worst ingratitude we can give to Our Lord is not to have the consideration for Him of taking forty short days out of our year to do penance for our sins, which caused Him so much suffering. Let us all hope that we can make this year's season of Lent our best one yet, for Our Lord's sake.



Benediction of the Blessed Sacrament, along with the all-night Eucharistic vigil, has become one of the favorite events of our annual retreat.

A father's vocation

by Mr. Tim Duff

A father is called to take care of a family, whether it be in the married or priestly state. Being the father of a family, my primary duty is to my wife and children. What makes me happy is to see them happy, and I am called to provide the best I can for them.

While a young man considering the priesthood must certainly always love and cherish his immediate family, he must realize that there is a much larger family to consider — the whole Church. This is the special calling of the priest. His family includes his parish, the whole Church, and in a certain respect, all mankind. All must find a place in his heart and in his prayers. All, but most especially those in his immediate care, must be the object of his sacrifice and labor of love.

I think it was St. Paul who said, "though you may have 10,000 teachers in Our Lord, yet not many fathers."

I hope I fulfill my vocation as a father by the happiness of my wife and children. And I hope that many young men hear the voice of the Good Shepherd calling them to labor for the eternal happiness of His beloved souls.

A time to ourselves

by Gerard Odom, gr. 9

Our annual retreat was conducted by Fr. Francisco Radecki, CMRI. We learned many lessons from this year's retreat.

This year's retreat was a bit different than last year's. Instead of having all of our spiritual conferences in the chapel, some of the conferences were held in the classroom. In our first conference we learned the importance of prayer, and that it's not something that you do just because someone told you to pray. In another conference we learned the steps to the priesthood, its ups and downs, and some of its many benefits. We also learned that the Mass and the vestments symbolize Christ's Passion and Resurrection. These were just a few of the topics of the spiritual conferences.

During the retreat we watched *The Passion of The Christ* and a movie on the seal of confession called *I Confess*. From these movies, we learned that Our Lord's Passion was much more painful than it looked, and that no matter what the cost, a priest is never allowed to break the seal of confession.

Even though we were on retreat, there were some periods of recreation. On Sunday, the last day of the retreat, we had to make breakfast for ourselves. Making breakfast on our own was bad enough, since none of us can be counted as iron chef material. To make it even worse, we played "The Imperial March" while we cooked! If that wasn't bad enough, we hatched the idea of having Fr. Francisco eat in the spirit of poverty. We gave him a very small bowl, which was filled with an unusually small portion of eggs, half an inch of bacon, and a shot glass of orange juice. We also kept up on our recreation.

During the weekend we played some of the most intense volleyball and basketball ever.

To sum it all up, this year's retreat was an excellent one. We all got something out of it. It was one of the best retreats ever given here, because it combined spiritual lectures with classroom learning, as well as a bit of humor and recreation. We are all grateful to Fr. Francisco Radecki for taking his time to give us this retreat, and we hope that he will be able to do it again in the future.

Overcoming our fears

by Cavan O'Sullivan, gr. 12

When the school year crept up and we started our classes, I heard that we were going to take a class in speech during the first semester. I dreaded it so much. I had never had a speech class before, but I knew it would involve standing up in front of a group, with a knot in my stomach, feeling embarrassed, doing my best to speak, while wishing I could run. It was not something I was looking forward to.

Mrs. Salgado was our teacher. She had been on the speech team when she was in high school, so she had a lot of enthusiasm for the subject. Our textbook advised us how to select a topic and explained how to gather facts for our informational speech. Peter selected the topic of *Global Warming*, while I decided to do mine on *The Cost of Living for an 18-Year-Old*. We went to the library to do our research. We searched through magazines, books, the Internet and even asked the librarian for assistance. We had to take notes on note cards so we could later organize them for our speech outlines.

When our speeches had been written we practiced, practiced and practiced delivering them. We practiced in front of class, we practiced in front of the mirror, and we practiced while tape recording ourselves. By the time we actually had to give our speeches we were relieved to just get it over with. What a surprise it was to discover that I wasn't as nervous as I thought I would be, and I didn't feel like running. It was a breeze. Our next speech went even better.

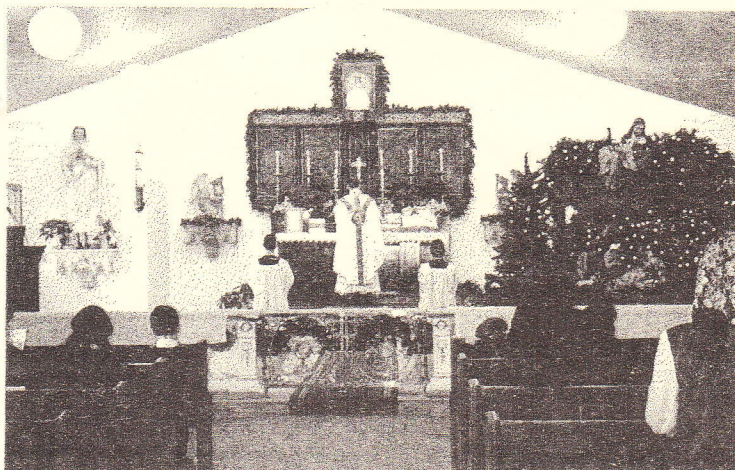
Speech actually was a good class to take because it helped us overcome our fears of speaking to an audience. I now feel like I have the tools to be able give speeches later in life; if I am ever asked to speak in front of an audience. At the same time, I sure am glad that Speech class is over and I won't have to speak in front of a group again any time soon.

A great archeological find

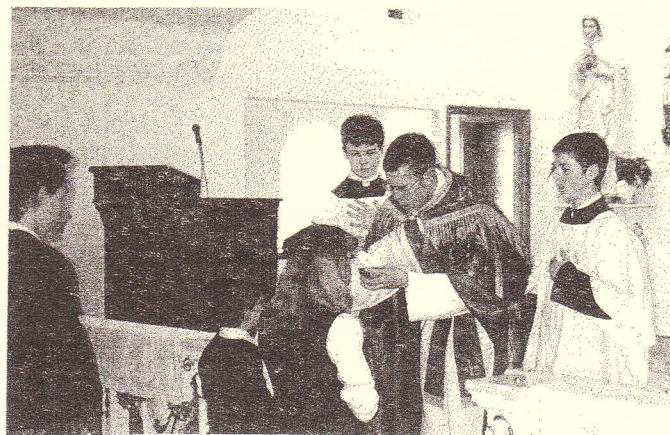
by Brandon Odom, gr. 10

Ah, the gym — a quiet place with plenty of lighting, comfortable seats and a buffed and polished floor. It was a clean, healthful environment for good quality recreation. With 32 lights and a floor so clean you can see your reflection in it, our gym was one of the best in the country.

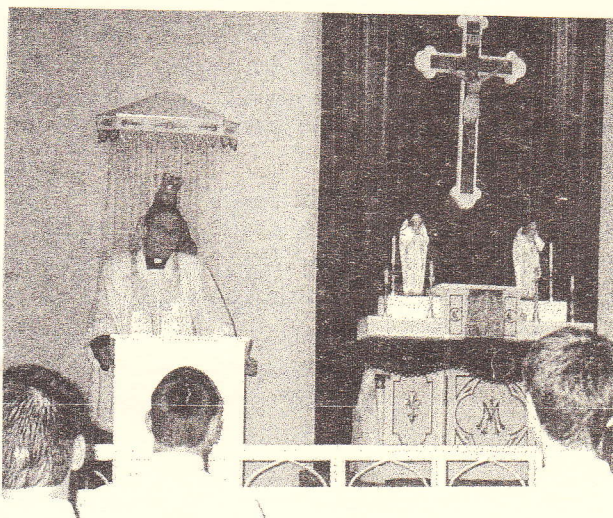
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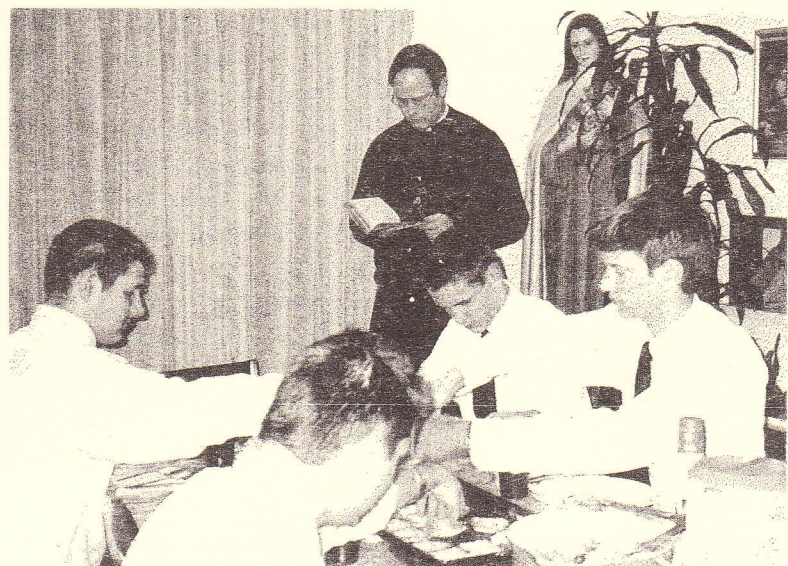
The Mass of the Purification of Mary on Candlemas Day is the final Mass of the Christmas Season.



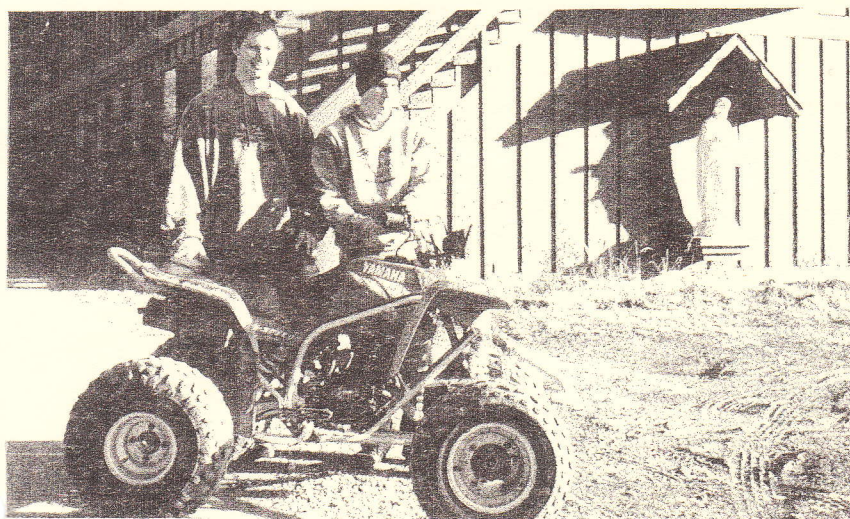
The ceremony of the blessing and distribution of ashes on Ash Wednesday reminds us of the public penance done in the early centuries.



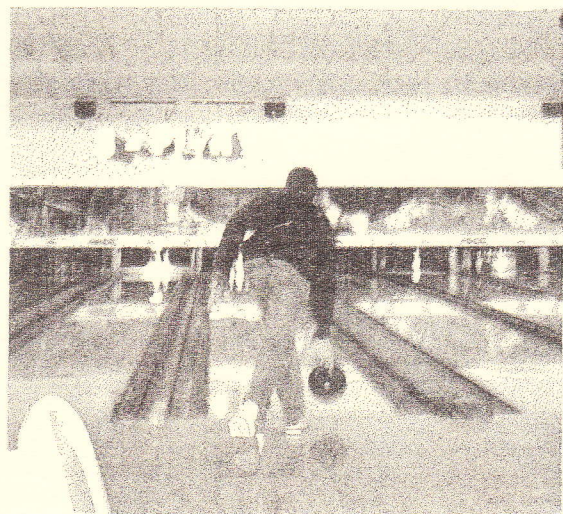
Fr. Francisco Radecki, CMRI, traveled to Idaho from Detroit, Michigan, to conduct the annual seminary retreat last week.



During the retreat spiritual reading is done at each meal, so that we feed the soul as we nourish the body.



Cavan and Gerard have been getting a lot of mileage out of the seminary "quad."



Peter hopes for a strike at a recent seminary outing to the bowling alley.

Archeological find

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All right, maybe that is a bit of an exaggeration. Our gym was a bit different. Instead of 32 lights, we had five and the rest were either dead or broken. The floor was covered with an estimated 26,000 layers of dust. There were marks from where kids spelled their names six years ago. There were enough clothes shoved under the benches in the gym to clothe everyone in India. The corners were no longer visible because the dust was as thick as snow. The insulation was smashed, bringing back memories of some pretty intense dodge ball games. (I'm still regretting using that medicine ball!) Basically, if you had asthma and took a step into the gym, you would be dead before you could turn around to go back outside! That safe, clean environment I was telling you about never existed. I would have felt safer in the middle of a war zone!

One day someone got a crazy idea to clean the gym. Isn't that weird? Who ever heard of cleaning a gym? Well, crazy as it sounded we decided to try it. Boy, were we in deep! We didn't even know where to start until Mr. Duff came in and saved the day. First, we pulled out all the benches and swept behind them until we found the wall. Then, for the next hour, we swept around the walls and into the remotest corners. When we were done, we saw that the gym was a lot bigger than it had previously seemed to be. After that, the remaining work went fairly quickly. It only took us about an hour to find the floor through all the dust. The gym became once again a semi-safe place to recreate in — until we started another game of dodge ball, of course.

Good St. Joseph

A few of the saints are given the distinct honor of being invoked by the faithful with the title "good" before their name. This is done to indicate a special saintliness and intercessory power. To none, however, does such a title more fittingly belong than to St. Joseph.

Our seminary has the great privilege of having this wonderful saint as our patron. During March each year we recite special devotions daily in his honor, over and above our normal prayers to him. Devotions in honor of St. Joseph are good, but it is even more important that we imitate the exceptional virtues of this great patron. St. Joseph was called a just man, for he fulfilled all the virtues; nevertheless, we

Prayer to St. Joseph

Oh St. Joseph, whose protection is so great, so strong, so prompt before the throne of God, I place in thee all my interest and desires. Oh, St. Joseph, do assist me by thy powerful intercession, and obtain for me from thy divine Son all spiritual blessings, through Jesus Christ, Our Lord. So that, having engaged here below thy heavenly power, I may offer my thanksgiving and homage to the most loving of Fathers. Oh, St. Joseph, I never weary contemplating thee, and Jesus asleep in thy arms; I dare not approach while He reposes near thy heart. Press Him in my name and kiss His fine head for me; and ask Him to return the Kiss when I draw my dying breath. St. Joseph, Patron of departing souls, pray for me. Amen.

especially think of St. Joseph excelling in love of God, trust in God, prayer and purity.

Youth especially should honor this humble man, who was chosen to guard the Christ Child and His holy Mother. St. Joseph watched over the boy Jesus, as He advanced in "wisdom, age and grace," and he will also watch over all those who honor him. Youth is a perilous period of life. How many the dangers, how many the pitfalls of youth! The crafty enemy of mankind exerts his chief machinations against our young people, because he knows that "as the youth, so the adult." A virtuous youth gives assurance of becoming a devout and faithful adult Catholic, whereas a young man or young woman who surrenders to the temptations of youth will sow the seeds of many sorrows in later life.

St. Joseph understands this better than we. He doubtless has a particular interest in Catholic boys and girls who honor him. Let us all invoke St. Joseph daily, especially during this month. He merited the singular honor of being called "Father" by Jesus. May he also be a father to us! May St. Joseph and the other members of the Holy Family bless all of you and your families. We are most grateful for your support of our seminary. We pray that you have a good Lent, and thereby grow ever more pleasing to Jesus, Mary and Good St. Joseph.

Fr. Benedict Hughes, CMRI

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