



THE GUARDIAN

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Monthly newsletter of St. Joseph Seminary

February 2006

What would a minor seminary be without a dog? As you readers know, we had a wonderful dog for several years, but, for various reasons, had to return the dog to its owners. And although a neighborhood dog named Rufus spends most of his time lying outside our door, waiting for the seminarians to come outside, we haven't had our own dog — until this past week. Our new dog is a Collie/Golden Retriever mix, a black puppy that we have named *Bosco*. Remember how St. John Bosco was often protected by a large dog that would appear when he was in danger? Our "Bosco" will remind us of this great saint. Look for Bosco's picture in the next issue of *The Guardian*.

As for school, just last week we finished our semester exams and enjoyed a day off for the traditional semester break. It was especially nice since it snowed that morning, giving us the opportunity to have some fun outdoors. With the new semester, there are a few changes to our school day, which we'll tell you about next month.

You are probably also wondering about the weather up here in Idaho. Well, the first couple weeks of January brought frequent rain showers and above average temperatures. Then, two weeks ago, we began to have snow showers, although sometimes mixed with rain. Finally, just last week, we received a good snowfall, and the weather has turned colder. Needless to say, we are anxious to enjoy our skiing adventures over the next few weeks.

We want to thank all of you for reading our newsletter and ask your continued prayers for us. In turn, we will continue to pray for you.

An army set in battle array

by Fr. Gabriel Lavery, CMRI

"Who is she that cometh forth as the morning rising, fair as the moon, bright as the sun, terrible as an army set in battle array?"

These are the words the priests from our congregation say every morning before chanting the *Magnificat* in praise of the Blessed Virgin Mary. How true it is that Mary is so powerful against the devil that it is more like an army waging war against him. After all, God said there would be an enmity between Satan and the Woman, and that she would crush Satan's head. Since we each have the duty of fighting in this battle, we ought to be careful to obtain the help of the powerful Virgin Mary.

A soldier of Jesus Christ cannot afford to be weak and lazy. Every day he has before him the only two possible choices Christ gave us: *"You are either with Me or against Me."* Every Catholic has made in his Baptism the solemn promise to renounce Satan, and when he receives the sacrament of Confirmation he becomes a soldier of Jesus Christ. Now we can either pick up our cross and follow Christ, or we can be like the weak members of the vine whom Christ said will die and be cut off since they do not bear fruit.

The fact that we turn to Mary at the very beginning of the day, as all should do, is no coincidence. The devil is not satisfied with eight-hour shifts! As St. Peter says, he always goes about as a raging lion,

February calendar

- 2 — Purification BVM feastday; Candlemas ceremonies and High Mass; chanted Vespers; no homework
- 11 — Feast of Our Lady of Lourdes; Rosary procession
- 18 — Alex's 14th birthday
- 26 — Brandon's 18th birthday
- 27 — Fr. Gabriel's feastday

seeking whom he may devour. So, we keep our weapons ready. Weapons? Sure! The devil is more afraid of facing the person who has the names of Jesus and Mary on his lips than any soldier was of the barrel of a gun, and he runs faster than any soldier too! It is so easy that we would be fools not to use these weapons.

Then we also have our daily Holy Communion. St. Chrysostom says we should come out after receiving Holy Communion as lions breathing forth fire, terrible to the devil. The value of

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The Nativity scene remains in our church until the conclusion of Candlemas day.

An army

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daily Communion cannot be overestimated. Then, of course, we have our daily Rosary. It only takes twenty minutes out of our day, and yet it is so powerful that it converts the most hardened hearts and conquers the most violent attacks of the devil. The only wounds we might come out with are some sore knees, and that is not much to complain about.

Too many weak-kneed souls pretend to have little time for prayer, but what they mean is they have little time for God. Of course one does not have to say *long* prayers, just *fervent* prayers. Unfortunately, many souls say little or no prayers, not even short aspirations through the day, and their souls are like a body suffering from starvation. With Mary at our side, we do not need to fear the attacks of the devil. She will always crush his proud head. We just have to make sure we do not let our weapons get rusty, that we do not stop praying!

Time well spent

by Alex Odom, gr. 9

Here at the seminary we don't get to go out that much, but thanks to the bishop, we got a chance to go bowling with all the priests who came to the semi-annual priests' meeting. Did we take it? **Of course we did!**

We left the seminary after lunch with Fr. Gabriel and Mr. Cooper, because Fr. Benedict was already at the meeting. In about ten minutes we reached the rectory in Spokane (Mr. Cooper was driving). Then we all went inside, greeted the priests, and left for the bowling alley.

When we reached Lilac Lanes, we all got our own shoes and were split up into groups of three or four, and then we began our games. I played on the team with Fr. Gerard, Fr. Trough, and Fr. Macias. Next to us were Mr. Cooper, Fr. Gilchrist, and Fr. Anaya, and I was watching Fr. Gilchrist get strike after strike. Half the time he was getting strikes, and the other half he was getting spares. I, however, was doing the total opposite — half the time I wasn't getting any strikes, and the other half I wasn't even getting any spares. Even though I didn't do the best, it was still fun because we had the opportunity to spend some time with the priests, and I'm sure I represent all the seminarians when I say that.

So I would just like to thank His Excellency for inviting us and for the great time that we all had.

A 'dark' celebration

by Gerard Odom, gr. 10

As you may know, we recently celebrated the feast of Our Lord's Epiphany on January 6. Consequently, we had a special dinner here at the seminary in which we exchanged gifts with our *Kristkindls*. The party was excellent, the food was great, and the power outage didn't really get in the way of our fun, either.

Here is my rendition of what occurred that day. We were all in another painfully long class of PE, when the power to the gym suddenly went out. Since a sudden loss of power builds character and team spirit, Fr. Gabriel had us finish off the period. After that, we all hustled up to the seminary to find that it had no power either. The first thing that came to our mind was, "Yes! No school!" then, "No! No party either!" We faced a serious dilemma. If we had our party, then we most certainly were in good enough spirits to have school. But if we wanted to skip school, then we couldn't have our party. In the end, we finished our school day and had our party.

The party was great. Instead of having our traditional ham and healthy food dinner, we had Domino's Pizza and unhealthy soda pop! We played cards by candlelight and played pool as best as we could. Of course it's hard to play pool when it gets so dark outside that every ball on the table looks like the eight ball, but we played anyway. Strangely enough, just when we thought the outage would last all night, the power suddenly came back on. We ate our pizza dinner anyway, and after that, we opened our gifts. All in all, that was the best celebration we have had in a long time.

Even if the power outage had lasted, I firmly believe that Father would have made us attend school anyway. After all, if a power outage couldn't ruin our Epiphany celebration, then why should it ruin our "gaining of greater knowledge and wisdom through means of school" either?

Slushy sensations

by Caleb Short, gr. 10

Here in the hills of northern Idaho, where all the car license plates have the inscription "Famous Potatoes" and where you get to be a neighbor of "Washington Apples," the weather has been rather interesting. The sky has been cloudy for quite awhile and it has been a little warmer than the normal "potato land" weather. With the weather being a little warmer we have been getting lots of short rains, but when it finally cooled down, we acquired about five inches of wet snow, which was perfect for snowball fights and white-washes, but then the temperature jumped a little, and a long, light, languid rain fell. Presto! We had a soggy slush storm.

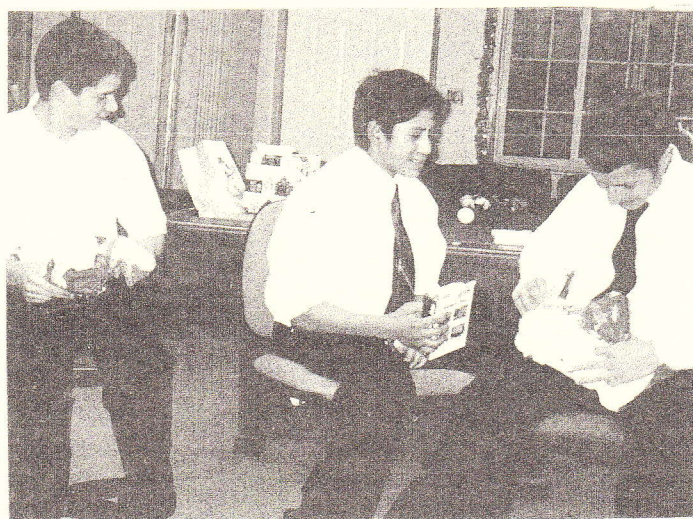
Everything was a mess. The driveway looked like the Mississippi River. (Sorry for the slight exaggeration.) We even had a miniature mudslide. (This is not a slight exaggeration.) The mudslide occurred in the spot where dirt was taken from the side of the hill to make more parking spaces for the seminary. With so much rain we had lots of little streams. Interestingly, some made their way underground using rodent holes. It was amazing to see how the water came back out of the ground. This is fascinating to the typical Coloradoan, because back home we don't get an incredible amount of precipitation.

Thanks to the intercession of St. Joseph and the new drainage system that was recently installed, the seminary

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This is how the tree looked before we opened our Epiphany gifts.



It didn't take long to open all the gifts.



Bowling with the visiting priests in early January was a real treat for the seminarians.



The Mexican seminarians have had no problem adapting to the practice of snowball fights.



The convent kitchen gets a new floor.



Shoveling the steps from the lower parking lot to the church is a job for the seminarians after each snowfall.

Slushy sensations

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did not suffer any water damage. Everything is going well here, and we all ask you to continue to pray that the rest of our school year will be a success, and maybe one or some of us will be blessed with a vocation and be given the graces necessary to follow it.

Lights out

by Brandon Odom, gr. 11

As our slushy winter progresses, we often find that spending time indoors playing games is easier than indulging in outdoor sports. This became more difficult as we lost the one thing that we probably take most for granted — electrical power.

It happened the afternoon that we were scheduled to have our Epiphany party. Figures. The one night we get a huge dinner, no homework, and gifts galore . . . we lose power! So with the aid of two lanterns and a flashlight, we played cards and pool. And since there was no power and therefore no heat for the stove, instead of ham and mashed potatoes we ordered pizza, a pretty decent trade by any teenager's standards. So we kept playing cards and were really getting into the game when the pizza arrived. As soon as the pizza was in the house the power came back on! So we got to eat pizza with the power on and we also got to drink stomach-rotting carbonated fluids. What more could a seminarian ask for?

That evening finished well, but Mother Nature — as if to get back at us — threw another power outage our way. But we were ready for this one, because we were already getting prepared for bed. All we had to do was light candles for chapel so we could pray night prayers. The experience does help us to better appreciate the wonders of electricity though, and I think we all gained from the experience.

The heart of a seminarian

Every month there are feasts of Our Lady. Here at the seminary we honor the Mother of God in a special way on each of her feasts. In February we start off with the feast of the Purification. All the seminarians participate in serving or singing in choir for the special liturgical function of the blessing and procession of candles. The blessed candles remind us of Christ, the Light of the world, and they also remind us of Our Lady, who bore Christ, for the beeswax is

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.

considered a symbol of virginity. The flame reminds us that Our Blessed Mother was always consumed with love for God and served Him daily most perfectly.

The next feast of Our Lady on the calendar is that of Our Lady of Lourdes. This feast fittingly occurs each year at the beginning, or shortly before the beginning of Lent. At Lourdes, Our Blessed Mother used the thrice-repeated admonition "*penance, penance, penance*" to remind us, through Bernadette, of the importance of penitential works. She also identified herself as the Immaculate Conception, showing a heavenly approval of the recent proclamation of the dogma of the Immaculate Conception by Pope Pius IX. The numerous cures that have occurred at Lourdes show us the motherly compassion Our Lady has for her suffering children. Each year on this feast we have an outdoor Rosary procession through the snow, to the shrine of Our Blessed Mother.

As you know, we also honor Our Lady on her feasts with special prayers and a celebration, not to mention other practices throughout the month. It is vital for seminarians to develop a tender devotion for their heavenly Mother now, for they will not have such a devotion as a priest unless it is developed in their youth. And where would a priest be, especially today, without a deep, tender, constant devotion to Our Blessed Mother?

So I pray that God will bless our practices of piety by inspiring a true interior devotion in the hearts of our young men, for it is the interior devotion that really counts. Indeed it is encouraging to see seminarians, especially after night prayers, kneeling before Our Lady's shrine. May we all continue to honor Our Blessed Mother, and may she reign in the hearts of all our priests, seminarians and laity. I wish to again thank you sincerely for your support. We pray daily for all our benefactors.

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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