

Recent event

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to divulge his interviewee's answer, for himself and for all of us, the relation of the priests' realizations of their vocations meant an increased eagerness to realize our own.

With such eagerness, this writer hopes he has ended on a high note, and asks, along with his fellow seminarians, for the prayers of the readers to realize our eagerness. And while this writer has not specified the annual event in question, the event is nonetheless annual, such that he writes assured that readers can certainly infer its identity. Until next month for this writer, and until next year for this event, good-bye, God bless, and God be praised.

Virtuous Christians

This year we have had 7 seminarians, which reminds me that the number 7 is a sacred number. There are 7 sacraments, 7 days of the week, 7 orders in Holy Orders, and, of course, 7 gifts of the Holy Ghost, to name just some of the uses of 7 in God's plan. Consequently, I have told the seminarians that they are 7 gifts that God has given to me.

Now that we have received a new seminarian, however, the number is 8. What shall I call them now? The one time the number 8 is used in the Gospel is the enumeration of those highly virtuous actions, which Our Lord designates as the Beatitudes. St. Matthew lists the 8 Beatitudes in the 5th chapter of his Gospel. Interestingly, since Jesus taught the Beatitudes in His "Sermon on the Mount," an 8-sided chapel was built on the mountain in Galilee, where it is believed that Our Lord delivered this powerful sermon around the beginning of His public life.

We should often reflect on the 8 Beatitudes, because they list the perfection of virtue for which we should all strive. Not only does Jesus, in His explanation of these 8 practices of perfection give us the meaning of each, but just as importantly, He gives the reward for the fulfillment of each. If you have not read them recently, perhaps you will open your New Testament to the 5th chapter of St. Matthew and read verses 3-12. There you will find material for reflection and for examination of conscience.

We all should strive to acquire the wonderful virtuous practices which we call the Beatitudes, for they represent the perfection of the Christian life. After all, we should not be content with a mere superficial practice of Our Lord's

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15384 N. Church Rd.
Rathdrum, ID 83858-7650



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It has been an eventful month. After returning from Christmas vacation, we immediately prepared for the Epiphany ceremonies of the solemn blessing of water and the high Mass. Of course, our Epiphany season also included the opening of gifts, which everyone enjoys.

The following couple of weeks featured our final tests, projects and papers for the Second Quarter, followed by a wonderful visit from the priests who were in the midst of their semi-annual priests' meeting. We always enjoy the opportunity to meet priests from around the country and to learn the stories of their vocations.

Before the end of the month, we welcomed a new seminarian and then experienced our first skiing trip of this year. Hopefully, we will have at least one more opportunity to enjoy the snow on Silver Mountain. For now, however, it's back to work as we begin the Third Quarter. Already, the school year is half over, and we ask your prayers that we will profit from the many graces available to us. Of course, you are remembered in our prayers each day. May God bless you all.

Treasure of St. Francis

by Aedan Gilchrist, gr. 11

You seek the treasures of this world, and I ask why. Why seek treasure that is perishable by fire, water, or by time. Treasures of this world do not last and often easily break. Either they break and bring pain to our life or we simply die and can no longer use them. So why do we seek the treasures of this world? Whatever the reason, it does not matter to Our Lord Who has an abundance of treasures that He is waiting to give to

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those who ask Him. This was the beauty of the soul of St. Francis of Assisi. For his soul was dressed with the riches and jewels of Our Lord, and he gained them by following God's will in the way of obedience, chastity and poverty.

If we too reject the way of the world in its seeking of pleasure and its covetousness, we will find an easier route to heaven. We will find the beauty of "Lady Poverty" as did St. Francis. One thing must be clear though, and that is, just because you do not have many things does not mean you are not attached to them. Someone may have many things and not be very attached to them, while another person may have few things but love them more than he loves God.

So the simple way to get to heaven is to give up what we love most as a sacrifice to God. Another sacrifice is denying the senses, which we call mortification. St. Francis understood well the value of mortification. He understood it so well that when tempted by thoughts against the ninth commandment, he jumped into a bush of thorns. They tore holes in his flesh but filled his soul with grace.

So we can think of poverty on a personal level as poverty of the senses (mortification), or on a general level when we mortify the desires stemming from covetousness. If you are able to get to this state of poverty, you will become a happy child of Lady Poverty and a loving apostle of Jesus Christ Our Lord. Christ is a King waiting to share His wealth with the poor: "Ask and you shall receive; seek and you shall find."

February calendar

2 — Purification BVM feastday; Candlemas ceremonies; chanted Vespers; no homework

11 — Feast of Our Lady of Lourdes; procession; chanted Vespers

20 — Zachary's 18th birthday

23 — Mid-quarter

Become a Brother

by Juan Garcia, gr. 12

If you have been interested in the priesthood, but you find yourself unworthy of such a sacred calling, consider the Brotherhood. Maybe you have no idea of what a religious Brother is, what a Brother does, or how a Brother lives. I would like to tell you about this important vocation.

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Juan Garcia became a postulant Brother on January 20.

Become a Brother

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There are three kinds of Brothers — teaching, nursing and working brothers, or at least that is what it used to be. Nowadays, they are mechanics, dishwashers, teachers, nurses, farmers and whatever else they are called upon to do. Yes, as you might see, we need many Brothers. Here at the City of Mary, Fr. Benedict is in charge of a big property with plenty of room. The problem is that much of it is vacant. Brothers would be a big help with all the needs of our parish, school and seminary.

Now you are probably wondering how a Brother lives. They rise early, pray the Divine Office, assist at Holy Mass, and afterwards they proceed with their appointed labors. They pray several times during the day, and at the end of the day they retire in order to be ready to serve God another day. Their lives are very beneficial to the Church. Because of the lack of priests and the many tasks they need to perform, Brothers can do many of the labors that slow down a priest's mission. Your parish can be one of the places where a Brother is needed. Think about it, and pray for guidance, and if you feel you have a vocation to the Brotherhood, contact your pastor.

My first ski trip

by Robert Kowalczyk, gr. 9

Each year at the seminary, at least one day is reserved for skiing. This year we went skiing on Monday, January 24th. All the seminarians including Abram, our newest member, went to the mountain with Fr. Benedict and Fr. Bernard. We got up early, attended Mass, ate breakfast, and began the one-hour drive to the ski resort. Mathias, Aedan, Rafa and I had never gone skiing before.

All of us chose to ski except Zachary who went snowboarding. After we equipped ourselves, we started to ski. My first run was difficult. Every few feet I tripped; nevertheless, I learned something in the end. Learning to ski for me was like learning to ride a bike. After tripping so many times, you learn to get more control of your skis.

At noon we had lunch and then resumed skiing until 3 p.m., when we headed back to the seminary. When we got back we were all wet and tired. After this first ski trip, I think I will look forward to skiing a lot better next time.

Another means of conquering temptation

by Zachary Odom, gr. 12

Temptations, occasions of sin, and sin itself are all around us. They are commonplace in the world and occur everyday in thoughts, words, and actions. Of course, it is necessary for lay persons to have a way of making a living for themselves and their families. We cannot help but be out in

the world to fulfill this necessity. But what can we do in order to not fall into sin? Prayer, the sacraments and mortification are the obvious means of grace, but there is another way of avoiding temptation and sin, and this way is to enjoy a hobby.

Having a hobby is a valuable avocation for all Catholics. Not only is it something that is enjoyable for us to do, but it also helps to keep our minds occupied and not idle. Because when we are idle we are open to temptations and are liable to fall. But if we counteract the temptations, which are the beginnings of sin, by fulfilling a hobby we can overcome sin.

Enjoying a hobby is like a talent given to us from God — we should not let it become stagnant but use it to the fullest. We should use the talents God has given us, and not treat them like the man of the parable who wasted the talents that his master had given him.

So a hobby is not only something that we enjoy doing, but it is a means that God has given us for countering temptations, for overcoming sins, and for conquering our vices. We should thank God every day for His goodness in giving us another means for overcoming the obstacles that oppose our salvation.

Concerning a recent event

by Forrest Nguyen, gr. 12

While the annuality of our articles may be tedious to readers and writers alike, these annual events are, in honestest and simplest proportions, *events*. And while passersby may categorize the seminary's yearly events as mere "happenings" and "dates," certainly to those readers — those in whose continued reading, we writers find continued delight in writing articles — these "happenings" rise to the level of momentous occasions. Thus, for you, readers, this writer writes of an event — however annual and annually described it may be — that he hopes you will find as equally delightful as he has found in relating it to you.

But before any relating can be properly made, a background to the event is in order.

In cycling through our four-year theology course, this year landed on the fourth and final book in the series, dealing with vocations, among other things. (This topic of vocations was intended for high school seniors, which intention coincides serendipitously with the fact that most of the seminarians, including the writer, are, in fact, seniors.) According to the book, the arrival at the realization of a priestly vocation is reached in many ways: individual to each individual. With our own possible priestly vocations in mind, seeking a proof of such realizations beyond "according to the book," we sought answers "according to the source": from the priests themselves.

Thus, during the event itself, amid all the annual frivolities of lunch, ping-pong, and bowling, each of us made it an especial point to consult a priest concerning how he had determined his vocation. Though this writer feels inadequate

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The blessing of Epiphany water is a lengthy but beautiful ceremony.



The shrine of Our Lady gleams in the winter snows.



Everyone enjoyed the opening of Epiphany gifts.



Rafael digs out the van after a snowfall.



We greatly enjoyed our skiing outing despite snow and some wind.



The priests joined us for lunch on the final afternoon of their meeting.



Many of the priests joined us for some bowling.



Aedan releases the ball for another strike!