



THE GUARDIAN

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Monthly newsletter of St. Joseph Seminary

February 2012

After our return from vacation, there was the blessing of Epiphany water and the various ceremonies of the feastday. A few days later, we had our annual exchange of gifts, which has become a cherished seminary custom. After Epiphany we got back into our studies, and recently concluded our first semester.

On the weather front, we had begun to wonder if winter was going to pass us by this year. Finally, in mid-January, the snows came, necessitating the shoveling brigade. Just last week we were able to go on our first skiing trip, about which you will read below. The conditions were excellent, and we hope that there will be at least one more opportunity to enjoy the mountains this year.

A highlight for us in January has always been a visit with the priests, who gather at Mt. St. Michael each year for a meeting. To meet with so many priests and learn about their paths to the priesthood and their current apostolates is always an inspiration and an encouragement in our efforts to discern and follow God's will.

As always, we appreciate your support and hope you enjoy reading our articles. Please pray for us and especially for more vocations to our seminary. We pray for you daily and hope that you will have a grace-filled Lent—the season of penance, which will soon be upon us.

A blessing in disguise

by Jordan Hartman, gr. 9

Poverty is truly a blessing in disguise. Many flee from it, and some cringe at the thought of it. But what would the saints have done? Having money is like

having the key to worldly desires, and some people find that a comfort. The saints, on the other hand, knew the danger of having money, and they ran from it to embrace the virtue of poverty. Most everyone today (who has a chance of getting it) is scrounging, grabbing, pushing and pulling to have the almighty dollar, which is one of the biggest problem-causers in the world. It causes war, murder, anger, cheating, and divorce, among others.

And yet, there lay Jesus in a manger with nowhere else to go and barely enough to clothe Him. Jesus our Saviour lay in some straw in the blistering cold, rejected by the world. God sent us Jesus to redeem us from our own faults. But Herod just for a little assurance of power—which would never have been taken away from him anyway—sought the life of the Christ Child. Joseph and Mary had to run from him to protect Jesus' life. And Herod after failing to find Our Lord and blinded by his greed, ended up killing many guiltless infant boys, who are now called the Holy Innocents.

February calendar

- 2 — Feast of the Purification
BVM; Candlemas
ceremonies; no homework
- 10 — Ski Day
- 21 — Mid-quarter
- 22 — Ash Wednesday

So we can see just how tied-up people can get with power or money. And are we not supposed to follow in the footsteps of Christ? And was *He* ever rich or wealthy? The answer is no, of course. Christ Himself said it would be easier for a camel to pass through the eye of a needle, than for a rich man to enter Heaven.

Poverty will increase joy and love for God, suppressing the attraction of the senses, and will create a true devotion to the saints and love for simplicity which will bring us closer to Heaven. Then we will avoid the spirit of the world and all its dangerous distractions.



The solemn blessing of Epiphany water takes place each year on January 5th.

Our first ski trip of 2012

by all the seminarians

After much anticipation for many months, we finally embarked on our day-long journey across Silver Mountain and its counterparts. In comparison to the mountain we were like insects, mere ants trying to scale this so-called unconquerable Titan, or so it would seem, had it not been for the wonderful world's longest gondola ride leading us right to one of the many tips of the earth. We almost felt it was going beyond this metaphor, and in fact taking us to heaven. For you see, we were heading somewhere in the direction of the sun, so you might excuse us for thinking that we were in the direct line of grace flowing forth from its blinding source.

The ascent was over, and now it was time for us all to be proved worthy to stand upon the shoulders of this most beautifully-groomed Goliath. We all had our differing attributes and experience, Jordan having none of the latter, as this was his first time on skis. Suited up and ready to battle the elements, we began our journey down the slopes, starting with the "bunny hill." Our comrade Jordan at first found it difficult to find his footing. (Literally, he couldn't keep his feet in his skis.) But after some time he proved himself to be a most worthy adversary of the mountain, plowing through its treacherous grounds.

After vanquishing the enemy (our fears), we freely traversed throughout parts of the mountain without consequence until the fateful first collision between Patrick and Aedan. Both received different punishments from the experience, which was due to Aedan's inability to turn in time. Patrick was thrown to the ground and Aedan onto his side. Thankfully, there was enough snow to soften the fall.

All in all, the day was full of adventure and mis-happenings, making it one fantastic day out in the mountains. In fact, we were having so much fun that we begged Father to give us one more hour before we had to leave. Now we look forward to the next skiing adventure.

The annual Epiphany party

by Patrick Gilchrist, gr. 8

This year we had our annual Epiphany party later than usual (on January 12th), because we were waiting for Aedan to get back from England. Aedan got back late on the 11th, and so we had the party the next day. We prayed the rosary at 5:10 p.m. as normal and ate dinner with all our guests: Mrs. Gallagher, Mrs. Salgado and Mary Antonia. It was a delicious meal! We had pork from our own pigs which had been butchered the previous month, cooked in a wonderful barbecue sauce made with orange juice and peels, a big salad, mashed potatoes, and apple cider that we had made a couple months ago from the apples in our orchard. We also had a large basket of walnuts that weren't cracked. Although it was messy, we had a very fun time cracking them. For dessert we had mint ice cream.

Afterwards we went into the classroom/rec room (because that is where the tree and presents were) where there were chairs in a semicircle around the tree. I was surprised to see how many presents were under the tree. I got a lot of socks which was very good because I was running low, air freshener, a white shirt, black trousers, a CD, and most importantly candy, including lemon heads which were gone in the next couple of days. As you can see, our annual Epiphany party was a great time for all.

The two unions

by Aedan Gilchrist, gr. 12

Dear friends in Christ, I hope you have all had a spiritually fulfilling Advent and Christmas. I know at least I have gained a greater understanding of the hope we poor sinners have and the great opportunity we have to make it to heaven. All thanks to our infant God and His most Holy Mother and the great sacrifices they made for us.

Our sweet Lord from all eternity planned His hypostatic union, where He united His divinity to our human flesh, to still be the one and same God but now man also. This Incarnation of the Word is the center of God's plan for both the spiritual realm and the physical. How interesting to think that man is the bridge between the physical and spiritual — how God already being the center of the spiritual realm wished to be the center of the physical. In order to be the center and head of mankind, He had to become man. Thus, you see the beauty of God in man (when in sanctifying grace), as we now reflect Him in soul and body — even if it is a poor reflection, at best.

If you are not yet convinced that the hypostatic union is the center of God's plans, then let us ask the question of whom this plan has affected. Before the angels could be admitted to the beatific vision, they were first put to a test. God revealed to them His divine plan to unite His divinity to our nature and how it would happen in the womb of the most humble of creations, a woman named Mary. The proud angels, full of confusion and hatred, started to blaspheme God, asking how can this creature be made more glorious than they, She being of a lower nature. Lucifer not only believed that God had been unjust in the idea of this woman but also in the hypostatic union itself. He believed, because of his pride, that the hypostatic union should be in him and not the man-God, as he believed that even though Christ remained God, He would still be of a lower nature than himself, who had an angelic nature.

While the idea of the hypostatic union was the greatest injustice according to the proud angels, it was the complete opposite for the rest of creation. The good angels could see their Lord's love at work, and man could benefit from this work by the salvation it would bring.

After speaking about the hypostatic union, I now wish to mention another union. This union is the perfect union between

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On special occasions, such as the Epiphany, our staff members join us for dinner.



Patrick distributes the gifts.



The ride up the gondola to the ski lodge takes about 20 minutes.



Seminarians keep the church entryway clear of snow and ice.



Eager skiers get ready for a day of fun!



The view from the top of the mountain evokes thoughts of the beauty of heaven.

The two unions

continued from page 2

God and creature and happened at the same time as the hypostatic union: the union between God and His Most Holy Mother. The hypostatic union (Christ) was hidden within the womb of Mary, for Mary is Its guardian. Reflect that Mary was hidden and protected by the One she protected — hidden and protected by the humility coming forth from God. So you can see this perfect union of protection between God and creature, both shielding each other from the world by their humility. We can think of Jesus and Mary, as Jesus the one in the mirror, and Mary as the mirror who reflects Him. May God bless you. Please pray for us here, as we pray for you.



The seminarians greatly enjoyed their recent visit with the priests during the priests' meeting.

One link at a time

Each January as we begin a new calendar year, we call to mind the fleeting nature of time. Time passes all too quickly, and we daily approach our entrance into eternity. Nothing could possibly be more important than this, and we naturally ask ourselves, "How can I persevere?"

Indeed, St. Alphonsus tells us that perseverance in grace is the greatest grace. It is not one we can earn, but we must continue to pray daily that we will persevere to the end in God's grace. That is what we call final perseverance. Humbly pray daily that you will persevere in the truth and grace of God until your dying breath.

We can think of our lives as chains, made up of thousands of links. Each link in the chain is another day, given to us by God in which to love and serve Him. On some days in our evening examination of conscience, we must admit that we have failed in our resolutions, that we had a "bad day." In fact, every day we have failed in some way. There is nothing else to be done than to humbly ask God's pardon and renew our resolutions to serve God faithfully.

Let us also serve God with joy. Yes, we are human, we are imperfect. Serve God as well as you can. Don't despair over your inadequacy, but humbly, trustfully, turn to Jesus and Mary and ask their help in overcoming your faults and striving for holiness. Thus you will take one day, one link at a time, treading the path to heaven.

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 Latin, theology, 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.

Again, I thank you for your prayers and support. You and your loved ones are daily remembered in our prayers and in our efforts to serve God, as He deserves to be served.

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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