



THE GUARDIAN

With the termination of classes in December came Christmas vacation. We all studied very hard during the first semester, this being evinced in our grades, and no doubt the break has been whole-heartedly welcomed. Our dedicated teachers were also in need of a vacation after dealing with us for a little over four months.

The past month of December has been a busy one for us. On December 8th, the feast of Our Lady's Immaculate Conception, there were no classes, so we went bowling and had pizza afterwards. Needless to say, it was one of the highlights of the month. We also enjoyed two basketball games at Mount St. Michael. Another event which took place during the month of December was a funeral. We dug the grave in our cemetery (named Mount Calvary Cemetery) and served the funeral at our church. What a sobering thing to have a funeral right before Christmas! Be that as it may, it is a reminder to us that we could die at any time and should always be prepared for our last end. One last major event for the seminary was a parish breakfast. We prepared the meal, served it and even cleaned up the mess afterwards! The breakfast served as a fundraiser for our seminary. The head cooks were two very gracious women who bought the ingredients and helped to coordinate the event. (Thank goodness, right?)

Winter is now upon us. Although thus far there has been very little snow, there will undoubtedly be plenty of it to shovel during the second half of our school year. But with the work which the snow brings, there also comes the fun and games. There are many ways to have fun in the snow, but our all-time

favorite is skiing. We always look forward to this exciting activity.

A new year already! By now we should have formed our annual resolutions. Let us above all strive to serve God to the best of our abilities during these coming months and prepare for the trials which must come. This world, we must remember, is where God has sent us that we might prove ourselves as worthy applicants to enter His heavenly abode. We wish you a joyous Christmas Season and a blessed New Year.

— a seminarian

Our daily spiritual food

by Vincent Prado, gr. 11

Every day at the minor seminary, we receive a dose of spiritual medicine and food for our souls. What I mean by this is that we are privileged to have every day: the sacrifice of the Mass, Holy Communion, visits to the Blessed Sacrament, and Rosary in common in the chapel. I would like to write about each of these things.

The Mass, every time it is being offered, is the single most important event going on at that time. We have the opportunity of daily assisting at this sacrifice. The graces we can receive from this are innumerable and we advance in holiness if we assist in the right way. So imagine assisting at Mass every day, seven days a week, for the entire school year.

Then there is Holy Communion. In this Sacrament we receive

January calendar

- 5 — Classes resume; solemn blessing of Epiphany water
- 6 — Feast of the Epiphany; special observances
- 8 — Annual gift exchange and Epiphany celebration
- 10 — Joseph Vines' 14th birthday
- 13-15 — Annual priests' winter meetings at Mount St. Michael
- 21-22 — Semester Exams
- 23 — Semester Break; ski day
- 26 — Second Semester (Third Quarter) begins

the actual Body and Blood of Christ. This Sacrament is the means to strengthen us in our daily battles with temptation and sin.

Several times during the day we are commanded by the schedule to recite certain prayers in chapel, such as

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Night prayers at the seminary, as seen from the choir loft.

Our daily spiritual food

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morning prayers, noon prayers, Rosary and night prayers. There is also a designated time for spiritual reading. These are just the prayers and exercises that we do in common in the chapel. We can, whenever we want, spend time in chapel by ourselves saying extra prayers, meditating or reading spiritual books. These visits to the chapel are so beneficial that you can sometimes feel yourself advancing in holiness every day.

Even in school we receive our spiritual food. In Theology class, for instance, we learn about the truths of our Faith and the teachings and wonders of the Bible. So as you see, we not only pray and contemplate holy things, but we also have a class on them too!

There is an old saying: you can sometimes have too much of a good thing. Well, when it comes to holiness and spirituality, you can never get enough of it. So we must strive for perfect holiness and an abundance of it.

In conclusion, I want to wish every reader a very Merry and Blessed Christmas Season, and to encourage you to incorporate spirituality into *your* everyday life.

Grave of hard work

by Dominic Pulliam, gr. 11

During the month of December a person from the parish passed away. Even though she was not well-known by every parishioner, she was still mourned by all who attended the funeral, especially her family and friends. Though we, the seminarians, didn't really know her, we were privileged to dig her grave, which meant that we were performing a corporal work of mercy.

We started the grave-digging on Tuesday, the 9th, and concluded on Thursday, the 11th, due to rain and cold weather. During these days we had time to think about death and how God could really call us at any time. But we also thought about another thing: when would the dirt get softer! The first foot of dirt was soft because of the rain we got, but the next few feet were a whole different story.

As we were digging we ran into something we did not expect. As I was swinging the pickax I noticed that after I would swing my digging tool, sparks would come flying from whatever I hit. I stopped and looked at what was making these little glowing sparks. It was crushed granite! A whole two feet of granite mixed in with the dirt. So we decided to come up with an ingenious way of getting rid of this granite. One person would go into the half-dug grave with a pickax and strike as hard as possible for one whole minute. Then two others would jump in, shovel the loose dirt and granite and throw it about five feet away from the grave. Now that probably doesn't sound like much work but it was. Each shovelful was about ten pounds. That is heavy. Finally, after mining through that stuff we got to a foot of clay and sand. This was easier but still heavy.

Now that the grave was finished we were happy but exhausted. But we kept in mind that we had just completed a corporal work of mercy. We had the burial on that Friday, the feast of Our Lady of Guadalupe. The funeral mass was at 11:00 a.m., which was a high Mass with incense. We all hope that with the beautiful Mass and our prayers and efforts, her soul was carried to eternal life.

Orasne saepe?

by Joseph Vines, gr. 8

Do you pray often? The Church Militant has always been persecuted throughout the ages and is still feeling the oppression of those who wish to destroy our gift from God, the Holy Faith. The martyrs showed their bravery again and again facing even the most fearsome and ruthless people. How can we attain such an intense love for God even as the foe oppresses us? The answer is through that powerful weapon of the Holy Rosary.

Our Blessed Mother gave this gift to us as a sword and shield of our Faith. We shield our Faith and defend it with the help of the Holy Ghost, and we attack our malicious enemy, the devil, with our sword of perseverance. When we reach our home in Heaven it will be because of the assistance of Mary and the graces she gives us. When we meditate on the lives of Jesus and Mary during the Rosary, we honor them and place them at the highest part of our heart and mind. So we, if we pray often, will see how much is given to us and how little we deserve, which will make us pleasing in the eyes of God.

We see in the lives of saints, how the Blessed Virgin interceded for them because of their devotion to her. St. Philomena had a great love for the Virgin of Virgins and prayed to her often. Mary came to visit Philomena while she was locked away during her trial under Diocletian; Mary comforted her after she was beaten, scourged, and tempted. Mary was so joyful to hear that Philomena had persevered in her vow to keep her virginity and give her life to Christ; Mary even sent the Archangel Gabriel to assist her in her pain. How greatly did St. Philomena love prayer. Her flesh never gave in to the attacks of the devil, and her life was kept pure and chaste.

How incredible is the power of prayer! Prayer turns sinners into saints but negligence of this spiritual communication can turn great people into wretched and disgusting animals. If we cease to pray then we give up eternal salvation and any hope of saving our soul. The devil will always attack us and try to convince us that we don't need to say the Rosary today or that we are probably too tired to even meditate on the mysteries. Satan will always do this in our life on earth and he will never be content with the feeling of a soul getting out of his clutches.

Just as the devil is doing everything in his power to prevent us from reaching the feet of God, we should be

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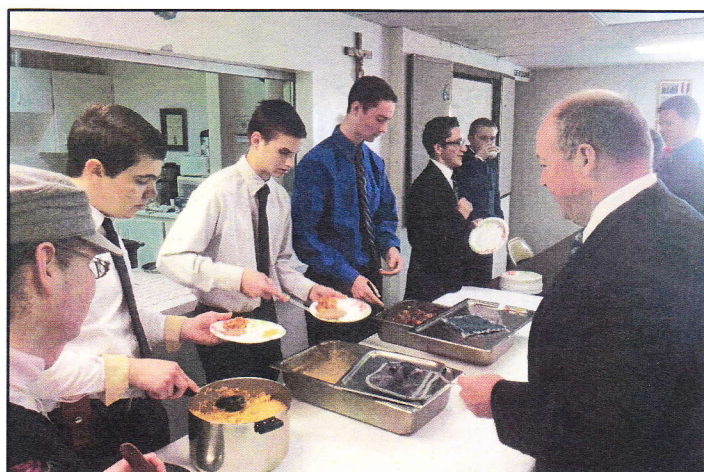
Dominic and Jordan work on the grave in our cemetery.



All the seminarians were involved in serving the funeral Mass.



The weather was mild on December 12 for the graveside ceremonies.



The seminarians enjoyed serving the meal at our fundraiser parish breakfast.



Some of the basketball action in one of our games.



Vincent and Joseph entertain their fellow seminarians at our annual Talent Show.



Before class we recite a prayer and sing a hymn.

Orasne saepe?

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engrossed in our salvation. Since God has given us so many graces to help us grow and enjoy Him in heaven, it would be a shame to waste it. Let us remember, especially in our day and age, to never forget prayer and sacrifice. We have many opportunities in our life to praise God and give Him the honor he deserves.

"If only these poor wretched sinners would say My Rosary, they would share in the merits of My Passion and I would be their Advocate and would appease My Father's Justice." (Words of Our Lord Jesus Christ to Blessed Alan de la Roche.)

A savory breakfast

by Mark Vincent, gr. 10

The best way to start out a Sunday or any other day is with a good, substantial breakfast. Fortunately, on Gaudete Sunday, we seminarians had the prerogative to carry out the completion of many of our parishioners' forenoon cravings. It was a good and rewarding fundraiser for our seminary.

After the first Mass of the Third Sunday of Advent, the parish hall was filled with men, women and children staring at the food to be absorbed by their mouths with hungry eyes. After going to Sunday Mass and having had nothing to ingest, there is much gratification given to the stomach by the pot and the spatula. Refried beans, enchilada casserole, and a healthful pot of rice completed the menu for Our Lady of Guadalupe's luscious Mexican breakfast. On each of the tables, covered in red tablecloths, sat two blue bowls heaped with tortilla chips for the set purpose of dipping in the delicious home-made salsa which filled another bowl.

Watering eyes stood gloating over all of these delicacies used to satisfy the appetite. There were two more items which need reference, both greatly needed in the morning American diet. The first one is coffee, the brown liquid substance filled with a mixture of sweeteners. I know a few people who would cease to stand on their own two feet if it weren't for coffee to give them the morning "wake-up call." The other item I wish to mention is also a liquid, commonly known as lemonade. A water dispenser filled to the brim contained a good supply of this refreshing appetizer.

To conclude my article I would like to encourage all of my readers to serve God well, given the strength from a hearty meal placed in front of all of us on the table every morning.

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.

God in his goodness has given us a bounty of food, and we should try to repay Him by fulfilling our daily duties well. Let us rejoice in the Infant Jesus who came on Christmas Day and be sure to serve Him faithfully.

Orderliness leads to holiness.

You've all heard the saying that "Order is heaven's first law." Well, if orderly neatness is a good character trait for a lay person, it is much more important for a priest. That training commences in the seminary.

Room inspection is an occasional part of the seminary routine. At the beginning of the year there are several announced inspections. As the year goes on, they are fewer and unannounced. Woe to the seminarian who has failed to make his bed in the morning or left his desk in disorder. He may be tasked with doing the dishes, much to the enjoyment of the normally-assigned dishes crew.

All of this, like everything else in the seminary, has a purpose. The young man who is neat in his habits and orderly with the articles he uses, will more likely be orderly in his spiritual life. Sloppiness in manners leads to sloppiness and disorder in the spiritual life. Order and neatness are natural virtues, of course, but they instill self-discipline and contribute to ease in the practice of the supernatural virtues.

And so our seminary life progresses, with all the small daily practices and rules, all of which have a purpose. May they help your young men to become good and holy priests one day! As always, we thank you for your support of this important work and assure you of our prayers and wishes that God will bless you and your loved ones in this New Year of 2015.

Fr. Benedict Hughes, CMRI

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