



THE GUARDIAN

Vol. XVI No. 6

Monthly newsletter of St. Joseph Seminary

February 2015

Wow! The month of January has already gone by. The first month of 2015 is in the past and nothing we can do will make time turn backwards so that we may redo or undo any of what we have done. Having this thought in mind, and realizing that we have a chance to do even better in the future, let us pray to God and to the Blessed Mother for a holy and spiritually beneficial month of February.

For us at the Seminary, the month of January has been full to bursting with activity, not the least among those activities being our end-of-the-semester tests. One of our traditions during the month of January includes celebrating the feast of the Epiphany by exchanging gifts. Each seminarian randomly selects the name of another seminarian. Over Christmas break we bought a gift for the person whose name we drew. And on the feast of the Epiphany, after fully enjoying an amazing meal prepared by our cooks, we all opened our presents.

We also enjoyed a visit to our seminary in mid-January, from the bishop and priests who had assembled at Mt. St. Michael for a meeting. It is always fun to try to learn the names of all the priests and to find out where they live and what they do for their Mass circuit. And, of course, our cooks prepared a splendid meal for the occasion.

Another activity we all enjoyed immensely was our first ski trip. As usual, we all had a ton of fun. We came back completely exhausted (this being usual after a full day of skiing) and ready for a good night's sleep, after the recitation of night prayers. We plan to go skiing at least once more, so that is indeed something to look forward to.

At the start of the second semester we are beginning a new class: speech. If we study diligently, we know that this class will give us the tools and skills we need to become decent public speakers. Aside from school though, our main form of exercise is roller hockey, especially in these winter months. Our gym is perfect for this sport.

So in conclusion, we ask you to please pray not only for our academic success, but more importantly, our spiritual life. We hope you enjoy this issue of *The Guardian*!

Sledding my style

by Joseph Prado, gr. 8

Dear reader, as we all know, winter is a difficult season to get through, especially if you live in the northern states of this country. Snow, although it's beautiful, is what makes it difficult. Every once in a short while though, you need to experience the joys of snow. And a wonderful way to do so is . . . sledding.

Since coming from the "Sunshine State," I now know that snow is not the wonderful fantasy that I thought it was, but at least we can have just a little fun here and there between our daily chores. Well, when the snow is not like granite from rain followed by freezing, we sled down any hill. None are big enough for us, but as for me, I must say that before the first time I freaked out.

Most of the seminarians, seasoned veterans or people who catch onto things quickly, made it down

February calendar

- 2 — Feast of the Purification
BVM; Candlemas
ceremonies; no homework
- 13 — Ski day
- 18 — Ash Wednesday
- 25 — Mid-quarter

most of the hills on the seminary property. But me . . . well . . . I'll have to delve into the brutal facts. As I was descending down one hill, the first five seconds were fine. Then, face plant! Yes, that's me for you. Soon afterwards, I got the hang of things. Another fun way to sled is down a paved road, because there are barely any bumps or divots in them. You're guaranteed a fast, spark flying ride. And yes, when you fall . . . ahem, which is usually never, it's not painful.

Let me briefly explain the two main styles of sledding. You can ride on your stomach, while you grip the front end of the sled. Or you can sit up, gripping the steering cord and hunching your legs close to your chest. I prefer the former, due to its stability. But, although the masters of the trade try impatiently to teach me the proper way, I have my

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Two seminarians assist as acolytes, serving the funeral Mass for Fr. Benedict's father.

Sledding my style

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own style. We have skis at the bottom of our homemade sleds, which make them faster than normal ones.

The skis are beautiful for lying on top of the sled, because it's a bumpy and hard ride if you're sitting on it. I lie on my stomach but I don't grip the sled, I steer myself a different way — wearing work gloves, I propel myself on the fleeting ground around me, building up a impressive amount of speed. And that's my style of sledding.

Daily mortification

by Jordan Hartman, gr. 12

We're halfway through the school year and just beginning a new calendar year. It's the beginning of the end! The end of the *next* semester that is. You know that a semester is divided into quarters and each quarter brings a change of chores.

Each quarter it's the same thing, Father stands at the classroom lectern and asks for volunteers for the various quarterly chores. It's a scary thought being stuck with a job you hate for a whole quarter! But then again, what better way could there be to mortify yourself and use up some Purgatory time? So, Father asks for victims who are brave enough to raise their hand above their head and tackle the onslaught of repetitious and sometimes distasteful assignments.

But not all of them are undesirable. Some are glamorous in their own way. I say glamorous for lack of a better word, because chores are still chores and we all try to do them for the greater glory of God. But as I was saying, there are chores such as "head sacristan" or "assistant sacristan." Head sacristan just means that you get to set up for Mass in the morning and put things away afterwards along with myriad other little tasks which are assigned. The assistant sacristan helps the head sacristan and often has his own chores.

Another likable chore, although less "glamorous", is "porter." I think this is one of the easiest jobs Father has to offer and is usually snatched up right away. I didn't say that it is the most adroitly executed chore, however. There have been a couple times when we come back from P.E. at the end of the school day at three in the afternoon and still find the door to the classroom locked! "How did we get through the entire school day with the classroom door locked?" we ask ourselves. But nonetheless, the porter usually gets all the doors unlocked at one point or another, even if it is just in time to lock it again at night!

I could go on, but it would take more than the normal length of our articles to cover it all. To sum it all up, I will tell you that we have many chores to keep us busy whether we like them or not. There's the trash removal person, the dog care person, the gym custodian, the sports equipment person and yes, we even have someone to change the bathroom hand towels! In short, God has provided us with little ways to attain

sanctity throughout the quarters of our school year and we try always to remember to do them well, that, by being faithful and diligent in the little things, we will be faithful and diligent in bigger things.

The greatest snow experience

by Vincent Prado, gr. 11

It was Friday, January 13th. We rose at 6 a.m. and assisted at 6:30 Mass and then hurriedly ate our breakfast. We were on the road soon after that and could not wait to arrive at Silver Mountain: the wonderful place where we would be skiing for the next six hours.

It was my fourth time skiing and I felt ready to take on the more advanced runs. My first run was on the bunny hill with my older brother and my younger brother Joseph, as it was his first time on skis. After making sure Joseph had his footing, we headed for the "blue" runs. On previous times skiing, I felt like I needed a bit of a warm-up, but this time, I felt like I was ready for anything. After tackling some of the blues, we decided to try a black diamond run named *Rendezvous*. We completed this run, but it was very difficult the whole way down. It was the only black diamond of the day for me, but I wanted to do it just to say that I've done one. After that arduous run, we skied on many other slightly easier runs.

On the gondola ride back to our vehicle, worn out from exhaustion, but feeling like it was well worth it, we were already planning what we were going to do next time and how incredibly fun it would be.

Gaudium in dolore

by Joseph Vines, gr. 8

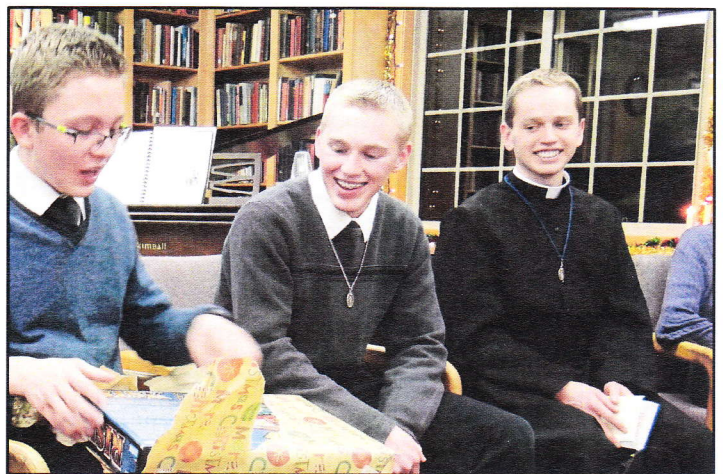
Joy in pain. Here at the seminary we take great measures to avoid waking up early, studying for a test, or sometimes even doing our chores on the weekends under the hard-working Fr. Anthony. All of these duties which are slightly annoying and slightly boring teach us how to love work, which we can use, God-willing, as priests. One should think of the saints who were martyred in the most gruesome ways or working in the most exhausting areas of the world, from skin-searing deserts to disease-infested jungles to freezing tundra that will attack the very essence of warmth. How can we seminarians be like the great missionaries who sacrifice everything to save souls?

Fr. Pro is an impeccable model of a missionary. He worked in the most uncomfortable conditions and sacrificed his identity for the great work of spreading the Faith and leading men to God throughout Mexico. He wasn't always perfect though. When he was a young man, he was a prankster and caused his mother many heartaches. When he was older he was tested greatly by the Jesuit Fathers in his town in Guadalajara. He even said that at one time he wanted to punch one of the priests in an interview. But as Fr. Pro grew in age and wisdom, he very much resembled the ideal

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On our first ski trip, we gathered for a photo before heading down the mountain.



Fr. Anthony and Jordan look on as Joseph opens his Epiphany gift.



Saturday chores include a variety of tasks, such as gathering and storing firewood.



During their visit some of the priests joined the seminarians in a sing-a-long.



Priests and seminarians pose for a group photo.



Our cooks prepared a wonderful dinner for the priests' visit.

Gaudium in dolore

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priest in Mexico. He did everything for God's people and gave much for the Church in his time. His cruel martyrdom showed how great his life was and how little he cared for earthly things.

I have to work on my acceptance of humiliating events and many things that require some pain. I try to pray every day for grace to overcome my pride and fill my soul with humility. I have to learn from the saints how to overcome pride with charity and patience. They conquered the flesh with their incredible perseverance and their abundance of prayer and sacrifice. The cross that God gives us will never be too great for us to handle. It will test us, but the Blessed Virgin Mary will help us overcome our adversaries and teach us to look at ourselves before we try to judge another person.

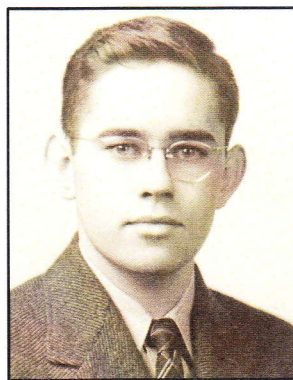
Mary is the greatest gift from God to the human race. She taught us in her life how to be quiet when human weakness wants to scream and punch somebody. She taught us that prayer is the only solution and that spiritual guidance from a priest (not from a therapist) is the best solution in conquering our flesh. Mary could have asked God to spare her from the cross, but she joyfully carried it in her life.

Let us try to persevere in this wonderful season of snow and frigid temperatures. If we can persevere in conquering the pain of the flesh, then we can surely earn a warm seat in heaven. The weather may be uncomfortable or maybe even painful, but God is always watching. He sees our pain and agony. God loves to see us accept pain, because He allowed His Only-Begotten Son to suffer. So let us try to be more like the saints of God, and even find joy in our pain.

"I have kept the Faith"

This issue of *The Guardian* has been delayed, due to the fact that my last two weeks have been topsy-turvy with the illness and death of my father. His was a most blessed death, with the sacraments of the Church and numerous Rosaries being prayed during his final days in the hospital. My mother and all ten of his children were able to spend many hours with him during the final week of his life. Despite our sorrow, we have been greatly comforted by the wonderful outpouring of support and assurance of prayers that we have received, and we accept God's holy will.

Shortly after my father's death, I received an email of condolence from an old family friend who had known my



Vincent Patrick Hughes, M.D., born March 14, 1927, in Fremont, Ohio; entered into eternal life on January 25, 2015, in Spokane, Washington.

father for many years. One of the things he wrote was particularly significant: "Your father will really be missed. He has occupied many of my thoughts these past two days. We go back a long way. It seems we were always fighting some kind of battle — Communism, new catechisms, the Novus Ordo, short skirts, etc. We encouraged each other with the words, 'It's not how many we win but how we fight that we will be judged. Our reward will be in heaven.' He is now receiving his reward."

These comments are certainly apropos. When I think of my father's life, I call to mind the words of St. Paul: "I have fought the good fight, I have finished the course, I have kept the faith. For the rest, there is laid up for me a crown of justice, which the Lord, the just Judge, will give to me in that day...." (II Timothy, 4:7-8).

If you would like to learn more about my father's life, you can find the eulogy on our seminary website (www.minorseminary.org). The website has been greatly enhanced recently, with a new weekly blog entry, which will help you to keep up on the latest news from the seminary. You will also find photos of the funeral, a beautiful solemn Requiem Mass, with the seminarians in attendance, and two of them serving as acolytes.

Among other attributes of my father was his support for vocations. It seems to me that one of the greatest things we can do to promote the work of the Church and the salvation of souls, is to pray for and support the work of the education of priests. We thank you for your support and encourage you to continue. May God reward each of you.

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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