



THE GUARDIAN

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Monthly newsletter of St. Joseph Seminary

September 2017

School began in the very warm days at the end of August. As usual, we had a “camping trip” to Lake Coeur d’Alene toward the end of the first week. We weren’t really camping, since we had the use of a house at the lake. Our time there was most enjoyable, with plenty of time for swimming, diving, canoeing and playing games.

We also completed our Boys’ Camp just a few weeks ago, and there were plenty of activities to enjoy during the camp. But now we must get down to more serious school work. After the first few days of getting adjusted, we are now used to the routine and ready to meet the challenges of the school year.

We ask for your prayers as we embark on this new school year, that it will be a time of spiritual and academic growth. We know that God has given us a tremendous grace to be here at this seminary, and we must be sure to make good use of it. As we go from month to month, we will share our experiences with you, and we thank you for reading our newsletter.

Summer Events

by Robert Kolinsky, gr. 12

As I left the seminary for the summer and went back to visit my family and relatives, I found myself coming out of the U.S.A to a little country called the Dominican Republic. You might wonder what I

was doing there. Well, this is the current residence of my mother and siblings so I enjoyed a great deal of my vacation there.

The Dominican Republic is one of two countries (the other being Haiti) on an Island called San Salvador, which means Holy Savior in Spanish. This island is in the Caribbean Sea, along with a number of other islands such as Puerto Rico and Cuba. It has a very tropical and humid climate with frequent precipitation. The main language is Spanish and the ancestry consist of three main races which are Indian, Spanish and African-American. The most preferred sports are soccer and basketball, particularly



There were 68 boys and four priests in attendance at this year’s Camp Saint Joseph.

soccer which is known as football to the inhabitants.

Now I will mention some of the history of this little country. On Columbus's first voyage to America he visited the north coast of the

September Calendar

- 4 – Labor Day outing
- 8 – Feast of Our Lady’s Nativity; chanted Vespers
- 12 – The Holy Name of Mary; chanted Vespers
- 28 – Mid-quarter

island. And as I was visiting I saw what was once an historical town containing old churches, forts, and other old buildings from around the era of Christopher Columbus. Another fact about this land is that it is a third-world country. Some places, especially in the city, have street

people living from day to day. On a bike ride I got to see some of the ghettos in which the area is very poor. Now there are also modern towns that are well-taken care of, and there are quite a few places for tourist attractions. Unfortunately there are no specific Catholic churches that are traditional. So we must keep these people in our prayers.

And then after living in this tourist place for a bit, I find myself returning to the minor seminary for my final year of high school. I hope

this will be a great year for me and the other students. I am excited and I pray that it is a grace-filled school year in which we can grow in Christ.

The 2017 Saint Joseph's Boys' Camp

by Dominic Scherling, gr. 10

Just like that, campers started showing up left and right. Before you knew it, there were about 60 campers from 8 to 20 years old, settled in for the night at the bottom of the hill. Early the next morning, we all had the honor to go on a Rosary walk all around the City of Mary property. Father Anthony offered Mass when the Rosary concluded. Now we had breakfast, and it was phenomenal! Imagine hash browns, pancakes, sausage, eggs, and juice.



This year we have 3 seminarians, who come from California, Georgia and Washington.

The next event was to disassemble our tents. Slowly, we all loaded up our tents and ourselves into the trucks and made our way up the hill. When we reached the top, we unloaded our gear and reassembled our tents. Soon enough, it was dinner time, then some sports, then night prayers, then finally, bed time.

Sooner rather than later, Tuesday morning arrived. We went through our normal routine, except today we prayed the Stations of the Cross while walking up the side of the hill with an actual Cross of about 30 feet in length. When we arrived at the camp sight, we planted the Cross in the ground. After all of that, it was nearly time for lunch. For the rest of the afternoon, we played a lot of volleyball and corn hole and that about wrapped it up for the second full day.

Now it's Wednesday, the day at the lake! We had seven big canoes ready to go. First, my friends and I started a game of volleyball, then we did a rematch, and even another rematch. Next, we took a break for a picnic, and after that, we made our way to the lake. Before getting in the canoes, my friends and I went tubing for about half an hour. After that, we got in our canoes and rowed away, battling other campers in their canoes, trying to tip them. Before we left, we had been at the lake for roughly 3½ hours.

When we woke up the next morning, we repeated the same daily schedule, but today was different... today was the day we played paintball! When we got to the course we picked teams, established who was starting where, made a strategy, and executed it. For many of us, paintball was the greatest attraction of the camp.

As this remarkable adventure was coming to a close, we were lucky enough to sing a High Mass on Friday morning. Over all, the 2017 St. Joseph Boys Camp was one of the greatest experiences of my entire life thus far.

A Long Journey to the Seminary

by Thiet Nguyen, gr. 8

In our lives there are many events that come and go. Some of them may be memorable, unforgettable; some of them may change your life. Some of them may be unexpected and forgettable. For myself, I've had to suffer many events that changed my life. Today I'll tell you the story of my life from the time of my childhood until the present.

I was born in Hanoi, Vietnam, at Francais de Hanoi hospital located in the center of the capital. My parents work for a Pacific Ocean crafting and building boat company. I have three siblings and I'm the second oldest. I have two sisters: Chau, my oldest sister is sixteen years old and now boards at a Catholic high school in Washington, and Diep, who's six years old. I also have a baby brother, named Joseph Kiet. He's now 7 months old.

Life in Vietnam is completely different compared to the United States. The government has a real hatred for Catholics, especially those who are very honest, spiritual, and gracious. My parents many times helped the people who were hunted by the government because of their religious freedom movements.

When I was a baby, I was very weak and suffered many illnesses in my lungs. It was necessary for me to use an oxygen tank with a mask for several years so that I could get more air into my lungs. This treatment helped me to breathe easier until I was baptized, and suddenly I could breathe without that oxygen medication machine. The baptism took place in Nam Dinh in a church located in an orphanage. My father had attended this church when he was a teenager.

When I was six years old, I went to Le Quy Don, a public school in Hanoi for my first grade. The way they educated me and the students in the school was very unsatisfactory for my parents. The school has the statues of Ho Chi Minh, the former leader of the communist party in

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The campers made ample use of the canoes on Lake Pend Oreille.



The large cross is erected above the campsite.



The boys sang a High Mass at the closing of this year's Boys' Camp.



Football and soccer at the park were just some of the activities of the camp.



The cooks had plenty of work feeding so many boys and counselors.



Darkness descends on the many tents erected on the church grounds during the camp.

A Long Journey to the Seminary

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Vietnam, everywhere. The students were required to know how to sing communist songs, especially the national anthem.



The excitement was high anticipating the paint ball wars.

After that terrible year of first grade, I moved on to second grade and I transferred to Hanoi Academy, a local private school near my home. This school's system of education was much better, but it is still under the control of the government. Every Monday, the students were required to stand in the school yard to sing the national anthem and the pledge of allegiance even in the bad weather. The history books in the school tell many untruths. When I was in third grade the school forced me to join the Red Guard team, the team that has to wear a red scarf, which represented communism. I refused to wear it, so my teacher told me to wear it or she'll take away points from my homework and tests.

I told my mom what my teacher said to me, which completely made her upset and from that event, she decided to move our family to the United States, which she wanted to do for a long time before that but she was not making her decision yet.

Two months after my mom made that decision, we moved to the United States. We arrived in the United States on a March afternoon. My mom's friend was there to pick us up at the airport. We were so lucky because my mom's friend let us stay in her house for 1 year.

We moved to Atlanta, Georgia, after 1 year in South Carolina. At that time I was 9 and I started to think about my vocation. My mom and I tried to find a seminary across the United States and we found St. Joseph Seminary.

I'm now boarding in St. Joseph Seminary and everything went well for me. I have seminarians, Fr. Benedict Hughes

and Frater Augustine always there to help me. Everyone's very nice to me. I'm looking forward to my future in the seminary and I hope that Jesus, Our Mother, Most Virgin Mary, and St. Joseph always stand by me.

Where are the Vocations?

As you can see by the photos and articles of this newsletter, we have only a few students this year—our smallest class yet. Why are there so few? I would like to explain some of the reasons, which should help us to appreciate vocations more and to do what we can to promote vocations.

Quite obviously, the first reason is that there are few truly Catholic families. Vocations come from good Catholic families, where the spirit of the world is kept out of the home and where virtue flourishes because the parents love their faith and are practicing it. They teach their children by word and especially by example. And they pray daily that God will bless them by calling one or more of their children to His service.

Sadly, however, there are some good Catholic parents who are raising their children well but do not want to part with them. When God calls a boy or girl, Catholic parents should be overjoyed. Sometimes, however, there is a selfish reluctance to part with their children.

Also, there are some parents who think that entrance into a minor seminary is somehow a serious commitment. Actually, minor seminaries are training grounds for boys who believe they may be called to the priesthood or religious life. The seminary provides a safe and holy environment where their innocence can be preserved and their minds and hearts formed in the faith and in the desire to do God's holy will. No boy who enters the seminary is bound to become a priest or religious. Only time will tell if he has a true vocation.

When we began our minor seminary in 1999, I wrote an article on the purpose of a minor seminary. This article, which can be seen on our web site, explains that the Council of Trent demanded that there be seminaries where boys can be trained from their earliest years. It is in obedience to the teachings of this council that we seek to form young men, according to the mind of the Church. Let us pray that our Catholic families will furnish the boys who can then be properly formed. Pray the Lord of the harvest, that He send laborers into His harvest!

We thank you for your interest in our work, and for your support and prayers. May God reward you, and may He grant many blessings to you and your loved ones.

Fr. Benedict Hughes, CMRI