



THE GUARDIAN

Despite a relatively mild winter (thanks to El Nino!) we at least had enough snow for two ski trips. Our outings took us to the slopes of Lookout Pass, which is on the border between Montana and Idaho, right off I-90. It is just slightly more than an hour drive from the seminary. Several seminarians went skiing for the first time; the rest of us were happy to again have the opportunity to experience the thrill of racing down the hill on skis or snowboards.

Now we are in the midst of Lent, trying to make the most of this important season. We just recently finished our Lenten retreat, which was a good opportunity for silent reflection and extra prayer. We will continue to spend time reflecting on the Passion of Our Lord, who suffered

of the day, but we also get a day free of classes in his honor!

Before we know it, Holy Week will be here. That is a special time at the seminary, as we have the opportunity to sing and serve the beautiful ceremonies of the Church. In the meantime, let us all resolve to make a good Lent, that we might rejoice at the feast of the Resurrection!

Our Lady's Humble Messenger

by Benjamin Shedenhelm, gr. 9

We have all heard about the apparitions of Our Lady of Guadalupe, but have you ever stopped to think why Our Lady picked Juan Diego? If you think about it, Juan Diego was a recent convert, who was an Aztec Indian from a pagan



The seminarians received their ashes at the altar during the Ash Wednesday ceremonies.

so much for us.

We will also honor Saint Joseph, our seminary patron, throughout this month. His feastday is always a special day at the seminary. The Solemn High Mass is the main focus

tribe. As you know, these tribes honor their false gods by giving them human sacrifices and by worshipping them.

Why then would Our Lady choose to appear to a

man from such a tribe as this? In my opinion, I think Our Lady wants to show us that it didn't really matter who it was. Even if it was a man who committed a great crime, Our Lady might still appear to him, provided

March Calendar

- 7 – Brother Thomas' Feastday
- 15 – Saint Patrick's Day talent show
- 18 – Joseph's 16th birthday
- 19 – Feast of Saint Joseph, seminary patron; Solemn High Mass
- 22 – End of Third Quarter
- 25 – First day of Fourth Quarter
- 28-29 – Holy Thursday/Good Friday; special schedule
- 30 – Holy Saturday; Easter Vacation begins
- 31 – Easter Sunday; Matthew's 17th birthday

that he is truly sorry for his sins and does penance. She also probably wants to show us that even if you attend the Mass just to look holy in the eyes of others, then the criminal who repented might be holier than you.

This reminds me of the story of the centurion's faith, because even though the centurion was a pagan, he went to Jesus and asked Him to cure his servant. Jesus said that He would come, but the centurion said to Our Lord, "Lord, do not trouble Thyself, for I am not worthy that Thou shouldst come under my roof; only say the word, and my servant will be healed." Both Juan Diego and the centurion were pagans, but by the grace of God, they both became devout Christians and they believed in Jesus for the rest of their lives.

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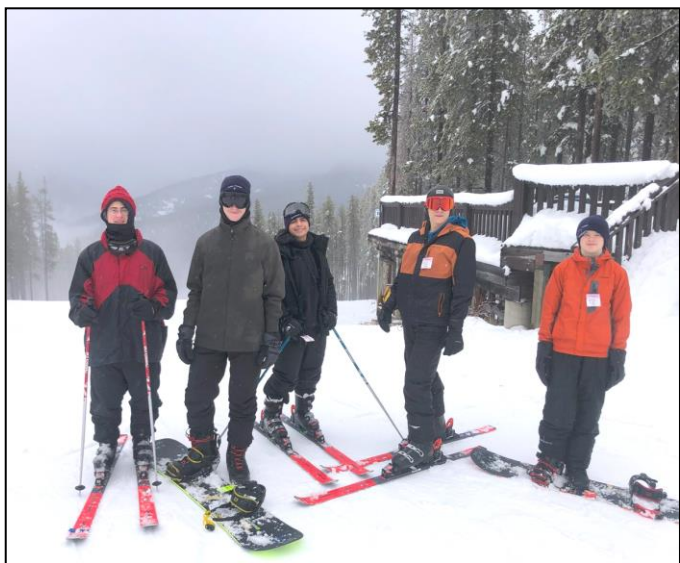
Our Lady's Humble Messenger

As you can see, though people may say that a great sinner will never have an apparition from Our Lord or Our Lady, they themselves might not deserve to see them. It was the great sinner who had the apparition, and not the proud hypocrite. I think Our Lady wanted to show us that no matter how great of sinners one lives among, he can still obtain a high degree of sanctity and even be the selected messenger of Our Lady.

Risen Above the World *by Louis Albin, gr. 9*

During Lent, an important theme is detachment from the world. Just as Our Lord went into the desert to fast for 40 days, so we should attempt to separate ourselves from the world during this season. Here, as in other cases, we have a saint to look to for a model.

St. Benedict lived in the late 5th and early 6th centuries. Raised in a simple country family, yet wishing for an education, he was sent to Rome for instruction. The western Roman Empire having fallen a short time ago, Rome, torn between the surviving Romans and uncivilized Ostrogoths, was overcome by corruption and impurity. Disgusted by the vices of this degenerate city, Benedict fled from Rome, terminating his studies, and lived in



*A group of seminarians
prepares to ski down the slope.*

complete retreat in the mountains for three years. Soon his sanctity attracted disciples, whom he organized into twelve small monasteries, which he presided over for twenty years.

His growing fame, however, incited the envy of a local priest, Florentius. This perverse man tried to uproot Benedict first by slander, then by an attempt of poisoning, and finally even by tempting Benedict's followers to impurity. The holy abbot, seeing that not only his life but

also the salvation of his disciples was at stake, determined to undertake the journey to Monte Cassino in southern Italy. At the sudden death of Florentius, Benedict still refused to return, knowing that it was the will of God to migrate to Monte Cassino.

As the new abbey rose on this mountain, the Gothic war was raging around them. Rome switched hands several times, and Totila, king of the Goths, marched against Belisarius, the general from Byzantium. The pope was murdered; political corruption followed; armies were gathered and destroyed. Benedict, though, kept his monks in relative peace and shelter on Monte Cassino, which was miraculously kept safe from the tides of war. It was about this time that Saint Benedict wrote his *Rule*, guidelines for a sheltered life of prayer and work. Word of his sanctity spread and miracles were worked. Benedict, however, continued to remain out of the world as much as possible, and it was in this state that he died.

St. Benedict is an example for us of how to do the will of God with detachment from earthly things. Let us try to follow his example in this holy season of Lent, in which it is so important to focus on God alone.

Jubilate Deo *by Matthew Mendieta, gr. 12*

“The Mercies of the Lord I will sing forever!” (Psalm 88) The Holy Ghost inspires the beauty of spiritual melodies. What grace would it be to experience the symphonies of the Blessed, who chant the eternal mercies of the Trinity? It is the spirit of the Church that we, the faithful, join the everlasting choir of the Saints, though imperfectly, by means of singing the Liturgical Chants and approved hymns. Pope Pius XII quoting St. Ambrose says: *“Let the full harmonious singing of our people rise to Heaven like the bursting of a thunderous sea and let them testify by the melody of their song to the unity of their hearts and minds, as becomes brothers and the children of the same father!”*

There were many saints who appreciated the beauty and necessity of music. St. Philip Neri, the Apostle of Rome, greatly appreciated the music of Palestrina, one of the greatest composers of polyphonic music. Palestrina himself wrote many motets and *laudes spirituali* for the oratory of St. Philip Neri and was also his penitent. Another admirer of music was the great St. Teresa of Avila. Tomas Luis Victoria was fortunate enough to meet St. Teresa, who was impressed by his potential and capability in music. Furthermore, St. Francis de Sales writes on sadness, more commonly known as depression, and tells us the value of singing spiritual songs: *“For the devil has often been made by such means... to abandon his operations. Witness the spirit that agitated Saul, which was quieted by the sacred music of the harp.”* Therefore, by means of music one can elevate the heart to God and overcome temptations.

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The annual Lenten retreat was held this year on the last weekend of February.



A group of seminarians acted out a skit called "Phobia Workshop" during the parish Talent Show.



Two brothers take their turn at doing the dishes.



Several seminarians take a break during their annual achievement testing.



Father Gabriel blesses throats on the feast of Saint Blaise.



Fr. Gabriel directs the seminarians in singing a high Mass.

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Jubilate Deo

Therefore, it behooves parish choirs and their directors to move the faithful by proper and devout music. Consequently, we should always strive to sing devoutly and responsibly and with great attention to every composition. We wouldn't want the angels to cringe because of a certain person going off key. Let us then desire to join our melodies in union with those who sing the mercies of God.

Contemplate the Blessed Virgin as she gently sings a lullaby to the God-man, in the poverty of the crib of Nazareth.



The seminarians sang the melismatic chants during our procession on Candlemas Day.

A Week of Grace

One quality that every future priest must acquire in the seminary is a love for the liturgy. The sacred liturgy is the official, public worship offered to God by His Church. As Saint Joseph Cafasso explained to a youthful John Bosco at their first encounter: "The sights to be seen by the priest are the functions of the Church; the more devoutly they are celebrated, the more pleasing they become to us." Although our private prayers and devotions are good, they do not compare to the excellence of the liturgy.

Here at the minor seminary there are many opportunities for seminarians to learn to love the liturgy, such as serving or attending the daily Mass and singing High Masses or parts of the Divine Office. But perhaps more significant than anything else is their participation in the beautiful liturgies of the Week of Grace: Holy Week.

At the seminary we have a special schedule for the week, so that each seminarian can learn his assigned parts and perform them well. All the seminarians participate in some way, although they cannot all serve each of the special liturgies for Palm Sunday, Holy Thursday, Good Friday and the Easter Vigil.

For a priest, these ceremonies of the Church are a joy, but it takes time to learn to perform them correctly. After one is a priest for many years, it no longer requires a great deal

of time to learn the ceremonies, but for seminarians, extra time must be spent in rehearsals. Such time is well spent, for we earn graces according to our dispositions and the effort made to fulfill the assigned parts correctly and devoutly.

We pray that you all receive many graces this Lent, and especially during Holy Week. It would be good to attend as many of the ceremonies as you can, but if you cannot, they will all be livestreamed on our parish website (www.miqparish.org). Thank you for your support. May God bless you and your families.

Fr. Benedict Hughes, CMRI



The seminarians join in on Stations of the Cross every Friday of Lent.