



THE GUARDIAN

How time flies! It seems like yesterday since the first day of school, and here we are already issuing the first newsletter for Year 2025. Reflecting on the last couple of months, the seminarians have enjoyed many memorable experiences and have kept busy with our studies this past year, and we are now looking forward to spending time with our families during the two-week Christmas vacation. With all the exciting events and constant activity in our schedule, it is nice to be able to take a short break with our families and relax, in order to return and start the upcoming year with renewed energy. Some are flying home, three are traveling by train, and the remaining

able to cover our incredibly obedient dog Felix in a snow mound.

Although the year has gone by quickly, it was nevertheless a good one. Like all things, however, there is always room for improvement. As we return from our short break, there is much to look forward to in what this new year has in store. In this month alone, we are all anticipating our second skiing trip and the priest meetings. As for our seniors, they will be striving to do their best to raise funds for their class trip. (If you would like to help support them there is a link on our website.) We thank you for all the support that you have shown us this past year, and hope that you have a wonderful and blessed rest of your

January Calendar

- 5 – Blessing of Epiphany water
- 6 – Feast of the Epiphany of Our Lord; classes resume
- 15 – Priests’ visit to the seminary
- 17 – Ski Day
- 18 – Begin Church Unity Octave
- 20 – Third Quarter begins

that someone might think of is “gift.” Another word someone might think of is “giving.” Sadly, many people in this world think solely about: “What am I going to give this person?” and: “I wonder if he will like the gift?” These thoughts should not be our only thoughts during this time. Primarily, we should focus on the gifts we receive from God, and what we should give to God in return.

God has given us His Only Son, Our Lord Jesus Christ, as we all know. He has given Him to us for our salvation. Oh, how great is this gift! God became man, suffered, and died for us, to redeem us from our sins.

God also gifted us so holy and perfect a mother, Our Lady. This Mother loves all her children and will always love them. Our Loving Creator has also given us a Church to belong to. He gave us the One True Church that His Son started. This Church doesn’t teach error, will always last, and will forever be one. God made available to us the Church that grants us the reception of sacraments.

God has gifted all these things because of His love for us. We should

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Work progresses on our new convent.

two live in the area just down the hill.

Throughout this past month, we were grateful to receive a decent amount of snow, of which we did not waste the opportunity of recreating in it. Sledding down steep paths, having intense snowball fights, and toppling sleds on top of each other in attempts to keep our sleds connected were all fun and enjoyable. We were even

Christmas vacation. May God bless each of you in the New Year of 2025.

The Greatest Gift

by Bryson Tucker, gr. 11

Christmas and Epiphany. If you were asked to describe these two words with only one word, what would you say? One word

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show our appreciation of these gifts and be thankful for all of them. We should also thank God for these gifts and show Him that we really mean it. What better way is there to show God that we appreciate His gifts than by receiving the Blessed Sacrament, participating at Holy Mass, frequently going to confession, and praying the Rosary? All these things, and many more, are such great ways to show God how much we love Him.

We receive gifts from God, but we must also give Him gifts. Although our gifts to God will never surpass the amount of gifts God has given us, we should still strive to give all to God. One might ask, "What can we give to God?" The answer is – everything! We should give Him all our thoughts, words, deeds, and acts. We must also tell God that we will offer up everything we do through the Morning Offering. It is most important to make a habit of saying the Morning Offering every day when we wake up.

As the start of the new year is upon us, we need to think less of the gifts of the world and think more of the gifts from God. We should also give God more, and specifically we should give God our whole selves and direct our thoughts more towards God. It is crucial that these thoughts fill our minds as we progress through the year.

The Family That Prays Together

By Diego Diaz, gr. 8

In this new year let us think about our families, and how our families can mirror, to the best extent, the Holy Family. The Holy Family was the most beautiful and perfect family. It consisted of Our Lord Jesus Christ, Our Lady, and St Joseph. Let us remember too that the Holy Family was poor, and that Jesus Christ, God and man, the king of kings, was born in a poor stable with rags as his clothing. Yet the Holy Family was happy, blessed, and honored because God was in their care. In a way, our families have some of these things. Although our families are not poor materially, we can be poor and humble in our hearts.

Whenever we think of the Holy Family, we should ask ourselves if our families live up to the standards of the Holy Family. We should go through our everyday lives and think about whether we have spent the day well or wasted it. Reflect on the past day and ask yourself, "When I get up each day, do I say my morning prayers right away?" When we do our daily duty each day, do we offer

up every little sacrifice? Do we children and teenagers obey our parents right away, like Jesus? Even though He was God, He was still man, and by being man, had to put Himself under the protection and care of His parents here on earth. Without our parents, we would not be alive today. Should we not, then, obey, love, and respect them to our best ability? Now, I am not saying that I am exempt from this either. My mom would always tell me: "Diego, do this please," and I would respond by saying, "Coming!" I would then wait and would receive a response from her, "Diego, do this," to which I would then say again, "Coming!" She would at last respond in a frustrated tone, "No, do it now!" I would at last consent, saying, "Yes mom!" Oh, how bad I was!

We should be thankful that we have a Catholic family, because so many people are not given the grace and are really not favored as much. Now, when I say that families who are not Catholic are not favored as much, I do not intend it so that we can look down on those poor families, but rather to recall the immense grace to have the only true Catholic faith. We should be grateful that we have kind, loving, and dedicated parents who, by the grace of God, have been taught Catholicism since their childhood and can therefore teach us how to be good Catholic kids, teenagers, and adults.

In conclusion, we should strive to be like the Holy Family more and more every day, have holy conversations like they would, and obey and love our parents like Our Lord

Jesus Christ would. He still denies nothing to His mother! Truly strive and pray to be a holy family. The family that prays together, stays together!

An Experience to Remember

by Leo Mansfield, gr. 9

Last month we had a "seminary support" breakfast, to earn money for a ski trip. We made many things for the breakfast, such as pancakes, sausages, egg souffle, and crispy potatoes. But my favorite thing to make was the pies.

We seminarians split into two groups making these delicious desserts. For the first day, I went with Brother Simon over

to the kitchen in the parish hall to make Oreo, Butterfinger, and Reese's pies. Brother Anthony and the other half of the seminarians made Lemon Meringue, Silk, and Chocolate Nutella pies. The next day, we made Coffee and Apple pies. It mostly went well, although I did drop a fully

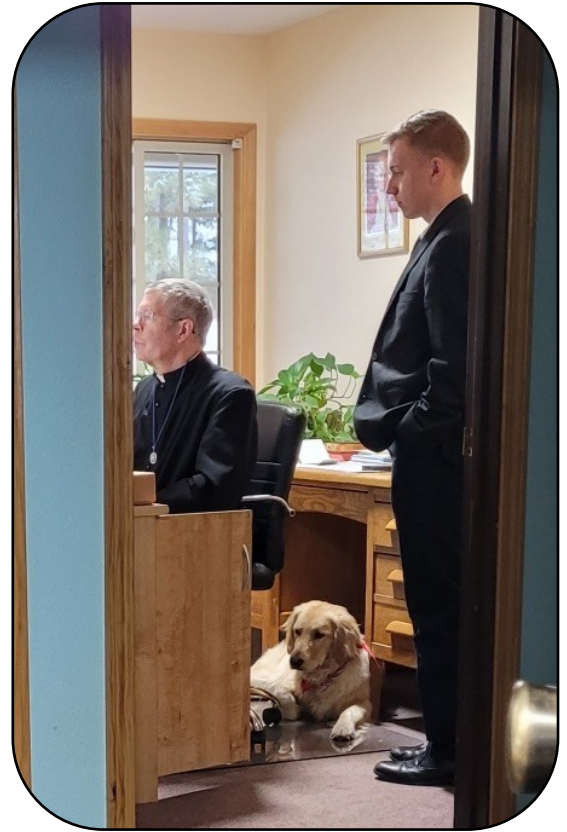
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Each day during Advent, one of the seminarians lit the candles on the Advent wreath before Mass.



It's Diego's turn to feed the calves.



Felix likes to curl up under Father's desk when he is working in his office.



This is a view of the garage of the new convent.



The skid steer is a big help with stocking the Sisters' supply of wood for the winter.



The seminarians regularly sing at the 9:00 am Mass every Sunday.



We had to expand into the classroom to fit everyone for Thanksgiving dinner.

Would you like to support the Seniors this year on their endeavor to travel to Europe? Scan the QR code or follow this link:
<https://gofund.me/e13951c2>



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baked apple pie. On the bright side, I got to eat it and it was very tasty. Surprisingly, the most popular pie was the coffee pie, with Oreo and Reese's not far behind. Thankfully, we reached our goal and were able to go skiing.

We usually go skiing in January, but for the first time we went skiing before Christmas. It was a very interesting experience, especially because it was my first time going skiing. The ski resort itself was beautiful. It had an amazing view at the top, and many ski trails going down. I did not go there at the start, for I had to begin with the easy hill. I kept on falling over, but after a while, I was back on my feet and started to get the hang of it. Later, I made my way to the bigger hill, which contained my favorite trail.

Another enjoyable part was riding the ski lifts. They were one of my favorite parts, because you were able to see the mountain top view above the clouds, and the ski hill that you just went down. Overall, skiing was a great experience, as well as the fundraising and pie making that we did. But most of all, I can't wait to go skiing again in January.

Time to Move On

Human nature is such that we don't like to change. We often prefer to stay where we are, but life requires us to move on to the next stage in our lives. It is the same with a vocation to the priesthood.

Young men who believe they are called by God to this vocation enter a minor seminary. They prepare during their high school years for this lofty calling by cultivating habits of piety and virtue, developing a prayer life, and acquiring an intellectual foundation upon which to build their knowledge. The important disciplines of theology, philosophy, et alia, require a foundation of academic skills. Minor seminarians study Latin, religion and other subjects, but they also learn the art of correct writing and speaking. Every aspect of their formation contributes to the future man of God.

Eventually, the time comes when they must move on. The minor seminary is a joyful place, filled with activities that will be well-remembered for a lifetime. Graduation from the seminary is bitter-sweet, as departing seniors say good-bye to their former class-

mates and move on to the next stage of priestly formation.

If they choose to become religious priests, they will enter the novitiate, for a period of 18-20 months of formation, as postulants and then novices. They will continue to study, but these studies will be primarily focused on the religious life, the holy rule, and the vows. After profession of first vows they will return here to Saint Joseph Seminary, where they will be in residence in another part of the building and begin their scholastic studies for the priesthood. Five or six years will be spent in these studies, during which they will advance through the various orders on their way to that long-desired pinnacle of priestly ordination.

Throughout these various stages, the seminarians need our prayers. During the long course of formation, some will conclude that they are not called to the priesthood and will then depart the seminary to pursue their vocation in the lay state. Others will mount the various steps and achieve the goal of priestly ordination. But all will have passed through various steps of formation, which will leave their per-



The Tucker family from Minnesota visited at Thanksgiving.

manent mark on the mind and heart of the young man. And that is why good, Catholic seminaries are so important!

We are most grateful for your prayers and support. Please continue to help us lead young men to the altar of God. Be assured that we also pray for all of you and your needs and intentions, especially that God will bless you and your loved ones in this New Year of 2025.

Father 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.

St. Joseph Seminary 15384 N. Church Rd. Rathdrum, ID 83858-7650