

# THE GUARDIAN

Vol. V, No. 4

Monthly newsletter of St. Joseph Seminary

December 2003

November, as usual, was a cold, rainy month, until last week. As you can imagine, our anticipation for the first good snowfall of the season grew daily. During the first few weeks of the month we were teased by a couple of instances of light snow (enough, at least, to make a few snowballs!) And then, at last, on the eve of Our Lady's Presentation we received eight inches of snow.

It seems that the first snowfall always coincides with the opening of basketball season. The snow began to fall last Thursday in the morning and continued through the day. We drove slowly in blizzard conditions to the game, and the snow continued to fall as we returned. Towards the end of the return trip we stopped to help as we saw a car that had slid off the road, but the driver was no longer in the vehicle, even though the lights had been left on. So we had a brief snowball battle and then it was back into the van. Well, we lost the game that evening, but we had a good time anyway. We are now looking forward to the rest of our basketball season.

Soon we will be off for the Thanksgiving vacation. We certainly all have much to be thankful for: our Faith, the Mass and sacraments, our family and loved ones, our health, a Catholic education, our material blessings, and so many other gifts. Let us all remember to give thanks to God for all these benefits. Who knows, but that He will begin to withdraw His blessings if we fail to adequately thank Him?

We hope that you all have a good, spiritual Advent. The world begins to celebrate the birth of Christ during the

very season when Holy Mother Church wants us to prepare our hearts for His coming. Let us not be caught up in the excessive materialism and busy activity of the world, but rather spend Advent in prayer, sacrifice, and meditation upon the wonderful blessing of Christ's coming into the world!

## The Season of Advent

by Seth Reed, gr. 10

*Adventus* is a Latin word, which in English means "coming" or "arrival." It is used to signify our preparation for the coming of Christ at Christmas. Advent is a time for us to prepare to celebrate Christ's birth. It is a time for joy.

During Advent we have a custom that comes from Germany, and that is the beautiful custom of lighting the Advent wreath. The wreath has four candles, and my family has a custom of lighting them daily in the following order: the oldest child lights the first candle the first week; the youngest child lights two candles the second week; for the third week, the mother lights three candles; and the fourth week the father lights all the candles. It's really a good custom for Advent.

Another wonderful aspect of Advent is the color of vestments the priest wears. On the first, second and fourth Sundays, the priest wears purple, the color of penance, reminding us to do

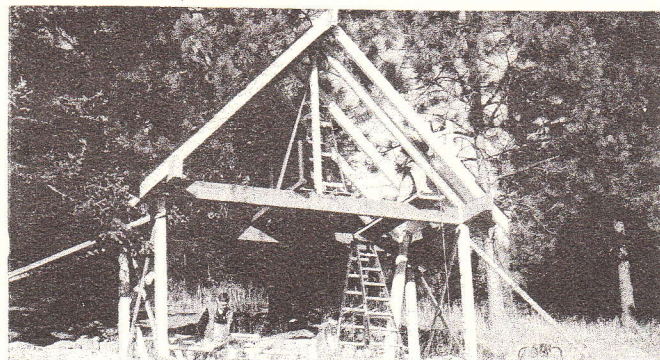
## December calendar

- 1 — Classes resume
- 4 — Basketball game
- 5 — Mid-quarter
- 8 — Immaculate Conception; Holyday of Obligation (no school)
- 11 — Basketball game
- 12 — Our Lady of Guadalupe feastday (no homework)
- 15 — Basketball game
- 20 — Christmas vacation begins; students leave for home

penance during this season. He wears rose vestments on the third Sunday of the season to show the joy expressed in the midst of our penance during this season.

Advent is a time in which we should do penance to show our love. Jesus suffered for us from the very beginning, shivering in the freezing cold wrapped

*continued on page 2*



*Work progresses steadily on our outdoor Sacred Heart shrine.*



## Advent

*continued from page 1*

in a swaddling cloth. It is very logical when you think about it, that we should show our love for God by returning our suffering for His.

I especially like to hear the songs sung on the Sundays of this season. On Gaudete Sunday, we here at the seminary will sing a high Mass with men from our parish choir. This is the same Sunday the priest wears rose-colored vestments. Some of the seminarians are eagerly looking forward to it, while others of us aren't very good at singing. But the big thing we are all anticipating is Christmas Mass — the singing and the beautiful ceremonies. Now is the time for us to prepare for that great feast.

## Operation whitewash

*by Brandon Odom, gr. 9*

Early in November we had the first snow of the year at the Seminary. I don't know if you can call it snow since it only lasted for two hours and only snowed about 2 millimeters. Even though we nearly had to use a spatula, we managed to get enough for a short snowball fight. Although it only lasted a few short minutes it was rather enjoyable watching one seminarian run around like a turkey while the others skillfully pelted him with snowballs. (In reality there was more dirt in them than there was snow!)

The fight ended rather abruptly when the bell rang for Latin class and the seminarians filed (pushed and shoved would better describe it) into the classroom to finish their studies for the day.

To further arouse our excitement and anticipation for snow, Fr. Benedict suggested that each seminarian choose the date on which he thought we would get at least two inches of snow. The prize for the one who correctly guesses the date is to be a free homework pass. So the seminarians continue to watch and keep a steady vigil for snow. (*Since this article was written, we have had our first major snowfall, on November 20.*)

## Class of confusion

*by Peter Linder, gr. 11*

Latin is a language which is obviously not spoken anywhere except in traditional Catholic Churches. That is why Latin is called a 'dead' language. It seems to most people like a waste of time to learn, although others think of Latin as a beneficial language for understanding English words better. It can also be a big help in learning foreign languages. If someone thinks about Latin in that manner he will probably not have too much difficulty in getting himself to do it. Now if someone really wants to have a tough time in Latin he or she would think of it as just a dead language that only priests need to know, which is the way some people think of it.

For us at the Seminary Latin is the most difficult class. The general feeling among seminarians about the workload can be summarized in these words of a seminarian of the past: "Latin is a dead language: it killed the Romans and it's going to kill me too." By the workload I mean that it takes about half of our study hall to do, except on nights with either a composition or a book report to write. Personally, I would rather exercise my brain with Latin than with a lot of math because Latin has more variety.

Generally, Latin is a difficult class with lots of work, no matter how you look at it. The only thing that changes with your outlook on Latin class is how much effort you put in. The amount of effort you put in determines exactly what your grade will be.

## The defiled dust

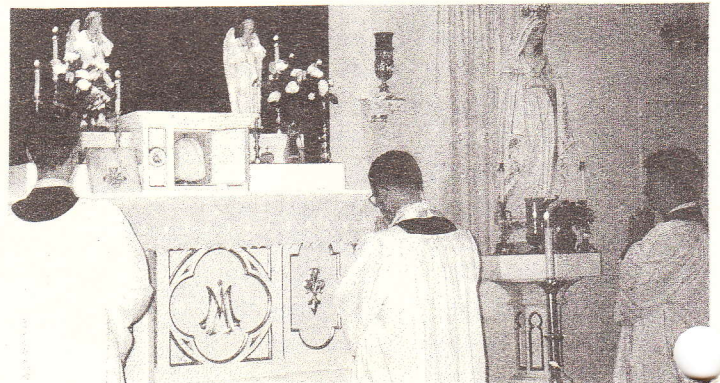
*by Chris Strain, gr. 10*

I don't usually share my problems with others, but you have a really big problem when working with chalkboards. All of us have chores, and one of the most odious chores is cleaning the chalkboards. The chalk dust gets all over you with its different colors. It smells repugnant.

First of all we have to wipe down the boards with a dry rag. Second, we have to clean out the chalk trays into the trash, and any dust that gets on the floor we have to vacuum up. Lastly, we have to clap the erasers out, and Father won't let us clap them out on the building because they leave marks. So, we have a clap them together and the dust gets all over the place.

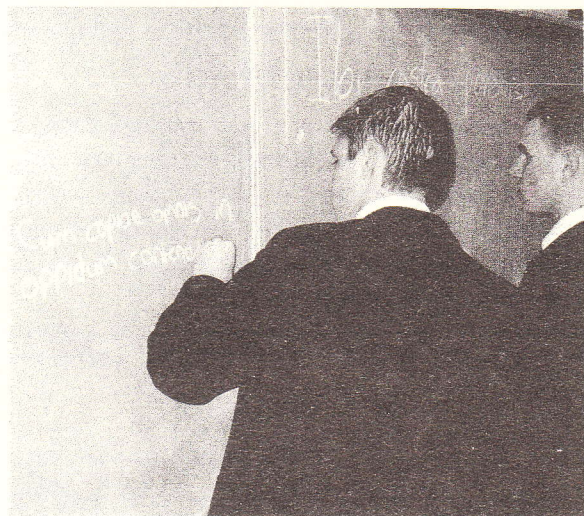
Another terrible thing is when you clap out the eraser you have to do it facing up wind otherwise you get it in your face, in your eyes, etc. A fun thing about this, however, is hitting the other guys with the erasers. But after you have your fun, you get tackled. The other day, for instance, I had to do the whole downstairs job that includes four or five different tasks. Since the other seminarian skipped out, I got him good.

Well, the chalkboards are all right, but the dust is horrible. If you can get someone else to handle the job that's great. If not, then just get it done — carefully.



*During October we prayed our daily Rosary before the Blessed Sacrament exposed.*

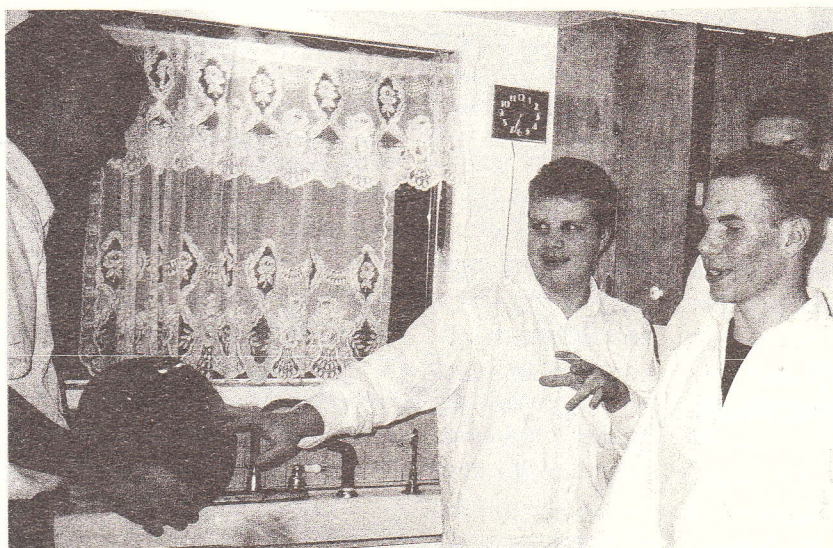




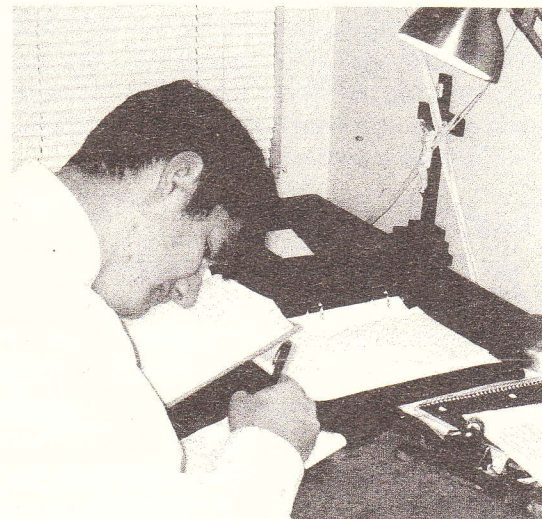
*The students often use the chalkboard to write out their Latin homework.*



*The distribution of uniforms marks the beginning of basketball season.*



*The seminarians enjoy a few laughs while doing the evening dishes.*



*Study hall after supper means quiet time with the seminarians at their desks.*



*Peter uses a broom to clean the snow off Father's car.*



*Cleaning the nearly 70 steps leading from the parking lot up to our church is a winter chore for the seminarians.*



## Detention

by Shea Davis, gr. 9

A set of initials, a check, a check, a check, another check. Ouch! I saw that one coming. The only way to describe this is like ice running through the veins of a seminarian. His shirt wasn't tucked in, or he left his book in his room, or he forgot to do his homework, or worse, he talked out in class when he wasn't supposed to.

That's the discipline plan for you. First, your initials are listed on the board, which is a warning. Then, another offense merits a check, which means 10 minutes of detention, followed by 10 more at the second check. Number three hurts at 20 minutes of detention and dishes at every meal for the next 24 hours. Pain sets into your spine at the final punishment when you get the 48 hours of dishes, which is feared above all things.

We must give credit where credit is due. Official records show that the longest detention is a joint punishment held by myself and one other seminarian. The first ever 10- and 20-minute detentions are ascribed to yours truly. I once felt the pain of the condemnation of dishes for a 24-hour period, and no one has had it since.

## Lingua Nostra

As one of our seminarians explains in his article, Latin is an important but difficult subject at the seminary. The first year especially is tedious, as the students learn the various grammar rules and memorize vocabulary. Gradually, however, we begin to translate various selections of ecclesiastical Latin, and then the language comes alive.

Latin is truly *Lingua Nostra* (Our Language). It is part of our heritage as Catholics. In the Mass and various hymns, in art and literature, and even in our very own native language, the effects of the Latin language are everywhere to be seen. A good grasp of Latin enables a seminarian to appreciate better the liturgy, especially Holy Mass.

Here at the seminary Latin and choir hold a place of preeminence, given their close connection with the liturgy. Each seminarian also serves Mass weekly, and a special emphasis is placed on the correct pronunciation of the various responses of the Mass. It is our hope that the study of Latin will help our young men to grow in the appreciation and love of the Mass.

## Seminary Support Club

If you are not yet a member of the Seminary Support Club and would like to become a member, you may write to the seminary at the address below. Members pledge to pray for the success of the seminary and, if able, to send a regular financial contribution for its support.

## 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 Theology, Latin, 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.

In your charity, please remember the recently departed souls of the following friends and benefactors of St. Joseph Seminary: Sophie Alderete, Gary Kish and Dr. Kenneth Tyler. May they rest in peace!

We pray that you all have a blessed Advent season, the prelude to a joyous Christmas. How sad that few, even among Catholics have lost the sense of what Advent is all about. Having given over the time of Advent to distraction and premature celebration, they have consequently lost a true appreciation of the meaning of Christmas. Christ's rejection by the world at this time of year is, sadly, indicative of His rejection by our modern society. Truly "there is no room for Him" in most homes in the world today. May He find a ready welcome this Christmas in your hearts.

We encourage you to return soon the enclosed remembrance card with any intentions you wish to have remembered in our annual Christmas novena, which begins on December 16. May God bless you and your loved ones with a most blessed Christmas. As always, we are most grateful for your support.

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.

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