



THE GUARDIAN

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Monthly newsletter of St. Joseph Seminary

July 2007

The following articles were written by the seminarians several weeks ago, before they left for their summer vacation.

What I have learned

by Angel Bryan Gamboa, gr. 9

We have just a couple more days of classes, and we are taking our final tests this week. The end of the school year has made me think about the beginning of the school year, and how I went from being uncomfortable with the English language to being comfortable.

The first three or four months at the seminary were more difficult than what I thought they would be. I still remember that I always wanted Jose and Gio to translate many of the things that people or the priests were telling me, and I think they sometimes felt uncomfortable with this task.

When I could finally understand a little bit of English it was much better; but it was still a problem because sometimes people thought I could understand everything, but I could not. It was kind of embarrassing, because at the end of our conversation they would ask me something and I would not know how to answer. Now I'm very happy because I understand and speak a lot better, but I still have problems with my

grammar, and that means I have to study much more.

I believe that the younger a person is, the easier it is to learn another language. This is especially the case for little children, because it is like a game for them and they are not embarrassed like us teenagers. The moral of this story is: If you have the opportunity to teach your children a second language, do it as soon as possible.

I would like to say thank you very much to all our benefactors for the support and all the benefits that we receive from their generosity. I want you to know that we pray for you every day.

Up in the trees

by Caleb Short, gr. 11

Besides all the chores, studies, and prayers we do here at the seminary, recreation takes an important role in seminary life. We all need to relax from our labors every once in a while, to keep ourselves fresh and ready to do God's will. On the other hand it is really bad to go to the other extreme of having too much fun. We are still supposed to live for God, but a little bit of recreation can be a useful tool to help us reach our goal of heaven.

As someone wrote in a previous article, we started the

July calendar

4 — Independence Day
22-28 — Boys' Summer Camp

tradition of having campfire dinners every now and then. We go a little ways up the hill into the forest to a clearing where we make our fire pit. After eating hot dogs and marshmallows, we usually sing some songs (I hope the neighbors don't hear us when we do this!) and we sometimes play some interesting games.

Here at the seminary we have many acres of beautiful forest. There are a lot of good places to make little hideouts. I enjoy doing this very much. A little while ago we started one up in the trees. We found four trees close together and fastened boards about six feet up for our first platform. We hope to be able to put up at least one more platform six feet higher. We still need to make some walls and a roof and then we will be done. Maybe it will be usable for the boys' camp this summer.

Besides all the work and prayer we have recreation. It definitely makes life easier to bear. Right now, at the end of the school year, my head is spinning from all the different things that have been going on, and I'm not the only one. It will be good to get a nice summer break so that we are refreshed enough to hit it hard again the next school year.

Consecration to Jesus and Mary

by Juan Fernando Garcia, gr. 9

Each year we have the consecration to Jesus and Mary. Some people made their consecration a long time ago, like the priests, religious and some parishioners, so they only renew their consecration each year. I told Father Benedict that I wanted to consecrate my soul to Jesus and Mary. He told me, "In a short time we are going to make it, but we need to prepare and pray before the consecration."

We prayed every day in the seminary chapel according to the book Preparation for Total Consecration. We also prayed the novena to the Holy Ghost to help us on this spiritual journey. Sister Amada, our Spanish grammar teacher, has been giving Bryan and me a religion class on Fridays, so she too has helped us to prepare. I anxiously await June 24th, the feast of the Queenship of Our Blessed Mother, for on that day, when I make my consecration, I hope to receive many graces to help me be a better Catholic.

An ant odyssey

by Matthew Belanger, gr. 11

Fr. Gabriel, our science teacher, got the wonderful idea for all the science students here to have a science fair. It took me a while to find a project that was to my liking. Fr. Gabriel finally suggested that I do an ant project that he saw on the internet.

Giovanni was my partner for this project. At first, we thought this would be an easy project. We later found out how very, very, very, wrong we were. We not only had the privilege of rewriting our report 50-million times, but also got the honor of failing to be able to test our project another 70-trillion times.

Our test subjects, ants, would never cooperate with what we wanted and we seemed never to be able to perform our experiment. Either the ants stayed in their hole all day or we were rained on. On rare occasions we would spot an ant here or there. These ants were fat, lazy, uncooperative, and without a purpose—it's a wonder how they even survived.

Three days before the project was due we finally found the right ants. Fr. Gabriel went looking around for ants and also prayed to St. Anthony that he would find ants. These ants were perfect. They were the little ants you find in homes and you consider a pest. I was never happier to see such annoying pests. We completed the experiment in one hour and started on the rest of the work.

After the experiment was complete we were left with one day to set up our display board and write out our report. We spent the whole day doing nothing but science and helping with the mailing of the last issue of *The Guardian*.

The next day we presented the project and I was very, very nervous. I was the most nervous person there. Everyone got a laugh when Gio and I presented. Everyone laughed and laughed at our struggles to get results. I just can't wait until next year.

Finally over

by Giovanni Ortiz, gr. 10

Another school year has finished and everyone is looking forward to having a nice summer break.

There are many questions that you might have asked yourself, but have you ever asked yourself what a school year really is? Or why it is so important? Well, a school year is a time of intense studying, in which sometimes people just want to see the end of it. This time of school might be tedious to some people but is very beneficial for us because it helps us to develop skills that will help us in the future.

This is why we have a long and good summer break at the end of each school year. This break lasts about three months and helps us to relax and rest from all the homework and studying that we all had during the school year.

As the end of the year comes we say good-bye to those we won't see again for three months. We thank all the teachers and friends that helped us during the school year to learn so many lessons. We give the house a total cleaning, and then we have a water fight outside the house. I think this is all that I can say about the end of the school year and I wish all of you a nice and enjoyable summer this year.

Drivers' education

by José Castellanos, gr. 10

Giovanni and I are taking a drivers' education class this summer. In this class I am learning many things. The first class was fun because every one in the class drove for half an hour. Some of them were very frightened to drive because it was their first time. The teacher asked who wanted to go first. Nobody wanted to, so I volunteered. The first day we drove around the property; the second day we drove on the normal roads.

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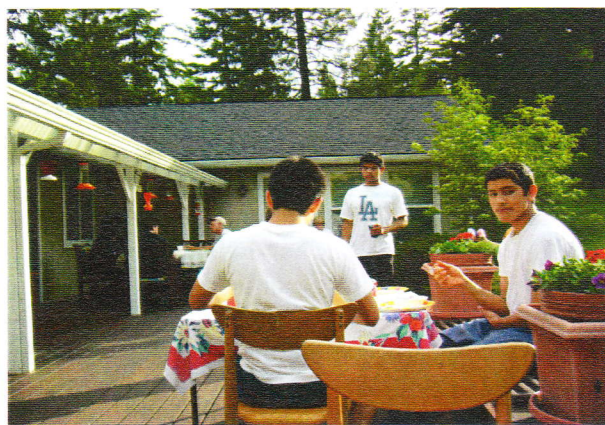
The young First Communion girls and Mrs. Vogel prepared flower petals to drop in the path of the Blessed Sacrament for our Corpus Christi procession.



The annual outdoor procession in honor of the Blessed Sacrament is a highlight at the end of the school year.



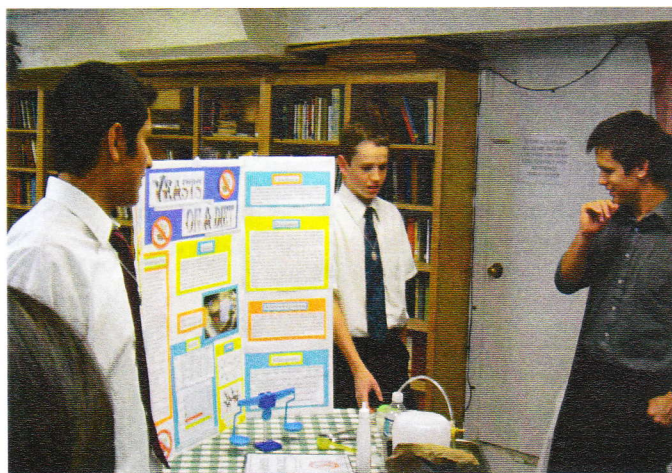
Giovanni prepared to dissect his first frog.



The seminarians enjoyed an end-of-the-year dinner at Mr. & Mrs. Freddi's



Bosco joined the seminary staff and students for the annual group photo.



José and Caleb impressed Gerard with their Science Fair presentation. Their project, "Yeast on a Diet" won First Prize.

This driving class is tough for Giovanni and me, since we don't read and write English as well as the others; but we are trying to do all the homework, tests and assignments correctly to get a good grade, and after these classes to get our licenses. There are many questions to read and answer, but I think I'm doing okay. Giovanni is also doing well.

I also want to tell you about how difficult it was to get our driving permits. Mrs. Salgado said that it was almost more difficult to get them than it was to get us into the country. I don't really know all the things that Mrs. Salgado and Fr. Benedict had to do to get our driving permits, but I remember how Mrs. Salgado sent the papers that we needed; then a couple of days later we went with Fr. Benedict and they said that we needed another paper. So Mrs. Salgado sent a fax to Mexico to get this paper. We went again and I got my permit, but Giovanni did not pass the vision test. So we had to go and see the eye-doctor. The doctor signed a paper so that Gio could get his permit, but he still has to get glasses. So that's a little bit of the trouble that we had.

Annual retreat

Summer is for rest. Teaching at the seminary is taxing on mind and body. The daily class preparation, grading papers, teaching, working with these young men—all take a toll on one's physical, emotional and mental reserves. During the summer, we teachers finally get the opportunity to recuperate.

But not to be overlooked is the importance of spiritual recuperation. During the long school year we pray our daily prayers, but we have little time to spend in extra meditation and prayer. We are always giving to others. That is why we must take time for the spiritual rejuvenation provided by a good retreat.

In the Gospel we read that a fortnight before His passion, Jesus "went into a country near the desert, unto a city that is called Ephrem, and there He abode with His disciples" (St. John 11:54). They dwelt there, in the quiet of retreat for 6 days. We religious imitate this example of Our Lord, by making an annual retreat.

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.

A retreat is a great grace. We try to forget all else—to think only of God, our spiritual duties, and our soul. We review notes and resolutions made in our last retreat and examine ourselves on our spiritual progress. We take stock of where we are in the spiritual life and what we need to improve. All in all, a retreat is a wonderful blessing.

While we must work for the salvation of other souls, we must also remember that God has given to each of us an immortal soul. Our primary task is to sanctify and save our own soul. No one else will do this task for us. The blessing of a retreat reminds us of this all-important work of our own salvation.

We hope that you also have a good summer—one that is relaxing and enjoyable, but also one that is spiritually refreshing. May God bless all of you. Please continue your prayers and support for us, in this great work of forming future priests.

Fr. Benedict Hughes, CMRI

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