



# THE GUARDIAN

Vol. XV No. 9

Monthly newsletter of St. Joseph Seminary

May 2014

Easter week has flown by and May, the month of Our Lady, is here. To honor the Blessed Virgin during this month, we will crown her with a coronet of flowers. At the Seminary, we have the custom of setting up a shrine to Our Lady in our classroom and each seminarian is assigned a day of the week to provide fresh flowers for her. As the end of the month draws near, we will have the ceremony of Total Consecration to Our Lady, an event in which those who wish to make the consecration can do so, while those who have already made it can renew their consecration. In preparation for this ceremony, one must pray during the month of May the prayers prescribed by St. Louis Marie De Montfort. It is a commendable practice to consecrate oneself to Mary, and one which we are sure pleases her very much.

The first day of the month is the feast of St. Joseph the Worker, which we celebrate by singing a high Mass for our benefactors. It will be a “no-homework” day and for supper we will have a barbecue. It’s always good to have something to look forward to! Another event during the month of May is Forty Hours. This represents the 40 hours that Our Lord was in the tomb. In addition to these, we all look forward to the end of the academic year. This will be our last full month of school and the words “summer break” have a beautiful ring to them!

With the end of the year comes the warm weather, birds, insects and a whole lot of grass. That means mowing and weed-whacking the seminary lawns — a lot of work, but a rewarding task which makes the grounds all the more resplendent and enjoyable! We

hope you have enjoyed receiving *The Guardian* this year and we look forward to writing more next year. May God bless you and, as always, please pray for our perseverance in our vocations!

## Our most powerful Advocate

by Dominic Pulliam, gr. 10

Here we are in the month of May when school is almost at an end. Well, May is just another month, but what happens in this flower-abundant month is another story. May means May Processions, May flowers, May altars, and May devotions, culminating in the feast of the Queenship of Mary.

St. Ephrem in the fourth century gave the Blessed Mother the title of Our Lady and Queen. Seven centuries later hymns were composed dedicated to Our Lady. Some of these hymns are “Hail, Holy Queen,” “Hail, Queen of Heaven” etc. The Dominican Rosary and Franciscan Crown gave and still give praise to the Mother of God.

In the early centuries many Christian people, either in time of celebration or in time of crisis, made petitions and hymns of praise to the Queen of Heaven for their needs. This tradition has never wavered through the centuries and it never will. Neither has our faith that taught the Virgin Mary, Mother

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## May calendar

- 1 — Feast of St. Joseph the Worker; High Mass
- 2 — Solemn High Mass; opening ceremony of the Forty Hours
- 2-3 — All-night vigil of adoration of the Blessed Sacrament
- 4 — Closing ceremony of the Forty Hours
- 8 — Mid-quarter
- 17 — Vocations Day
- 25-26 — Camping trip to Priest Lake
- 27 — Rogation Procession
- 29 — Feast of the Ascension; Holyday of Obligation; no classes
- 31 — Feast of the Queenship; chanted Vespers; Procession; Total Consecration to Mary



*Dominic assists Father in the blessing of the Easter Water.*

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## Our most powerful Advocate

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of Jesus Christ, is in heaven and reigns with a mother's solicitude over the whole terrestrial planet.

During the last century many cities, villages, and towns have turned to ruins. Great moral evils are being spread like a violent tsunami and the corrupted powers of today are making a threat for all the people of this world, financially and spiritually. But this is when we should go and give all our problems to Mary our Queen. She is concerned with the whole affair of the human race. She wants us to pour our problems into her lap and trust in her.

So we should pray to the Blessed Mother for all we need. Some of the many prayers we can say are: the *Hail Mary*, the *Litany of Our Lady*, the *Memorare*, and many others. All the saints have said that if we need help overcoming and conquering our faults and failings we should turn to the Blessed Virgin Mary.

God thought it necessary that the Davidic kingdom have a Queen. In Israel it was the king's mother who sat on the throne and exerted power as the "Great Lady" or "gebirah" in Hebrew. Just as King Solomon's mother, Bethsabee, was the intercessor for the people, so does Our Lady act as our intercessor with the king of kings.

So pray to Our Lady and ask her to be your intercessor while here on earth. With Mary as your advocate, you can make it to heaven where you can thank her for being a splendid intercessor.

## Fun or fanaticism

*by Vincent Prado, gr. 10*

As we strolled into the much dreaded classroom on August 26<sup>th</sup>, we thought that the end of school would never come, but now there is only one more month of this academic torture (just kidding). We, as average American teenage students, always in some way dislike the school books which, in the end, give us copious amounts of knowledge which we should embrace. But as we near the concluding month of the school year, we continue in our love-hate relationship with erudition and the means of obtaining it. Now, whether you like it or not and since you don't have a choice, I will give you a short synopsis of the subjects which increase our mental capacity for knowledge.

The first drill of the day would be that of a dead language. Latin is the language of which I write. Learning this speech can prove to be a strenuous task, a task in fact I thoroughly enjoy. There are benefits to learning this "dead" language, one of which is that it helps us to understand the liturgy better. Another is that major languages are based on Latin.

Now on to math. The ultimate conglomeration of numbers is in a book 520 pages long, with 30 problems per lesson and 131 lessons per book, which amounts to 3,930 problems in

180 days of school. And that's just math! And we are the totally *willing* subjects of these mathematical experiments.

Next is English. We all know how to speak English don't we? Well, we think we do — that is, until we realize that there is more than we ever dreamed of in the English language. Enough said. Moving on.

Next is the most important class of the day: Theology. It is the immense study of our Catholic religion. We must attempt perfection in this class as it teaches us the most profound doctrines of our Catholic Faith. It goes rather quickly for us, as we enjoy it to its fullest.

Our first class of the afternoon is a multiple subject period, with some seminarians studying Spanish, while others have science. It is the easy-going class of the day.

Finally, we reach the end of our day with a large dose of American History. Buried deep within the (large number of pages) of the book is found the most beloved stories of our country. Since it is the last class of the day, it could drag. But it does quite the contrary as our ever-so-learned teacher thoroughly keeps both our attention and interest.

So there you have it. This is what we have to go through nine months out of the year. And we love it! And we also encourage any average American teenage students reading this to enjoy school for the sake of learning. For as it is said, "Knowledge is power; ignorance is slavery."

## The holiest hour

*by Jordan Hartman, gr. 11*

There I knelt in the vacant chapel, encompassed by a heavy silence, the smell of incense still wafting faintly in the air from Exposition. It was about midnight and completely dark outside. The only light in the chapel was the warm, flickering glow from the twelve candles on the altar and the many vigil candles lining the chapel walls. Although no one else was in chapel, there was the underlying feeling of a holy Presence. Peace pervaded every nook and cranny and sought to permeate even the very depths of my soul.

I knelt, read, prayed, meditated and yawned, periodically, for a whole hour. This would commonly be called a "holy hour." Here at the Seminary we have the privilege of making all-night vigils several times throughout the year. It often starts right after night prayers, which commence at 9:00 p.m. on the dot, and goes until 7:00 in the morning, when we have Benediction followed by Mass. Each of us gets to take an hour or more during this time.

Making a holy hour is a great means of obtaining grace. The practice originated from Our Lord's Passion when He was suffering so terribly in the Garden of Olives. He went to His disciples and asked: "Can you not stay awake one hour with Me?" We should strive to make a holy hour especially during the time of Lent, but any time of year will do. In fact, during the month of May, we have our Forty Hours' devotion.

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*We spent plenty of time in serving practice during Holy Week, to prepare for the intricacies of the ceremonies.*



*Jordan was the MC for Mass on Holy Thursday.*



*The seminarians assist Father with the Washing of the Feet on Holy Thursday.*



*The unveiling of the Cross is a moving ceremony on Good Friday.*



*A young parishioner finds an Easter Egg among the flowers at the seminary.*



*A new batch of chicks just arrived during Easter Week.*



*Dominic won our highly-competitive pool tournament this year.*

## The holiest hour

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This 40 hours represents the time that Our Lord was in the tomb. The custom consists in attending at least one of the 40 hours in adoration of the Blessed Sacrament exposed on the altar. The entire parish can take part and is encouraged to do so.

What better time to petition, give thanks or comfort Our Lord than when He is exposed on the altar? He waits there silently for us to come to Him. In silence and mercy He abides there for now. But the day will come for justice when Our Lord will judge the world in glory and majesty. So let us take advantage of God's mercy and silence while it lasts — while He waits patiently on the altar for us to visit Him and adore Him. Let us answer His heart-rending plea: "Can you not stay one hour with Me?"

## Everyone has a vocation

*by Byron Ugolini, gr. 8*

Everyone has a vocation, whether it be to the religious life, the married state or to remain single for the rest of your life. I have a vocation, you have a vocation, everyone has a vocation. This is the very point I am making in this article. Some people think that a vocation is only to the religious life, but a vocation is just your calling. Each person must work out his own vocation. This is not a matter where you can consult your friends to make the decision for you. You can ask for advice, but they cannot make the decision for you. A vocation is something you have to want to do. If you don't want to become a priest then perhaps you don't have a vocation to the priesthood.

You have to determine your vocation. Don't expect an angel to appear to you and tell you your vocation. It is the will and the determination that creates a religious vocation. It is a fact that most people don't like living under obedience, because it is hard and disagreeable to nature. The trick is to rely on the grace of God to smooth out the road to sanctity. If you are looking for an impulse or a spiritual attraction you may wait your entire life. Jesus said, "*If thou wilt be perfect, go sell what thou hast, and give to the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven: and come follow Me.*" (The information for this article came from Fr. Francis Cassilly, S.J., contained in *Adsum.*)

## 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 Latin, theology, 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.

## O dulcis Virgo Maria!

All children of Mary love the month of May. It is their opportunity to pour out their enthusiasm for their heavenly Mother in various practices of devotion. This reminds us of what St. Louis Marie de Montfort says of the characteristics of true devotion to Mary: it is interior, tender, holy, constant and disinterested. Let us concentrate on the second of these.

What does it mean to have a *tender* devotion to Mary? According to St. Louis, it means that the soul is full of confidence in Our Lady, like a child's confidence in its mother. This confidence leads the soul to have recourse to her in all trials and difficulties, with much simplicity, trust and love. Do we have such a devotion to Mary? Is ours a *tender* devotion? Or is it sterile, forced and mechanical? What a pity, if we perform our various practices of devotion to Mary without tenderness in our hearts for such a merciful and loving Mother!

Beware of those who would seek to minimize the place that Catholic piety has always accorded to Our Blessed Mother, whom we call our *life*, our *sweetness* and our *hope*. Truly, we cannot honor Mary too much, as long as ours is a true devotion, leading us to Christ, her Son. May we all grow in our devotion to Mary this month, especially in a tender devotion.

As always, I wish to thank all of you who generously support our seminary with your prayers and donations. Please pray especially for more vocations, as we now look toward our next school year. May God bless you and your loved ones in time and eternity.

*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.

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