

VERBUM

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Saint Thomas Aquinas Seminary
209 Tackora Trail



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06877 U.S.A.

Off the Starting Blocks

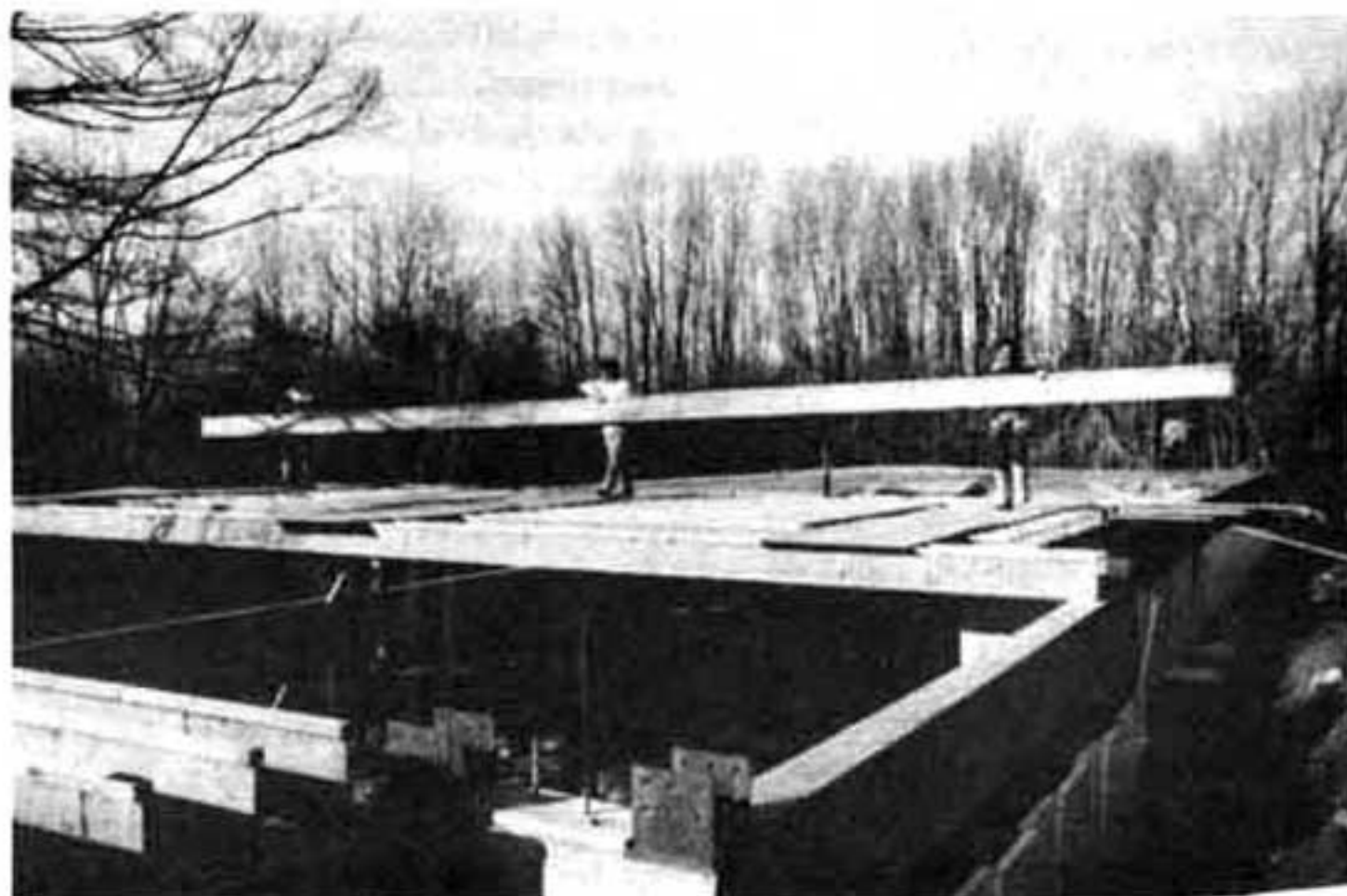
"This winter will be a severe one; the trees are completely bare, the squirrels have extra bushy tails, and the *Farmer's Almanac* says that we'll have to dig down to the fence posts." That is what the "experts" were forecasting, but Divine Providence ruled differently. It is now a matter of record that Connecticut has experienced some of the mildest weeks of fall and winter weather in recent memory—60° Fahrenheit on December 4, a few days of cold weather in the second week of that month, followed by warm weather until a negligible snowfall just before Christmas. January brought more wintry weather, but the heavy snows and torrential rains which turn construction sites into massive mudslides were absent.

All this meteorological data explains the rapid progress of the construction of the seminary expansion. By the end of November, work on the foundation for the new chapel had been completed, and the crews turned their attention to the dormitory basement. By December 10, this project had been substantially completed, and the crews were able to stucco, seal with tar, and insulate the part of the foundation which will lay underground.

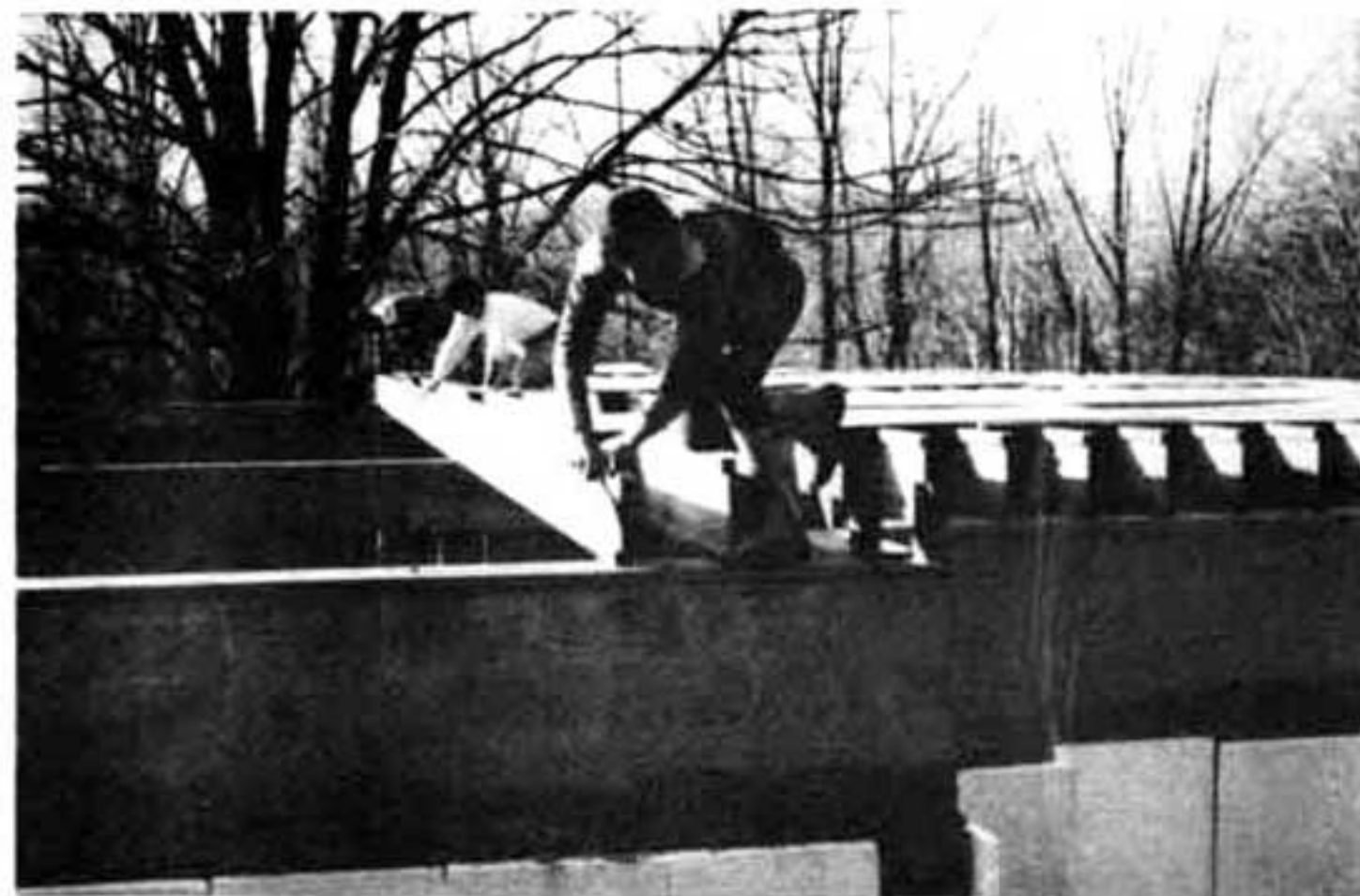


The view of the entire construction project from the main building of the seminary. In the foreground is the foundation for the new dormitory; in the distance is the construction work accomplished on the new chapel.

(continued on p. 3)



THERE IS A PLACE FOR EVERYTHING in the construction of the chapel, and three workmen use this principle to set one of one hundred sixty-two joists in its proper location.



AND EVERYTHING IS IN ITS PLACE, requiring only to be fixed immovably by the construction crews. All the joists have been placed, and await the placement of the chapel floor on top of them.

The Word of God



Father Williamson gets across a vital point in the study of St. Paul's Epistle to the Romans.

As most Catholics are well aware, the pillars upon which the Church bases the whole of her doctrine are Sacred Scripture and Sacred Tradition. The Church therefore requires of her priests, who will transmit this doctrine to the faithful under their care, a thorough knowledge of the doctrine contained in both Sacred Scripture and Tradition.

The importance of a comprehensive knowledge of Sacred Scripture is evidenced by the fact that it is the only course which a seminarian takes in each year of his priestly training.

A general introduction

The first year of Sacred Scripture is taught by Father Roger Petit, and is divided into two one-semester courses. The first semester gives a general introduction to Scripture and involves a diligent study of the notions of inspiration and the teaching of the Church on what biblical inspiration is, the history of the

various books of the Bible, and a study of the Catholic view of Sacred Scripture and its importance in the teaching of the Church.

The "Book of Praises"

The second semester of the first year of Scripture study introduces the seminarian to the Book of Psalms. Father Petit gives a brief history of the Psalms, and then proceeds to explain in detail the symbolism and beauty attached to some of the more well-known Psalms. This task is of extreme importance, for the Psalms contain some of the richest passages in all of the Bible and also the most profound ideas are contained within them. *So that man might worthily praise God*, wrote St. Augustine, *God praised Himself*.

The seminarians must know these hymns of praise, for their function as priests will consist in echoing them primarily in the daily recitation of the Divine Office as well as in the Holy Sac-

rifice of the Mass. By these examples alone it is evident that the seminarian should have a strong foundation in understanding the Psalms.

Systematic examination

The seminarians in the second through sixth years of study take their Sacred Scripture course together, which consequently runs in a five-year cycle. This cycle of study begins with the examination of the Old Testament and its bearing on the New. This is followed by an examination of the three Synoptic Gospels, i.e., those of St. Matthew, St. Mark, and St. Luke. In the third year of the cycle, the fourth Gospel, that of St. John, is studied by itself, as it is the most mystical and most difficult of the four to examine. In the fourth year, the Catholic epistles, the Acts of the Apostles, and the Apocalypse of St. John are scrutinized. In the final year of the cycle, the epistles of St. Paul are studied, and it is in this year of the cycle that the seminarians in the upper years are presently studying.

Too much emphasis cannot be placed upon the epistles of St. Paul to the various churches under his guidance. This fact is made eminently clear by Father Williamson, the instructor for this most difficult aspect of Scripture study. Indeed, the importance of these fourteen letters is such that they may be described as *the blueprint for the Church*, in the words of Father Williamson, and in order to ensure that the seminarians are familiar with this blueprint, Father has assigned as daily homework the reading of three chapters from the epistles.

The Pauline epistles play a major part not only in the Liturgy (as may be evidenced by the vast number of epistles read at Mass being taken from St. Paul) but they are also the cornerstone of the study of Apologetics and Sacred Theol-

St. Joseph: Pillar of Families

It is not hard for us to become discouraged amidst this world of turmoil and confusion. This is particularly true of Catholic fathers and mothers, who often face problems in the upbringing of their children and know not where to turn. To them is recommended the patronage of St. Joseph.

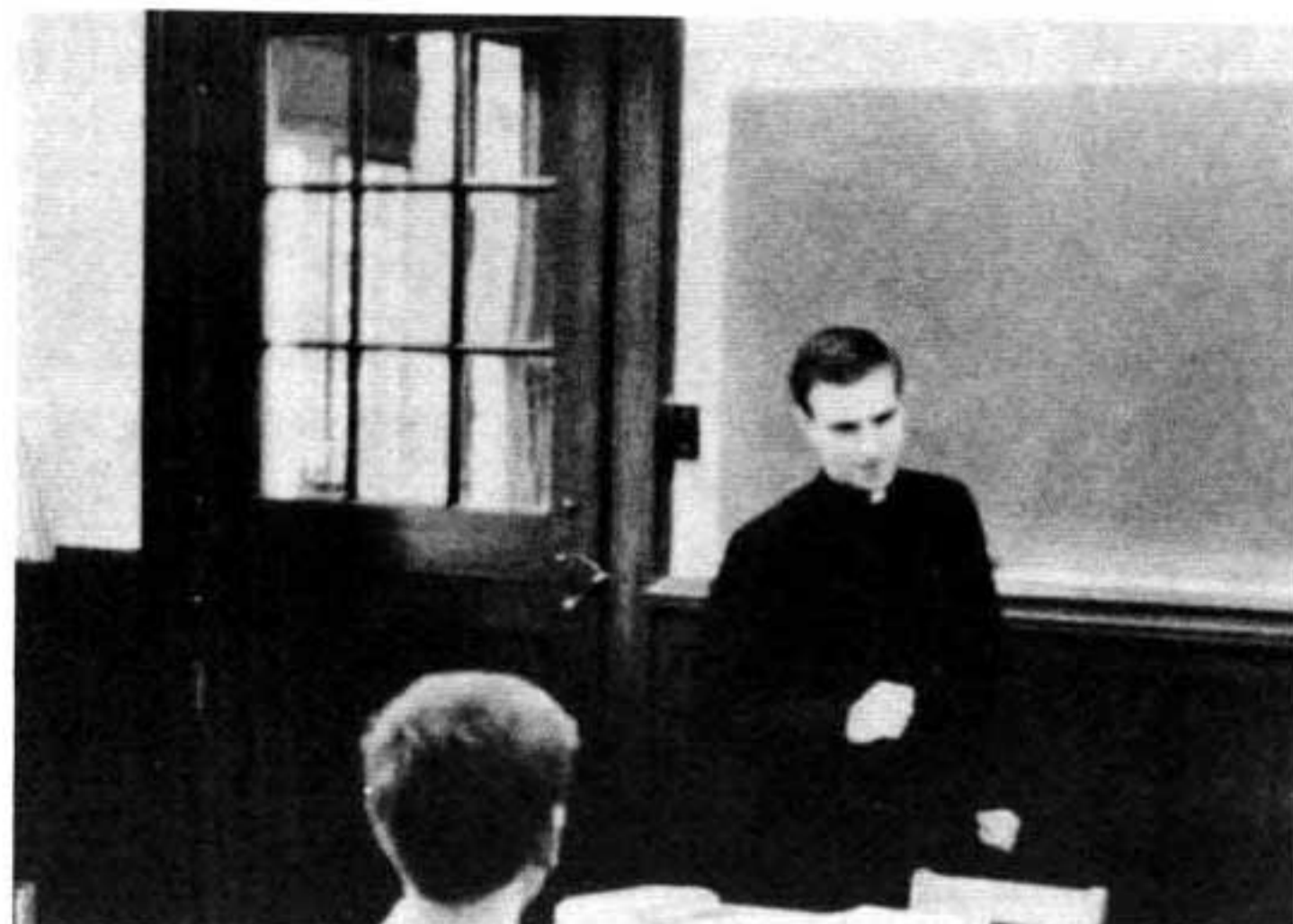
Divine Providence ordained from all time that the most chaste Joseph should rule and protect the Infant Christ and Mary, His most blessed and ever-virgin mother. Here we find the God-Man submitting to one of His own creatures, inferior to Himself. Here we find God the Father entrusting the purest of all mortals to St. Joseph. What a privilege St. Joseph enjoyed, and consequently, what responsibilities he accepted in being the Head of the Holy Family.



As he protected the Incarnate Word in His physical body, St. Joseph continues to protect Christ's Mystical Body, namely, the Church. Just as St. Joseph sought to protect the Holy Family, so also will he come to our aid and protect us from both physical and spiritual evils. Only one condition exists: we must ask for his intercession.

While it is true that St. Joseph is the renowned offspring of David, this is not his greatest honor. Rather, the virtue in St. Joseph, which seeks to perfect virtue in others, is the greatest honor he has. Thus Catholic parents have both an excellent model and a powerful intercessor in St. Joseph, the Pillar of Families.

—Joseph Greenwell



In the first year course of Scripture studies, Father Petit explains and interprets the Psalms according to the tradition of the Church.

ogy. Hence, familiarity with the doctrine in the epistles is absolutely essential for the priest. Their importance in instructing the faithful, that is, as subjects for preaching, cannot be overlooked. St. John Chrysostom considered that the epistles were so important that he did not let a week go by without having read all fourteen of them.

The importance of Sacred Scripture, since it is the word of God Himself, cannot be emphasized strongly enough. But a true and holy knowledge of the Bible can be attained only through a study and examination with the eyes of the Church. And so the Church requires of her priests and future priests to develop a close bond and holy love of Sacred Scripture, which together with Sacred Tradition constitutes the two great pillars upon which She stands.

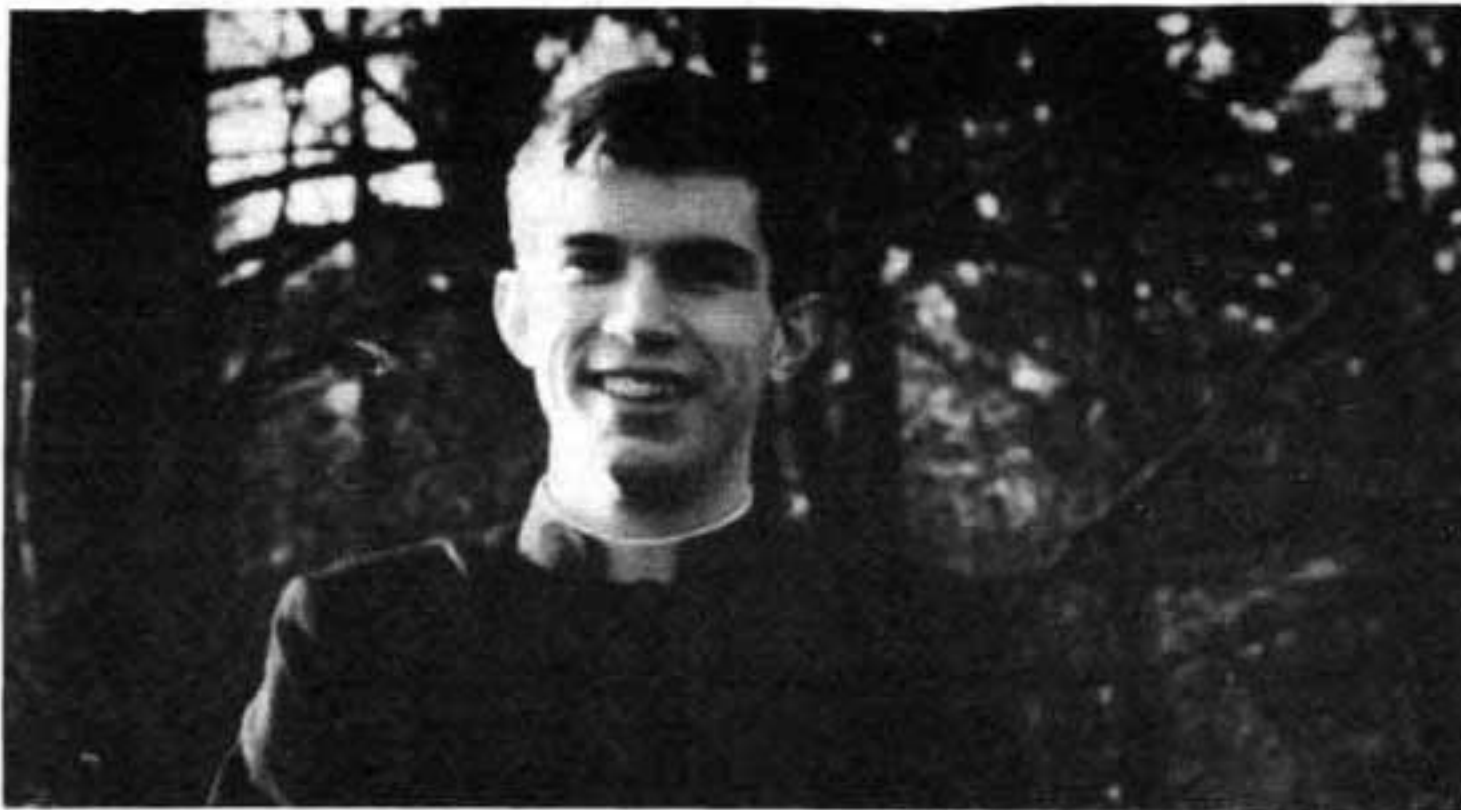
—Frederick Baldau

Seminary Diary



On February 2, the seminarians in the first year of study received their cassocks in a ceremony preceding the Mass of the Purification of Our Lady. Pictured above in their new clerical attire are (front row, left to right): Arvin Brown, of San Diego, California; Paul Baumberger, Loveland, Colorado; Steven Perry, Armada, Michigan; Jacques Procca, Winnepeg,

Manitoba; and Christopher Hand, Arcadia, California. In the back row, left to right: Paul Miller, St. Mary's, Kansas; James Morton, Helena, Montana; Jerome Dvorak, Belle Plaine, Minnesota; Wayne Bufe, Bellevue, Bulawayo, Rhodesia; Andrew Bryan, Alta Loma, Texas; and James Doran, Clawson, Michigan.



Father Herve de la Tour, professor of philosophy and dogmatic theology at the seminary (above), was reassigned to St. Mary's Academy, St. Mary's, Kansas, at the beginning of the second semester. The seminarians are very grateful and appreciative of Father de la Tour's hard work for them as both professor and spiritual director, and assure him of their prayers for the success

of his new apostolate. To take the place of Father de la Tour on the faculty, Father Joseph Collins (below) has been assigned as professor at the seminary. He has taken over most of Father de la Tour's philosophy and theology courses, and is also the instructor for the course in Sacred Chant taken by the seminarians in their first year.



Also assigned to St. Mary's is Father Christopher Hunter (above), one of the three priests ordained by Archbishop Lefebvre last November. Since his ordination, Father Hunter has been in the process of completing his studies at the seminary, and on the weekends he has assisted the seminary priests in working the circuit of missions they service. Father Hunter also can count on the prayers and good wishes of the seminarians for the success of his first assignment.



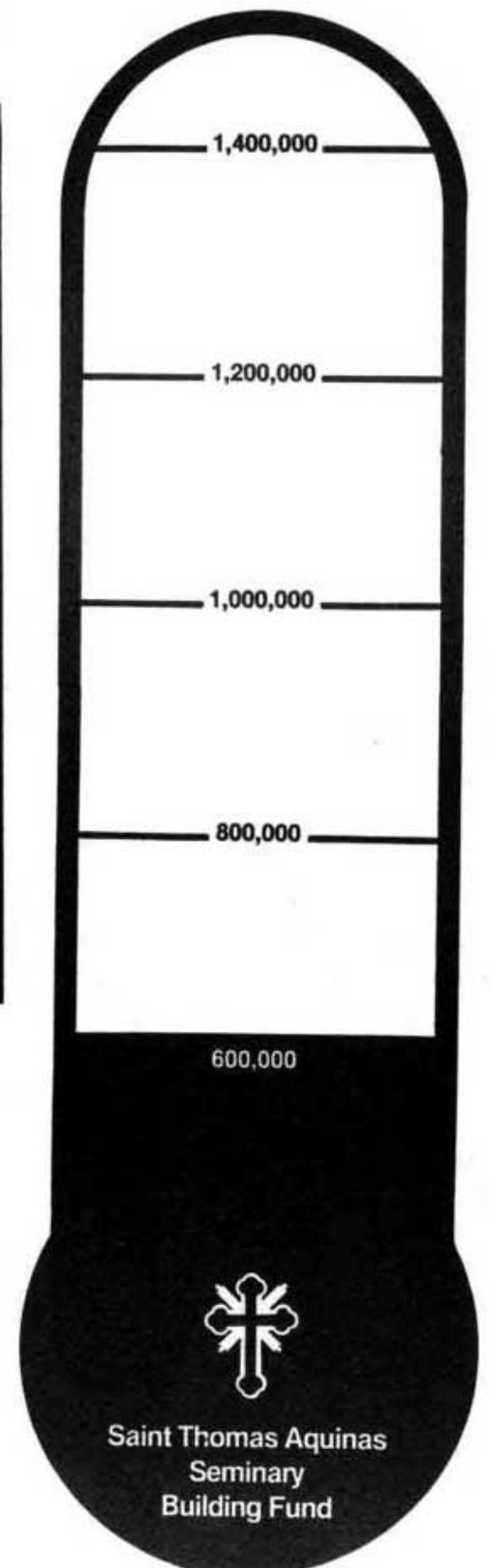
(construction continued)

As this issue of VERBUM goes to press, over two feet of snow covers the construction site, and no work is being done; however, the construction crew is waiting for the arrival of roof support columns thirty-eight feet in length to begin the next phase of the building of the chapel. Delivery is expected in the middle of March. If all goes according to the schedule, the chapel should be completed by June 1, and the dormitory by September 1.

Successful fundraising efforts

Many of our readers have probably seen the brochure, WE'RE BUILDING, which was put out at the beginning of Advent. The appeal made then proved to be highly successful, bringing in \$60,000 in both December and January in what Father Sanborn called "an electric response." If the seminary could rely on the generosity of many more faithful, the completion of the entire building project would be assured. At the present time, \$220,000 has been paid off on the first part of the contract; \$713,000 remains to be paid to fulfill this obligation on June 1, and Father Sanborn remains optimistic that the American faithful will come through. Please add the intention of the success of the Seminary Building Fund to your Lenten prayers and penances, please make it the object of your alms, and please urge others to do the same.

—Rev. Mr. Daniel Ahern



Why a Brother?

Why do you want to be a brother? Why don't you want to be a priest? These questions are generally asked of a young man when he makes known the intention of serving God as a brother.

The brotherhood, as a vocation, is misunderstood by many people. It is thought of as a second-class vocation. There is nothing second-class about the life of a brother. It is a unique call by Our Blessed Lord to serve His Church in a special way. As St. Paul tells us in his Epistle to the Romans, *Brethren: we have gifts differing according to the grace that has been given us...* (Romans 12, 6)

At the service of the priest

The primary purpose of the brother is the sanctification and salvation of his soul. This is done by devoting his life to the service of the priests by relieving them of duties which would otherwise keep them from their apostolic obligations. This is particularly necessary today when there are so few Roman Catholic priests and so many souls in danger of being lost. The brothers in the Society of St. Pius X live in the priories or the seminaries of the Society. They perform such jobs as cooking, laundry, housework, plumbing, sewing, woodworking, gardening, teaching catechism, bookkeeping, office work, and sacristan. It is fairly obvious that the priests of the Society would find their difficult obligations practically impossible to perform if they had to fulfill these duties as well.

Poverty, Chastity, and Obedience

Brothers take the three vows of poverty, chastity, and obedience—the vows of the evangelical counsels. Through these vows, the brother consecrates his life entirely to the honor and glory of God. Rather than being a hardship to him, these vows remove worldly distractions from his life, enabling him to approach closer to God. He puts aside his will and lives at the disposal of his superiors. Every act, even the most menial task, thus becomes a beautiful prayer to Our Lord.

One wonders, then, why there are not a multitude of famous brothers. The answer lies in the fact that the truly saintly brother strives to please only God and not to make himself noticed. He does his tasks in as much obscurity as possible. His role is like that of St. Joseph, who led a relatively hidden life. We only hear of St. Joseph a few times in Scripture, yet he was chosen to be the foster-father of Our Lord. How many rich and famous

men have had the privilege of bouncing their Creator on their knee, or saving His life, or teaching Him a trade? Because of his humility and his desire to do the Will of God, St. Joseph was hand-picked for this most important role.

Once in a while, for reasons known only to Himself, God allows a brother to become well-known. In this century, one humble brother who was greatly devoted to St. Joseph wished to build a shrine in his honor. He went around begging for funds as well as praying and sacrificing exceedingly. He always referred to himself as *St. Joseph's Little Dog*, and when someone confronted him with a problem he would tell him to *go to St. Joseph*. When this saintly little brother died on January 6, 1937, a million people from around the world braved the harsh Canadian winter to have one last look at Brother Andre. Today, St. Joseph's Oratory in Montreal is a magnificent church where many cures through the intercession of St. Joseph and Brother Andre have taken place. In the crypt of this church lies the heart of Brother Andre, an example to all of how deep was the love he had for Our Lord and His foster-father. *Blessed are the meek; for they shall possess the land.* (Matthew 5, 4)

The brother receives his strength from the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass, the Stations of the Cross, the Divine Office, and time spent in adoration of Our Lord in the Blessed Sacrament. His greatest privilege is to serve Mass, kneeling at the foot of Calvary in the company of Our Blessed Lady, St. Mary Magdalen, St. John, and countless other saints and martyrs, known and forgotten. Here he sees his Savior offering His innocent life for the remission of our many sins. From this realization, the brother resolves to do his best, through the graces of this Sacrifice, to offer his every thought, word, and deed to God for the salvation of his own soul as well as for the souls of others.

If anyone feels that Our Lord is asking him to become a brother, rejoice and give thanks to Him. It truly is a special calling. His family and friends should pray for him, not that he change his mind and become a priest, but that he receive the graces necessary to carry to the glory of Calvary the cross that Our Lord Himself has laid on his shoulders.

—Paul Flanagan

(Paul Flanagan is a brother postulant of the Society of St. Pius X working as bookkeeper and accountant for the Seminary.)

VOCATIONS

Anyone interested in vocations to the priesthood or the brotherhood is encouraged to contact the seminary for information. If possible, a visit to the seminary could be arranged, during which there will be opportunities to meet the seminarians and the professors, see the operations of the seminary, and to visit and pray before the Blessed Sacrament. Please write or call the seminary at the address and number given above for information on vocations to the priesthood or brotherhood in the Society of St. Pius X.

ORDINATIONS

Sunday, April 24, 1983

Archbishop Lefebvre will ordain to the Subdiaconate and Diaconate the seminarians of the fourth and fifth years of study. The sacred ceremonies will commence at 10 a.m. on the grounds of St. Thomas Aquinas Seminary, Ridgefield, Connecticut

Monday, April 25, 1983

His Grace will promote to First Tonsure and Minor Orders the seminarians of the first, second, and third years of study. The sacred ceremonies will commence at 10 a.m. in the chapel of St. Thomas Aquinas Seminary, Ridgefield, Connecticut

Those who require travel directions are asked to contact the seminary.

Retreats

Retreats will be held this summer at St. Thomas Aquinas Seminary throughout the months of July and August. Dates and retreat masters are as follows:

- For men:** July 18 to July 22: Five day retreat, conducted by Father Roger Petit and Father Joseph Collins.
August 12 to August 14: Weekend retreat conducted by Father William Jenkins and Father Petit.
- For women:** July 25 to July 29: Five day retreat conducted by Father Donald Sanborn and Father Collins.
August 5 to August 7: Weekend retreat conducted by Father Sanborn and Father Jenkins.

Those who are interested in making a retreat at the seminary should mark these dates on their calendars. Please do not register for any retreats yet; information and registration forms will be mailed in the near future to all who receive VERBUM. When returning the registration forms, please send them separately from any other correspondence, donations to the Seminary Building Fund, or contributions to the Seminary Continuous Support Fund, in order to prevent errors due to misplaced forms.

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