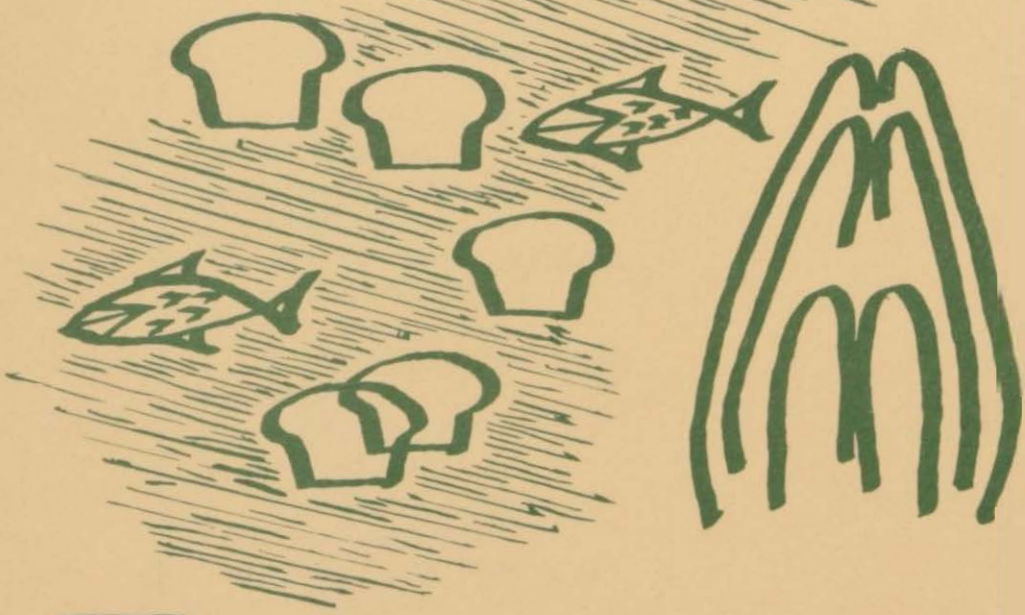
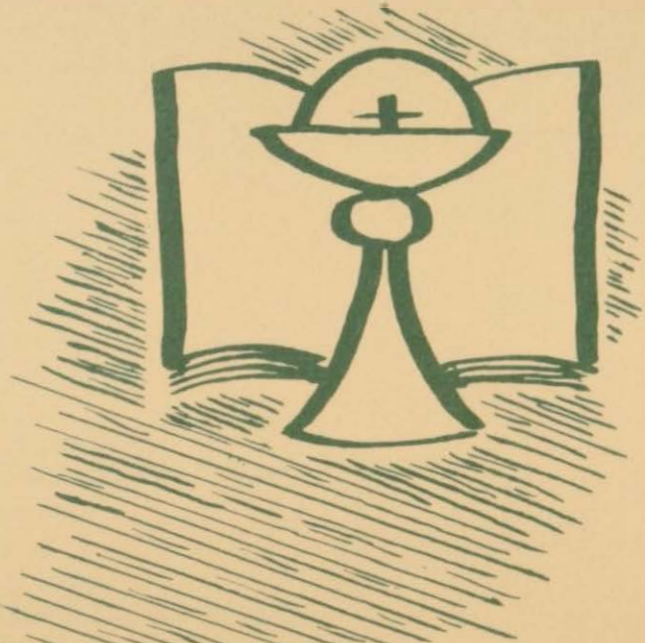
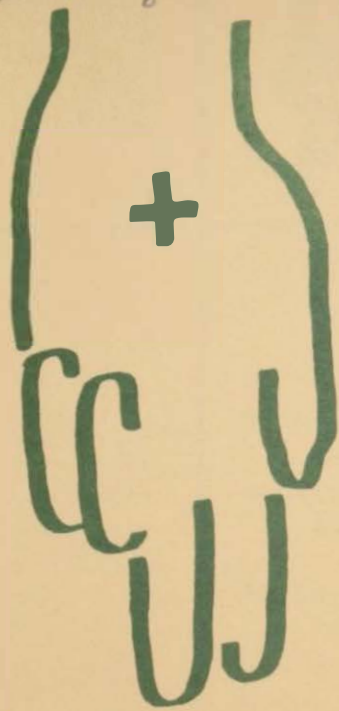


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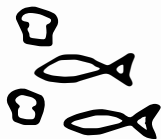
"A Journal Devoted to Student Expression"

Volume XVIII

Number 2

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THANKSGIVING, 1956



THANKSGIVING

Dr. Paul Tillich in a recent sermon referred to thanksgiving as being an "elevated state of being." Typically Tillich you say! I think he meant that we should get away from the habit of making thanksgiving just a series of thank-yous to God for blessings here and there, and we should see thanksgiving rather as an unbroken response on our part to God because he is accepting us all the time. Down deep we are thankful at all times and in all places because our Lord has made us "acceptable in his sight." What more can our faith be?

Something must overwhelm you before you can be truly thankful. I think of a young woman refugee from Poland who sat next to me at a recent mass political rally at Convention Hall, who was amazed that she, not even a citizen, could come to that place, unguarded, unsuspected, and for the first time with her own eyes see the President of the United States. I did not hear her say thank you in so many words, but I believe she must have left that place tremendously thankful that even now she could be part of it all. It overwhelmed her just being there, accepted. Do you think that someone had to tell her the meaning of thanksgiving?

I dare say that our faith and our whole ministry will be proved ultimately by how thankful we are to God. For unless we are overwhelmed by his mercy to us, we will, with all our white collars and clergy garb and theology and whatever other trinkets we have picked up along the way, be forever something like pilgrims and strangers in faith. God knows we couldn't go on in his service a single day longer if it were not that he has accepted us now for what we are. God knows the pride we are forever feeding with, and he knows the day when it will be knocked out of us by some sudden upset. In that day what else will there be for us to hang on to but God's word of acceptance, "thy sins be forgiven thee." In that day must not thanksgiving and faith be one?

Getting back to Dr. Tillich's description, may it serve to show us the never-ending quality of true thanksgiving. May it also suggest to us that faith will remain coldly unreal if it be not born out of thanksgiving. Perhaps here is one answer to an age-old question in every believer's heart. "How do I get faith?" The answer will be known, I believe, as we are thankful.



-- Arthur J. Henne

IN THIS ISSUE...

In this, the Thanksgiving issue of The Seminarian, we cast a critical eye on our community here at Mt. Airy. Studying the world around us -- the Middle East, Hungary -- we pause to examine ourselves and our lives together. Truly a time to be utterly thankful for this Christian community where we may realize our roles as "Branches of the Vine"!

Taking the theme for a title, Art Anderson interprets its meaning to us as seminarians. In this lively article he analyzes the secular and the Christian community with penetrating phrasing and skillful pen.

Cag Gibson, Hank Hund, and Dave Mangiante teamed up to do an article on campus worship and what it means. Our private, group, and corporate devotions will undoubtedly be enriched as we heed their many suggestions.

Did you ever wonder about the man who dropped out of Seminary? What are his problems? Just what is he thinking about? And maybe -- why did he come back? Ray Long tries to take you into the mind of one of our fellow students who came back!

You'll find plenty more in this issue: Art Henne's thoughtful little piece on thanksgiving; there, on the opposite page -- timely (we hope!) and helpful new reports about what is happening when -- a letter from Brother Beobachter -- humor from Bucher's pen -- a couple of poems. Hal Geiss keeps you up to date on the antics of the angels. Dick Niebanck came up for air and had time to tell us something about those books in which his nose was buried. Incidentally, Don Luck's cover deserves more than that momentary glance!

It's yours now. Read it, study it -- above all, enjoy it! We hope that you find this issue as digestible as that Thanksgiving turkey! Have a pleasant recess.

-- Al Schrum

* * *

O God of Love, Father of us all: Help us to banish from among us all jealousy, suspicion, quarrels, and pride; give us the spirit of comradeship, and teach us the joy that lies in helping one another; enable us to take pleasure in the success of others; to be generous of praise and slow to criticize; to frame our actions and thought in conformity with those we learn of Him, in whom we all, though many, are called to be one body, even Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

(Source Unknown)

"Branches of the Vine"

Arthur L. Anderson

"... I am the vine, you are the branches. He who abides in me, and I in him, he it is that bears much fruit, for apart from me you can do nothing."

Even the sociologists have stumbled on a reality of contemporary existence, namely, The Lonely Crowd. The lonely crowd--a motif already well wrought out by Henry James and Henry Adams in the 19th century--has become the keynote address for many of our modern artists. Whether it be W.H. Auden's Age of Anxiety, or going back a few years, Eugene O'Neill's Yank in his passion to belong crying, "Christ, where do I get off at? Where do I fit in?"--in either instance, indeed, in all instances, the writers of this kidney are trying to give positive expression to one negative fact--the lack of community in present day living.

Wallowing in the problem of the lack of community is obviously an inverse way of saying that man needs community, perhaps was created as a communal being. This humanistically oriented psychiatrists have been trying to tell us, albeit we heard about the same thing from a carpenter of some repute, long ago. Man's need for community appears to him as anxiety. W.H. Auden has suggested that ours is an "age of anxiety." This is not to say that anxiety is a 20th century demonic novelty. Rather it is a major ingredient of our creatureliness.

Anxiety drives man either to community or away from it. If a man withdraws, his anxiety may destroy him, in fact, will destroy him if withdrawal into himself is the major way he responds. Ironically, man in his need for community often finds a community itself the major cause for his anxiety. Nevertheless, most men are persistent in letting anxiety drive them not to withdrawal but to community.

Exemplary is the B.D. student who spends endless time in bull sessions, coffee breaks, and continually dropping in on fellow students when he ought to be studying. This he does for reassurance. In his soul he is anxiously asking, "Who am I?" By "shooting the bull" with enough people he finds out that, "I am me," and is reassured. (The difficulty here is that having done no studying he is threatened all over again--and so the vicious circle.)

In an age of anxiety people particularly need community; they need reassurance. Their persons as such cry for meaning and purpose, and if life's only meaning is that it has no meaning then the human person anxiously wants to know this. Moreover, it is in communal relationship that the human self seeks such reassurance, because anxiety turned inward dissects rather than integrates.

The fundamental problem that arises here, however, is that man in anxiously seeking community tries--and to cull a phrase from our epigraph--to arrange "the branches" himself. That is to say, he is constantly trying to create community with the raw materials of life as he himself can provide them.

For community to occur we need a common experience, a corporate experiencing. The more the common experiential background, the more profound will be the communal experience, and hence the greater the reassurance, "I am me." But for community to occur on even a secular basis something more is needed, namely, an interpretation of experience. In fact, what is commonly called experience is nothing but sensation; but when the sensations are interpreted they become experience. Add to this some objective cultic symbol--bread and wine in Christian experience--and you have community.

In a nutshell, sensation, plus interpretation equals experience, plus a cultus equals community. Implied of course is that the individual will have gone through the common sensation in community with others; that he will appropriate the common interpretation of the sensation; and that consequently the cultus will be meaningful to him. All this any natural human creature knows, and knows particularly well in an age of anxiety when man's need for community is at its peak and the possibility of gratification at a minimum.

Again the problem: Man tries to "arrange the branches" himself. Of himself he seeks to create community to alleviate his need for community. In polite suburban society one notices the ever growing cocktail koinonia. Its members number in the millions. The cultic symbol is a martini in hand; the liturgy is superficial small talk in preparation for bridge or some junior high parlor games. Nothing disrupts this corporate experience more than if one emerges on the scene without the cultic symbol, or even more daring, with a glass of milk. This kind of koinonia is ungratifying since one does not find an answer to the soul's secret question, "What the hell is life all about?" by debating whether or not to get your dog spaded.

While the cocktail koinonia is only one of a multitude of contemporary communal possibilities, it is peculiarly exemplary

of the level at which modern man has tried to alleviate his deepest need. Indeed, one of the only places community--on the level man needs corporate experience--can be found is on the analyst's couch, and this option must be relegated to the economically elite. Tragically, a seminary community is little less susceptible to the above analysis than is the rest of American society.

Perhaps the real problem (and this statement is glib or profound depending on how quickly you arrive at it)--perhaps the real problem is that when we communally organize around something less than God we become something less than man. When in our anxiety we seek community per se it eludes us, because we of ourselves are trying to provide the interpretation, we of ourselves are trying to provide the cultus. We forget the carpenter's words, "I am the vine, you are the branches."

Most of the time we are busy trying to be the vine or trying to create one. We choose for a vine our mutual antagonism towards an in-group, but this leads to a false kind of community because it rotates around a negative attitude.

Another real problem is that a seminary community is prone to the same kind of secular eschatology prominent in the average American mind. We have our eyes continually set on tomorrow, that summer vacation, and ultimately when we'll be out of this place, and in our first parish. This kind of futuristic frame of mind prevents our taking the present seriously enough to realize that the gospel call us now to community, calls us now to realize that Christian faith is corporate faith or it is not faith at all. In the words of our epigraph, our Lord does not call us to be a branch of the vine, he calls us to be branches.

We with any country club director also realize the ingredients for community. The difference is that the country club director has nothing to create real community with save 18 holes and a club house. With his religious do-it-yourself kit, he will at best come up with a cocktail koinonia. Conversely, the Christian has no do-it-yourself kit. Also, the sensation is different because it involves immersing our nerve endings in 4,000 years of history. The interpretation is different because it comes not from within but from a cross which stands without; moreover, the question, "Who am I?" is asked in this case before the face of the living God. The cultus is different too because it involves the hand of God and the living Lord who gives of himself.

The carpenter said, "I am the vine, you are the branches." We must seek the vine and not community as such, since community is a by-product. On no other ground will community exist at

Mt. Airy. Our backgrounds are too diverse, some live off and some on campus, and we work in quite different situations. Of our own affinities we would at best become a community on the level of a cocktail reception, when instead we are called to be "branches of the vine."

THE COMMUNITY AT WORSHIP

- Sandra Gibson, Henry
Hurd, Dave Mangiante

"Will you earnestly endeavor by the help of God to be faithful to the discharge of your duties in this Seminary; especially to give yourself diligently to the reading of the Holy Scriptures and to your appointed studies; to seek God's grace and guidance in daily prayer and in the reverent and devout reception of the holy communions; and in all things to demean yourself with such charity, industry and soberness of life and conversation as becometh a member of a community devoted to the study of the Word of God and the life and teaching of the Church?"

(Matriculation Service)

"I will, by the help of God." So we professed and promised as we were formally admitted to this seminary as students of theology. The purpose of this article is to analyze this statement in terms of our devotional life, as individuals and as a corporate body. The above statement speaks of many facets but they all are focused in Jesus Christ. And while for purposes of discussion we treat the various phases of our devotional life separately, we must always keep in mind their interaction with each other and their common ground in our living Lord and Saviour.

Let us first consider personal devotions. In moments of prayerful meditation we daily offer our lives to God. We continually commit ourselves to him who gives us life abundant; with thankful hearts we diligently seek the will of God for our immediate situation. Assurance and certainty are granted to us so that we might be better able to minister to others both now and when we leave seminary. To those of you who have neglected this opportunity to draw closer to your Saviour - perhaps thinking to delay it until you're in the parish - a word of caution is directed. The longer you delay in developing a personal devotional life the more difficult it will be later. Begin while you're in seminary!

Most men find that a period of time set aside in the early morning and late evening hours is convenient. An appropriate

place to hold personal devotions is right at your desk. This brings clearly into focus your call as a student and your worshipful obedience to the Caller... "especially to give yourself diligently to the reading of the Holy Scriptures and to your appointed studies." In addition to your room, the seminary chapel is also available for personal devotions.

Besides the Scriptures, other devotional literature may be read. The companion volumes, A Diary of Readings and A Diary of Private Prayer, by John Baillie; Day by Day We Magnify Thee by Martin Luther; and Meditations from Kierkegaard by Croxall are possible suggestions. Selections of books suitable for private devotions are now on display in the library.

This leads us to consider another aspect of our devotional life at seminary -- group devotions. While the size of the group may vary between 2 and 6 members, its purpose is the same: the mutual concern for the Christian faith, its implications and applications to our present day. In face to face conversation and silence the bonds of Christian fellowship is evidenced. Arriving out of the need felt by a particular group, a program will be developed. Such a program may include Bible study or a study of other material, responsive readings, prayer-chains, a review of the catechism. Moments of silent meditation and prayer are usually included. The program may be as diverse as its members but yet it will be unified in Christ, even as the members are.

We pass on now to another phase of our devotional life -- corporate worship in the chapel. This is the one place where seminarians can worship together as a community. It is here that we realize the unity from which our community stems; it is here that we, though still individuals, most clearly see ourselves as a community, prayerfully gathered around our Lord as he comes in word and sacrament.

Even as prayerful concentration, repetition, and participation are required in the two other aspects of our devotional life, they are also mandatory here. This part of our devotional life also cannot be left until we get into the parish. The refusal to attend chapel regularly because "it becomes a habit" is as wrong as some of the answers which you will later hear from parishioners.

In our devotional life as a community we are not cut off from the world. We are to live "in" it, and yet not "of" it. A sharper consciousness of the society in which we live and its problems would prompt more of the individual collects of various readers to be directed to God for the sake of the world and its affairs, and not so many for our own individual concerns.

reduced to a candle or a church building or a First Cause or "that than which nothing greater can be conceived" is a god fashioned after our way of thinking. If our god is what we think God is, what we talk about in Hagan Hall, then our god is too small --because we are so small. Let us not limit God to ourselves. Like Job we must admit that man cannot know God or his ways.

Christ is personal, human, continually encountering us on life's road to Emmaus. We do not recognize him; suddenly, silently he is in the midst of us. "He comes to us as One unknown, as of old by the lakeside He came to those who knew Him not." He comes in a roommate asking for a bit of "precious" time. He comes to us in a professor making us memorize theories and theologies. He comes to us in a pastor asking us to work with the Luther League. Christ comes asking for a little bit of effort and a little bit of time. How he comes only we know. And how he comes is the way in which he makes himself known and demands our response. "He speaks to us the same word, 'follow thou me,' and sets us the task which He has to fulfill in our time."

If we love Christ we love him not only in the professor, author, and student who agrees with us. To accept only those who agree with us or only those whom we can mold to our own views is to worship ourselves. This is using others as means. This is man trying to be God. It is pride; it is sin. To accept Christ only in some individuals is to reject him in others. To "love the brotherhood" means to accept Christ in the hypocrite we think we see (or do not see) in chapel.

We must love Christ in the pseudo-intellectual asking questions to exhibit his own learnedness. We must accept Christ in the segregation bigot, the irrational hothead who favors a candidate or party for no good reason. We must love him in those who have different views than ours on the liturgy, the church, reason, God. We must not withhold love until others are what we would like them to be. We are not what we would like to be! We must love individuals as they are, where they are. To accept Christ is to love him in every person we meet. We should not love man --a non-existent concept -- but we must love men -- individual, sinful, weak, petty, dirty, ugly, drunk, (and any other relative term we wish to add). Christ is in a prostitute as much as he is in a preacher. "Follow me" is said as much in "hey bud, gotta dime for a cup of coffee" as in the announcement of Greek assignments or the toll of chapel bells.

We follow Christ when we do not force our opinions, but listen, tolerate, try to see the other side. We must learn to listen and listen to learn. We must admit that we do not know everything and that we may be wrong. We must forgive! Are we not forgiven much more than we could ever forgive in others? We do not judge

how others worship, the way they offer their prayers, or read the scripture. There are inevitable differences concerning smoking, drinking, dancing, doctrine, church polity. Because we have been raised one way is no reason for condemning others.

Nor is this an excuse for going as we please. If our action creates scandal, if whatever we ^{do} causes another to weaken then it is not permitted. "All things are lawful for me, but all things are not expedient; all things are lawful for me, but all things edify not." What we can do is not determined in a vacuum but is conditioned by the situation in which we must make our decision. Our ethics cannot be torn apart from our economics, nor can our ethics be the sugar coating to our politics.

Our Christianity should not be determined by the radar ethics of our other-directedness -- but, as a result of our encounter with Christ, must be active in what we do on the trolley, the books we read, the movies and plays we see, what our attitude is towards professors, classes, chapel, what we say and do on a date.

We show our love when we serve individual persons as we encounter them at every tick of eternity. We do not make the supreme sacrifice and with great ado hand over our lives to Christ. He asks only that we do our best in each small task, without knowing (never knowing!) but always hoping it is his will. This is what it means to have faith, to "sin bravely but believe and trust more bravely." Everything we do is sin, only God is effective.

"The Kingdom of God is Within You," heaven is where we are, here at Mt. Airy. Christ alone is our master, everyone (professors and fellow seminarians) is Christ saying "Follow me" and everything is present as far as Christ is concerned. We alone know if we answer his call. There will be no grade or test by the faculty. No one will ever suspect -- we can so easily fool them. But we are judging ourselves! We are saying: "Lord, are we not preaching in thy name, are we not giving our lives to your church." Oh how I tremble to think if he should say to me: "Depart from me, thou cursed, I know thee not!" To reject Christ in the least of those who encounter us is to be rejected by God. And there is nothing worse than not to be known by God. Nothing!

* * *

"Christian brotherhood is not an ideal which we must realize; it is rather a reality created by God in Christ in which we may participate. The more clearly we learn to recognize that the ground and strength and promise of all our fellowship is in Jesus Christ alone, the more serenely shall we think of our fellowship and pray and hope for it." -- D. Bonhoeffer in Life Together.

CAMPUS NEWS

An ADVENT RETREAT for all seminarians and faculty has been scheduled for Saturday, December 8, at Trinity Church, Germantown. Meditations will be led by Dr. Edward T. Horn III, Dr. Luther D. Reed, and Dr. Hagen Staack. Theme of the retreat, "Prepare Ye the Way of the Lord," will be directed to the practical aspect of the Advent season in the individual parish. Tentative schedule.

Matins and quiet time
Meditation by Dr. Reed
Celebration of the Eucharist
Lunch followed by quiet time
Meditation by Dr. Horn
Advent Litany and quiet time
Vespers and quiet time
Meditation by Dr. Staack
Closing prayers

The retreat will begin at 9 a.m. Cost per student is \$1.50, covering lunch at the Coulter House, stationery, and travel expenses for leaders. Reservations must be secured with Ernest Waxbom, North Dorm, room 6.

"Spotlight on Christian Education" will be the topic of SYMPOSIUM II, Chairman Don Luck has announced. November 29 is the date tentatively set for the program which intends to present a critique of parish education.

The committee is hoping to present four outstanding personalities in this field, two as protagonists, and two as antagonists who will deal with parish education from the viewpoint of the successes and failures of its aims and purposes, its contents and materials, and areas for development and improvement. Although the names of the men participating are not definite as yet, this information will be announced as soon as final plans are set.

Chairman Donald Landis of the DEPUTATIONS COMMITTEE has announced the committee's plans for the current academic year. This semester the committee has visited Muhlenberg College and

will visit several area Luther Leagues. Next semester the members will journey to Penn State University and Thiel College.

At each visit a program with slides and talks is followed by group discussion. The committee aims to orientate prospective seminarians and thereby make the adjustment between college and seminary easier. In addition to Chairman Landis, this year's committee includes Martin Acker, James McCormick, Jack Traugott, Hal Geiss, Tom Stennett, and Gus Wedemeyer.

The complete schedule of concerts by the SEMINARY CHOIR for this academic year has been officially announced by Director Robert E. Bornemann. In keeping with the practice of presenting no more than six concerts annually, the choir will appear on the following dates:

Dec. 18	Seminary Chapel (Advent Vespers)
March 10	Bethlehem, Pa.
March 17	Emmanuel Church, West Philadelphia
March 31	Jamaica, New York
April 7	Rednill, Pa.

The Philadelphia area fall conference of the INTERSEMINARY MOVEMENT was held Friday, Nov. 2, at Mt. Airy. Eight seminaries were represented by 77 students attending.

During the business meeting Donald Luck, Mt. Airy, was re-elected chairman of the area and Paul Hoh, Mt. Airy, was elected treasurer. The group approved a proposal to create an executive committee consisting of the area chairman and a representative from each seminary, and also agreed to change the date of election of officers from the fall meeting to the spring conference.

FACULTY EVENTS: Gisela Woehringer is currently studying languages and German literature in Heidelberg, Germany. She will spend one year at the university.

After an extended illness, Mrs. Carson (Mrs. Tappert's mother) died. She resided in Philadelphia.

JUNIOR JOTTINGS: The class sent a representation of ten of its members to tour the Germantown Home on Thursday, November 1. Dr. Bagger accompanied the group on its inspection of the buildings with ample explanation from Pastor Harrison, the Home's

director, who acted as guide. Outstanding features of the tour were an informal chat with the ladies in the infirmary and the viewing of the recent renovations in the main building. A trip to the deaconess training school is being planned.

Continuing its series of interesting and informative programs, the HEYER COMMISSION met last Thursday evening for a program centering in the church's mission in Japan. Included in the evening's activities were a talk by Pastor Ihlitz and two movies in color showing Lutheran work toward fostering Christian education and the providing a ministry of mercy to the Japanese people.

Future plans of the commission include a fund-raising drive for \$1,000 to be applied to a mission project (which will be announced later). Coin boxes will be provided for each student to contribute on a day-by-day basis if he wishes to do so.

CHAPEL SPEAKERS:

November 28 -- Dr. Franklin Clark Fry, president, United Lutheran Church in America.

December 5 -- The Rev. Theodore L. Fischer, pastor, Good Shepherd Lutheran Church, Philadelphia.

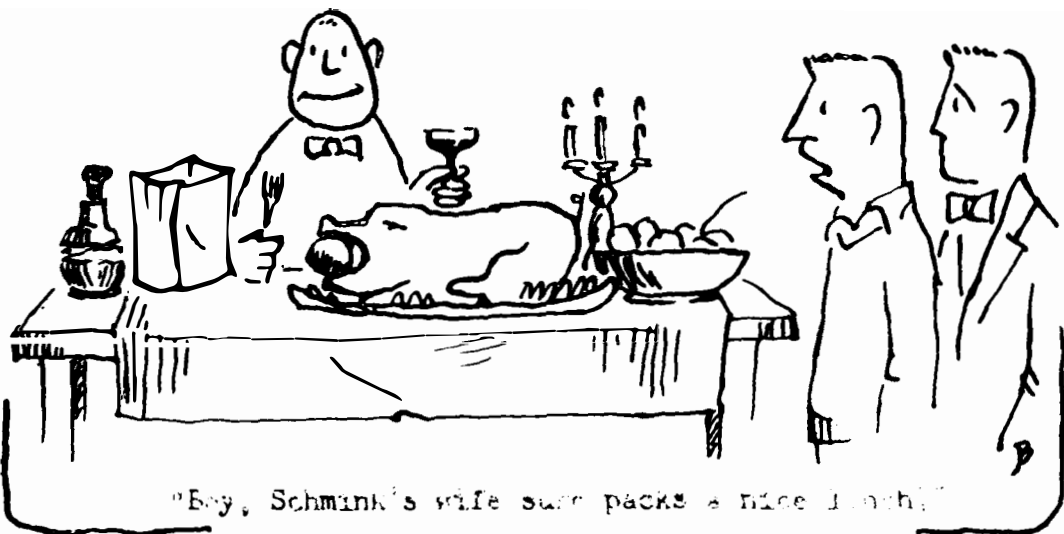
SPECIAL...

...SPECIAL

A SPECIAL STUDENT BODY MEETING

will be held on Wednesday evening, November 28, at 7:15 p.m.

ON MARRIED STUDENTS:



...angel antics

The Angels had hardly had enough time between publications to be their normal vexatious selves -- but somehow they managed.

The fall volleyball tournament ended in a bizarre battle between the awesome seniors and the fearsome middlers. The middlers, "fresh" from their victory over the crestfallen juniors, sailed over their opponents in the first skirmish, 21-13. The incensed seniors remembering the days of their youth and the call of the wild, took the second contest, 21-15. This rejuvenation was short lived. After a short rest between games one and three the middlers captured the crown, 21-17 -- they may not be the smartest class but they win the tournaments. It was good to see "Keds" Hitchcock back in uniform.

There is no longer any question of "Scooter" Anderson's retirement -- he was domesticated on November 3.

The Mt. Airy "Angels" wheezed to a 51-34 triumph over the Whirlwinds in the Watertower league. It was the "Angels" first win -- it was the "Angels" first game. The play started quickly with both teams exerting themselves fully. This soon subsided as it proved itself incompatible with "all sorts and conditions of men." There were moments when the game degenerated into a hopeless mayhem but the overall perspective looked good. This was the first chance the "Angels" have had to work together and they did well. They started ahead and they finished ahead -- of course, at times the basket eluded the ball, but they were persistent. They have height in Adickes, Walker, Richards, and Mertzluft; speed in Traugott and Mangiante; depth and hustle in Dieter, Gessler, Shupp, Wert, Long, and Shemenske. Walker threw in 16 for high man. Adickes, Traugott, and Richards had 15, 11, and 7 in that order. If nothing else is wrong with the team, the coach has greying hair.

In their second game of the season the "Angels" had their halos twisted to the tune of 57-48. It looked like a different team that took to the court to face the Eagles of the Watertower league. In spite of the loss, Jack Traugott played the best game of his career. E. Richards took scoring honors with 18.

Middlers and seniors will vie for the crown in the intramural tournament. No game has been played yet, but the juniors forfeited to the middle class. Could it be that the yearlings lack "man"power? Let's scrimmage, gang!

-- Hal Geiss

Beloved Brethren:

A quote from C.S. Lewis:

"... it isn't the doctrines on which we chiefly depend for producing malice. The real fun is working up hatred between those who say "mass" and those who say "holy communion" when neither party could possibly state the difference between, say, Hooker's doctrine and Thomas Aquinas', in any form which would hold water for five minutes. And all the purely indifferent things --- candles and clothes and what not - - are an admirable ground for our activities. We have quite removed from men's minds what that pestilent fellow Paul used to teach about food and other unessentials --- namely, that the human without scruples should always give in to the human with scruples. You would think they could not fail to see the application. You would expect to find the "low" churchman genuflecting and crossing himself lest the weak conscience of his "high" brother should be moved to irreverence, and the "high" one refraining from these exercises lest he should betray his "low" brother into idolatry. And so it would have been but for our ceaseless labour. Without the variety of usage within the Church... (it) might have become a positive hotbed of charity and humility.

Your affectionate uncle,
Screwtape"

"...And now abideth faith, hope and charity, these three; but the greatest of these is charity."

The Epistle for Quinquagesima Sunday
Brother Seobachter.

* * *

PARADOX.

The Unity of Opposites

There's a thorn in a rose,
Because joy is the fruit of suffering.
Only a valley makes a mountain,
Because the price of certainty is despair.

There's a piece of man in a work of art,
Because freedom is servitude.
Only a lonely man can have a friend,
Because only sinners can be saints.

There's a death in life,
Because salvation cost a cross.
Only the wanderer knows rest,
Because to suffer is to be loved by God.

-- Ray Long

ON THE BOOKSHELF...

While pausing in the library rotunda the other day, I spied two volumes which should be of special interest in connection with both Mr. Lazareth's "cultural analysis" and Dr. Heineken's wind-up course in Christian ethics. They are The Theology of Reinhold Niebuhr by Hans Hofmann (New York: Scribner's, 1956) and Christian Ethics and Moral Philosophy by George F. Thomas (New York: Scribner's, 1955).

Hofmann's concern is to present Reinhold Niebuhr in a systematic fashion, showing both the development and the inner unity of his ideas. Niebuhr's controlling thought is the relation of the Christian message to the contemporary world; his method is the analysis of present-day man in the light of "Christian realism." Hofmann reminds us that Niebuhr's theology did not grow out of "pure research."

Niebuhr had the experience of seeing an inadequate theology break down on the parish level. His own theology thus emerged from a genuine pastoral concern. He found it necessary to ask the same question his people were asking before he could proffer an answer. To us who have fallen heir to Niebuhr's labors, this book is a testimony to the heroism of one man who dared to expose the impotence of liberalism as he stood "on the line of battle between gospel and world."

Christian Ethics and Moral Philosophy begins with the assertion that when Christians and philosophers ignore each other's ethic, they impoverish themselves. The author, who has taught both philosophy and religion, is convinced that the ethical judgments of the moral philosophers are not incompatible with Christianity, that an ethic of aspiration has a certain validity alongside the ethic of neighbor-love.

This book is of value in that it deals in specifics such as race, marriage, economics and war. It should thus be a valuable companion to the more abstract discussions by such men as Paul Tillich (e.g. in Love, Power, and Justice).

Although the author has gone to great lengths to prove his contention the question remains: Is it fair to the moral philosophers when Christianity appropriates their ethics and re-interprets them in terms of an alien presupposition?

-- Dick Niebanck

I AM THAT I AM

I MADE YOU MAN. I AM YOUR GOD.

I BUILT YOUR BODY, FORMED YOUR FACE.

I HAVE YOU CLOTHED. I HAVE YOU SHOD.

I HAVE PROVIDED TIME AND SPACE.

I AM THE FATHER OF YOUR RACE,

AND YOU MAY GOVERN BY MY GRACE.

THOUGH EARTH AND HEAVEN BE DESTROYED,

I GRANT YOU FREEDOM TO FORGE CHAINS.

I FEEL YOUR PLEASURES AND YOUR PAINS.

I FILL THE VOLUME AND THE VOID.

I AM THE LIGHT WHERE DARKNESS REIGNS.

I AM THE MAKER WHO REMAINS.

-- Manfred Fletscher

"Branches of the Vine," community at Mt. Airy, is a fitting and timely theme for this issue of The Seminarian. We've had enough talk about the lack of our "sense of community" among ourselves. Ever since The Seminarian staff chose this theme, I've tried to keep my eyes and ears open, and I've heard "community" battered to and fro in seemingly endless bull sessions and discussions -- I've seen relatively more seminarians heeding the call of the chapel bell -- I've watched intra-class tournaments in volleyball, football -- I was amazed at signs of cooperative efforts in classroom and dormitory. While these illustrations are only external indications of what we are concerned with in this issue, I feel that they are "good" and positive indications.

Most of you will remember one of the most whispered topics on campus last year -- "the retreats" -- kept pretty quiet by some, ridiculed by others. I'd like to direct your attention to the first news article on page 12. Immediate questions will undoubtedly be: Who's running it? Do you have to wear anything special? Are all students really invited? Let me remind you (in good theological fashion) that such questions put the "offense" at the wrong place.

Evidently, there are some students here who feel a need for this sort of thing. Further, I think few will disagree with them. An Advent retreat will give us opportunity to meditate, learn, worship, and talk together. In that sense, I feel the project is a move in the right direction.

In one of the discussions in which I participated, this suggestion was made: that the administration provide in next year's calendar a few days between semesters for a mid-year retreat -- for the community's self-examination, corporate worship, and "life together." Here's an idea which needs student discussion before any approach can be made to the administration. "Life together" cannot be "administrated!"

I pass this suggestion on to you -- the student body. If you like it, talk it up. If you don't like it, talk against it. Maybe several of those interested in the idea will bring it up in a student body meeting for public airing. Eventually, I think such a project should be put into the hands of the student body executive committee for study and possible action. It should not be arranged by a few of those concerned.

Meanwhile, attend the Advent Retreat! See what you think of it. Then explore possibilities of a mid-year retreat. However, don't gripe and complain about "those retreats" unless you know what you're talking about.

-- Al Schrum

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We praise and bless Thee, O God; we give thanks to Thee for Thy goodness and Thy great glory; we join our voices with the heavenly host, with the Apostles, Prophets, and Martyrs, with all Thy People, to magnify Thy Name. Blessed art Thou, O God, our King; blessed art Thou, O Christ, our Lord, blessed art Thou, O Holy Ghost, our Comforter, now, and unto the ages of ages. Amen.