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SEMINARIAN

Vol. XXIII

September 27, 1961

No. 4

UNITY

Sam Seminarian Reports

To judge from the increasing number of books on the subject, it would seem that ecumenicity is becoming at least commercially popular. The greater part of these volumes, however, are premature in form, that is, they presuppose that the time for fruitful dialogue is here. I do not say that there is no dialogue nor that it should be discouraged; it is, on the contrary, an exciting and inspiring reality both here and in Europe. The experience of conducting theological discussion between Christian brethren so historically opposed gives one (I can witness) real encouragement in the work toward unity.

But the form of dialogue is incapable at this point of becoming an effective instrument beyond the personal level of which I speak. Even as the sense of brotherhood and understanding grows in discussion, there remain the all too obvious impasses of thought and practice. Therefore, when we read books of or about dialogue we are more often left with a lack of agreement than with a growth in openness which has resulted.

The alternative form of ecumenical work lies in self-preparation. Today our main job is to introduce ourselves and our own household to the thoughts and ways of our neighbors. Having been thus sympathetically informed we shall be enabled much more adequately to find new ways of expressing our beliefs and to reexamine our own stance.

With this in mind I heartily recommend Pelikan's Riddle of Roman Catholicism or von Loewenich's Modern Catholicism. It is informative and surprising to read similar works written by and for Roman Catholics, eg. L. Bouyer's Spirit and Forms of Protestantism. Only as all become more mature can real unity be achieved; for the time, at any rate, let us concern ourselves with our own growth.

George Weckman

VIRGIN SPRING

My assignment this week carried me to Philadelphia to see a very highly recommended movie The Virgin Spring. Before going any further, let me immediately pass this recommendation on - should you ever get the chance to see this picture, do it without fail!

Virgin Spring is not really a picture - it is an experience. Anything said about it is trite and amounts to underestimation. In this picture set in the Roman Catholic fourteenth century is man - man worshipping Odin and man worshipping God. In this picture is sin - adultery and murder. In this picture is life realistically portrayed. Perhaps we all don't go through or see an experience as did the people in the picture, but the same ultimate questions arise.

Questions which include "Why should someone so innocent have to die?" And here is man's earnest plea "Forgive me, God, for what I have done." And the answer from God bestowing his grace upon all, even the apparently most sinful.

But all of the above is simply my interpretation. Much more could be said, and certainly other interpretations have been offered. Let me urge all to see this picture!

Ed. Note; Virgin Spring will be shown for the last times tonight, Sept. 27, at the Castor Theatre, Castor Ave., North East, Philadelphia.

CLASS OFFICERS

With the arrival of the junior class comes election of class officers. Listed below are the executive slates which may serve as reference in succeeding months:

Junior Class - President, Bodo Niscah; Secretary, Richard Krause; Social Secretary, Tom Reinsel; Athletic Chairman, Arthur Hahn.

Middle Class - President, Charles Scott; Vice-president, David Krewson; con't p.2

Editorials

THORNS AND THISTLES

It is rather generally recognized that Jesus' observation about words and deeds is pretty shrewd. "You will know them by their fruits." What a man does rather than what he says, should be decisive in our evaluation of him. Although this dictum in the New Testament is set in the context of a warning against false prophets, it turns out to be a sweeping condemnation of the "not-as-I-do-but-as-I-say" philosophy of so many of us. But it's not enough to say that since we are all guilty of this we can overlook it. 'I can't hear what you are saying over the noise of what you are' is a famous quote which indicates the frequency with which this rule is, consciously or not, applied. When we look at our own community, the rift between words and deeds becomes painfully evident. Each student is preparing here for some phase of the Church's ministry, in which so much of the value of his work depends on his ability to creatively share the lives of others with them, and in so doing make relevant the Word of God. Yet in seminary how many cut themselves off from the koinonia we have in Christ, use every possible device to build a wall around themselves to avoid getting involved, silently condemn the seminary, the larger Church, their fellow seminarians, and the life we share here together.

Perhaps we should say something about those who talk about worship and those who worship; unfortunately there is often a difference. The chapel pews are already getting less and less use. Doubtless some still have basic disagreements with the chapel program: no statement is ever going to satisfy everyone. But how seriously will a man be heard whose absence is all too conspicuous in chapel? How seriously can words about faculty responsibility for worship be taken when a faculty member is seen at 9:55 chatting in Hagan Hall but absent from chapel five minutes later?

Perhaps a healthy and disciplined

effort to make words and deeds coincide will do more to aid the realization of community at Mt. Airy than most other efforts.

FAITH DEFEATS SIGHT

A recent issue of Life includes the pathetic story of a young boy who watched his whole family drown in the floods caused by the recent Texas hurricane. What grips one most in the story is the fact that the family had plenty of warning, but despite the radio advice and the urgings of his wife, the father insisted that it would all blow over without serious effect. His son, clinging to a tree, watched his supremely confident father go beneath the water.

To many this is America's attitude toward the cold war: "They'll never touch us!" As Christians we realize how false this "faith" is. What, perhaps, we more dimly see is our own false confidence, not necessarily in Americanism or our nuclear stock pile, but in our theology or the Scriptures or, even worse, our own faith! It is suggested that we've learned how to be "not of the world" but have forgotten how to be "in the world." Instead of concentrating almost exclusively on the Church as it met the challenges of the past, we might better think about the Church's role in the present crises and begin making some history ourselves. Perhaps the new and faddish theologies ought to be put behind a fresh dose of kerygmatic preaching. This is no cry for apocalyptic fanaticism but for the same sort of urgency that led Paul to ease the tension between his ministry and Apollos'. God still gives the growth, no matter who plants and waters. We can't ignore the differences between us, but no difference must be allowed to cloud a unified witness to the Lord to whom we are responsible not as Barthians or as Lutherans but as one Church.

OFFICERS - con't. Secretary-Treasurer, David Wartluft; Athletic Chairman, Ed Keyser; Social Chairman, Mike Levensgood. Senior Class - President, Foster McCurley; Vice-president, Ron Speckman; Secretary, John Brndjar; Treasurer, Harold Baer; Athletic Chairman, Lou Smith; Social Chairman, Dick Miller.