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RETREAT EVALUATION

(Ed. Note) Last week due to the exigencies of space we edited Wes Johnston's article at a point where the reader would have thought the evaluation ended on a negative note. This was not the intent of the writer, so we print his article in full this week.)

Evaluation of a retreat is an especially difficult task--especially for one who has not had much prior experience with gatherings of this nature. If, however, the comments of many who attended (including seminarians, college students, pastors, professors, and--perhaps most importantly--parishioners) are any criterion for judgment, then the retreat held last Saturday (Ed. note--a week ago Saturday) at St. Paul's Church, Mt. Holly, N.J. was surely a success.

The retreat's stated purpose was "to shed God's light in mountain-top intensity" and few would deny that this purpose was accomplished; for whether in sermon, sacrament, lecture, discussion, or fellowship, God's Word was dominant.

The question arises as to the place of a retreat in the life of an evangelical Christian. Could it not be construed that those who participate in retreats are attempting to "climb up to God on Jacob's Ladder?" Perhaps a retreat is just a modern-day, short term version of medieval monasticism. The writer believes this question to be justified (probably because he thought it up), but believes equally strongly that such a question may be answered negatively by setting forth a proper understanding of a retreat.

Last Saturday's retreat placed its emphasis squarely upon man's total depravity before God. At no time were the participants encouraged to climb toward some "mystical presence". In fact the theme of the retreat might well have been "BE STILL AND KNOW THAT I AM GOD".

It is true that the Christian should be open to receive the inspiration of God's Word at all times in his daily life, and that we need not draw apart to contemplate God as if he were some far-off unknown to whose knowledge we have to aspire. For to the Christian whose God is "nearer than hands and feet" this is absurd and blasphemous.

At the same time though, perhaps it is not irreverent to desire to follow the example of Our Lord Himself, who often withdrew from the helter-skelter world to pray.

Wes Johnston



After about a month's absence, we welcome back Sebastian Seminarian....

Sebastian Seminarian Reports...
COMMUNITY WITHOUT A SEMINARY

The following headline was found on page 28 of the Inquirer dated August 30, 1965: "Seminary Decides to Relocate Downtown". The Seminary mentioned was the Lutheran Theological Seminary at Mt.

Airy. The effect of this relocation on the community which it was leaving provided this interesting factor: summarizing the article it was noticed that the net result was "no effect". The only possible disagreement with this opinion came from the merchants, but with the proposed location of a Roman Catholic Prep School on the site, no loss in business was anticipated, except during the time of changeover.
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(SEBASTIAN SEMINARIAN CONT'D)

This reporter, not satisfied with what he reads in the paper, talked with some of the people of the community to ascertain what their reactions to the relocation. The people who lived on Mt. Airy Avenue wondered what they would do for entertainment without the telephone or shouts to provide background noises to their daily living. The thousands of school children in the area were worried about the possibility of still using the campus as a short or long cut to school. The garage attendants wondered if there would be any business in fixing A-frames. Others were indifferent to questioning, as they did not really notice any effect of the seminarians on the community. No one else could remember any community-oriented project on the part of the seminarians. In fact, the Seminary was considered to be in a world of its own, although the seminarians looked human enough and did provide services at \$1.50 an hour.

It's still 1962.

(Sebastian Seminarian, after a four-month trip to various parts of Pa. and adjacent states, returns to his writing for THE SEMINARIAN. Together with his brother Samuel, he intends to write occasionally on aspects of campus or church life, or on anything else, for that matter.)

FOOTNOTES

"And who is my brother?"

"A man was going down from academic abstractions to living existence, and he fell among distressing emotions, which tormented him and distracted him. Now by chance his pastor, who had passed that same road, saw him, but passed by on the other side. And likewise a professor, when he recognized his plight, deemed pastoral concern an alien vocation. But a brother, as he journeyed that same way, saw him and knew in his own heart the pain his companion felt; and he went to him, spoke with him pouring out the balm of his own consolation in the Cross and love of Christians for each other; and he bore him on his own strength and brought to him an experience of friendship and took care

of him. And after a while he entrusted his care to the binds of love, vowing to continue to enrich it as much as was needed. Which of these produced the community of love?"

"The one who expressed his own love and concern for his brother!"

"Go and....."

George Weckman

THE BOOK SHELF

Katharine Ann Porter, Ship of Fools

Porter has written a novel of human sin and corruption. Using the setting of a German boat returning "homeland" shortly before World War I, Porter has portrayed for us the personal exhibitions of lust, hatred, prejudice, apathy, fear of death, and unreal optimism. Each of her many characters are developed with skill and patience, as if carving some realistic marble carature. She does not hesitate to reveal the subtleties of human corruption in their true light, especially as they reveal themselves in inter-personal relations. But before continuing, it would be best to outline some of the main themes, as they are exhibited in some of the characters.

The first theme that strikes us is the wave of anti-Semitism that effects everybody on the boat. The thing that stirs up this controversy is the discovery that at the Captain's table there sits a man named Freyberg who is married to a Jewess. The results of this discovery are more than a change of seating arrangements in the dining hall. The waves of prejudice are seen to tone the attitudes of all these "good, high-bred" Germans who had been unfortunately

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Staff: Fred Myers, Editor; James Bresnahan, Wesley Hamlin, George Weckman, Gregory Shannon, Henry Ireland.

Porter, Ship of Fools, (Cont'd)

tainted by this deception on Freyberg's part. Especially good is Porter's presentation of this prejudice as seen from the side of a low-life Jew named Lowenberg, who sells religious articles for a profit.

The second theme that seems to be recurrent is an apparent apathy towards others on the boat. Even with those who are tossed together by circumstance there is a mechanical "what's in it for me" attitude. A passenger list that rates the people on the boat as first, second, or third class holds true in the personal relations as well. One good example of this apathetic spirit is the demise of one of the peasants stored in the hold of the ship. There is little concern for their welfare, and they are viewed throughout the book as if in another world. They are viewed with suspicion by the Captain, and he "disarms" them by taking away all weapons, including a carving knife from one man who makes his livelihood by whittling. This same peasant drowns saving the pet dog of a first class passenger, and it is only out of the highest sense of duty that anyone attends his funeral. In some minds, there is a distaste for the foolishness of such an act, but not so much a whisper of sorrow that his life was lost.

There are other themes that run intertwined throughout, and I recommend that you read the book to discover for yourself what they are. But now let me close with one problem that exhibits itself again and again in the novel, the problem of evil. In the minds of most of the passengers, there is at some point a dealing with this problem. But the overall conclusion, it seems, is that evil is a disorder, an "out-of-place", somewhat like Plato's idea of injustice in the City-state. It does not possess a demonic character, but is an expression of arrogance. It is not an inherent trait or permanent mark. It is rather the attempt to transcend one's place in the world. The book never quite gets into the solution of this problem, but is rather content to manifest evil's workings in human encounters.

I must add one final remark. Porter writes with a bit of sarcasm. Her characters are rarely shown in their good light. Each person has a weakness and this sooner or later reveals itself. The only really good characters are a bride and groom, who so discreetly remain in the background. Their goodness is a withdrawal from corruption.

Douglas Werner.

 THE POOR SOUL
(Curvatus in se)

Periodically, this column will print definitions taken from the Devil's notebook. This week we start with "A."

ABATIS, n. Rubbish in front of a fort, to prevent the rubbish outside from molesting the rubbish inside.

ABDOMEN; n. The temple of the god STOMACH, in whose worship, with sacrificial rights, all true men engage.

ABILITY, n. The natural equipment to accomplish some small part of the meaner ambitions distinguishing able men from dead ones.

MORE TO COME.....

 PROFESSOR LAZARETH INSTALLED

In a very impressive Chapel service this morning Dr. William H. Lazareth was installed as Professor of Christian Ethics. Members of the Seminary Board participated in the Service. Dr. Seltzer led the service. Dr. Lazareth gave a "reverently relevant" sermon.

 SENIOR BANQUET REFERENDUM
 The SPECIAL STUDENT BODY REFERENDUM REGARDING THE SENIOR BANQUET AND METHOD OF FINANCING WILL BE CONDUCTED TOMORROW MORNING at 9:50 a.m. IN EACH CLASSROOM. THIS WILL BE YOUR ONLY OPPORTUNITY TO VOTE.

RESULTS OF THE ELECTION OR REFERENDUM
VOTE ON THE SENIOR BANQUET.

Vote held on Thursday, October 11, 1962. All ballots cast were NOT counted by class.

1. Do you want a Senior Banquet? YES 106 NO 34
2. If the banquet were held, how would you wish the banquet to be financed?
 - 41 A. Traditional Manner -- from the Student Body Treasury
(estimated at \$600.00)
 - 97 B. Those attending, pay their own way for their meal with the Student Body paying for the Music, Speaker, Hall, etc.
(estimated at \$200.00)

Reactions of the electorate:

To Question 1. "Yeah, we like that."

To Question 2 "Someone's going to pay"
"Good"

"Let's give the extra \$400 to the Mermaid in installments."

"I can't believe the students would vote for benevolence."

"Here's POWER POLITICS at its worst."

"Anytime you get these Juniors thinking you have trouble"

"Let's endow the Heyer Commission with the extra funds

and use the income for the benevolence program."

SPECIAL ANNOUNCEMENT

On October 27, from 8 p.m. to 12 midnight a Halloween Party and Dance in the Refectory. Please come in Costume! Cost \$1.00 per couple. Sponsored by the Wives' Club. Refreshments! Live Music! Fun!

OFFICIAL NOTICE FROM THE STUDENT BODY PRESIDENT:

A special meeting of the Student Body will be called at a date to be announced in compliance with a petition presented by 10% of the Student Body. Purpose: to allocate surplus funds from the budget. Three days notice will be given in compliance with the Constitution & ByLaws.