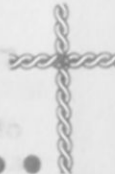


13310
L9 P54



the SEMINARIAN

VOL. XXIV

December 12, 1962

No. 13

SEBASTIAN SEMINARIAN

WHAT HAS HAPPENED TO ADVENT?

During the Advent season we look forward to Christmas and the birth of the Christ child. But do we so as ones who have already been comprehended, grasped and overcome by the eternal significance of that one time event. And so as Christians we rejoice in the fact that He has already come, that a Savior has been born for us as the Gospel text from Luke declares.

Since these things are so, our looking forward is more than a wordly hope and anticipation; it is the hope that arises out of faith in what God has already done and is doing now in us. Prepare us for thy coming, O Lord, our lips do pray in the anticipation of the Advent season. And how does God prepare us for his coming save by His very coming even now during this Advent season. The Christ event finds its completion in us whenever his Word is believed as God to us with the anticipation of His incarnation and the promise of His forgiveness through the cross.

Sadly, there are those who tend to think of the church year as a time to push themselves back into the life of Jesus to relive with Him the moments of anguish and joy, suffering and glory, death and resurrection. Now is it that in Lent we attempt to forget or subdue the triumph of Easter by omitting from the Service the words Hallelujah, Hallelujah, Hallelujah - praise Yahweh. Lent is thereby seen as a time to shush up about Easter and relive the agony with Christ. Advent, moreover, it is said is designed to be a time of penitence and true repentance so that we may be prepared for his coming. But should it not be realized that our only preparation is to hear every Sunday the proclamation that he has come. Even in this Advent season we are overwhelmed by the Love of God which became flesh. And so, if for many Christians the joy

(Continued on Page 3)

Advent, as you all know, was planned by the Church to be a penitential season. It is intended to be a time of preparation, a time in which in a spirit of true repentance, self-examination, and humility, the Christian devotionally prepares himself for God's gift to him at Christmas. Note, for example, the Collects for the Sundays in Advent. Advent is meant to have an overwhelming devotional effect on the Christian. "Overwhelmed", indeed, by the wonder of God's love, is the effect of the Christmas Day if the Advent season is kept as originally intended.

It is apparent, however, that the original intent of Advent has been lost. This is most clearly evidenced by Christian merchants who start putting up displays, Christmas trees and decorations, and play Carols even before Thanksgiving. This is also seen in our churches. Many parishes schedule in Advent what are in effect Christmas programs...in the auxiliaries, church schools, choirs, etc. We here at Seminary also do this.. For example, next week following the Advent vespers and the buffet we will all gather around, caught up in the "Christmas Spirit" and sing Christmas carols...and then have parties in our rooms...and sing carols again. The point is that there are so many instances of where we sing carols in non-devotional circumstances, that by the time December 25 come, the full devotional impact is gone. The effect devotionally on the life of the Christian would be like during Lent, Holy Week, and Good Friday letting loose Easter hymns.

The Christmas season begins on the eve of December 24 and continues for the following two weeks to January 6, but many. Those two weeks are the appropriate time for Christmas carols, parties, programs, etc. This issue, which all of us will soon face for ourselves, needs some thinking now... But the effort surely will be

(Continued on Page 3)

SEBASTIAN SEMINARIAN (Continued from Page 1)

of Christmas has spread beyond its liturgical season as they break forth in carol and song, let the rest of us not be so quick to frown upon their not choosing to fragment their total Christian experience into the exact and precise divisions of the liturgical year. Even now there may be justly be those who, caught up in the spirit of Christmas, proclaim with all their heart and voice "The Lord has come"

WHAT HAS HAPPENED TO ADVENT? (Continued from Page 1)

worthwhile... and Advent and Christmas again will be definite seasons as are Lent and Easter.

Wesley Hamlin

COMENTARIES OF JEROME (Continued from Page 2)

ridiculous readings in the Chapel. Where else could we have such wondrous transportation of Versicles and Responses? It really makes one proud of the liturgical practices here! And I wonder if there is some correlation between those who cannot read the service and those who do not attend Chapel regularly (if at all!)

In the Apocryphal Acts of Thomas, there is mention of a wild ass preaching to the people. Could it be that the braying of asses is more pleasing to God than the sturbled reading of supposedly intelligent seminarians?

A short time ago, the question was: "Why can't Johnny read?" Perhaps now it should read: "Why can't Johnny's older brother in Seminary read?"

JEROME

THE FREE TELEPHONE

At the Student Body meeting on Monday night a near-unanimous vote was reached on the motion which states that the pay telephone in F hall be removed, and a conventional, residential-type telephone be installed in its place, subject to the following regulations:

1. Absolutely no long-distance telephone calls will be permitted. Every long distance phone call appearing on the bill will be traced, and the person responsible will face a \$10.00 fine plus costs. This provision is absolutely inflexible.
2. Rather, the telephone may be used for local calls within the city-limits of Philadelphia, plus six suburban exchanges which form a "fringe area" around our Chestnut Hill exchange. (These exchanges will be clearly posted)
3. Five telephone calls outside the specified area which, despite every effort of the Phone company and the Phone Committee, to which the responsible person cannot be found in a period of one month constitutes an abuse, and thus removal of the telephone will follow suit.
4. The telephone may be used for incoming calls; however, on a secondary or overflow basis. Incoming calls will be focused to C Hall.
5. A phone committee will be appointed whose duty is to enforce regulations and answer all questions concerning the telephone.

Greg Shannon, Chairman, Phone Comm.

FOOTNOTES

Last week it was the concert (O what a joy to see so many of you there!), now it is a record. Do you mind if, in recognition to all the Christianity which we put into Christmas around here, I espouse the cause of brash commercialism?

To put it plainly, I have a record for sale. It is a 12" long playing record of music for organ, harpsichord, recorder and voices. Since I had nothing to do with the taping or pressing, I can praise the fidelity of the record with impunity - I think it will show off any hi-fi to advantage.

As for the music: The organ recorded here is the Aeolian-Skinner instrument at St. Paul's Episcopal Church in Chestnut Hill. This organ is the finest in the city, I think, for its recapture of the traditional pipe organ sound. It is reportedly designed after an old Dutch instrument, which fact explains its clarity and brilliance.

The first organ selection is a series of variations on a Noel melody which is full of Christmas frivolity. Marcello's musical impression of the 19th Psalm follows, with much pomp and circumstance. Then there is a set of variations by Walther, a contemporary of Bach; this piece shows off the tonal colors of the organ. And finally this side of the record contains a composition by Ludwig Lenel, the Professor of Music at Muhlenberg, on the hymn "In the midst of life we are surrounded by death." This is a premiere recording of a very powerful study in repentance and awe.

The harpsichord side begins with a set of "Fugues on the Magnificat" by Pachelbel. Next is the Sonatina for harpsichord and recorder by James Hook, which Mr. Bornemann played at last week's concert. (This kind of fun in music is rare today). The Fantasia by Mozart which follows is usually heard on the piano; it's quite a revelation to hear it with the clarity of harpsichord tone. Last on that side: Don Simmons and Doris Krewson join to sing a setting of "Wake, awake" by Bach.

They make wonderful Christmas gifts, a remembrance of Seminary, unique, limited edition. Release date is Friday, Dec.

14. What more can I say?! GW

COMMENTARIES OF JEROME

It certainly seems strange to me that many men who have been graduated from colleges and universities show an amazing lack of any reading ability whatsoever. For example, there are those poor souls who cannot locate books in the library because the numbering system is much too difficult to understand. I suppose that they just cannot read the carefully written instruction booklets or the explanatory signs in the library. (And they do not seem to realize that they can always ask for help if they need it). And is it not strange that the only ones who complain about the system are the Seniors and Middlers, primarily the latter? This seems to say something about the relative basic intelligence of the different classes.

And we all thank you, Dear Librarian, for your marvelous exposition on this subject in a recent issue of this paper, and for your much needed explanation of the meanings of "bait" and "bate."

By the way, I just wonder how the junior class justifies a forced-will offering from all its members in order to finance a dance which will be attended by somewhat less than all. Dances are fine, but I always thought that they were voluntary, and that only the people who re-attended them had to pay for them. And how much good could have been done with those thirty dollars (or should I say, perhaps, pieces of silver?)!

And does it not seem reasonable to suppose that the students who lead the worship in the chapel would at least read over the service to be used and the Psalm and the lesson before trying to lead? Of course, some mistakes are undoubtedly caused by nervousness, but with a book directly before their eyes it seems that only a profound lack of reading ability can account for some of the

The SEMINARIAN is published weekly during the academic year by the Student Body of the Lutheran Theological Seminary, 7301 Germantown Ave., Phila. 19.

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

JINGLE BELLS, JINGLE BELLS.

The following was in the New York Times on November 28 under the by-line of Russell Baker. It is included here to help you get ready for the Christmas season and to show that there are still some true "believers."

"Commencement address at graduation exercises from Santa Claus school:

"You men stand today at the threshold of life's greatest adventure. For the whole month you will be the living embodiment of childhood's sweetest dreams. To you will be granted the rare opportunity of lifting children's hearts and filling their little world with joy. Warm loving bundles of faith will cuddle upon your laps and whisper to you of dreams and aspirations they dare not confide even to their parents.

"How will you respond to this challenge? We here at Santa Claus A&M have no doubt that you will measure up to the highest standards so long as you abide by the precepts we have labored so hard to impart. Remember, these children will be completely in your power. Direct your every action to tighten your sway over their little minds.

"Let us always remember that attention to the small details often distinguishes the great Santa Claus from the failure. Keep your beards fitted tightly to the chin; nothing is more dispiriting than two inches of daylight showing between chin line and beard. Above all, we cannot caution you enough against yielding to tobacco and alcohol during rest periods behind the throne. There was a day when breath sweeteners could deceive your little visitors. Those days are gone.

"Many Of you have complained about the severity of our laughing course. We realize how difficult it is these days to produce a good convincing 'Ho, Ho, Ho' when we all feel such a powerful urge to sit down and cry. We can only suggest that you stop reading the newspapers for the next month.

"Many of you will note that long series of 'HoHoHo's' will bring a spasm of racking coughs particularly if the little visitor is pressing an elbow into your breastbone. In these cases a switch to 'Hah,Hah, Ha' usually relieves the problem. In no case, however, should you let out a 'Heh,Heh,Heh'. Most

merchandisers feel the 'Heh,Heh,Heh,' is extremely harmful to the store image.

"The greatest crisis each of you will face as Santa Claus is essentially one of morals. Here, each man must do what will permit him to live with his own conscience. We urge you once again, however, to be exceedingly careful in the commitments you place upon your little visitor's parents.

"I am sure that most of you balk instinctively at agreeing to bring a chinchilla stole for some dewey-eyed 6-year old charmer or a real machine gun to a little boy of 5. The marginal problem, however, arises with the toddler who climbs into your lap, smiles with angelic simplicity into your eyes and asks for his own private telephone or stereo rig.

"A bland commitment of this magnitude may occasionally produce ugly scenes with parents and even violence. We suggest that you consult your individual store manager for policy guidance, but as a loose rule of thumb we think it unwise to promise to bring anything that costs over 150 or requires regular professional maintenance service.

"And finally, a few simple do's and don'ts. Never flirt with the shopgirls while in uniform. After hours, do not frequent bars while wearing your Santa Claus suit. Keep the beard free at all times of soup and coffee stains. Keep an alert eye for parents trying to smuggle youngsters past your throne without paying a visit.

"In these cases, pick up your microphone and ask in a booking voice, "Don't you want to come and tell Santa Claus what you want for Christmas? 'Heh,Heh,Heh'.

"Graduates, go forth and take up the challenge that lies before you in the spirit with which the men of Santa Claus A&M have ever responded to Christmastide. Lift children's hearts. Fill their little world with joy. Light their childhood with a jolly 'Ho, Ho, Ho' or at least a 'Ha, Ha, Ha'. The next four weeks are yours."

THOUGHT FOR THE DAY

Shouldn't the holiday spirits be in the heart instead of the glass?