



# the SEMINARIAN .....

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## SAM SEMINARIAN REPORTS....

### CHILDREN A.B., B.D.

(Opening day at the Lutheran Theological Seminary, somewhere, U.S.A. The Registrar is giving a speech on the nature of the institution...)

"....and you will find the Seminary to be a graduate institution. It will be in the first place a school of learning, in the second place a school of Christians. It is not a church."

The seminarian after hearing this speech eagerly looks forward to do some really challenging academic work. Upon arrival in the various class rooms he hears:

"Next week we will have an objective test on-----, 25 questions of important information which will be the basis of this course. You must understand this or we can go no farther. I realize this test is similiar to that which you had in the second year of kindergarten, and that to have you correct each other's papers is reminiscent of eighth grade days, but the important thing is the facts."

And so, our seminarian begins his study. He picks up his Bible and is reading in it when another classmate enters the room. "Oh" says he, observing his friend with a Bible in his hand, "you're studying it for a test. Good luck - you'll need it."

Week after week, year after year, the same procedure continues. The number and quality of papers improves, the outside reading multiplies, some practical emphases are added - but the objective test remains. Indeed, even at the height of academic work, in the 19th year of academic work the objective test continues: not a test of intelligence - just a test of facts.

At the end of his last objective  
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## COMMENTARIES OF JEROME

First of all, I would like to express my thanks to Brother Sebastian for his comments upon my earlier commentaries. And, dear Brother, I don't expect to be canonized, in any form.

I realize that I am not the first to complain about the poor attendance at chapel, and I will probably not be the last, although it would be of inestimable value to the Seminary if attendance would improve to such an extent that complaints would no longer be warranted. And, although you and I doubt that matter will improve in the future, this doubt gives us no reason to assume that there is nothing that we can do to help correct the situation. Just one question, Dear Brother: what do you do with your beads in chapel?

I regret that my Christmas greetings were not presented in the form I had originally intended. Due to a lack of space, there was an unfortunate and, I am sure, quite unintentional omission of an important phrase, speaking of Christmas in terms of a "celebration of the First Coming of Christ and a joyful expectation of the Second." I think that with the re-insertion of this a more positive, if belated, greeting can be found.  
(Editor's note: The following paragraph is an exact reproduction of Jerome's Christmas greetings as they originally were written when they were turned into us) : Finally, I would just like to ask what the emphasis will be in your life this Christmas season: are you looking for Santa Claus, or are you going to burn blue votive candles to celebrate the season, or are you celebrating Christ's first coming and eagerly awaiting the Second? In any event, I wish each of you, in your own way: Mery Xmas, or, Mary christmas, or (perhaps?) a Blessed Christmas. (End of Jerome's Christmas greeting)  
To give constructive criticism seems  
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test the seminarian finally got up enough nerve and wrote in his exam booklet: You will be interested in knowing that after 19 years of schooling I do know how to read, and how to gather some basic facts. And in spite of the constant objective-type test I have begun using the facts. I suppose, however, I remain a child in your sight, having no brains, and will be graduated with the rest of the Children, A.B., B.D.

COMMENTARIES OF JEROME (Continued from page 1)

to imply that the giver has answers. These, unfortunately, have I not; I have only questions, questions about items which are perhaps being taken for granted by too many people, questions about things that do not seem quite right, even though I cannot locate the real problem and thereby be able to offer a solution.

Again, I thank you, Brother Sebastian, and I look forward to further discussions with you and your brother Sam, if he be so inclined.

And next week, Seminarians, we will talk about what may be Satan's greatest victory and source of pleasure in the church.

JEROME

LETTER TO THE EDITOR:

Brethren:

In recent issues of the Seminarian few areas of life here at Mt. Airy have not come under scrutiny. For the sake of the common good and in hopes of improvement may I suggest another area where we might have room for self-examination. This concerns the saying of grace at meals.

It seems as though future Pastors of the Church should be able to get on their feet and offer a prayer that in some small way resembles a prayer fitting for the occasion. How often have we thanked God for everything, somehow never getting around to thanking Him for the food on the plate.

Now and again other budding theologians have taken the opportunity to preach a sermon or define one of the doctrines of the church. Creativity, cleverness, and spotlight-seeking could well give way to sincerity.

Saying grace should be a time for giving thanks, not pushing your particular party line be the direction up or down.

One last thought. Gnetlemen, dare we who are so familiar with holy things (perhaps too familiar) dare to take his name in vain?

Charles J. Orem

## FOOTNOTES

It's not enough, you know, to say that you're always ready to lend a helping hand when it's requested. You can stand on the sidelines for a lifetime waiting for the request.

Now there is a possibility that the one who waits for the cry of help is actually covering a lack of concern, that he is not willing to be bothered by efforts on another's behalf and therefore he rationalizes. But it is not of this hardness of heart that I speak; this is not our worry among Christian brethren. Rather it is the unthinking neglect, the failure to match heart and hand, of which we may not even be aware.

In short, we dare not wait for the friend or neighbor to come to us in need, for then it may be too late. Love anticipates the request, it is constantly on the watch for an opportunity, it is drawn into the vacuum of a human need without invitation. The problem with us is not our lack of love so much as it is our blindness to love's chances. Yes, the eye may cause us to sin in many ways - instead of plucking it out, sharpen it for its glorious task.

Do you say that you are afraid of offending by your suggestion of aid? Yes, indeed there may be surprise at such an offer; and there is pain in admitting need. But Christians are used to even worse crosses than the rejection of loving concern.

Next time you find yourself saying that you did not know that help was needed, you did not realize that there was anything wrong, think then of the sin of omission.

GW

## SYMPOSIUM

March 8 is now a firm date for the Cornell-Mt. Airy Seminar, which will be held here at Mt. Airy this year. This Seminar will provide us with an opportunity to learn of the current status of research in biology and physics with particular emphasis on current and future challenges and problems for our faith. If you think that there are none--come and see! Please note this date on your calendar.

## MENTAL HEALTH SYMPOSIUM

The Church and Mental Health is a very timely subject. Currently it has received much attention from the public press and church.

Last month the New York Times and Look magazine simultaneously carried articles concerning the drop in seminary enrollment. Broken mental health as an occupational hazard was one reason many young men were avoiding the ministry as a vocation, the articles reported. The Post and Redbook described fiascos perpetrated by ministers who counseled mentally ill. According to one psychiatrist, "the ministry was fine therapy for some neurotics." The public has questioned our role in this field.

Recently twenty-five scientists and clergy concerned with clinical testing of perspective clergy met for two days in New York City. "The Lutheran Church," said Dr. Benson, "ordained known pre-psychotic and schizophrenics." A Roman Catholic reported to the group, "that the priesthood has a particular attraction for potential schizophrenics." Many ministerial candidates are "sick."

With so much being said and written about the minister's mental health and the church's role in this field, the Symposium Committee invited Dr. Brunner, a Lutheran layman, The Rev. Mr. Paulus, of Our Saviour Lutheran Church, Haddonfield, N.J., and Chaplain Lee of Trenton State Hospital, to discuss this relevant subject with us. The date of this important symposium is Thursday, January 17, at 8:00 p.m.

Hank Maertens

## CONTEST WINNER

We are happy to announce the winner of our contest to design a new letterhead for the Student Body. To A. David Deery, Junior, goes a year's subscription to Dialog.

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LETTER TO THE EDITOR:

Our car stalled on the "Sure-Kill Expressway" on a cold and snowy Sunday afternoon. The trouble was in the electrical fuel pump which was producing a rapid clicking noise - a definite sign that our car needed to be towed to a repair shop.

While searching in vain to find a possible disconnected wire, the snow began to soak my clothes, dampening all the more our hope for a fast rescue. Just then a car pulled up behind ours and the driver asked me if I could use some help - which was of course gladly accepted. He invited me and my wife to sit in his warm car while he tried to find some assistance. It was then that we discovered that he was an amateur radio operator.

In a procedure which seemed too easy to believe, he reached two other operators at the same time (and by strange coincidence, one happened to be a Lutheran) who both offered their help. We asked if they would send out a call for road service, to which they immediately and most graciously complied. It turned out that we had to wait exactly one hour and 37 minutes for a tow-truck; and during all that time the kind gentlemen patiently waited with us and introduced us to amateur radio - truly a fine introduction to the "city of brotherly love" (we are natives of Pittsburgh). Neither my wife nor I could get over the fact that these gentlemen would devote all that time to a couple of strangers stranded on the Expressway.

They invited us and anyone who was interested to pay them a visit at their homes, and they would tell us all we wanted to know about amateur radio. What we learned during that episode was truly fascinating, and so I pass their invitation on to you. If you are interested, just let me know and we'll all accept their kind invitation.

One of the gentlemen's name was Tausendfreundt, which he said means just that - he has 1000 friends. He and all the other operators now have at least 1002 friends.

John Yedlicka