

Table Talk

News and Views of the Student Body of The Lutheran
Theological Seminary at Gettysburg.

Vol. 1 No. 9

November 12, 1964

OUR BADLY EDUCATED CLERGY

CHAPEL MEDITATION

by Raymond Mitchell

The following are comments on an article entitled "Our Badly Educated Clergy", printed in Parade, October 25, 1964 issue.

The article discusses three different aspects of the life of a minister, 1) His seminary studies are divorced from life, 2) His schedule of duties is almost impossible for him to do an adequate job, and 3) Some seminaries, realizing the condition of their clergy are doing something about this 'bad' education.

Two statements in this article seem to me to stand out. One is by an unidentified expert who says "They have too many jobs to do that they don't know anything about." Let me comment. Assuming that this expert's statement is true, for what reason is the minister called to deal with every conceivable matter under the sun? Where is the laity, where are the Christian people who are also called into the service of Jesus Christ, and thus to the people of the world?

Is the church to be a one-man affair; one man who is to be able to "spread himself thick" in every area of human life and enterprise? Is he to be something more than man and hardly less than God? Is it to be assumed that Jesus and his followers dealt with all social economic, political, etc., etc. ills of Israel at his time? It would appear to me that a minister is called to an impossible task if he is to function authoritatively in every area of human involvement in which people encounter difficulty. Whereas the inadequacies cited in this article are valid in varying degrees and ought therefore to be taken seriously, the critics ought themselves to

(cont. on p. 9)

LIBRARY CHAPEL MEDITATION
GETTYSBURG, PA.
November 4
During my intern year I was fortunate enough to be near the World's Fair and to have an opportunity to see the movie "Parable", which was shown at the Protestant Pavilion. As you probably know, this film is quite controversial. It begins at a circus parade. The narrator speaks the only words in the entire film, "Into this great Circus of Life came a man who dared to be different." At this point a mime or clown enters the screen riding a donkey. He is completely in white and covered with white grease paint. Only his eyes and the cross-shaped eyebrows are black. The rest of the movie follows this clown-mime without dialogue as he helps people in the circus. He carries water for the man who is exhausted from watering the elephants. Later he takes the place of a Negro who is on a seat which releases him into a tank of water when a target is hit. In helping these men he incurs the wrath of others who then follow him. He and those whom he has helped break up the act of Magnus the Great, a cruel puppeteer with human puppets. The mime takes the part of one of the human puppets and while he is suspended in the harness those whom he has offended attack and kill him. His limp, spread-eagle form as he hangs dead in the harness is reminiscent of the crucified Christ. In the following scene Magnus is before his dressing room mirror putting white grease paint on his face. As the circus moves away at the end of the film, the figure of the mime is seen riding along behind it. Is it a resurrection? Is it Magnus? Or is there a third party?

(cont. on p. 8)

FEATURE EDITORIAL

Within the next week a wonderful beginning will be over. I wonder if it will turn out to be a true beginning or just another end. I am referring to the use of the Library Rotunda as a display area for contemporary artistic endeavors. The one woman exhibit of the works of Carol Lange almost seemed to be a symbolic awakening of a rather traditional institution into the world of modern expression and communication. But what now? Will the forms of iron and steel, the sketches of pen and ink, be replaced by the relics of the past which for so many years filled that hall? For myself I hope not.

We are a community blest with many talents. I am sure it would not be hard to again fill those walls either with the works of one of our members or with a composite showing of the talents of many. We have only begun to investigate areas of expression. The field of oils, water colors, pastels, of mobiles, of photography, and even of pop art have not as yet been touched. If we wished, wall-cover could be found. But there is a warning. And this warning has to do with the whole purpose of the thing. Are we to use our new-found gallery simply to expose that which we have done? If so, better the walls be blank than pridefully filled with amateur attempts at greatness.

What then ought we to do? Can we not take a lead from the current coffee house movement in our colleges and cities? We have a concerned and interested community. We have the available space. Why not search the area for artists who are attempting to communicate their own feelings, their own beliefs concerning this modern world of ours? Why not invite them to display their works in our halls? Why not ask them to come for a few evenings of discussion and interpretation of their works? Why not use an area of relevant dialogue so easily within our reach? We have enough people on our campus at

(cont. on p. 9)

STAFF OF TABLE TALK

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EDITOR'S CORNER

Just a reminder that this is the last issue of Table Talk for the academic quarter. The next issue will be on December 2, with articles due, if possible, by noon on Monday, November 30. This gives everyone a chance to be creative over the vacation and come back with articles and ideas.

This week marks the end of Bob Richard's "Chapel Corner", after much thought on his part. This means that we'd like to have at least one new column of some sort next quarter. I have asked Bob to come up with another idea for a column and continue writing for Table Talk, and he has asked for suggestions from his readers. What type of column would you like to see? Come up with some ideas over vacation and either write a column yourself or offer your suggestion to Bob.

The staff of Table Talk wishes the seminary community a happy and enjoyable vacation.

R. F. G.

JOKE OF THE WEEK

"The supply preacher was all right" one parishoner said to another concerning the seminarian's efforts that morning, "but it seems to me that he didn't put enough fire into his sermon."

"I feel the opposite way," replied the second parishoner. "In my opinion he didn't put enough of his sermon into the fire."

REFLECTION ON MY CHAPEL MEDITATION

CHAPEL CORNER

Oct. 16

(Prior to my discussuon let me make this comment: I was delighted that my assistant chose to use the Matins during that chapel hour. In this way I hoped to express my appreciation for having been enabled to study in this seminary (I'm a Menonite) and to learn to know and appreciate the tradition in which the Lutheran church stands.)

My meditation was based on the question which the disciples addressed to Jesus when they saw a blind man: "Rabbi, who sinned, this man or his parents, that he was born blind?" (John 9:2) In other words 'why?' was this man born blind. This is a common question which arises about natural catastrophes. We ask the question why because we seek an explanation for what has happened. To seek an explanation is in itself a very human instinct, and in and of itself not wrong. But there is also a distinct danger sign which ought to flash when the question 'why' is posed. For frequently we are not only looking for an explanation, but we are seeking justification. For such events as the death of a child, of an old man, blindness, other disabilities, earthquakes, floods, etc., often elude explanation. But if explanations can be found, then many times we disqualify, almost instinctively, the justification given by Jesus Christ. We know why something happened, and we are satisfied. Hence we are not pointed to Christ as he who gives justification.

The answer which Jesus gives the disciples is not an answer to the question 'why'. For there is no human justification for much that occurs on the human scene. How can there be human justification for an act of God which, in its essence, totally escapes our understanding? The answer of Jesus to his disciples is a great assurance to all who read and seek to perceive. "It was not that this man sinned, or his parents, but

(cont. on p. 6)

As a result of comments made to the writer, a serious question has been raised with regard to the validity of making Chapel worship services the object of criticism or even comment in the formal sense. Should there be a weekly column that evaluates our worship services? A negative response seems theologically sound.

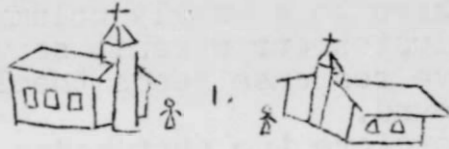
Heretofore two approaches have been attempted in this column. First, a summary of selected chapel meditations appeared with the intent being that this might draw attention to the fact that Chapel can contribute something constructive to the fellowship within this seminary community. Second, the scope was broadened to include an overview of the facts of worship rather than simply summarizing what was said, with the purpose of motivating students to constantly improve the quality of their leadership in chapel services. The error of the first approach was that it allowed for no critical judgment on the one hand and was liable to misrepresentation on the other. The second approach proved fallacious because it assumed that worship could be criticized with the use of secular criteria. The error of both of these approaches was that they

(cont. on p. 9)



UNDER THE TABLE
by Dick Graf

It has been said that a picture is worth a thousand words. With this thought in mind we present this week's column.



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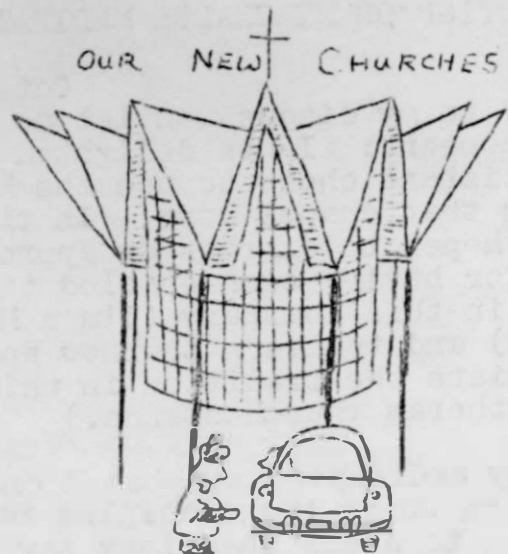
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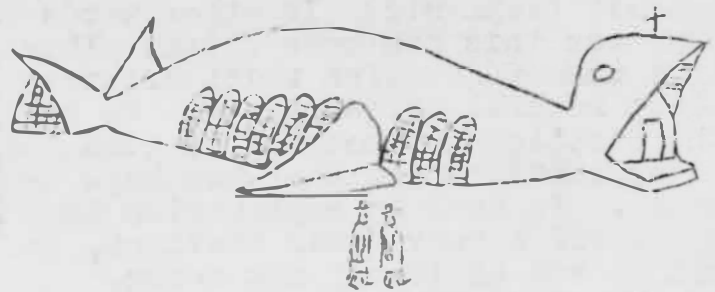


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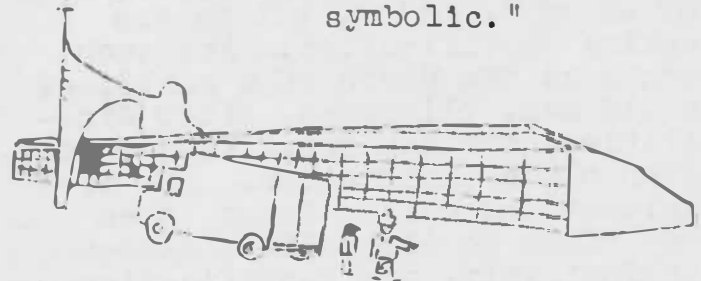


OUR NEW CHURCHES

"Two cheeseburgers, one black and white shake, one...COPS!!"



"Based on Simon called Peter who was this fisherman swallowed by this white whale called Moby Dick ... Anyway...It's all very very symbolic."



"No, no, no...The bottling plant is down the road!!"

AND, IN CLOSING...



PAX.

A PERSONAL OPINION
by Richard Graefe

Perhaps these comments should have been made in "The Editor's Corner", but since they represent my personal opinion and not necessarily staff opinion I have decided to step momentarily out of my role as editor to make them.

There have recently been some not-too-pleasant around the table discussions as a result of several articles and parts of articles appearing in Table Talk. This, I think, should lead us to question exactly what is fitting material for this publication. Before turning in an article for Table Talk I wish the author would seriously consider what type of response the article is going to stir. Is it going to breed healthy, stimulating table talk, or is it going to breed discontent and bad feelings? Will it lead to a valuable exchange of views, or will it lead to downright pointless argument? And thirdly, is it your personal opinion or your personal gripe?

Not that differences in opinion are necessarily bad. I think the recent exchange of political views in Table Talk was a good example of how we can "disagree without being disagreeable". We've also had a few examples of creative and worthwhile satire, proving that we can "poke fun" at ourselves and others if it is done in the proper spirit.

But there is also a point at which disagreements become disagreeable, and each writer ought to analyze his article as best he can before submitting it, asking himself whether it is really in the best interests of the entire seminary community. These comments are not meant to directly criticize any particular article in this or any previous issue. Instead I am merely trying to point out that when you criticize you are on dangerous ground and you ought to be aware of the possible pitfalls.

If you are discussing why a bop blurped, how valuable a speaker's address was, or any other

(cont. in next column)

RESULTS OF LECTURE COMMITTEE VOTE

On the second lecture committee ballot, 32 people voted and picked Bishop Kilmer ("Kim") Myers by a narrow margin over Dr. Charles Long. Dr. Carl Iraaten, too, polled a significant number of votes, lagging only slightly behind Long. Bishop Myers is presently being contacted, and should he be unable to come, the other two men will be contacted in order.

Richard Graefe,
Chairman
Student-Faculty
Lecture Committee

controversial issue you ought to first of all ask yourself whether this is a legitimate subject for an article, and secondly, if you do decide to proceed, you ought to choose your words and formulate your ideas carefully. And when you're done you ought to re-read your article and ask yourself, "Is what I have written here consistent with the demands of Christian love and charity?"

It has thus far been the policy of Table Talk to print whatever articles are submitted, unless these articles are obviously factually erroneous. And this is as it should be; it's not the staff's position to be a board of censors. But when you print everything that's submitted there is always the chance that your publication may end up to be a "gripe sheet". I hope this never happens to Table Talk. Perhaps we ought to reserve the final page of each issue for gripe-type articles of questionable value; then each reader could have the option of tearing off the final sheet beforehand, as we did with the lecture committee ballots, and casting it in the circular file as his vote for higher quality reading material.

OUT OF PLACE
by Charles R. Schwarz

In a seminary community we should recognize that many problems in the society to which we are preparing to confront are the result of the inability of people to speak freely with one another. Hiding behind defenses, people become part of the "Lonely Crowd". Do we suffer from this same problem right here in our community? When a Halloween Dance is well planned and we are to dress to the height of the ridiculous, the only way we can show we are still respectable students for the ministry is through our words to our fellow students and their wives. Of course if we dress in the cocktail garb of American high society it is not necessary to say a word. Just stand around - you already look like the Baal we worship instead of God. We certainly are the high society when we come to a "Baal Bop" for a record hop on Halloween in sleek black suits and ties, and cocktail dresses. Perhaps on second thought, we did dress at the height of the ridiculous.

Chapel Meditation
(cont. from p. 3)

that the works of God might be made manifest in him." (John 9:3) And so we rejoice in the knowledge that that which eludes our finite perception, is nonetheless central in the purposes of God.

Gerhard Klaassen

A sermon is not too long just because people look at their watches to see the time. But you can begin to wonder when they put them to their ears to see if they are still running.

JESUIT INVITATION EXTENDED

The following letter was received by the ecumenics committee from Woodstock Jesuit Seminary, Woodstock, Maryland:

"On Saturday, November 21, 1964, the annual Fall Theological Disputation will be held here at Woodstock, beginning promptly at 9:30 in the morning. Three members of the fourth year class will discuss the Priesthood of the Laity. Members of the third year class will discuss the Christology of Paul Tillich.

We would be happy to have five or six of the Gettysburg Seminary-seans join us on that day...After the academic exercises in the morning we would like to have our guests stay for lunch, an afternoon of recreation, and dinner at six. I would suggest that your students bring along some informal attire to enjoy our grounds and outdoor athletic facilities in the afternoon.

We sincerely hope that some of you will be able to join us on the twenty first."

The Committee hopes that there will be a response from the student body to participate in this disputation. Any one who would be interested should notify Gwenn Hilburn as soon as possible since immediate reply has been requested. Travel instructions to the seminary will be available.

IT HAPPENED IN EUCTB

M.Y. (giving report on Roman Catholic Christian Ed. material)

"And this is one of the books they use, Vital Steps to Chastity

(Much laughter)

RDH: "I gather that chastity isn't very popular"

G.G.: "Yes, I hear more people are giving it up every day."

MARK YOUR CALENDARS

Coming soon is an opportunity to attend a theological conference which will bring together noted Roman Catholic and Protestant clergy from around the world to discuss a profoundly pertinent topic for our time. Dr. Hefner has given the following schedule to Table Talk and has asked us to publicize it strongly. The Patrick F. Healy Conference on "Freedom and Man" to be held at the Georgetown University Campus on November 30, December 1, and December 2 will present the following speakers:

Monday, November 30
Session I - 8:30 p.m.

Karl Rahner, S.J., University of Munich - "The Theology of Freedom"

Tuesday, December 1
Session II - 9:00 a.m.

Piet Fransen, S.J., University of Louvain - "Freedom and Grace"

William F. Lynch, S.J., St. Peter's College - "Creativity and Freedom"

Session III - 2:00 p.m.

Christopher F. Mooney, S.J., Institut Catholique de Paris - "Teilhard de Chardin on Freedom and Risk in Evolution"

Ernan McMullin, University of Minnesota - "Creativity and Discovery in Science"

Session IV - 8:30 p.m.

John Courtney Murray, S.J., Woodstock College - "Religious Freedom"

Wednesday, December 2

Session V - 9:00 a.m.

Robert Johann, S.J., Loyola Seminary, Shrub Oak, New York - "Authority and Responsibility"

Daniel Callahan, "The Commonwealth" - "Freedom and the Layman"

Session VI - 2:00 p.m.

Jean-Yves Calvez, S.J., Institut Social, Paris - "Possibilities of Freedom in Tomorrow's Complex Societies"

Session VIII - 8:30 p.m.

Hans Kung, University of Tubingen - "The Freedom of Theology"

AN "UNDER THE WEATHER" REPORT

Two members of the seminary community entered the hospital this week. Inge Rossler has been in Annie Warner Hospital here in town since early in the week, recovering from an appendectomy, and will be returning to campus in a day or so; her hospital room number is 107. Paul Case is in Room 496, Polyclinic Hospital, Harrisburg, for minor surgery and will be there for the remainder of the week; visiting hours are 2 to 4, and 7 to 8.

There's nothing like a cheery get well card or a friendly visit to brighten a day in a hospital room. We ask the seminary community to remember Inge and Paul, and of course Dr. Heiges, with prayers and with words of greeting and encouragement. (It's still requested, however, that Dr. Heiges have no visitors.)

In addition to these speakers, there will be panel discussions following Sessions II, III, V, and VI. Discussants will include not only Roman Catholic clergy but also leading men in Protestantism from such schools as Harvard, Yale, University of Chicago, Princeton, and others. Dr. Hefner commented that several of our faculty members are planning to attend. If you are interested and would like to attend any or all of the sessions, make arrangements with the professors whose classes you would have to miss. No type of advanced registration is required for the conference. For further information see Dr. Hefner. Pick up your free tickets in Dean Stroup's office

Prejudice: being down on something you're not up on.

Chapel Meditation
(cont. from p. 1)

We don't know.

Robert Moses, the director of the Fair, condemned the "Parable" without a viewing because he said, "It is not proper to portray Jesus as a clown."

The Rev. Dan Potter, director of the Protestant Pavilion said, "It is not Christ who is being depicted at all. Everyone must make up his own mind about it after he has seen it."

"Time" labeled "Parable" an art film that got religion and accused writer-director Rolf Forsbert of being a Fundist.

I do not seek to defend or condemn the film. But in listening to comments that lay-viewers made in a radio interview I was taken by one point in particular. Many of them were disturbed by the seeming ignorance of the mime. He helped without giving cognizance to the wrath which he was incurring. The fact that there was no speech probably added to the impression of idiocy or simple-mindedness. It was offensive to them to think that someone, especially a Christ image, would go around in such an unquestioning, defenseless way. But I think it is precisely at this point that the film has something to say.

In a culture that values individualism, striving and acquisition, this naive, self-effacing action is certainly not popular. Men consider what other people will think, what's in it for me?, and what this will do his image.

Ministers are confronted with many needs and usually there is a choice involved which could cater to this worldly kind of judgement. One can, for example, call on a shut-in who is in need of counseling or work on a new stewardship program. Or the work of the church might be weighed against a day off. It may be a choice between taking an unpopular stand or letting it ride by. The situations come and the choices must be made so be sure to consider all the angles. The

(cont. next column)

lesson of the parable of the wicked steward should be taken seriously and we certainly don't want the sons of darkness to be wiser than the sons of light.

Of course the church is right in understanding worldly means and standards. The whole of God's creation is included in the arena of our Christian actions. Every talent and facility must be used in the effort to win the world for Christ. "Doth God exact day labor light denied?" asks the parable of the talents.

But can these worldly standards be used as a measure of our ministrings? Many unpleasant, unrewarding and even unpopular duties fall to the servant of God. Can they be brushed off because the world doesn't approve? Certainly there are times when a course of action which is unprofitable by worldly ideals is precisely what our Christian calling tells us to do. We may appear as simple-minded as a speechless clown who doesn't seem to know how much hate his good works are bringing down upon him. Yet no matter what society and friends may say about our acts, the only proper measure for them is God's will. Regardless of what the world says, we must do the will of God.

Christians are sent out as lambs before wolves. They are called to give up all; leaving the dead to bury the dead, and to do God's will. In the pursuit of God's will Sir Thomas Moores are chastized and Dietrich Bonhoeffers are shot. Political office and financial gains are demolished along the way. Dedicated men are sold short and hopefully successful ministries are ruined as men seek God above all else.

Is this the way it must be? Or can worldly standards influence us in choosing a course of action? Some may tell us so. We can be taught to look out for ourselves by playing to the popular critics. But remember that it was only in turning from the will of God that Adam knew what good and evil were. When God's

(cont. column 1 p. 9)

will is forgotten, then he could eat of the fruit and learn about good and evil.

We cannot tell how much we may have to suffer -- how ridiculously stupid we may appear by worldly standards. But man who is reconciled through Christ can know only the will of God and that is the deciding factor in his choice of action.

Our Badly Educated Clergy (cont. from p. 1)

consider that they are human and therefore live within the limitations of their own human capacities. It is a strange but consistent paradox that God has chosen weak and inefficient men and women through whom His strength is made perfect.

The other statement that I shall comment upon is this: "We must convince the clergy that their education is never completed" writes Rev. Ralph E. Peterson of the NCC, "They should be studying, reading, going to school throughout their entire career." This, then is the hope of the present inadequacies, that those critics, being church leaders, will help create the conditions and situations in which ministers will continue in their studies. Beyond formal seminary education they could pursue any pertinent discipline which will help them, directly or indirectly, in proclaiming the saving grace of God to people in whatever condition they find themselves. Any minister who feels that his education has ended with seminary simply does not know what it means to be called to the ministry. But he must finally be able to feel accepted, not because of his inadequacies, but in spite of them.

Gerhard Klaassen

Feature Editorial

(cont. from p. 2)

this moment who I am sure would be interested in developing such a program. I am sure that added help could be gotten from the college. And I am sure that such establishments as the Potter's House in Washington and the coffee shops of Penn State and Cornell would be willing to assist. Why not give it a try? If we are to communicate with those who are creative within our world and relate their creativity to the creativity of God, ought we not begin with enlightened dialogue?

Just one closing comment.

Would not that dusty-rose dome in the rotunda be enhanced by the creativity of someone's brush?

JH

Chapel Corner

(cont. from p. 3)

operated with a perverted view of the gospel. The "good news" of Jesus Christ cannot be limited or improved by the labors of man. Who is to say that a poorly conducted Chapel service is not blessed by God's presence? Who can say that a well-written meditation is more efficacious than a badly-written one? If God confronts man only when he does good in the Lord's Service, then we are not saved by God's grace and therefore not saved at all.

Growth in spiritual understanding is almost never painless. With the demise of this column comes greater responsibility on the part of each of us to forever measure his purposes and activities in the light of the gospel.

Robert Richards