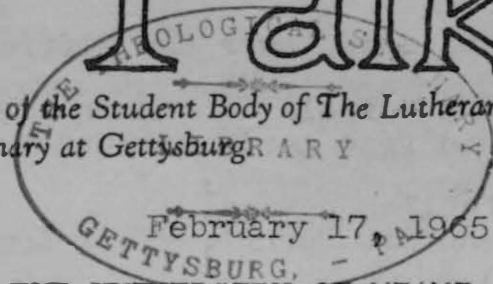


# Table Talk



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



FEB 17 1965

Vol. 1 No. 15

## RECOLLECTIONS OF AN INTERNSHIP AT THE UNIVERSITY OF MIAMI by Richard Graf

As temperatures hover between zero and freezing, and bitter winds bring the snow and the ice, it is not unpleasant to recollect the year past. My home was in South Miami, Florida; small but not without such niceties as a pool and a park. My office was in Westminster Chapel; a fully air conditioned modern complex of a chapel, library, fellowship hall, kitchen, and offices built around a palm laden tropical court yard. My position was pastor to Lutheran students at the most pretentious university in the South, the University of Miami, and the fastest growing junior college in the South (3,000 students in three years), Miami-Dade. Regular features of my work included football games in the Orange Bowl, excursions to Miami Beach, and other activities not at all difficult to entertain. Particular features were a flight to the National Ashram in Wisconsin, a week with students in the beautiful mountains of North Carolina, a retreat in central Florida to focus study on "The Playboy Philosophy", and a pleasant visit by our own Dean Stroup.

Aside from these pleasantries, however, and with the exception of the invaluable experience gained in the struggles of initiating a campus congregation, a Lutheran Student Association, and an attempted re-discovery of the true mission of the Church on campus, my internship was worthless...or so it seemed until my return to Gettysburg and realization that in a few short months I will accept the most awesome responsibility Our Lord can grant in His Creation.

During the year I met Theodore Gibson, a nationally recognized member of the N.A.A.C.P., I engaged in a revealing struggle over Biblical interpretation with a fundamentalist Missouri Synod pastor, I saw men and women fighting for some meaning to life, I asked myself questions as to the purpose of the Church and was provoked to find the answers. I left Florida feeling I had failed in that the response to a "program" had not been numerically satisfactory to me. Now I know that my success was in seeing the University clearly for the first time, establishing a foundation I found no where else which will enable me to much more intensely minister the gospel in whatever situation I might find myself. And the recognition of the value of my year continues even now. Thus to say I found worth in it, I recommend it, I would do it again had I the chance, would be understatement indeed.

I was fortunate in that my experiences were accompanied by living in an exciting area under comfortable conditions, yet the real worth of the year was in the experience. When temperatures drop and winds bring ice and snow, I think of the coconut palms, the wild orchids, the silver beaches; yes, and the sun bathed golf courses. But when I approach my chosen responsibility, I thank God I was given the opportunity for this extension of preparation, the real value of which I am only beginning to realize.

## TO THE EDITOR:

Oh wad some power the giftie gie  
 us  
 To see oursels as others see us!  
 It wad frae monie a blunder free  
 us,  
 An foolish notion.  
 (From Robert Burns', "To A Louse")

I admit to thinking more highly of the perceptability of our brotherhood than that which now is obvious to me. But when even efforts based on such a misconception, designed to contribute, construct, and refine, become in other eyes a barrier to community and communicativeness, then they must be recognized by those responsible as abortive; and should be terminated lest they become destructive to their own purposes. As author of "Under The Table", that insight Burns speaks of was recently bestowed upon me.

Due to unfortunate handling of last week's column by the editor of the paper, it was the just verdict of the Table Talk staff that it not be published in that issue. Because of sincerity in cause by its author and the present revelation of how at least one member of the community (and my conviction is that in a true community whether the dissent be lone or legion it is important) interpreted a criticism in that column, "Under The Table" is herewith demised.

Pax,  
 Richard Graf, Jr.

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Christ has been shown to be an effective decay-preventive and can be of significant value...when worshipped in a conscientiously applied program of regular chapel attendance and daily prayer.

Mrs. June Camac

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Criticism is something you can avoid by saying nothing, doing nothing, and being nothing.

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## CHANCEL PLAYERS

## PRESENT

## A READING FROM W. H. AUDEN

Monday Evening  
 February 22  
 8:30 PM

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Fr. Avery Dulles, S.J., from Woodstock, Md.

Tomorrow - Thursday February Eighteenth

1:30-2:30 - Informal meeting with all students and faculty in Social Room

3:00-5:00 - Lecture and discussion on "The New Quest of the Historical Jesus" in Room 206

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## STUDENT ASSOCIATION MEETING

Tuesday, February 23 at 10:30 a.m.  
 Room 206 - Old chapel

Purpose: To discuss and vote on constitutional amendments regarding election of officers. A quorum is necessary. Plan to be there.

## FEATURE EDITORIAL

THE SILENCE

The local outlet for massselected movies has again broken its cultural silence this year for a series of films by Ingmar Bergman to be shown on Tuesdays. The Silence appeared there Tuesday a week ago and caused much comment and perplexity on the "hill". I missed this showing of the film but saw the film about eight months ago. I have been asked to present some reactions to the film.

I was and am very excited about the film. It is the third in a trilogy, the others being Through a Glass Darkly, and Winter Light. Bergman has stated that in these films he is attempting to perfect his cinematic craft so that the impact of the film is made visually and somewhat on an emotive, rather than a wordy, propositional level. This presents us with a shift in mode of criticism from our reactions to the earlier efforts of Bergman, although, with this insight, one can see where he has been working in this direction all the time. I find this picture to be a mastery of the technique, on the par with La Dolce Vita and 8½. The emphasis on silence and the affective impact of the visual imagery in this picture was almost overwhelming. The opening sequence of total silence almost made one scream. The visual impact of the atmosphere of extreme heat and animal desire and sex was equally overpowering and oppressive. Bergman claims that each picture in this trilogy builds to a single moment of insight and resignation. In this work, he appears to be dealing with the lack of communication and depth of relation between individuals, a search for meaning and definition. Here the atmosphere of silence, the oppressive heat of a hell atmosphere, the warped humanity of dwarfs with their mock wedding march and sexual obscenities, the placing of the setting in a foreign land where linguistic communication is impossible, the lostness of senility, the menacing, mechanical, inhumanity of a tank, all of these combine to build up the inability of communication or depth relationships and the total lack of meaning. There is a definite emphasis upon sexuality as an escape here. However, there are no meaningful relationships only types of prostitution: the self-stimulation of the one sister; the actual prostitution and savage sex of the other with a partner with whom she could not speak and whom she openly used. Both approaches are meaningless and self defeating in illness or the oppressiveness of heat--to wash is not to be clean, to sleep is not to rest. In the second film of the trilogy, Bergman dealt with the inability of unenlivened or unempowering forms to save or give meaning. Here he used the symbolism of the ministry and the mass in the Swedish Church. In The Silence, an early sexual act takes place within a church because it was the coolest place to be found. (Bergman is ambiguous here because the Church is the only "cool" place in the film, as a release from the oppressive heat and in the earlier film the moment of recognition does come within the church building. Perhaps there is a hint of meaningfulness here but the church is not the empowering force realized.) All of this symbolism visually is played against a refreshing, innocent, uninhibited, delightful young boy who exists lonely and longingly within this hell. The point of recognition comes at the end of the film when the boy reads a note from his aunt. The note consists of some translations of foreign words. This is the point of communication, the coming of meaning, the point of spiritual contact in the depths of two beings. The silence has been broken not with talking, nor with constant action, nor with

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self orientated impulsiveness but with a reaching out to the other and a depth of relationship and a complete translation for meaning.

The entire trilogy has great significance in the atmosphere of Sweden where it was created where to some extent the Church and sex are at issue. Bergman appears to be returning to man and seeking there for the ground that will bring meaning and effective communication, effective life. This is the search for life, for meaningful existence, and Bergman must be heard, or more appropriately experienced with the totality of the self.

Since I have typewriter in hand, two more reflections on other types of silence. I would like to raise a mild protest against the reservation of the "priesthood". If guest speakers are to be brought to apparently eat with the students, it would seem as if they should share table fellowship with the students in a more apparent manner. I have no objection to the faculty wishing to entertain speakers and discuss with them over a meal; but why dangle them temptingly in front of the students but just out of their reach?

The last silence of which I wish to speak at this time is the fact that ANNO DOMINI, a Christian (Roman Catholic-Protestant) publication of the religious arts of a very high quality, has had to cease publication after only four or five monthly issues because of the lack of interest within the Christian churches. I mourn! I mourn!

Fred Reisz

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#### CHAPEL ATTENDANCE: NOT A NECESSITY

David W. Schneider

Dietrich Bonhoeffer once said that being a Christian could "consist today in only two things: in praying and in doing the right among men. All Christian thinking, speaking and organization must be reborn out of that praying and that action."<sup>1</sup>

It seems to me that perhaps now is the time on this seminary campus to start rethinking our organization and tradition. We must let ourselves think in some new directions. For example, perhaps chapel attendance is not necessary. During the past week I have felt constrained to present some personal reasons why I react very violently to the propaganda, both written and verbal, that has been spread about lately regarding the utter necessity of chapel attendance. Because I lack time and space, I am not able to spell out completely my basis for what I say. If I am misunderstood, I am sorry.

Basically I believe in the need for worship of God and in the necessity of community. However, I do not believe that the seminary community must worship in the chapel. I must agree with Peter Berger in *The Noise of Solemn Assemblies* that "intensive involvement in religious activities is no guarantee of encountering the Christian message and that sometimes it may be a device protecting against such an encounter."<sup>2</sup> Quite often worship herein the chapel is only an half-hour escape from reality.

As I said above, we all must worship. However, the means of worshipping God vary from person to person. Some feel that going through an ancient rite in chapel does not help them worship. Some oppose the idea that we can only worship God in "his house", i.e., the chapel. We have the strange feeling that God exists elsewhere too.

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I also said that we need community. I, for one, do not really feel this in chapel. Sometimes I do experience it in the dorm, in the library, or in the coffee shop. Sometimes it takes effort on my part to establish a relationship. I would, perhaps, like to feel community or relationship by worshipping with others in the chapel. Unfortunately I do not feel this in chapel; I feel that I am one individual among other individuals.

Furthermore, I would like to take issue with Mr. Vogelsong in his article in last week's Table Talk. He indicated that anyone who came to school here automatically chose to attend chapel. I disagree wholeheartedly. When one chooses to come here, one should be choosing to study theology. This does not mean that one also chooses to tie himself to ancient traditions. Perhaps this is our problem here; we just want to learn the "old party line". Maybe we need a few avowed agnostics, interested in seeing what theology is about, to attend school here. (I say this knowing that many theologians claim one must be a believer before he can study theology.)

Finally, let me say that I do not agree that the chapel must stand at the center of our community life. The search for meaning, Christian meaning, and how to proclaim it should be the center of our lives. If this includes corporate chapel worship, fine; if not, fine also.

Gerhard Ebeling in The Nature of Faith made the following statement: "A light that is a light for itself is a contradiction. Light is for others, its life is to light up the place where it is. In precisely the same way a church is a contradiction which is, if not solely, at least chiefly, there for itself, taken up with its self-limitation, self-preservation and self-assertion, concerned to be distinguished from the world by occupying a piece of the world which it cultivates as a spiritual realm distinct from the worldly realm." I would hope that what I said above might keep us from making chapel attendance the kind of church that Ebeling describes.<sup>3</sup>

I do not condemn going to chapel. If this is the way one best worships God, I commend it. Furthermore, I hope that no one feels that what I have said rationalizes laziness. To worship and to establish relationships takes effort, whether in or out of chapel. I do hope, though, that we will stop trying to measure the usefulness and meaningfulness of the seminary by the number of people in chapel attendance.

<sup>1</sup>Gerhard Ebeling, Word and Faith (Philadelphia, 1963), p. 286.

<sup>2</sup>(Garden City, 1961), p. 120.

<sup>3</sup>(Philadelphia, 1961), p. 156.

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#### THE CATECHETICS CORNER

One Junior field worker gave his confirmation class a test on the Ten Commandments this past weekend. Here are the new 10 Commandments gathered as a composite from that class's papers:

- |                                       |                                 |
|---------------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| 1. You shall not have no other gods   | 6. Thou shalt take the Lord thy |
| 2. You shall not attempt adultery     | God in vain                     |
| 3. You should believe in Jesus Christ | 7. You should worship God       |
| 4. You shall not take another man's   | 8. You shall not take another   |
| sheep or oxen                         | man's wife                      |
| 5. You shall not lie                  | 9. You should believe in the    |
|                                       | Holy Christian Church and       |
|                                       | Holy Ghost                      |
| 10. You shall not bear witness        | againess your neighbor          |