

Table Talk



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THE COST OF KOINONIA

SEMINARY HYMN

Like the weather--a la Mark Twain--koinonia is something everybody talks of, but no one seems able to do much about it. The hard facts of life are: you can neither gamble your way into it nor push yourself and others to it by piety in one form or another. Reliance on manipulative leverages in human relations can only lead to disaster. Why should these things be?

The obvious, as happens only too often in human life, tends to remain obscure. Modern society is in travail, groaning and groping toward a communal viability. A theological seminary community is not excepted from what is going on, and particularly so in view of its calling to be a community of grace and creative vitality. The stone of stumbling--which could be the stone of blessing--lies in the difficulty recognizing properly the professional character of our relationships with one another. We are tied together by long-range bonds of mind, of spirit, and of mission (which cannot be split by cliches "work and worship", "altar and desk"). The question which one hears raised deserves consideration: Is there a connection between ways of worship and the quality of interpersonal relationships? And is it not true that partisan conflict over worship may create the deepest imaginable cleavages, and prove divisive, demonically divisive? And yet it is precisely at worship that the primal image of the people of God, the community of faith and hope and love, is most clearly reflected.

The issue of building up community, koinonia, is that of the ethic of responsibility. Complain as one will about the lack of dialogue, dialogue of itself is quite insufficient. What needs cul-
(Cont'd next col.)

Did you know that Gettysburg Seminary has an unofficial Alma Mater? Professor Hale passed along to the editor the following "Seminary Hymn."

Serene upon her hill-top,
She reigns these many years,
A mother of God's prophets,
Preceptor of His seers.
Afar her couriers journey,
Her watchword on each tongue;
"Ecclesia Plantanda,"
From sea to sea is sung.

About her walls the thunders
Of warfare filled the world,
Among her circling treetops,
The smoke of battle curled,
But at her pitying threshold
She bade all strife to cease,
Within her walls ruled mercy,
Within her gates dwelt peace.

In love her children gather,
Upon her wooded hills,
And with the oil of wisdom,
Their lamps again they fill,
O, may they ever find her,
When seeking her they come,
A fount of life and blessing,
Their mother and their home.

Elsie Singmaster Lewars
1926

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tivation is "communal-log" in the context of the covenantal bond of our baptism and shared life in the Body of Christ. The pragmatic question is how to solve our problems with least damage to all and with maximum helpfulness in edifying the life of one another. The clue to it, in the words of the Apostle is: "Let
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DO ALL SHOES HAVE SOLES*

high heels and low flats
walking down a street
clip clop
flopping discreetly
trying to pass each other
ceremonious claps and clicks
red and purple flicks of light
mixed with somber black and white

one via one side
the other over there
where no one's supposed to be stepping

two styles
miles apart
some come between
all lean
to one or the other
side of the street

important shoes for
wearing and walking
appearance and going
where we want to
knowing the right
and the wrong
of clicking and clacking

one year
one styles in
low flats
or high heels
the shoemaker feels
which way--
who knows?

which pair
does that
company coordinator
want us to wear?

up there at the top
beyond the shoe shop
does he care
whether we wear
high heels
low flats
or hush puppies?

as for me
i'll go barefoot

--Ron Reed

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everyone speak the truth with his neighbor,
for we are members one of another." As
Dostoevsky wrote in The Brother Karamazoo,
"Everyone is really responsible to all
men and for all men and for everything."
God intends to create community. He
offers it as a gift.

J. W. Heikkinen

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* A note on liturgical renewal