

# Recorder

Vol. 38 No. 2 St. Joseph's Seminary, Grand Rapids, Michigan



Bishop Rancans (center) in his place in the Council hall.

## Bishop Rancans Chats About Vatican II

The two of us had been waiting for several minutes in the bishop's study before he came in to see us. Standing tall and looking as healthy as ever, Bishop Rancans greeted us heartily. He conversed with us in English, which though slow and somewhat broken we were quite able to follow. We had been late in arriving, but the bishop, for the few minutes he could spare, answered some of our questions on the Council.

By his beaming smile and the cheerful tone of his remarks, Bishop Rancans showed how wonderful he felt to take an active part in the Vatican Council. He said that he had been accustomed to be among and work with clerics and bishops. The bishop made mention of some of his many fellow bishops whom he had met and worked with during the two sessions of the Council.

### BALTIC STATES DEDICATED

Bishop Rancans told us with noticeable joy in his expression that, while he was in Rome, Pope Paul formally dedicated the Baltic States, Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania, under the patronage of the Blessed Virgin.

Bishop Rancans is himself from Latvia. The seventy-seven year old prelate had been a suffragan bishop in the archdiocese of Riga when he was exiled by the Communists. He came to this country about ten years ago. The bishop mentioned by name two Latvian bishops whom he had known before in Latvia and with whom he was now working in the Council.

### SECOND SESSION

Looking back over the Council's recently completed second session, Bishop Rancans emphasized the large amount of work that was accomplished. He attributed this to the many preparations which had been made in the interval since last year's session. The compiling of the seventeen schemata and the smooth organization of the bishops' daily assemblies were cited as causes for this session's particular efficiency.

The bishop looked quite pleased as he singled out for comment the passage and promulgation of the two schemata on the liturgy and on communications media. Touching upon the solemn closing of the se-

(continued page 3, column 2)

## Sem Family Honors Fr. McKenna on Jubilee

FORMER PROFESSOR CELEBRATES ANNIVERSARY DEC. 7

The third year Greek class didn't know their principal parts! With an expression of despair on his face, their professor moved toward the classroom windows. "My baby brother, Herminigild, knows more than you fellows," he mourned; "I'm going to jump right out this window." And he began to climb up onto the window sill.

### Clubs Discuss Liturgy, Sacraments Seminary System

Judging from the great cloud of dust over 600 Burton, one could easily conclude that seminarians are hardly content to let their imaginations lie dormant. And rightly so, for as the council indicates, this is an exciting era, an age of liturgical renewal, of reappraising and re-evaluating our modus operandi in winning the world for Christ. And nowhere in the seminary is this spirit more clearly evidenced than in the activity of the several discussion clubs.

The fourth class group, as a typical example, has as its theme the Mass, from a broad, liturgical aspect. Thus they treat such topics as the function of sacrifice in the life of man, how the Mass is the perfect sacrifice, and the layman's role in the Mass. Father Clifford Howell's book *Of Sacraments and Sacrifice* serves as a basic text, and the group considers a chapter weekly. The meeting itself, as established by the students, is simply an open discussion on the questions at the end of each chapter. The student moderator for the week directs the discussion. However, on more than one occasion it took Fr. Rose, their faculty moderator, to snatch them from the brink of heresy.

Both fifth and sixth classes have established similar clubs under the moderation of Fr. Ancona. These groups are currently considering prayer and the sacraments, and their matter is extracted from the *Doctrinal Pamphlet Series* on sacraments, thus somewhat paralleling the fourth high religion class. Newly formed, under the Rector's moderation, is a sixth year group whose purpose is a better understanding of the different aspects of seminary training and their function in the seminarian's formation, a decidedly excellent topic.

These groups, and all their activities, are the product of a real effort made here at St. Joe's--an effort to respond enthusiastically to the world's challenges to its future priests.

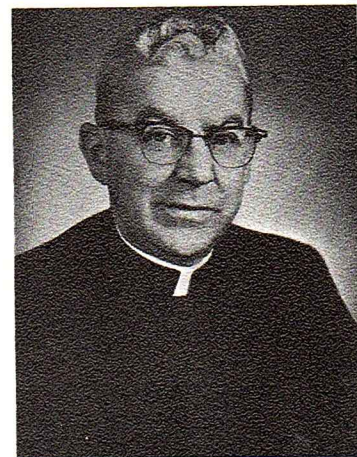
This incident really happened; the professor was Fr. Vincent McKenna. I don't believe he went through with the jump, though; or if he did, he came out of it well enough to be able to tell the story some twenty years later.

### TAUGHT AS SUBDEACON

Fr. McKenna was ordained on December 8, 1938 -- 25 years ago. It is interesting to note that he came to the seminary to teach in September of '38, when he was still a subdeacon. Without taking a fourth year of theology, he was ordained deacon in October, and then just two months later ordained to the Priesthood.

### HUMOROUS CLASSES

Father says that he didn't like the idea of teaching at first but emphasizes that he grew to love it. The classes he taught were, in his own words, "the most riotous classes around." His teaching



Fr. McKenna

method was simple: he had an agreement with his students on two things -- that, first, they were going to learn, and that they were going to have fun doing so. Indeed, they did both.

### BANQUET HELD

In recognition of his 25 years as a priest, our seminary family honored Fr. McKenna with a banquet on December 7, the eve of his ordination anniversary. A spiritual bouquet, a hearty "Vivat!" and the best wishes of all were given to him.

Fr. McKenna--Ad multos annos!



# EDITORIAL Views



## Recipe For Vacation

Just about this time every year there is a certain feeling experienced by "firsties" and "sixthies" alike, anticipation of Christmas vacation.

At this time too, there is a similar feeling growing among certain families, the families of seminarians.

If you wait until December 22, and then combine these two ingredients, you have a recipe for a "Betty Crocker" vacation--guaranteed perfect every time.

Nothing could spoil these wonderful two weeks at home--except one thing, the burdensome presence of a king seminarian. This character is also known as the sovereign seminarian or the monarch from the sem, but regardless of title, his actions are always the same.

This pampered princeling thinks that now that he has time at home, his family better treat him right. After all, he's been in the seminary for half a year. They owe him homage for that. It hasn't been easy, so treat me accordingly.

This kind of behavior is the only thing that can play havoc with a "Betty Crocker" vacation. It makes it flat. We must all be careful to avoid the regal trappings by a readiness and a real willingness to help with regular family chores: dish washing, snow shoveling or feeding the pet, be it horse or parakeet.

This isn't difficult to do if we keep in mind the reason we are home, to celebrate the humble birth of our Infant King, whom we are trying to imitate in our life, as closely as possible.

dear  
Recorder

### Letters,

### We Get Letters

Monday two letters came in. On Tuesday we received four more. On Friday the Recorder office was swamped with letters from our alumni commenting on our first issue of the year.

We appreciate the overwhelming response to our initial efforts. The compliments and constructive criticisms were very helpful. To know that our readers are really interested is a great incentive for our continued labors.

### Special Thanks

The students wish to express their gratitude to the faculty for the pre-Christmas gifts of the F.M. radios which were placed in the junior den and senior lounge.

### Christmas Wish

The Recorder staff joins in wishing all of our readers a blessed Christmas and a holy and happy New Year.

IN MANU DEI SUNT



Remember also, Lord, your servants, who have gone before us marked with the sign of faith and who sleep the sleep of peace.

The President of the United States, John F. Kennedy, who died on November 22.

Fr. Porter's brother, who died on November 2.

The grandfather of Carl Shangraw, who passed away on December 1.

William Ambry's grandfather, who died on November 22.

To them, Lord, and to all who rest in Christ we pray that you grant a place of refreshment, light, and peace. Through Christ our Lord. Amen.

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Student organ of St. Joseph's Seminary, Grand Rapids 7, Michigan, published five times annually. Affiliate Member of the Catholic School Press Association.

November - 1963 - December

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## What Have We To Hide?

Whenever we think of the first years of the young Catholic Church, the dynamic picture of a man with a mission immediately comes into view. The man is St. Paul, and the mission--to preach the good news of the gospel. St. Paul went at his task with everything he had. He neglected nothing which someday might save a soul.

We today have the same mission that St. Paul did--to preach the gospel. Yet I am afraid that if St. Paul were to come back to earth today, one of his first comments would be, "What are you modern Catholics afraid of? What do you have to hide?"

Now at first we would naturally be taken aback and perhaps not a little insulted. But then, if we were to investigate, we could very easily discover what the saint was trying to say.

Today everything is very easily identified. Towns have signs, roads have signs, businesses have signs, Protestant churches have signs, everything has signs, except... Have you ever noticed that the most conspicuous thing about many of our Catholic Churches is the lack of identification? What's wrong with a sign out in front telling what church it is and when the Masses are? Who knows what hidden effects it might have on some unknown soul? As for our Catholic institutions, how many there are which are a vibrant part of their communities; and yet the average citizen could pass them by ten times each day and never know what they are. What do we have to hide?

To many non-catholics, the Church is one big mystery. From the very core of our worship out, or so it seems to them, the Church tries to hide itself in a veil of secrecy. It is tragic that they should get this opinion.

We have the good news of salvation. Why hide it? Even the Mass, the center, the white heat of our whole life, to the average non-catholic is a mystery. The Second Vatican Council is trying to help the situation by making the Mass more intelligible in itself, but there are many who object. Why? What do we have to hide?

St. Paul never missed a chance to talk about the faith, even to argue with non-believers. Yet today this is almost frowned upon. It is sometimes considered in poor taste to involve oneself in discussions about the faith with "outsiders." Doesn't this smack a little of timidity? What do we have to hide?

And what impression does the average non-catholic get when he sees some of the religious habits worn today? Does the habit serve to tell the world of the good news of Christ, or does it just give the impression that the person wearing it is a little "different"? What do we have to hide?

It would almost seem that we have put a shell around ourselves. Are we content to be seen, yet not understood? Can we neglect any way of bringing salvation to others? Does it seem too far-fetched to suppose that perhaps by making ourselves known, we might also make Christ known to others?

"And the angel said to them: Fear not; for, behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all the people: for this day is born to you a Saviour, who is Christ the Lord..."

What do we have to fear?





Two of the Little Sisters and their helpers protect a batch of cookies from a hungry seminarian.

## Our Little Sisters of the Poor: God's Homemakers

The seminary family has many friends that we seldom see, many staunch supporters that we know all too little about. Among our oldest friends and our best, the Little Sisters of the Poor hold perhaps the highest place on the list of people we think a lot of and appreciate very much indeed.

Our Little Sisters came to Grand Rapids 77 years ago, and our rewarding friendship with them has flourished almost as long. It was back in 1924 that Msgr. Bryant, the priest with the violin, then a member of the seminary faculty, struck upon the never regretted idea of adopting the sisters into our then not so very old seminary family. The key to our long-standing friendship, a singing violin, was bolstered with more music--provided by the now defunct seminary orchestra--and yearly skits, dramatized for the sisters and the old people by the Burton Street players of yesteryear, Msgr. Shaw often starring in the lead.

### FURNISH CAR

The Little Sisters cemented the ties of good-feeling by supplying the fathers, who now served them as chaplains, with a car to make the early morning trip down to the home for daily Mass. This raises a question that will no doubt go unanswered: How did our poor cousins, the Little Sisters, ever land a "horseless carriage" before the seminary?

### TEACH US MUCH

With the years of close association, we have come to learn quite a bit about our Little Sisters. We have learned of their humility: the sisters beg for their daily bread

and for the daily bread of the hundred-plus old people with whom they make their home. We have learned of their concern for our vocations--countless times they have assured us of their prayers, and in such prayers our confidence is very great. We have learned of their charity. Their life of self-sacrifice is a lesson that we try very hard to master. With such teachers the chances for our success are very strong.

Yet the greatest title we can give the sisters is, like their life, a quiet one: God's Homemakers. One often reads today about the frightening disappearance of Christian home life. We believe that the home is built around God, not around the current symbols of material prosperity; that the home is built on God, not on any temporal deck of cards. We believe that the home is built with love. When we look for an example of what we believe, for what the Church teaches, we look first to God's Homemakers, the Little Sisters of the Poor.

James Hanink  
4th High

## Bishop Rancans

(continued from page 1)

cond session on December 4, Bishop Rancans referred briefly and with obvious approval to Pope Paul's decision to visit the Holy Land next month.

As important future works of the Council, the bishop mentioned the schema on Mary and the discussion on the collegiality of the bishops. He also talked for a moment on the topic of ecumenism. He stated that it is not right for there to be a separation of Chris-

tians into so many sects. He expressed his sincere wish that they all may become one, united, as Christ intended.

Charles Fischer

PHOTO at right shows Bishop Rancans (center) entering St. Peter's in procession.

## Chorus To Sing

Fr. Thome has been preparing a chorus to sing between acts of the Christmas play. The chorus will sing "God Rest You Merry Gentlemen," "The Twelve Days of Christmas," "Go, Tell It on the Mountain," and "The Carol of the Drum."



# Christ Is Born in the Church Today

It's a great time for us Catholic Christians this Advent and this Christmas season. Normally we have our hearts full as we gaze wonderingly at the historical birth of our Savior. Normally we have our hands full trying to salvage something of that immense mystery--something meaningful enough to bribe its way into our trifling minds and petty hearts. Add to this challenge the bewilderingly happy reality of Christ's presence in each of us now through the life of grace and the promise of his triumphal final coming and, well, what else can we be but humbly and gratefully confused?

But these mysteries of God's generosity are our normal diet. We've

## Mitch Keeps His Record Clean

As Mitch doffed his duties of the office and donned his hunting duds for another exciting season of deer hunting, it marked his 20th anniversary as an American deer hunter. It certainly is an event that he will never forget and one of which he can be rightfully proud. We understand that he has even been carrying on correspondence with the president of the American Deer-Hunter's Association, Everherda Bucksnot, who congratulated Mitch on his anniversary and expressed his most sincere regret at this being his 20th consecutive and unsuccessful season. We join the association in expressing our congratulations.

Deer hunting, however, has only been one of the highlights in Mitch's annual sports curriculum. Now that he has successfully completed another unsuccessful season of deer hunting, no doubt Mitch again is ready and anxious to delve into another season of exciting and somewhat discouraging ice-fishing.

Each year as these seasons slip by and Mitch continues trying so vigorously to improve on his former attempts, we look upon him more and more as a genuine example of patience and perseverance.

Charles Griffith  
II College

learned how to nibble at the fruits of this lush paradise he has set us in. We're not surprised anymore to hear his voice talking to us in the cool of an evening. No, our God has always walked with us.

But now we have a Council, something new to get used to. Somehow, through the guiding Spirit and the deliberating Fathers, we are going to see Christ ever more clearly in our midst. Somehow we're going to hear his voice in tones more challenging. We're going to feel his hand rubbing new life into our ebbing, pampered hearts.

Why this new intrusion of the divine into our affairs? What is God trying to do to us? Well, here we are finally at dead center. What has God been trying to do all along? To reveal, to communicate, to make himself known, to become our friend and our very life these have been the loving obsession beguiling our Creator with us his creatures. And in Christ yesterday and today, in Christ the Beginning and the End, in Christ at the stable and in Christ at Peter's throne, God has engulfed us in an endless surge of love.

"Now at last he has spoken to us with a Son to speak for him," and what can any of us say, we who know and feel that we are greatly loved and longed for? "Light the lamps. The Lord is near!"

Father Ancona



# Modern Meanings Latent In Traditional Carols

Music is and has been throughout the ages the common way for the ordinary people to express simple ideas. The heroic deeds of the ancients were sung to the people to the music of the lyre. David played the psalms on the harp. In the same way men tell and retell that story of supreme love and ultimate simplicity every time a Christmas hymn is sung. This is a story of how God Himself was born on earth in an animal barn, because He loved men and wanted to redeem them from their sins. At this time of the year men remind themselves in song of their brotherhood with each other through the Redeemer Christ. Everyone turns to Christmas carols. Even those who would consider Christmas music "sloppy sentimentalism," out-dated tradition find themselves singing Christmas carols.

This final charge is interesting. Are Christmas carols merely a remnant of seventeenth century ideas? Are they just another part of our external customs that have no meaning? Or do the ordinary Christmas hymns really fit into the most modern idea of the Church?

## CAROLS ECUMENICAL

Not only are Christmas hymns in line with the twentieth century concept of the Church, but they actually lead the way. These hymns, centuries old, are just as ecumenical as Pope John's Council.

The big hope of the ecumenists for the present is first of all to create good will among Christians, and secondly, to examine our common heritage. How often the words "peace," "good will," "love" are heard. The very melodies of the hymns give us a feeling of peace. And where do we find more in common with our separated brethren than in the birth of our common Saviour? This is shown by the fact that many of the traditional Christmas hymns find their origin in Protestantism, yet they often become our own favorites. This common belief in the Nativity of Christ and the actual sharing of the same hymns could well be another link toward our reunion. And what would be more fitting than that Christendom should be reunited by the doctrine of the nativity, which first brought Christ into the world as our brother?

Similarly we can find in carols all the other modern movements, including the liturgy and salvation history.

## MODERN AS CHURCH

No, Christmas carols are not out of date; they are not meaningless words put to "nice" music. They can be as modern and vital to the ideas of the Church as we allow them to be. They are full of meaning. Their appreciation depends upon us.

## I'm Tired and I Wanna Go Home

Whew! Only eight more days until vacation. I thought it would never come. And am I tired! Eight hours of sleep never seem to help much if you spend the first two hours worrying about Greek or a similar nightmare. And all that Latin keeps me from indulging in my afternoon "siesta."

I feel even more exhausted when I realize that I have been working now for fourteen straight weeks, with only a lightning-fast five-day break at Thanksgiving. After boring through a mountain of English assignments, pounding out 24 Latin exercises, and attending nearly 200 classes, no wonder I feel weary.

The other fellows are also feeling scholastic fatigue. Most fourth classmen instinctively yawn when the word Cicero is mentioned. The battle-scarred second class gladly looks ahead to a two-week truce from the geometry war. A few freshmen can barely keep their eyes open long enough to contemplate the celestial joys of no six o'clock bell.

Last, and numerically least, come those rare phenomena called fifth classmen. So often are these weary lads sneaking cat naps that more than six of them are never seen together at one time.

The students are not alone in their dreams of vacation. Have you noticed the grey hairs that Fr. Rose has acquired because of the Christmas play? And Fr. Zaskowski, I hear, is getting quite tired of being a Berlin wall between the drama boys and those paint cans. Alas, there's poor Mitch, who has had to work around the clock to correspond with all those who ardently follow his hunting adventures.

I feel that this sheltered, sedate seminary life is more taxing than we realize. Tired? Yes, that's my middle name, and I can't wait for home, sweet home.



The seminary chorus disembarks from the bus after a practice session.

## What? Homegrown Talent Teams with Marywood at West Catholic

For as long a time past as anyone can remember, all that the St. Joseph boys had known of the Marywood girls was that they came to our Christmas play every year. Times have changed.

On December 12, the Catholic high schools of the area presented a Christmas program consisting of choral and band music. This program

## Santa Brings Bag of Laughs

Plans for this year's Christmas party have been completed by the Publicity Committee under the capable chairmanship of Mike Hazard. Although the program is a secret, certain items on the agenda have leaked out.

Charlie Griffith will be in command of the show as M.C. Keeping this in mind, we can expect almost anything to happen. Charlie had this to say: "The Christmas party should prove to be interesting, somewhat original, and full of surprises for everyone. (In other words, I don't know what to expect!)"

The blessing of the Advent wreath by Monsignor Moran will commence the party, which will be held in the refectory again this year.

This year something new is to be attempted: choral reading of the Old Testament prophecies about the birth of our Saviour. There will be four such readings during the party. The second class will present one of their famous plays appropriate to this festive season. Interspersed throughout the program will be traditional Christmas carols sung by different groups or by the whole community.

Of course, Santa will be on hand loaded with useful gifts for the priests and sisters and Christmas cheer for everyone.

Michael Hogan  
II College

was of special interest to us, because in the chorus along with students from East Catholic, West Catholic, and Marywood were about thirty of "our boys." The whole chorus, under the direction of Mr. Kratzenstein, a native German who now teaches church music at Aquinas College, was made up of about 210 voices, 140 girls and 70 boys.

## 14 SELECTIONS

The boys' and girls' choruses combined beautifully in the presentation of fourteen choice selections. Among their songs were "The March of the Three Kings," "Christian Men Rejoice," and "Now Let Every Tongue Adore Thee."

## NON-CHOIR MEMBERS

This certainly showed that vocal talent in the seminary is not restricted to the choir, for the seminarians who took part were third and fourth classmen, none of them choir members. Yet after many hours of practice, with Fr. Thome tirelessly pounding out tenor and bass parts for them again and again, the boys came through in fine style.

## SENIORS ATTEND

To top it all off, everyone in the upper four classes was allowed to go to West Catholic to attend the program. Singing with Marywood girls, going out to attend a Christmas program: I ask you, What is this seminary coming to?

Whatever it is, I think it is for the better.



## 'Shepherds' Fill Halls with Howls of Folly

CRITIC VIEWS PLAY

Although he will hear neither piano nor British humor, the viewer of this seminary Christmas production is liable to enjoy himself. *Shepherds on the Shelf* is a farce in three acts--it says so on the script. Its history extends back to the season of 1960-61, when it was produced at the Blackfriars' theatre in New York.

I said the spectator is liable to enjoy himself. He will, under two conditions. First, he must have good ears, a fast mind, and an appetite for clerical "corn." Good ears and a fast mind: to catch everything referred to in the conversation on stage, because most of the humor of the play is verbal. An appetite for clerical "corn": to be able to assimilate and digest this sort of vegetable in surplus quantities, because the amount of it fed the audience is like that of potatoes fed seminarians (I got noddin' against potatoes, understand)--it's vast!

### THE PLOT

The plot revolves around five middle-aged priests who are so middle-aged that the bishop establishes for them a sort of "Sunny Pastures for Pastors Home" called Tenebrae House. Naturally anything that even resembles an institution they do not fully appreciate and the regimentation and carrot juice fed them by the fanatic in charge only adds to their emotional warmth for the place. (This Christian resignation never ceases to spill from the stage.) *Shepherds on the Shelf* relates of their new found hobbies and the consequences of these harmless endeavors.

I mentioned there were two conditions for enjoyment of the farce. The second one is that the cast must deliver it properly. The humor is there. They must bring it out. I viewed two acts of the production about a week before it was to open. Mildly put, it lacked. The character portrayal was too artificial, and the lines seemed directed towards nobody. But with a week to go, these are hardly omens of death. It is quite enough time to eliminate these difficulties, though they are not minor. How well Fr. Rose has directed his cast, we have yet to see. But I predict this play will be the target not of tomatoes, but of much laughter.

Xanthias



## Our Christmas Customs Yield Richness of Christian Belief



**Christmastime** can be a season of joy or a season of merriment; or it can be both at once. You don't really have to have both these qualities to have one, but they often come together; and it's always nicer when they do. Much of the merriment that we get out of Christmas comes from our Christmas customs--things that we take so much for granted. And where does our joy come from at Christmas time? Surely from reflection on our beliefs--the real meaning of Christ's birthday. Why not have the two in one? Why can't we derive both merriment and joy from the same source? Why, we can! And our warm, homely Christmas customs can be that source.

### ADVENT WREATH

In many Catholic homes, as here in the seminary, the first lighting of the Advent wreath is the signal for the beginning of our preparations, both interior and exterior, for Christmas Day. The Advent wreath is something that, though relatively new in this country, goes back as far as the 16th century in its native land, Germany. For centuries men have

been reminded by the Advent wreath of Old Testament times, when men were enveloped in darkness. As each week a candle is lit, we see the light of revelation shining more and more brightly, until finally in the fourth week, we symbolically announce, by the burning of all four candles, the coming of "the light of revelation to the gentiles."

### CHRISTMAS TREE

The light of the Advent wreath

touches off, as it were, the lights of the Christmas tree. This particular tradition started long, long ago when people combined two old customs, the tree of paradise, and the Christmas pyramid, and came up with the Christmas tree (for who ever heard of a pyramid of paradise?). The tree of paradise was an evergreen (to symbolize eternal life) decked with apples (for happiness).

### SYMBOL OF CHRIST

The pyramid was a wooden frame bearing Christmas candles as a symbol of Christ, the light of the world, and decorated with glass balls and tinsel, which are symbolic of Christ's glory, both in himself, and shining through us in his many gifts to us, his graces, and our virtues.

### GIFTS



Speaking of gifts, what is more traditional at Christmastime than the exchanging of gifts? This too has been going on for ages, and even when there has not been money to buy gifts with, there have always been gifts. Either they are made, or they are done.

### SWISS CUSTOM

In fact, there's an old Swiss custom whereby each member of a family draws from a box the name of another member of that family and tries to do as many little favors for that person during Advent as he can, without letting the beneficiary know about it.

This shows forth the symbolism of gift-giving at Christmastime beautifully; for though there's no concrete reward, all these little favors are done for Christ, through the other person. And they're done in imitation of God's love which sent us, on the first Christmas, his most precious gift, his beloved Son.

### MANY CUSTOMS

Christmas has so many beautiful customs--like the Christmas crib (St. Francis of Assisi's invention), and the Christmas candle (product of Ireland's love for the Holy Family)--so many, and all so full of rich Christian meaning. There's no reason why Christmas shouldn't be a season just radiating merriment and Christian joy. After all, merry and joyous is the way Christmas ought to be.

## Advent: Silent Preparation for 'Silent Night'

It was just an ordinary day like any other. A young girl was silently praying. Suddenly an angel appeared. His message was one that would have brought singing and dancing in the streets. He wanted Mary to be the mother of the Promised One. A great honor and a grave responsibility he presented to her. Mary unhesitatingly gave the perfect answer. She didn't pace the floor nervously before giving a dramatic response. She didn't kiss the floor and cry tears of joy to thank God. And she didn't beg off, afraid of the responsibilities she would have to take on. But she did thank God in the best way, by ready obedience to his will. This was a time for the silence of humility.

Not long afterwards, Mary found out that her cousin, Elizabeth, was about to have a child. Immediately Mary decided to go to offer her help. And so, not thinking of herself, she set out to wait upon her cousin. She didn't think about her own problems and inconveniences. Nor did she spread it around town how noble and good she was. No, Mary saw that she could aid someone, so she simply left town without a word. This was a time for the silence of charity.

The night was still and dark. Almost all the lights of the town had long ago been dimmed. Almost all the people in town had long ago retired. And in a cold stable, the same young girl and her husband, a carpenter, smiled at each other as they gazed silently at their young child, the Son of God. Small wonder they were silent, for what words could express their feelings at that moment? What words could thank God for entrusting his only Son to them? What words could love God for sending the long-awaited Saviour? No, this was not a time for showy speeches. This was a time for private thought and personal gratitude. This was a time for the silence of love.

These are just three examples that typify Advent. It is significant that all of them are silently joyful mysteries; and Advent, too, is a time of silent joy. Advent is a time for quiet preparation. Christ is again coming, but coming to each of us individually. That is why there is the need for personal preparation. And the preparation Christ wants is one of quality, not quantity. It's not an extra rosary, hurriedly said; but it is putting meaning into the one we say. And it's not making big sacrifices grudgingly; but it is sacrificing something willingly. Yes, it is our own interior preparation in our own silent way. For Advent is a time for silent preparation, the preparation of humility, of charity, and of love.

Thomas Drinan  
3rd High



## On the Death of the President

It was day and yet night;  
It was sunlight and yet gloom;  
It was smiles and sadness:  
It was all of these things.

It was shock and grief;  
It was tears and wet eyes;  
It was sadness and heartbreak:  
It was all of these things.

It was hatred and prejudice;  
It was anger and stupidity;  
It was madness and folly:  
It was all of these things.

It was sorrow for one man's death;  
It was pride in one man's conviction;  
It was grief for one man's life:  
It was admiration of one man's example.

It was all of these things.

Peter Mestre  
II College

## Two Weeks of Rest Do Wreck the Weak

It was 4:30 P.M., December 22, 1963. Joe was sitting in his room, evaluating the good points of Christmas vacation.

"More sleep, no books, no profs, more sleep, no work, more sleep, zzzzzzz." Joe had looked forward to these next two weeks of complete relaxation ever since the end of Thanksgiving vacation. Since that fateful Sunday night the first thought that disturbed his tired mind as he rolled out of his bed at 6 o'clock was that those two weeks of heavenly rest were one day less away.

Now it was 4:45 and the people were coming out of the auditorium. The glorious moment had come. Joe found his dad, shook hands till he was red in the face, and started home, but Joe didn't mind--he slept all the way.

They got home just in time for the Ed Sullivan Christmas show. The whole family watched it--Joe, his dad, mother, little Tommy and Polly. Polly and Tommy went to bed at 9:00. Joe's eyes were glued to the idiot box till 12:00, when he crawled up the stairs and into bed.

Tommy wanted Joe to play cowboys and Indians at 7:30 the next morning, but a dime sent him downstairs. In two weeks, Tommy

made quite a haul. Polly did too--10¢ a day to do the dishes.

Joe boosted his bowling average up to 130, and would have brought it up more if he could have gone bowling twice a day, but instead he went ice-skating.

He couldn't keep up his movie schedule of one each night, but he did see "Question Seven," "The Cruel Sea," and "Ladykillers" ---- just some of the top features.

And then it came Sunday, January 5, 1964. The two weeks of "rest" ended. Joe came back to good ol' St. Joe's, back to the books, the profs, the work, and the all-around hardship of sem life. He was tired already.

Russell Hogan  
3rd High

## CMC Sows the Word Abroad

For the past six months, Fr. Guzikowski, the mainstay of the Catholic Mission Club, has been deluged with questions from anxious seminarians concerning the success of last spring's shipment of books to Manila. Finally word has been received from Marist Brother Joseph Damian that the books have arrived - and in remarkably good condition. In his

letter, Brother assured us of his deep gratitude for the much needed texts and said that they were immediately being distributed in the area to other missions.

Future shipments of this type have now been made possible by the generous donation of some eleven and a half tons of used textbooks. Recently the Roseville school system emptied its school depository of nearly 23,000 pounds of "obsolete books." These were made available for the CMC through the efforts of Fr. Guzikowski in co-operation with Mr. John Brockhaus.

The interest and activity generated by last year's Philippine shipment prove beyond a doubt that seminarians are very enthusiastic even now, a half year later, about the mission fields. The CMC members have about 850 pounds of literature packaged and awaiting mailing.

Beyond any shadow of a doubt, the men at St. Joseph's are fulfilling Christ's apostolic command to spread the Faith to the farthest corners of the world. Congratulations, CMC!

## Clangor Clanging in the Halls

FR. ROSE'S "DARING DISCIPULI"  
LEARN LATIN WITH LAUGHTER

No doubt anyone on the second floor Friday, December 6, would have thought he was going out of his mind. For he would have heard, about 9:00 A.M., bells jingling in the distance, but gradually getting louder as they apparently came closer. Suddenly, from out of nowhere, he would have seen Santa Claus come riding down the hallway in a little cart pulled by two reindeer and disappearing into Room 208. No, Santa wasn't lost and he wasn't early. "Dominus" Claus and the two reindeer were, in reality, three of the actors "Nox ante Nativitatem Christi," the second of a series of three Latin plays staged by the second class.

The first play was a story of Tarquinus Superbus, in two scenes. The third was entitled "Omnes Homines Regis." This is the story of a certain King Tragicus, whose country was crumbling under him. Perhaps one of the funniest things about this play happened "offstage." Bill Kelly came back into the room after changing and said that "Frowzella" Hart couldn't find her...er...his costume.

A lot of work is put into these skits. A committee must be chosen to write a skit, the skit approved by Fr. Rose, and actors picked. There are rehearsals and

dress rehearsals to go through after the actors have memorized their lines.

However, these plays are well worth the effort put into them. They provide the second class with an opportunity to display their talent and are very entertaining for both "magister" and "discipuli."

Thomas Maksim  
2nd High

## Tears 'n Cheers Jolts 'n Dolts Spice Sem Stage

The annual Christmas play ranks high on the list of both popular and time-honored traditions. These plays have entertained seminarians, their friends and relatives, priests and nuns, throughout the diocese for nearly 40 years.

As we review the early history of play tradition, Fr. Farquharson stands out as a most gifted director of Shakespearean plays--"Macbeth" and "Julius Caesar" were but two of his many fine productions. Later Fr. Simon displayed his talents by directing "St. Francis" which he himself wrote.



Jovial cast poses after "Macbeth" in 1922.

In 1939, Msgr. Falicki began an eight year career as stage director with "Mysteries of the Mass," and later followed with such hits as "Monsignor's Hour" and "Career Angel."

Msgr. Moran won fame by directing "Through the Eye of a Needle," "Victim of the Seal" and "Harvey." In 1954, Fr. Hackett directed the popular Gilbert and Sullivan musical, "Cox and Box." Father continued to direct the plays until 1957, when Frs. Thome and Rose first combined forces to stage "Arsenic and Old Lace."

In 1960, the Christmas play was Gilbert and Sullivan's comic opera, "Mikado." The popular Gilbert and Sullivan dominated the stage for the next two years with "The Yeomen of the Guard" in 1961 and "H.M.S. Pinafore" last year.

John Reardon  
II College



# Christmas in the Big Time

Not gangster activity--priestly. This is the seminarian's "big time." He is still in the small time, the peanuts. May not break into the big stuff for quite a while. But if he is looking for the bigtime at its biggest, Christmas season is the time to take that look because this is the priest's biggest season.

How does Christmas affect big time operations at the rectory? We have contacted Fr. Donald Wieber, who made the break from this place in 1952 and who is presently connected with Holy Name parish, just outside Grand Rapids. A summary of that interview:

As everywhere else, there is a Christmas rush in the parish. However, this does not mean that everything but Christmas is put aside. The usual routine is simply compounded, or perhaps not so simply. The priest must still be available to help people with their individual problems, still be there to instruct those wishing to enter the Church, still teach at the parish school. It is on top of these duties that the rush builds up.

All the various organizations of the parish throw their annual parties now. The priest's presence is required at each of them. His role is to inject a spiritual note into these gatherings, to help the people realize why they are even having a party at this time. The CCD party demands special attention because here children are involved.

The St. Vincent de Paul Society conducts a program to bring baskets of food to the needy of the parish. The priest supplies names and supervises the distribution of these Christmas presents.

The action around the rectory begins to get very thick about a week before the big feast. The Father must train his altar boys for the solemn Midnight Mass. This is one of the few solemn Masses a year celebrated in the parish. It is tough enough for seminarians to serve it properly, we who are familiar with it.

Since Christmas falls on a Wednesday this year, confessions are heard on Saturday afternoon and evening, Sunday afternoon, Monday afternoon and evening, and Tuesday afternoon and evening. But these confessions aren't the usual kind. Many of these people are confessing for the first time

since Easter, and so the priest is challenged to give special advice.

It's the day before Christmas and all through the rectory the priest is nowhere to be seen. He is out making Communion calls to the sick of the parish. There are about 15 such calls at Holy Name for Fr. Wieber.

The Christmas sermon must be something out of the ordinary. But time for such a composition is scarce, and there is little peace in which to write.

Finally the night arrives. Midnight Mass. This is over perhaps at 1:15. The Church must be open at 5:30 the same morning. Then the priest prepares himself for two more Masses.

Sometime in the afternoon, Father, understandably exhausted, journeys home for Christmas dinner.

And that is Christmas for the parish priest.

## Spaghetti & & Fruitcake

Syllogism:

Major premise: Everyone eats fruitcake at Christmas time.

Minor premise: Italians eat spaghetti all year around.

Conclusion: Spaghetti and fruitcake is the favorite dish in Rome around Christmas.

Unsound reasoning? Perhaps. In reality, Romans do not eat such a concoction at Christmas or any other time. Tom Kelsch, in third year theology at the North American College in Rome, set us straight on that. He also included a few other details in his letter; mainly, how Christmas is spent in a Roman seminary.

### THE CIRCUS

Christmas there, as here, begins with the Advent wreath. The appearance of the wreath is the signal for the theologians to crowd down to the ancient Circus of Domitian. This oval, race-track-like affair is the nerve center of Christmas celebrations around Rome. It is ringed at Christmas-time with gaily colored and lightly lit stalls. At first glance it reminds the foreigners of the booths at a state fair, but a little wandering convinces that it could only be Rome: the wooden handicraft articles, the ferocious bickering over prices, the candymakers pulling toffee, the chestnut sellers hunched over their charcoal stoves, and the motorscooters circling the ovals. In one corner

of the Circus in a plywood house, Befana stays. And she is none other than an evil, nasty witch who changes bad children's toys and food to charcoal. The little tots approached her fearfully, hoping she will not remember anything bad about them. Lately, Santa Claus has made his appearance, compliments of American commercialism.

The actual celebration of the Nativity is bound up very much with ordinations. In the week before, the seventy odd fourth theologians at the College are ordained to the priesthood. First Masses, blessings, breakfasts, and papal audiences, and six hundred or so relatives, flown in for the big occasion bring Christmas on before anyone realizes it.

### THE FEAST

Christmas Day itself begins with Midnight Mass in the seminary chapel. This is followed by the traditional Italian breakfast of hot chocolate and panetone, a fruit and nut filled coffee cake, but without spaghetti. Then (this is early morning, remember) the students adjourn to the dormitory section where gifts are exchanged. Tom has, in his two previous years there, received a cork-firing six-shooter and a little mechanical monkey which shot free throws. Eventually these gifts are collected for orphans, who are given a party on the Epiphany. After a few hours of sleep, they are up again, around five, for the dawn Mass at the Station Church, St. Anastasia's. After a long walk through the narrow, dark, deserted streets of pre-dawn Rome, with their capes wrapped around them, and steam from their breath forming white puffs in front of their faces, they are there. Mass is offered by candlelight; everyone sings, gathered around the altar. After the Third Mass, at St. Mary Major's, the Michigan men meet for breakfast, a two hour affair, at a nearby restaurant. Shortly after this, it's to St. Peter's Square, where promptly at 12:00 o'clock the pope gives his blessing. In the evening there is a choral program at the College in which are featured "good old American Christmas carols."

The next few days are known as the "social season" for seminarians, for then the national seminaries in the city put on plays and musical programs for the other seminaries. During this period also, three days are allotted the seminarians to travel through Italy. By the octave of the Nativity those at the North American College are quite ready to resume normal operations, which they do.

# Say Buddy, Ride?

Everybody wants to go home at Christmastime, and almost everybody makes it. Seminarians are no different from people; for the motto of our alumni seems to be "Where there's a will, there's a ride home."

For instance, Del Smolinski, at T.C. in Washington, says that when "CHRISTMAS VACATION BEGINS DECEMBER 17!!!" (sic) he is going to get a ride home with one of the lay students or priests from Mich. Ergo, no sweat.

Not so with Bob Tisch of the San Antonio Six, though. Being so far away from home, they have a money problem. Bob says it's about \$100.00 for a round trip; and that's by car!

The fellas at the Rock in Cincy are pretty well decided on what they are going to do, but how they are going to do it is still a matter of debate. "Two compact chariots" writes Dale Greiner, would be ideal, if it weren't for the pecunia involved. One "station chariot" is more economical, but where do you put the "bags and goatskins?"

J.L. (alias H.M.S.) Brucksch has had his trip home planned since October. He'll fly United with Ron Kessler--they'll be home by the 18th. Jim says he's holding his breath against a storm on the day of the flight lest it be postponed. Plans for Easter vacation travel will naturally begin in January.

Jim Petricevic's in suspense. He had heard that bus and train are pure torture for any distance, so he decided to fly home by United Airlines--who, he learned a week after the reservation had been made, may strike on Dec. 19th. He can get a ride to Detroit; but this time of year, it's a long, cold walk from there to Brant, where Jim lives.

Wanted: nice old gentleman, needing someone to drive him from Detroit to Grand Rapids on Dec. 21. Driver can play harmonica, guitar, radio; also juggles. Write Robt. Lesinski, c/o Recorder.

Bob would have gone home with Len Gross this Christmas, except that Len refused to let him bring his gee-tar along. Too much wind resistance for the motorcycle or something.



# Recorder Sports

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Sixth Class quarterback Dave Hooper prepares to sweep right end against the Fourth Class. Note the linemen pulling to the right to block.

## No Upsets in Sem's Major Bowl Games

Editor's note: Many of the top college teams in the country will clash in bowl games this coming January 1. We, however, have beat them to the punch; the seminary bowl games have already been played. For a résumé of these games, read on.

Several classes this year were looking for early Christmas presents in the form of upset victories in the class games, but upper class opponents simply refused to play Santa Claus. The result was that each class was duly humbled by the class above it in this year's seminary "bowl games".

### 2nd vs 1st

If any game was far from any danger of an upset, it was this Firstie Bowl game. The 2nd class was in command all the way through the 46-6 rout. Yet one optimistic 1st classman remarked, "We didn't lose; we just came in second place. We played a good game too, only they played for keeps." Bernard Burns affirmed, "We will beat them in the 2nd-3rd class game next year." Perhaps.

### 3rd vs 2nd

The Intermediate Bowl turned out to be quite a contest, with the 3rd class finally pulling out a 19-7 win. Larry Sova, looking back on the game, gave much of the credit to quarterback Russ Hogan and captain-halfback Randy Cirner. Russ tossed three TD passes, one of them to Randy; and the two backfield mates put their heads together to come up with several effective plays. But still they only won by a 12 point margin, which

led 2nd class quarterback Steve Mysliwiec to remark, "A devastating moral victory for us!"

### 4th vs 3rd

A strong 4th class squad had to work hard to grind out a 12-6 Blood and Guts Bowl victory over the 3rd class. The halftime score of 0-0 gives a good idea of just how evenly-matched these two teams were. And the low score wasn't the result of weak offenses, either, but of two solid, hard-hitting defenses. Dave Downer, 3rd class linebacker, commented, "Our defense was both good and lucky!" Even at that, the 4th class was just a little better. Look for these two teams to clash for the house championship next year.

### 6th vs 4th

Skipping over the 5th class, who chose not to play this year, the 4th class challenged the 6th class in the House Championship Bowl. But the challenge was met and overcome as the 6th class scored a 19-0 triumph. Good spirit, fine teamwork, and just a bit more experience were big factors in the victory. Winning captain Tom Cassleman had special praises for Pete Mestre, whose booming kicks kept the 4th class in the hole most of the game. Tom Zbikowski, 4th class defensive back whose job it was to cover star 6th class end Charlie Fischer, moaned, "I wish someone could have tied Charlie's legs together." Fischer himself paid his opponents a left-handed compliment when he remarked, "We were so good that day that it's a credit to the 4th class to have held us to three touchdowns."

Congratulations to all bowl game winners!

## Blues Write Letter to Santa

## Red Demons Fly as Blue Angels Fry

Halo there Santa,

Our Blue angelic spirits have been darkened. In the years 1960-1961, when we had possession of the All-Sports trophy, we were flying on Cloud Nine. But since then, we have fallen down into the Red ring of fire.

No longer does the chorus of Blue angels sing "Glory to the Blues in the Highest." Only the burning Red spirit can be seen and heard in any color clash. It is this spirit that has carried them to a 90-18 point margin in this year's trophy tussle.

After the recent football encounters, head archangels Michael Hogan and James Van Wert are at halos' end trying to pep up this blue state.

That devilish duo of Al Grabinski and Dave Miller combined for a fifty yard pass-run touchdown play. This 6-0 lead held the whole game as the Red defense stiffened and intercepted four passes to insure their victory.

Those little devils in the Juniors caught fire in the first quarter and continued to burn up the gridiron until the final gun. When it was over, the Reds tallied 44 to the Blues' 0. Bernie Burns scored three TD's. Dennis Harney had two. Jerry Rock and Elmer Bunek horned in with one apiece.

The Intermediate Blues have finally shown us some glimmer of hope. They flew high on Steve Mysliwiec's right arm, as he winged two scores to Randy Cirner and one each to Larry Sova and Fred Sydlowski. All totaled, the Blues had a 26-0 victory over the Reds.

Santa, we need your help. Help us to win over the Red Devils and regain our angelic ways.



Merry Christmas, Santa,  
Your true Blues

## Tradition Carried On: College Downs High School

Rain, rain, go away; come again another day. But Someone up there had other plans, as both teams and spectators were thoroughly drenched at this year's College - High School football game. Spirits remained undampened, though, as the contest was fought by two teams so evenly matched that a mere seven points proved the difference.

Little did either team realize that the contest was actually won only seconds after the opening kick-off. For on the third play of the game, College quarterback Mike Hogan let loose a long spiral pass to center Dave Miller on a slick sixty yard touchdown play. And then quicker than it takes Santa to slide down a slippery chimney, the College added their seventh

point over a stunned High School team, leaving themselves with an early 7 - 0 lead.

The rest of the game turned out to be a regular seesaw affair; but this seesaw ended up balanced, as neither team could score again. Al Grabinski piloted the High School squad, which seemed to teeter when the College tottered, and tottered when the College teetered. Deserving of special mention was the excellent sportsmanship in this game, a quality which is all too often absent in some of our games.

And thus according to tradition, the College team walked off the field victorious. But beware, College '64, for we are living in an age today when custom and tradition are becoming more and more a thing of the past.