



FR. PAUL J. CUDDY  
**On The  
Right Side**

**Q.** Don't you think sending Christmas cards has become meaningless: commercial and impersonal? Why, some people have an annual "list!"

**A.** Cheer up. It's awfully hard to be completely impersonal. Others are just disinclined to send cards. Every year since my ordination I sent a Christmas note to Msgr. Craugh, the late Rector of St. Bernard's, because I admired him greatly. Also, I was grateful to him because he nearly tossed me out of the Seminary twice, but did not. He never sent a card in

return; nor did I expect him to. But he was pleased, which was the purpose of sending the greeting.

**Q.** But lists! How impersonal can you get?

**A.** Don't you think it depends? For example, you hardly expect President Nixon to send a personal note to thousands. Yet I think most who receive his card are pleased and honored. The efficiency of our own Bishop Casey has long been a matter both of humor and admiration among his

clerical friends. His Christmas greetings are addressed in August. He mails them out in early December. Just being included is a nice thing.

**Q.** But so many Christmas cards are non-religious!

**A.** 1) Some cards are specifically religious. That's fine. 2) Others are of candles, dogs, even sparkling bottles of booze. The pictures and greetings may not be very Christmasy, but don't you think the remembering is? 3) Cards which delight me very much are pictures of relatives' and friends' children, whether of one child or of a dozen. This is beautiful Incarnationism.

**Q.** Any suggestions about Christmas greetings?

**A.** Yes. First, remember those who are most likely to be forgotten: the people hidden in flats, nursing homes, in poverty and anonymity. Malcolm Muggeridge's recent life of Mother Teresa of Calcutta quotes: "Being unwanted is the worst disease that any human being can experience." Second, remember

those away from home, especially those in the Military Service. It surely is dreadful for them to read the propaganda against them, implying that they are murderers and malefactors. Third, write a personal note on your card if possible.

**Q.** Anything else?

**A.** Yes! Put your return address including the zip code on your card, and write your name in full! It's maddening to have a card from an incognito "John" or "Mary." Finally, do use the religious Christmas stamps. Last year the P.O. printed 875 million of Lotto's Nativity stamps, and as many secular stamps for Christmas. This year, it has printed 1.2 billion of Giorgione's Adoration of the Shepherds; and 800 million of a secular bird stamp. Ask for the religious stamps.

**Q.** Anything else?

**A.** That's one of my weaknesses. I always have "something else!" While I was in the service a young soldier about 22 or 23 used to work around the chapel grounds. He

was a good farmer, but quite simple. And he was one of the finest men I have known. Even after nearly 20 years we exchange an occasional note. From his farm in the mid-West he recently sent a pretty greeting card with verse, which read: "Dear Rev. Father: Thinking of how nice you are — And saying 'Thanks so much' — The thoughtfulness of folks like you — Gives life a brighter touch!" And in his own script he added: "and in particular when the greeting comes from you, Father." Such a card is real kindness. So please do your cards early, mail them early; use the Adoration of the Shepherds stamps, and remember the "little people" who might easily be forgotten on the feast of God's love.

**50TH ANNIVERSARY**  
Geneva — Mr. and Mrs. Francis R. Christiano recently celebrated their 50th wedding anniversary with Mass at St. Francis de Sales Church and dinner at the Lafayette Inn, hosted by their five children. Celebrations were attended by more than 150 friends and relatives.

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