



Choral Belles

The Nazareth Academy's Choral Belles, a group selected from the school's Perisian Choir, will entertain workers at Rochester Products Thursday, Dec. 20. Left to right (first row): Judy Kears, Jean Foote, Susan Keon, Beth Shannon, Bonnie Becks; [second row] Susan Keller, Vicki Brasser, Kathy Nowak; [third row] Christine Okum, Mary Jo Culhane; [fourth row] Therese Mancuso. The group will also entertain on the Eddie Meath Show on Dec. 17.



ON THE RIGHT SIDE
Fr. Paul J. Cuddy

Don't you think Christmas is so commercialized it has lost its meaning?

Oh, no. That's like saying that Christianity doesn't work because so many Christians practice their faith badly. Recall Chesterton's rejoinder: that Christianity has not been tried and found wanting, but that it hasn't been tried.

But so much emphasis is on the commercial.

Agreed. Even broader, on the material. That includes the over-stress on food, drink, entertainment, as well as goods. Christmas can well become an epicurean gorge rather than a Christian feast day. But don't you think that's up to the individual persons and families? The Viennese psychiatrist, Dr. Victor Frankel, spent three horrible years as a prisoner in Auschwitz and other Nazi concentration camps. Pondering over his experiences and on human nature Dr. Frankel wrote:

"We who lived in concentration camps can remember the men who walked through the huts comforting others. They may have been few in number, but they offer sufficient proof that everything can be taken away from a man but one thing: the last of the human freedoms — to choose one's attitude in any given set of circumstances; to choose one's own way." (Man's Search for Meaning — p. 104).

But the pressures to minimize the religious significance are mighty.

Of course. And it takes God's grace, a vital faith and a disciplined will to preserve the religious significance.

Any Christmas suggestions?

Well, why not start off by not worrying about the commercialism, materialism and non-religiousness of others. As Dr. Frankel wrote, every man is free "to choose one's own way." So we are free to celebrate Christmas well. Here are some suggestions:

1) Take time out to pray. For many people, to pray in church or

chapel is both better and possible. The Blessed Sacrament hallows Catholic churches by Our Lord's Eucharistic Presence. No telephones, or doorbells will distract. The quiet of the church gives the Holy Spirit a chance to work in our souls. But we can pray anywhere.

2) Enjoy the gifts of creation: the Christmas dinner and other reasonable convivialities. To celebrate happily with family and friends is both piety and love. If every one at the celebration doesn't act just as you might want him to, e.g. perhaps drinking unwisely, well, why not a bit of "live and let live"? Father Vincent Collins' wise little book, Me, Myself and You treats this attitude very well.

3) Monitor the TV. Strange the anxiety about smog, yet a rationalization about the filth and irreverence which pours into homes from TV stations. We cannot do much about prurience of TV shows, but we do not have to accept it into our homes. The pity of it is that our children will have to live in a society which is become debased by irreverence, mockery and impurity. On the other hand, there are splendid and inspiring programs. Have you ever written or phoned a TV station or a radio station telling them you are pleased?

4) Extend to others your interest in them. Everyone needs to be loved. It is not possible to visit many people, but telephones can be instruments of kindness if we don't stay on the phone too long. Why not ring a shut-in or a relative or a friend?

5) Parents can use the feast to inspire their children. A scene etched in my memory is that of a young father, kneeling in front of the manger in the parish church on Christmas afternoon, explaining to his three little children about Jesus and Mary and Joseph. Not only were the children edified. So was I, and very much.

Anything else?

Yes. Happy Christmas to all the Courier Journal readers, with a special blessing for those who read this column regularly.

Learn how to Conserve Energy in your home



at RG&E's Consumer Information Center

Individuals who are concerned about the current energy shortages can find some helpful information about conserving energy in the home at RG&E's Consumer Information Center during the month of December.

The Center will feature a slide presentation which gives a general introduction to the existence of the Energy Crisis and asks individuals to develop a conserving attitude toward energy use.

The slides show how you can compute the amount of gas and electricity that various appliances use, shows several high users of energy and suggests ways to use these appliances more efficiently.

In addition to the slide show is our automated Watt Watcher display which will show you an approximate monthly cost of certain appliances in your home.

The accompanying display pictures additional ways that people can save energy in their homes. Two booklets with additional energy saving ideas will be available without charge at the Center. They are entitled, "The Watt Watcher's Handbook" and "53 Ways to Reduce Your Gas And Electric Bills."

Stop at the Consumer Information Center between 8:00 A.M. and 5:00 P.M. from Monday through Friday. The Center is located on the first floor of RG&E's Main Office at 89 East Avenue. RG&E is consulting with its large business customers about ways to conserve energy. We would also like to help individuals conserve by providing appropriate information at the Consumer Information Center throughout this month.

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