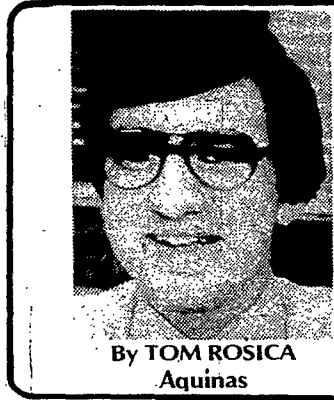
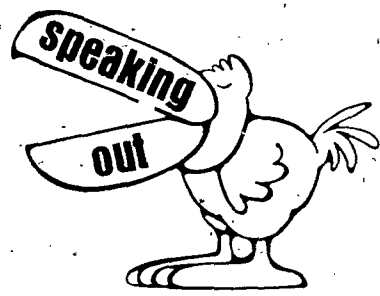


Around Rap Around Rap Around Rap Are



By TOM ROSICA
Aquinas



The clanging of the bell makes an impression on your brain. You walk past the bellringer and drop a quarter in the round basket.

As you walk into the stores, there is a mood in the air that comes but once a year. Your eyes take in the tinsel, the trees, the children, the shoppers. Once again, Christmas has come.

You dread the shopping because of too many people and because of the noise. A feeling of dread and disillusion is upon you. It is Christmas again.

But what has happened to Christmas? Where is the spirit, and where is the closeness of yesterday? And most of all, where is Christ?

We have commercialized Christmas as a time of getting gifts and repaying all our debts with a visit. The trouble is that Christmas doesn't just come on Dec. 25, it comes every day of the year. There is a song that goes—"It's not the things you do at Christmas, but the Christmas things you do all year." How often we forget that Christ reveals himself to us each and every day. At Christmas, however, we honor his birthday with commercialism.

Perhaps the true Christmas spirit isn't gone. It will never leave us. It just gets lost every now and then. Christmas lies in us, it lies in children, in Santa Claus, in the department stores

crowds, in the trees and lights that fill street corners—Christmas is a feeling so hard to explain—it's more than a date on Calendars.

The people who get the true meaning of Christmas are those who find it in others. Let us light up our homes and trees with the brightest lights of all—the lights that require human power of love, of patience and of hope.

We must put Christ back into Christmas, not in name only. Let us be generators of brightness throughout this season and all year through.

We often get caught up with the commercial aspect of this season. Unwind, settle your minds, think of the little baby shivering in the night on his mother's lap. Think of the father, so proud, and so humble. This is Christmas. Remember what the anonymous writer said—"When He came, there was no light. When He left, there was no darkness."

Be glad and rejoice—we live in light this season. Open your eyes to the sparkling trees, to the child's smile. Touch the hand of the poor, aged, lonely. Smile in the hustle and bustle of shoppers. Pray in the quietness of yourself. When you do this, then you will know that this is What Christmas is.

Merry Christmas!



Winner's Circle

RapAround weekly will run a photo of a group of students taken somewhere in the diocese. One person will be circled and if that person brings the clipping to the Courier-Journal before noon of the Tuesday following publication date, he or she will receive \$5. This week's photo was taken at McQuaid High School during an assembly. The person circled above should bring the clipping to Joan M. Smith, Courier-Journal, by noon, Tuesday, Dec. 16 to receive \$5.

Religion Gains With Students

According to the results of the poll conducted by the "Who's Who Among American High School Students" religion is playing an increasingly important role in the lives of teenagers.

The survey based on the responses received from 22,000 high achievers also revealed that students are less tolerant of drug use (other than alcohol), more "puritanical sexually", and more "old fashioned" in their attitudes toward marriage and the women's movement than the group surveyed last year.

The study revealed that religion has assumed an increasingly important role among teens in the last three years. Students who believe religion plays a significant role in their own moral standards and actions increased from 63 per cent in 1972 to 86 per cent this year.

Religion was considered "very significant" by 57 per cent Protestant, 48 per cent Catholic, and 26 per cent Jewish students.

The percentage of those who feel religion is relevant in our society increased from 77 per cent in 1973 to 86 per cent in 1974.

Vietnam Students Join Nazareth

Last October two Vietnamese smiles were added to the many that brighten Nazareth Academy halls when Quyen and Hong LeLuu registered as juniors.

These sisters left Saigon and their family last April. After spending six months in Pennsylvania, they came to join their uncle who lives in Rochester.

School in Vietnam was very different for Quyen and Hong. There students had no choice of subjects but followed a strict required program. Class periods

were two hours long followed by a 15-minute break. School hours went from 7:45 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. and 2:30 to 6:15 p.m.

Both Quyen and Hong speak fluent Vietnamese, Chinese and French. One of their wishes is to learn "perfect English"—and they are doing remarkably well in that language, also!

Food was a problem to the girls since American food was completely unfamiliar. However, it didn't take long for hot dogs and french fries to become their favorites!



50 Years of Music

Two Nazareth students join Aquinas boys as they prepare for the Aquinas 50th Anniversary concert to be held at Aquinas on Sunday, Dec. 14 at 8 p.m. Tickets will be available at the door for \$1. Getting ready for the big day are: Donna Heberger, Tony Liepert, Steve Wehner, Kurt Sanger, Pat Skerrett, Brian Virgil, Mark Hahn, Jim DeJager, and Therese Mancuso.

HOTLINE

It is the aim of RapAround to touch all of the bases. If we are missing any, please let Mrs. Joan M. Smith know your ideas. Drop her a line. We need suggestions and invite criticism.

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