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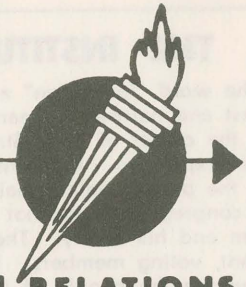
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THE VANGUARD



... THE CHURCH IN HUMAN RELATIONS

Volume 9, Number 1

January, 1962

That the Church May Lead

INCARNATION AND IDENTIFICATION

The section on Service of the World Council of Churches in convention in New Delhi November 19 to December 6 agreed on two important points, according to **Time**: "Christians must take an all-out, unambiguous stand for racial equality, exorcising prejudices from all churches and **identifying with oppressed races.**" (Emphasis ours)

The Church in the United States had a real job of it last year again to focus attention on the anniversary itself, that of the incarnation, the Nativity, or the birth of our Lord Jesus Christ. This was the case not only because of the inherent godlessness of human nature but also because of the roadblock thrown into the way of the Christmas message by the commercialization of Christmas.

It happened last year again, and perhaps with greater vigor than ever before, that businessmen, Christian, Jew, and atheist alike, by exploiting the Christian heritage of Christmas carols and hymns, have caused Christian, Jew, and atheist so to celebrate "Christmas" that when the holy season itself arrived even the best of Christians were all but nauseated at the hearing of song and message. Having been fed up with the commercialization of it, they came into their churches feeling that they were once again moving into the environment of the drugstore, the dime store, the department store — and the liquor joint down the street.

"But as many as received Him, to them He gave the power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on His Name, which were born not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of evil of the will of man, but of God." John 1:12-13.

Christmas — according to the Roman (Western) tradition — is December 25 to January 6; and it is the celebration of the birth of Christ, His holy incarnation. Which means that God in the person of Jesus Christ revealed Himself to man by becoming a man Him-

self, taking into His divine person our human nature.

To give us life for death He did it; He gathered into Himself His own judgment of death. And die He did, on the accursed tree of the cross. In Him we now find a new life, the life of God Himself.

But in doing so, that is, in becoming man to die for all of mankind, He, the Son of God, Jesus Christ, **identified** Himself with all mankind. In His incarnation He identified Himself with the righteous pharisees of all times, with the religious and the irreligious, the good and the bad — with all of godless humankind.

To them that believe in Him He now gives the power to become the children of God. And with that power they are now, as Luther says, "little christs." If incarnation brings with it identification, then let us be bold enough to acknowledge it in our lives: God is with us, we have His life, and with it in Christ we now are identified

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A LOOK AROUND

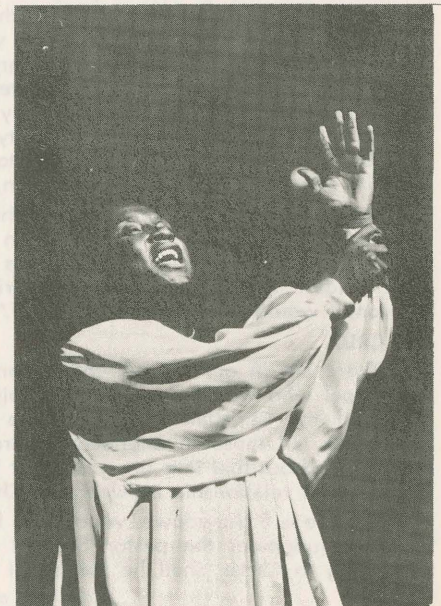
By Martin H. Scharlemann
I. A Blooper

It seems that Mayor Duckworth of Norfolk, Virginia, accompanied the mayors of twenty-two other American cities on a six-day trip to Berlin. This was part of an effort to convince West Germans that the U.S. would remain firm in its commitments. When the mayor of Norfolk got back, he was asked to comment on the statement of a civic leader in Florida who observed that Southern mayors were out of place discussing freedom in strife-torn Berlin. To this the mayor replied — if newspaper reports are correct on this—: "As I said before in regard to colored people, equality should be earned, not legislated."

Possibly His Honor failed to recall that the equality colored people are struggling for requires no legislation. It is written indelibly in our basic freedom documents. Even the Constitution of the Commonwealth of Virginia says: "That all men are by nature equally free and independent and have certain inherent rights, of which, when they

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Black Nativity, a Negro musical drama, is to be presented at Valparaiso University on Sunday, January 7, in the chapel-auditorium. The drama was written by Langston Hughes, distinguished Negro American poet, playwright, and author. It is a dramatization of the birth of Christ in dialogue, pantomime, and song, and will be presented by an all-Negro cast of professional gospel singers and actors. Because it presents the Nativity alive in a non-white cultural setting, it promises to be a unique experience, emphasizing the universality of the redemption and the inclusion of many peoples in the acceptance of the Savior. Coming at the very close of the Christmas season — the day after the Festival of the Epiphany of Our Lord — **Black Nativity** can be a fitting climax to the observance of the birth of Christ. The picture is that of one of the **Black Nativity** artists.



THE INSTITUTION AND THE WITNESS

The word "institution" as it is to be used in this article is the church in the broadest and narrowest meaning of the term. Institution means the church building at the corner of Main Street and First Avenue. It means the plans for future physical expansion. It means the financial stability of the congregation, which includes the pastor's salary maintained on a sufficiently high level that the members of the congregation need not be smitten with a guilty conscience every time they see him and his family. The institution is the congregation itself, baptized, communicant, voting members. It is the congregation with its prospects for accessions from among the people of the community. It is the federation of many congregations in what some circles is called a synod. It is the synod's outreach, with the purpose of establishing one new congregation every third day, at home, an expansion of its missionary outreach "till each remotest nation has learned Messiah's name."

The term "institution" as it is being employed in this article is the church which is the body of Christ in the community of which each believing Christian is a member and Christ Himself is the Head. It is the "one holy catholic [Christian] and Apostolic Church."

The institution is something or everything that Christians should hold sacred because it is established to the glory and praise of God.

THE WITNESS

The term "witness" as it is employed in this article is everything in the life of a Christian by which he communicates or tries to communicate to others in a way in which they will, through him, learn to know and accept Jesus Christ. Christian witness includes words and deeds and attitudes.

It includes the sermon and every other communication of Jesus Christ by words to others. But it is not words only, whether they are spoken or written. For Christians have a new life in them. Christ dwells in their hearts by faith. They have the life of God once given in creation, lost through the fall into sin, and restored to them again through the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ. Words may be an expression of that new life. But the new life of God which the Christian possesses through faith in Christ has its expression in attitudes and deeds as well as in words.

An essential part of the Christian witness is to tell people "Jesus died to take away your sins. Believe in Him, and you will go to heaven." That, to many, is the essence of "preaching the gospel." It is indeed essential to preaching the gospel, but witnessing to Christ is more than that.

A very potent witness to Christ is a recognition of the known needs of men and an attitude of concern which has in it the determination to do what is possible to remove them. Such needs of men which come within the special focus of **VANGUARD** concern are the eradication of the brutality practiced against innocent Negroes by the police in certain Southern states; the still flagrant injustice of courts of justice; the denial of the ballot and with it the perpetuation of second-class citizenship with all of its life-denying and death-bestowing propensities.

An example of discrimination north of Mason and Dixon's line as gleaned from a Human Relations Survey of Alton, Illinois, reveals the need for the Christian witness in that city of 43,000 people. Although the quotation refers to Negroes, the Survey itself represents a study of the civil rights of all non-whites of that city: "A Negro child, recently born in Alton, very likely would be delivered by a Negro doctor in his mother's home or in a segregated hospital room; grow up in a segregated neighborhood; attend an integrated school; have difficulty in finding a job; and, if successful, have greater difficulty in getting promoted; have some difficulty in getting dental care; have less difficulty in finding a place to eat, but face general community barriers [also in churches] to his sense of worth as a full-fledged citizen; die and be buried, as he was born, apart."

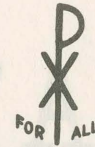
When Christian people recognize the needs that are so evident to people and then make those needs to be their own by identifying themselves with the needy ones, the new life of God through Jesus Christ that motivates the Christian will become evident and the person thus befriended will be inclined to respond "that's religion; I would like to have it myself."

THE CRUX

There are in our country today perhaps only a small number of ministers of the gospel who would deny the foregoing — the nature of the institution and the nature of the Christian witness. At a pastoral conference recently attended by this writer, all those in attendance were at least in seeming agreement. It was then pointed out that it is often difficult for some to understand and to accept what is the proper relationship between the Christian institution and the Christian witness.

If there is a showdown, which is to have priority, the institution or the witness? If in his judgment the pastor finds it difficult to maintain the institution when witnessing to Christ, shall he soft-pedal the witness? The answer of course must

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ON OTHER LUTHERAN FRONTS

By L. W. Halvorson

ALL THINGS TO ALL MEN

The real test of Christian love is the extent to which it will go in achieving its goal. As Christians our mission is to all people. The purpose of all that we do in the church is that as many as possible be brought into the Kingdom of our Lord Jesus Christ. The motive that should drive us on is our love for all men in the spirit of the Redeemer. Our willingness to sacrifice personal needs and desires for the sake of reaching all men becomes the measure of love for Christ.

When the church seeks people of different cultures there is bound to be need for adjustments. Acculturation has been defined as "the acquiring of culture through contact." Since the Christian mission calls for contact with other people, we must expect the process of acculturation to be at work. When Christians of different cultures and backgrounds are brought together, the process of "give and take" makes acculturation much easier. But when Christians seek to make people of another culture into Christians, then the process may become a painful and difficult thing.

We must not make the mistake of thinking that acculturation calls for a revision of all the customs of the other group. The Christian will always seek to keep such change at a minimum. He will be thoughtful and considerate of what is expected of others. He will make whatever changes in his own life may be necessary for the good of others. He will seek in all of these things to find means of bringing some people into the Kingdom of Christ.

The Apostle Paul must have had this in mind when he wrote the last half of I Corinthians 9. He spoke of being "a Jew to the Jew" and of being weak "to the weak." He said that for the purpose of saving at least some of them he was willing to become "all things to all men."

We must learn over and over again the implications of Christ's coming to earth. He became in all things one with us, except for the part of sin. He did all of this for the sake of all men. Now He asks us to learn of Him the willingness to make whatever sacrifices and adjustments may be necessary for the sake of bringing others into His Kingdom. It is the Christian's responsibility to reflect in human relations the spirit and the fact of the Incarnation.

INCARNATION . . .

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with those with whom He is identified — all human beings. They are now indeed our brothers.

Now the white man has become our brother, our Jewish neighbor too. The Indians, the Negroes, the Castros, the Khrushchevs, and all — all are our brothers. Through Christ's incarnation we are identified with them. Will we now identify ourselves with them in a meaningful way? Will we identify ourselves with them so that the angels in heaven looking on in holy jealousy will be compelled to say of us what the writer to the Hebrews said about Christ: "Wherefore He is not ashamed to call them brethren." Hebrews 2:11.

I am living in a city which still has the "reputation" of not permitting a Negro to live there, and in a community where not long ago an atmosphere of tension and great alarm prevailed because a Negro had tried to purchase a house there. And in my city and my community my wife and I have had a number of unusual opportunities to identify ourselves with other than middle-class white Protestants. A quick glance at our present guest register reminds me that we have had many noble Negro and white Americans in our home. But the first person who signed the register was Hanson Udo Akpobio, then a student at Valparaiso University and now the minister of state in his home country — Nigeria. Other names found in the register are the Rev. Francis Sianipar, of Sumatra, Indonesia; Joseph A. Kinyano Malle, Lalashowi M. Swai, and Eliewaha E. Mshana, all of Tanganyika, E. Africa; Augustus Isaac Dhar, Lucknow, India; B. H. Jackayya, Nagercoil, India; Gerson David. Tambaram, Madras, India; Howard Vassallo and Eustace Renner from Sierra Leone, W. Africa; Ambrose Reeves, former Anglican bishop of Johannesburg, South Africa; and Afiong E. Emah, Uyo, Nigeria.

That type of identification with people, though, may be fraught with little danger of suffering; it may even be a source of satisfaction to one's ego. (When we moved to this city, I asked a member of the Valparaiso faculty what he thought the reaction of my neighbors would be when they would see non-whites being received as guests in my home. He said they wouldn't like it, but they would excuse it with the thought that university people are crackpots anyway.) But living the new life of God in Christ by identifying oneself with people can be courting danger, even death itself. If Christ died for others, we His disciples may anticipate a similar fate — as we,

like He, identify ourselves with His and our human brothers in their human need. He has given us ample warning; the whole New Testament is replete with statements that tell us of "the cost of discipleship." Let one suffice at this time: "He who does not take up his cross and follow me is not worthy of me. He who finds his life will lose it, and he who loses his life for my sake will find it." Matt. 10: 38-39.

Among the many places where such Christian discipleship is being tested today are our Northern suburbs. There many city folk have fled to "save" themselves from too close identification with their Negro brothers. They have fled to communities which are carefully guarded against their Negro brothers' taking up residence. And of course it goes without saying that the Christian churches, springing up wherever the city folk now become suburbanites, are of necessity segregated like the community and hence without opportunity for their members to identify themselves in a meaningful manner with those who greatly need such identification.

Christian discipleship is being put to the test each day in the South where in many places wanton brutality confronts our Negro brothers, where in almost every area of life — even reaching the level of fellowship in the church — Negroes, our human brothers through the incarnation of Christ, are treated as less than human.

When Christians speak out against such injustices, when they by word and deed vigorously protest expressions of prejudice, even when it hurts, they are identifying themselves with the brothers of Christ and with Him. There is within the church, and especially among Christian pastors, a growing awareness of that type of brotherhood. May it grow, to the glory of our great Brother, Jesus.

LOOK AROUND

(Continued from page one)

enter into a state of society, they cannot, by any compact deprive or divest their posterity, namely, the enjoyment of life and liberty, with the means of acquiring and possessing property, and pursuing and obtaining happiness and safety."

The only legislation most Americans are concerned about is that which some Southern States, including Virginia, have adopted to **deny, abridge, or nullify** that very equality which is proclaimed by the Declaration of Independence and guaranteed by federal and state constitutions.

2. Heroic Age

Writing for the **Virginia Quarterly Review**, Leslie W. Dunbar is bold enough to assert: "I believe the South will, out of its travail and sadness and requited passion, give the world its first grand example of two races of men living together in equality and with mutual respect. The South's heroic age is with us now." Well, when we read about desegregations popping out all over the South so fast that one can hardly count them, and the community pride, relief, and the elaborately casual acceptance of the forced change, it does seem likely that it may not be long before "our rich and varied configuration of people, black and white," will meet to share equally in the mighty blessings of this great land. There is reason to hope that "white people will learn to love before the Negro learns to hate," to quote Louis Lomax. These holy days remind us of God's great gift of love to both black and white, also to red and yellow.

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"QUOTES"

It has been suggested that **The VANGUARD** add a regular column featuring pertinent, helpful quotations that have to do with race relations. And this is our first try.

Recently the president of Valparaiso University had his secretary send **The VANGUARD** editor a letter the president had received from the Association for the Study of Negro Life and History. A quotation from the letter may be helpful to some of our readers:

"The social studies are the weakest link in education in the United States. Related subjects are based frequently upon a history designed to accommodate a point of view which does not offend unscientific beliefs concerning racial superiority and inferiority. From this basic social education have come the propaganda and prejudice which justify the false stereotypes of race and resulting patterns of segregation. From this education also has come a social order which denies the inherent equality of each individual; thereby creating a vicious circle, out of which escape from environmental factors that debase the individual is all but impossible."

Frederick Douglas (d. 1895) was no doubt one of the greatest Negro citizens of this country. He was the son of a slave woman; his father was white. After his first wife died, he married again. His second marriage was criticized by friend and foe, Negro and white. In responding to his critics and depending upon who they were, "he slyly observed that in his first marriage he had paid respects to his black mother, in his second, to his white father." He charged, "White Americans were not really opposed to the mixture of the races; they only opposed honorable marriage between the groups." He thought that his mar-

riage was a "dramatic challenge to color prejudice in America."

These quotations are from a new publication of Dodd, Mead & Company entitled **100 Years of Negro Freedom**.

Kyle Haselden in his excellent treatise, **The Racial Problem in Christian Perspective**, writes: "There has been no significant instance in which the white society motivated by love and mercy has voluntarily relinquished an area of domination over the Negro. On the contrary, every major social advancement made by the Negro has resulted from some kind of legal or social coercion. It would be folly to assume that the barriers which still stand between the Negro and his full manhood will topple before a trumpet of justice which is not accompanied by any kind of force." (p. 96)

THE INSTITUTION . . .

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be "no." If the welcoming of non-whites into the church, and addressing himself in a clear and courageous way to the discriminations practiced against non-whites in the area where his church is located, threatens the "peace" of the congregation, its membership increase and its financial stability — what then? Should the institution take priority over the witness? It is at this point in the ministry of the pastor and in the life of the congregation where many stumble and fall. They become God's good, self-appointed policemen to "protect" His institution while giving second place to the witness — God's instrument for building the institution.

Is it possible at this point reverently to paraphrase the words of Christ spoken in the Sermon on the Mount? Every one then who hears these words of mine and does them will be like a wise man who built his institution upon the rock; and the rain fell, and the floods came, and the winds blew and beat upon that institution, but it did not fall, because it had been founded on the rock. And every one who

Some 1962 Events and Dates

In order that the friends of our annual Valparaiso University Institutes on Human Relations may make their summer plans at an early date to include attendance at and participation in the Institute for 1962, we are making the time of the Institute known now. It is **July 27-29**.

The fourth Workshop on Human Relations for pastors and other professional church workers will be held at Valparaiso University from July 23-27, immediately preceding the Institute which will begin on the afternoon of the 27th. — The Workshop will close at noon on the same day. The one will immediately follow the other to give opportunity to those attending the Workshop to attend the Institute also, without the expenditure of additional money and time to get to both. Some scholarships for the Workshop will be made available through a grant from the Lutheran Brotherhood.

hears these words of mine and does not do them will be like a foolish man who built his institution upon the sand; and the rain fell, and the floods came, and the winds blew and beat against that institution, and it fell; and great was the fall of it.

Since two or three **VANGUARD** readers may be laymen, it may not be out of place to suggest that they can do much to encourage their pastors in all instances to give priority to the witness and to let God then build His institution according to His will and purpose.

LUTHERAN HUMAN RELATIONS ASSOCIATION OF AMERICA

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