

Opinion Page

The other side of it

by Winston G. Robinson
Holy Cross Parish

On the day after Christmas, the death column of one of Toronto's daily newspapers listed, among others, 10 people who died Christmas day. Families and friends were now mourning their losses. Several people at a local bus stop were complaining that once again, this Christmas was a real "downer". Further from here in the west end of Downsview on Christmas night, a number of billiard parlors were open - and packed to the hilt. In a snack bar at a local gas station, several tables were occupied by individuals staring into the night.

The people mentioned above all shared something in common (even if they didn't initially realize it) - loneliness. I'm quite certain that other feelings were also present - anger, rejection, abandonment, separation, feelings of being unloved, not being appreciated, not belonging.

Perhaps just as sad as their difficulty in coping with loneliness under these or other circumstances is what the world has to offer as solutions to their loneliness: a glut of so-called "self-help" manuals offering "instant" remedies but so frequently falling short of the mark. Most recently, we heard much on the "New Age Movement" which suggests that we are in control of the "power within" and can heal ourselves, or even tap into a crystal for peace-of-mind or whatever. Then there are the latest in tapes presented by certain T.V. gurus offering tapes providing means to alter the mind's negative thoughts or, it is suggested, which can reprogram one's subconscious mind to give an individual "power" to change one's lifestyle.

As so often happens with wordy solutions or endeavoring to "playing God", seldom is the loneliness resolved, seldom are the hurting feelings communicated so that true healing can be experienced.

What has helped me immensely in dealing with such feelings has been coming into the truth and the answers for which I was searching - namely that of a personal relationship with Jesus. It was making a choice, taking a risk as it were, to enter into the silence of loneliness and letting go of control, and in all



CLERGY COMMENT

of this, coming into the reality that God truly and unconditionally loves me - and always has. This is not an intellectual idea, but an idea that is a truth that has to be sent from the head to the heart.

Over the years as I've gotten to know Jesus more intimately, He has demonstrated time after time, occasion after occasion, that He is true to His Word - He is the Way, the Truth and the Life. This relationship with Jesus has provided a sense of belonging, a source of comfort and understanding in my loneliness - one who can always identify with me wherever I'm at.

So what am I attempting to say, friend, as you read this. That God continues to offer salvation to you and me and everyone through his only Son, Jesus Christ. The hope is that we need not be afraid to respond to the spiritual dimension of our lives. Take the risk that I did, friend and allow Jesus to touch you, to be your personal Lord and Savior of your life. Your loneliness won't go away, and you'll still experience not only the good feelings we all do, but the painful feelings of your humanness. But, the difference is this. Where the world has so often failed to provide you true peace, joy and love for which you so often hunger, with Jesus as Lord of your life, you will, like me, come to know and experience what God has said from the very beginning in his Word: Long before your father, mother, brothers and sisters or anyone else was around, I was there to love you. He will fill the void and touch the pain of your loneliness.

And so, friend, my prayer for you is this. May Jesus touch you where you're at. May He touch you in the pain of your loneliness. May He grant you unwavering faith, constant hope and love that endures to the end. May He grant you His grace and every blessing and keep you safe throughout the New Year. I ask this for you, friend, in the name of Jesus, who is Lord, for ever and ever, amen.

LETTERS

Ice a team, but not the fans

Dear Sir,
I have watched the junior Gemini - now Raiders - for the last several years.

I am continually amazed at how hard some of the people work to insure a hockey team in town, while at the same time others seem to do their best to discourage support for it.

On Tuesday evening (Dec. 27) the support group went to a lot of work to put on a Kid's Night. For the first time this season the arena was full of kids and their parents. This big crowd seemed to give the team - who have been playing a little spotty the last while - a big and well deserved lift and they responded with a good show for the fans. As I said, the stands were full of parents and kids. Unfortunately the people in charge of the arena thought it was the 27th of July, not the 27th of December. It was cold in there. I was freezing and I heard

several others complaining. President Dave Kentner was at the front of the arena selling tickets and welcoming the fans, so I mentioned the lack of heat for the fans to him. As is Mr. Kentner's habit, it was seen to in less time than it takes to talk about it and the heaters were soon glowing red - glowing that is, till Mr. Kentner had to leave near the end of the second period. All of a sudden we were back in the frigid zone again. Around where I sat trying to keep warm and watch a pretty good hockey game a lot of people couldn't take it anymore, and got up and left.

The boys on the ice put on a good game and showed a lot of character by not retaliating when Milton saw the game was gone and started to try and intimidate the boys.

I think the team and the people who work so hard to provide it deserve better co-operation on a

night when they could have made a lot of new fans. To me it showed a total disregard for the guy paying his four bucks at the door.

This is not the first time this year this has happened. On another occasion that I can recall, the local arena was the local ice palace in more ways than one. I walked out after an earlier game this year, and there were four scouts who had watched the game. I overheard them talking about some of the players they had seen and also wondering if Georgetown was ever going to get hooked up to the gas line. I have failed to see those four at any games since.

We may need more offices in the recreation department and maybe a new assistant or two, but we also need the juniors as they are the only game in town now.

A Disgusted Fan,
Ron Loucks

Tree loss hits close to home

Dear Sir,
I would like to acknowledge the letter in the Dec. 7 issue of the Herald by Aird Lewis - Director, Trees for Today and Tomorrow. The points made in his letter were very true. But how can you find out what ails a tree when it, and thousands of others, are being chopped down by greedy developers?

I live in Moore Park and myself and many of my neighbors, fought the best we could this past spring to save the stand of trees behind

Joycelyn Crescent. We wrote letters, drew up petitions, and went to all the town council meetings re: The Relisco Development, to save this tiny but important forest. In the end, it was the town council that decided to accept a cash payment in lieu of parkland - ie: trees - from Relisco.

It's written in black and white in the bylaw. So, I'm sad to say that the real enemy of the trees is plain old greed for money. Just take a look at the two developments going in right now south of Hungry

Hollow. Looks a bit like a moonscape, doesn't it?

In a few years, if the developers have their way, you won't recognize Georgetown and area. It will be remarkably similar to Brampton, or worse, Mississauga! All concrete and no glorious trees.

So, Mr. Lewis, you won't have to worry about acid rain getting to our trees because soon there won't be any trees left to poison.

Doreen Henschel,
Joycelyn Crescent, Georgetown

USC needs Canadians' support

Dear Sir,
Overseas agencies seldom highlight positive and hopeful projects to win public support. Ethiopia is a case in point.

Mention Ethiopia and most Canadians think of a wasteland of war and famine, without hope. This image is misleading. There is hardship, but there is also progress.

USC Canada is helping to supply funds so that farmers and scientists can work together through Ethiopia's Plant Genetic Resource Centre (PGRC) to conserve the

country's traditional seeds and select the best for development and storage in times of drought.

PGRC Director, Dr. Melaku Worede, describes the program as the only way to sustainable agricultural growth within Ethiopia. Local seeds have been developed by centuries of cooperation between man and nature, to resist drought, pests and disease and improved varieties will be used to increase agricultural production.

The Ministry of Agriculture,

Farmers' Associations and the Ethiopia Seed Cooperative are working in close cooperation with PGRC.

The cost to USC of launching and coordinating this important pilot project is \$1.3 million. We need the financial support of Canadians to help Ethiopia put its own resources to work.

Please send your contribution, every dollar counts.

John Martin,
Chief Executive Officer,
USC Canada

Snorers just can't seem to get any rest

It never fails. Never.

Just when you're sure that medical science has exhausted its supply of horror stories about new and unexpected health hazards, they drop yet another bombshell on you.

This time, doctors have announced to the world that snoring makes you stupid.

Good lord. For all these years, we've supposed that snoring was a perfectly harmless hobby. Or at best a subtle form of revenge upon spouses who have cold feet.

Now we learn the ever Zzzz knocks another few brain-cells into next week. Catch enough Zzzz's, and you are doomed to wake up one morning with the vague notion that Zzzz is the letter that comes between Qqqq and Ffff in the alphabet.

Apparently, most heavy snorers are afflicted with a condition known as obstructive sleep apnea, which causes the sleeper to stop breathing for periods of up to 90 seconds. This reduces blood-oxygen levels, and it has long been suspected that there might be some impact on the brain.

And now, researchers at the University of Florida have come up with a hideous piece of confirmation: a study of 46 snorers has revealed that the 13 who snored most heavily were also the ones with the lowest IQs.

Granted, this correlation bet-



Weir's View

By Ian Weir

Thomson News Service

ween snoring and low IQ doesn't necessarily prove that snoring causes stupidity - it's always possible that the cause-and-effect relationship works the other way round.

In other words, it's possible my snoring is not making me dumber by the night. Possibly, I snore because I was thick as two planks in the first place.

But either way, there isn't much consolation. You still wind up perceiving a whole new resonance in that familiar night-time snarl: "Stop snoring, stupid."

On the other hand, this sudden concern about a possible link between snoring and stupidity raises a much deeper and more fundamental question. To wit: who among us really knows - beyond a shadow of a doubt - that he snores in the first place.

It goes without saying that I have never heard myself snore. And yet I am told, repeatedly, that I snore like a chain-saw.

I scarcely need identify the person who tells me this. Which raises the second question: how reliable is this particular source.

Like most of us, my tendency is to shrug in sheepish acquiescence when told that I snore. At best, I fling back a witty rejoinder - like, "yeah... Well, you make silly little whiffing sounds."

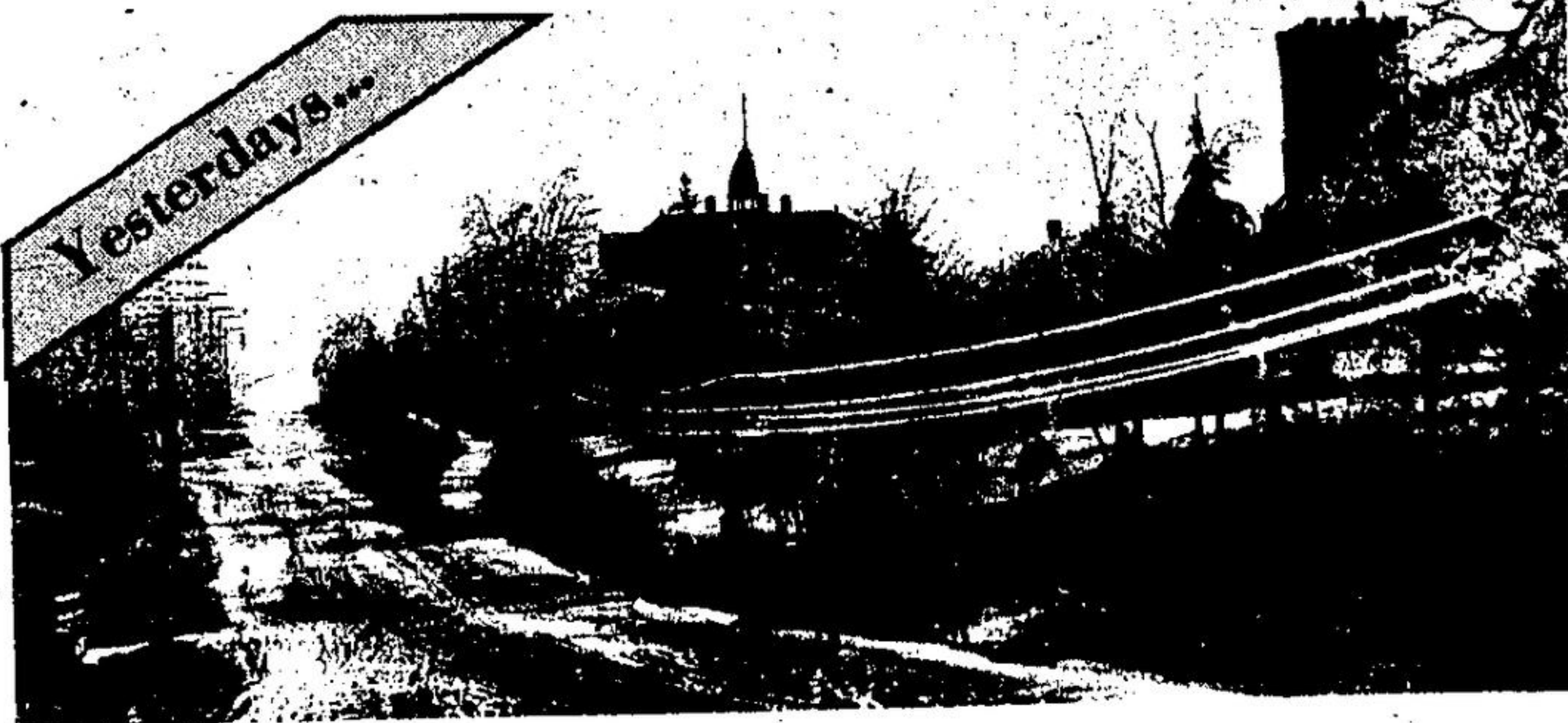
But still, there is always the nag-

ging suspicion that this accusation about snoring is just another one of those Big Lies that crop up in relationships - like the claim that you're pig-headed (absurd!) or that you sulk if you don't get your own way (vile falsehood).

Granted, the Love of My Life had a ready comeback when I finally put my foot down and insisted categorically that I never snore.

She consulted my mother, who duly reported that I have snored since I was a kid.

But keep in mind that my mother was the one who foiled my childhood attempt at vegetarianism by telling me that lamb-chops grew on trees. So we're hardly dealing with an unimpeachable source here.



There may be a difference of 75 years but certain landmarks, like the Georgetown High School are still recognizable from this vantage point looking east along Guelph Street from the Mill Street intersection. This 1913 photo was provided by the Esquesing

Historical Society, which will hold its first meeting of the new year on Wednesday, Jan. 11 at 7:30 p.m. at the Glen Williams town hall. Speakers will be from the local LACAC committee, and all are welcome to attend.