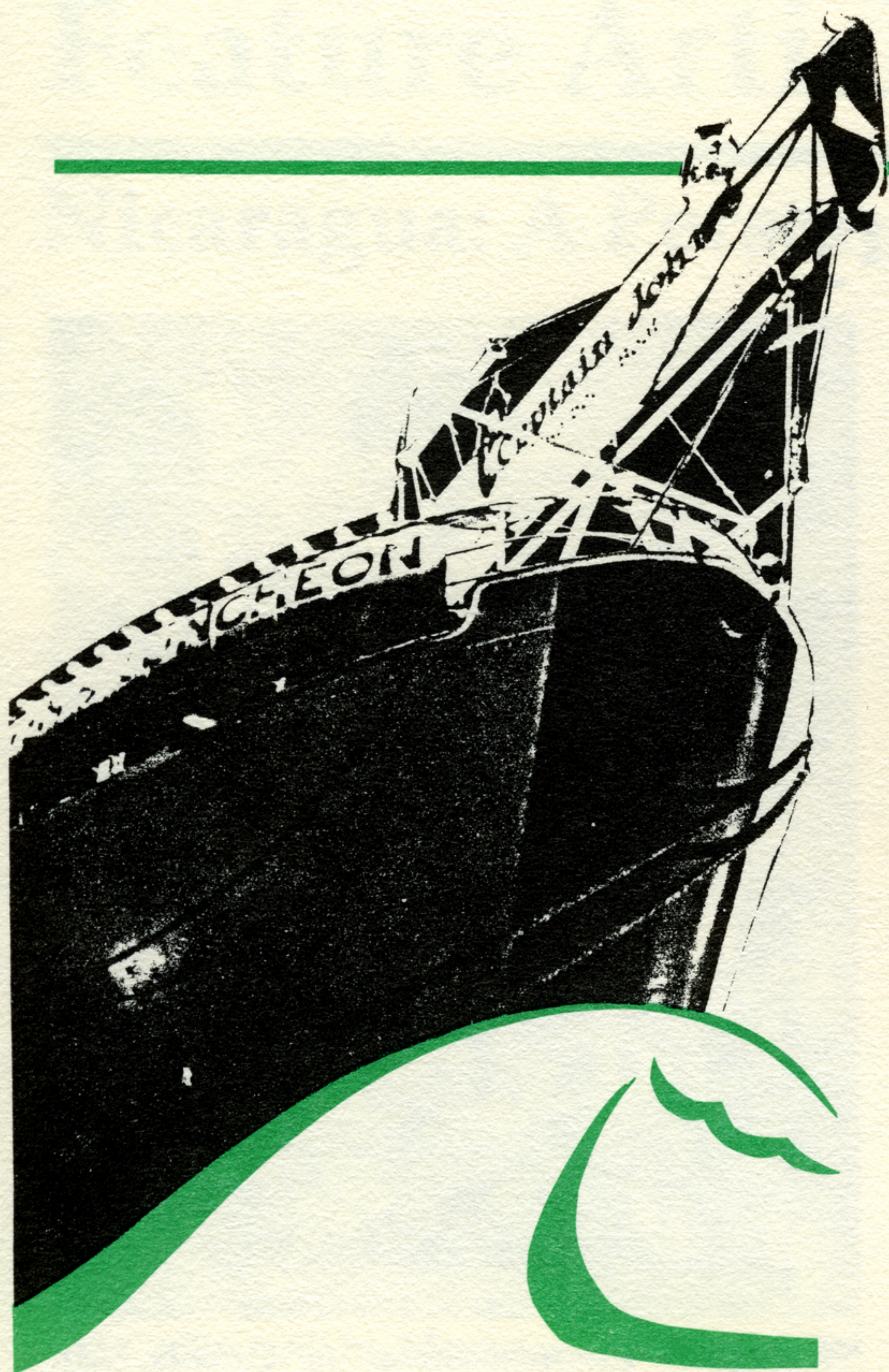


Alumni News



Good people enjoying the company of one another
Fr. Norm addresses the eighty alumni who gathered for the Toronto reunion dinner.

Plans for alumni association launch

"Good people always have and still do enjoy the company of each other." It was with this sentiment that Fr. Norm Choate greeted the 80 alumni who gathered in early November at Captain John's Harbour Boat Restaurant for the College's first alumni reunion dinner in Toronto. Like family members who hadn't seen one another in years, there existed a generous feeling of friendship and a sense of belonging to something special which was almost tangible. The warm spirit, laughter and conversation of alumni renewing acquaintances with faculty and classmates combined with a superb dinner to make this reunion a grand occasion. It came only a month after an equally successful chapter gathering in Hamilton at the Hillcrest Restaurant.

"Collegial education as we know it at St. Jerome's finds its focus in the building of community ... in becoming part of a network of a society and, in our case, in becoming an active part of the Church," said Fr. Norm. "We consider it a part of our continuing mandate to expand, to promote, and to support the development and continuation of that community." He observed that the good feeling prevalent at both the Hamilton and Toronto dinners welcomes and reinforces this collegial mandate.

Alumni must "help us to be good citizens of our Church, province and country," he said. He cited the example of alumnus Ron Mendez, now a priest working on the Island of St. Vincent, who contacted the College to enquire as to the possibility of St. Jerome's offering correspondence courses to people on St. Vincent. "Because one of you saw that it was a possibility, you took the initiative and asked us what we could do. We responded."

In the same light, Fr. Norm mentioned a recent request to sponsor foreign students by an alumnus working in South Africa. "It may be that we can do something in that regard as well," he said.

He noted the establishment of the St. Jerome's Centre for Catholic Experience two years ago and the support given to it by College alumni. "We want not only to be reactive to the social justice and spiritual issues of our time ... but to be influential as well." The Centre is a vehicle for this, he noted, and one way in which alumni can participate in the life of the College.

"Ours is a different mission ... the development of human beings, of persons and of society."

He encouraged all alumni to "tell us about the needs and expectations of the society in which you live. We at St. Jerome's want to continue to offer a value-based and value-oriented education. We want to prepare people for life, for a career, and we want to have some influence on the society in which we live."

Turning to the education scene in Canada and in Ontario, Fr. Norm commented on the growing problem of limited accessibility to university education in this province. "The product of this is a tendency in the direction of elitism in post secondary education which is not in the history of St. Jerome's College. We intend to do everything we can to kick against that goal. We will swim upstream. We will listen to the beat of the other drum."

"Ours is a different mission. We are not in the business of preparing technologists. Technologists are important and necessary, but ours is a mission that has to do with the development of human beings, of persons and of society. We intend to keep those goals in focus."

In maintaining such goals, pressures are placed on scholarship monies, he acknowledged. "We have to find ways in which to

present opportunities to students who would have not otherwise had these opportunities. We are not well served if we simply accept the fact that these are tough economic times. We have to keep our focus on what our vision and purpose is rather than emphasize restraint and retrenchment at a time when our most profound ability to create is being called upon."

"For the moment," he concluded, "what we need from you, the alumni of St. Jerome's, is your spiritual, moral and intellectual support. We need the encouragement of seeing you together, of recognizing that the collegial dimension of our education is very important to you. St. Jerome's College has a different kind of education for a different kind of people."



(l. to r.) Leslie Johnstone ('82), Mike Ludgate ('83), Mike Horbatiuk ('80) and Greg McKernan ('81)