

We have reached the time of year when, despite the many tinsel reminders of our own weaknesses -- our selfishness, our love of things -- some sounds amid the tumult are directed to our spirits.

And we know that the great message to the spirit is always the injunction to think of others. In what may be only a vague memory of that ancient injunction, we give Christmas presents, forgetting that the only real gift is the gift of ourselves.

A college should help us prepare for that kind of giving, should prepare us by leading us to understanding, to tolerance, to sympathy, even to love. In the President's Report, in which I summed up the last academic year, I wrote, of last May, that we remembered "the tensions and the days of crisis" but also "the victories of communication and of rational discussion and the not infrequent moments of understanding and unity."

Every week has its tensions, but every day presents us with opportunities for that kind of victory and can be filled with moments of understanding and unity.

And so I am pleased to have this chance to wish everyone a happy holiday season, knowing that in that happiness must be reflected our love and respect for one another.

Roland Dille, President