

ST. PATRICK'S PARISH

BARONESS SPEAKS FEB. 11

Catherine de Hueck, Russian Baroness, will be the guest speaker at the annual banquet of the Sodality of Our Lady on Feb. 11. The Baroness is the founder of the "Friendship House" and has devoted her life to helping the Negroes of Harlem.

Mrs. Luk B. Margraff and Mrs. Paul Broschart have been named chairmen of this banquet.

Assisting on committees will be Mrs. Walter C. Ervin, Mrs. William P. Schiefen, tickets; Mrs. James J. Doyle, Miss Helen Cain, decorations; Mrs. Charles P. Lynch, programs; Miss Margaret Shields, publicity.

St. John the Baptist Parish

SODALITY PLANS BANQUET

The Sodality of Our Lady is holding its annual banquet this year on Feb. 10 at the Mark Twain Hotel. Mrs. Thomas P. Rohde is chairman and Mrs. Charles Hummel is co-chairman.

Assisting on committees will be Miss Grace Miller, Mrs. John C. O'Brien, Miss Madeline Rohwinkle, Mrs. Fred S. Rohwinkle, Mrs. Lewis Riebeck, Mrs. Frank A. Rohde, Mrs. Jacob F. Rohde, Mrs. Frank K. Rohde, Mrs. John Ruhmel, Jr., Mrs. Daniel J. Ryan, Mrs. James A. Ryan and Mrs. Francis M. Rourke.

Further plans will be announced at the Jan. 27 meeting next Tuesday.

Altar Society Meets

The annual supper of the Altar Society was held last Monday evening in the parish hall. Mrs. Joseph

Gates was chairman and Mrs. Augusta Schiefen co-chairman.

Approximately forty members attended and heard the enlightening talk by Brother Servatius, F.M.F. He gave a brief history of the Brothers of Mercy and told of the great work being carried on by them. The organization is comparatively new in the United States and at present has only two houses, both established at Buffalo. These brothers devote their lives to the care of the sick, and are well known in Europe, especially Germany.

Mrs. Charles Kasper, president, presided at the meeting. Other officers are Miss Margaret Kennedy, secretary, and Mrs. Thomas Rohde, treasurer.

The group enjoyed community singing, highlighted by several solos by Mrs. Joseph Schiefen. Accompaniment was supplied by Mrs. Joseph Herold.

Abyssinian Churches

By Donald Attwater

With the Italian "empire" in Africa being broken up and Haile Selassie back in his own land, Abyssinia has come into the news again, being frequently referred to in press dispatches, and it seems worth while to take a look at how the Italian occupation of five years ago has modified the ecclesiastical set-up of that country.

Just as the Abyssinians (a word of Arabic origin meaning, more or less, "mongrels", they call themselves Ethiopians and their country Ethiopia) are far from being a homogeneous and united people, so they are not (as is sometimes implied) a solidly Christian nation. Estimates of their number vary, but there seems to be about eight millions of them, including Eritrea, about a half of whom are Christians (mostly in the Amhara, Shoa, Goffam and Tigre regions); the remainder are Mohammedans (as elsewhere in Africa, Islam gains ground in some places at an alarming rate) and heathen, with a number of Falashas, who are Jews by religion but not by race.

Sixteen hundred years ago the second apostle of Ethiopia, the Syrian St. Frumentius, went to Alexandria and there was consecrated bishop of St. Athanasius, and from that day to this the Church of Abyssinia has been in a manner dependent on the Coptic Church of Egypt. It followed its parent into schism and heresy after the Council of Chalcedon, and has so remained ever since, except for an uneasy time in the sixteenth-seventeenth century it uses practically the same Alexandrian rites of worship as the Copts, but in Ghe'ez, the classical Ethiopian language, now dead.

ONLY BISHOP
The most practical manifestation of Abyssinia's religious dependence on Egypt was that the primate of the Ethiopian Church was always an Egyptian monk appointed by the Coptic patriarch of Alexandria; he had the title of abuna ("our father") and for centuries was the only bishop in the church.

This went on until the death of Abuna Matthew in 1926, when the negus (or emperor), Haile Selassie, voicing younger and "progressive" opinion, demanded the independence of his church from Egypt. This was bitterly opposed both by many Abyssinians and by the Coptic patriarch, Abna John XIX, and eventually a compromise was reached.

In 1929 Abna John appointed as usual a Coptic monk, Cyril, as abuna, and at the same time ordained four Abyssinian bishops. These bishops were to have no delimited dioceses but were to be, as it were, auxiliaries to abuna, with fixed residences. In the following year the patriarch ordained a fifth bishop in the person of the Abna, the "abbot general" of the monks of the "congregation" of Takla Haymanot, living at the monastery of Dabra Libanos and having jurisdiction only over the numerous

monks. Although not previously ordained bishop the itahage, being an Abyssinian, has often been a more influential person in his church than abuna himself.

It was thought after the Italian occupation of Abyssinia that Signor Mussolini might discourage this movement towards religious autonomy, in order to make friends among the Copts in Egypt, but the opposite happened. Abuna Cyril was informed by the Italian civil authorities that in future he was to be quite independent of Alexandria. Cyril had taken the oath of allegiance to the new government, but he received this information with reserve, so he was sent off to Rome to be given his orders there. Then he went to Cairo to discuss the position with the Coptic patriarch, and as a foreign subject.

STIRRED UP EGYPT

By this time two of the bishops appointed in 1929-30 were dead, and two more refused to countenance the Italian proceedings, so in November, 1926, the other leading dignitaries of the Abyssinian Church were conveyed at Addis Ababa to cope with the situation. This gathering proclaimed the complete independence of its church, and appointed the remaining bishop, Aba Abraham, who was old and blind, to be its first patriarch. It also named a new episcopal itahage and three suffragan bishops, for the Dabra Damo, Sala Singhai and Aksum regions. The Italian viceroy, General Gratianni, was not slow to express his government's extreme gratification at these proceedings.

In Egypt indignation at this coup d'etat was not confined to the Coptic Christians, and the council of ministers entered into fruitless diplomatic negotiations with Italy. It was, however, represented to the Coptic patriarch by the Italian authorities that the age-long link between his church and that of Abyssinia might be renewed if he would recognize the new position, with Aba Abraham at its head. This Abna John refused to do, and on Dec. 28, 1926, he solemnly excommunicated Abraham.

Beyond the fact that Aba Abraham has since died, it is difficult to get authentic information about subsequent events. But it seems clear that the traditionalists and anti-Italians in Abyssinia still look on the exiled Abuna Cyril as their legitimate hierarchy, while the others accept the new state of affairs, which does away with a tradition of sixteen centuries and makes wholly national the last of the dissident Eastern churches that was not organized on a purely national basis.—CV Service.

Discretion is necessary in spiritual life. It is its part to restrain the exercise in the way of perfection, so as to keep us between the two extremes.—St. Ignatius.

ST. PATRICK'S PARISH

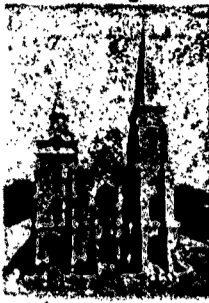
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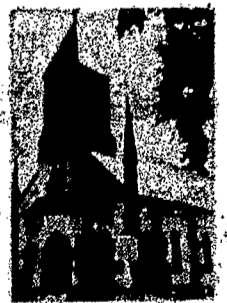
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