

Pope Thrills 50,000 With Blessing From St. Peter's Balcony

VATICAN CITY (NC) — As the sun slowly set behind the Vatican hill to bring to a close the Feast of the Immaculate Conception, His Holiness Pope Pius XII unexpectedly appeared on the balcony of St. Peter's Basilica to impart to the huge gathering of the Roman faithful in the square below his Apostolic Benediction.

It was at once a magnanimous and significant gesture for His Holiness had been informed that more than 50,000 of the beloved faithful of the Eternal City, who had come in response to his papal appeal to join him in a Holy Hour of impetration and expiation, had found the Basilica filled to overflowing and were obliged to remain in the great square of St. Peter's. There they stood in silent prayer to the Blessed Virgin Mary to whose Immaculate Heart Pope Pius XII, as Bishop of Rome, from within the Basilica was solemnly consecrating his children of Rome that through her intercession God might grant the graces necessary in this time of sorrow.

Four Out Hearts

It was a spontaneous outpouring of the Roman faithful such as has seldom been witnessed before and they had come, there was no mistaking it, to pour out their hearts in prayer to the Blessed Virgin Mary that she might obtain for them and for the world that peace in the truth and justice and charity of Christ.

The ceremony within the Basilica was simple and yet most impressive there was no brilliant lighting, no long procession, no special choir. The altar, richly illuminated by myriad candles, stood out against the sombre background. The singing was the spontaneous and heartfelt chorus of the congregation chanting the lovely and meaningful verses of "The Magnificat," the "Adoro Te," the "Miserere," the "Parce Domine," the "Alma Redemptoris Mater," the "Tota Pulchra," the Litany of the Blessed Virgin and, finally "Christus Vincit."

The immense congregation knelt in perfect silence as His Holiness recited the prayer of consecration to the Immaculate Heart of Mary which he himself composed. It was a loving sight and one had the impression that the heart of Rome was overflowing in devotion and impetration as the Bishop of the Eternal City stormed Heaven in soulful supplication with his beloved flock.

Dramatic Scene

After imparting Benediction of the Blessed Sacrament, the Holy Father was carried from the Basilica on the gestatorial chair and went immediately to the balcony where he blessed the assembled crowds and the city which he rules as Bishop.

Here indeed was a dramatic moment which will live long in the memory of all present. Rome and Romans rested easier that night in the knowledge that the Blessed Virgin Mary had been called upon to act as special mediatrix in the cause of world peace and that the city and the faithful had been placed in a very special manner under her protection.

Present in the apex of the Vatican basilica during the Holy Hour were 20 Cardinals and members of the diplomatic corps, including representatives from the United States, Great Britain and the various Central and South American countries.

A great boom in air travel is predicted for after the war. In that case, will billboards be built so they lie flat on the ground? Omaha World Herald.

Deny Yamamoto of Japanese Navy Is 'Catholic'

WASHINGTON. — Admiral Kumaichi Yamamoto, commander of the Japanese navy, is not a Catholic. Numerous inquiries regarding the religious affiliation, if any, of the Japanese leader have been received by the N.C.W.C. NEWS SERVICE, based, it is believed, on confusion of his name with that of the late Rear Admiral Shinjiro Yamamoto, a former president of Catholic Action in Japan.

Many of the inquiries, it is believed, were prompted by an error contained in a questions and answers column conducted in the

CHRISTMAS AND THE LEPERS



War or no war, Catholic missionaries carry on their work among the lepers of the world. In this picture a Catholic Sister is shown with two other patients in Rabaul. The Society for the Propagation of the Faith has announced its annual Christmas Leper Appeal for 1943 to aid the thousands of lepers in 40 asylums in the mission fields. (N.C.W.C.)

Poles' Faith Mounts Despite Sufferings

LONDON (NC)—Despite their sufferings under the German heel, all Poles united in their trials are filled with daily growing faith in the future. This was the message received by the Polish Catholic Press Agency, KAP here through an underground channel, from an eminent Catholic leader in Poland.

"The religious feelings of the Polish people," the message says, "are deepening daily as they endure the most terrible ordeals of which the mind can conceive. We have passed through several phases. First, we prayed for mercy. Next we asked God to punish the criminals. In the third phase we prayed for strength to endure. Now our only prayer is: 'Thy will be done.'"

It must however be emphasized that our present frame of mind is not one of resignation. On the contrary we have a deep faith that what is happening had to be, and that the future will be good.

As our people's faith grows there is a greater spiritual understanding between Polish clergy and laity. The people have seen that the occupying authorities have treated the priests more harshly

than other intellectuals. The Polish Catholic clergy have undergone all the torments of the German regime of constant interrogations, prisons, concentration camps, and Prayer-Books Seized.

Last winter in the areas incorporated into the Reich, orders were given to confiscate all prayer-books containing the hymn Boze cos Polskie. God save Poland. And since all Polish prayer-books include this hymn, all have been seized. Thus the people have had to learn to pray without the aid of prayer books which has perhaps made their prayers more sincere and fervent than ever before.

The Germans as a result of all this see in the Polish clergy a deadly enemy which hampers their efforts to corrupt the Polish soul and more especially the soul of the Polish youth which the Germans attack with propaganda of all kinds and surround with gambling dens and dance halls which are in reality houses of vice and debauchery.

"The Polish clergy have richly earned the hatred of the invaders. Their calm patriotism, their daring sermons, their participation in all kinds of underground activities they give instruction secretly to students, for example — tighten their bonds with the community and stiffen the common resistance to the invader. In all fields of action the heroic and persevering work of young priests is especially outstanding. They combine in a remarkable manner strictly pastoral duties with patriotic activity. The same can also be said of the elder curates and the higher clergy, and among them the blameless and heroic figure of the Metropolitan Sapieha of Cracow sets a high example.

Christmas Will Seem Strange To American Troops In Australia

By ELSIE BRIGGS
CHRISTMAS in Australia was originally quite a problem for the Australians. The majority of the white settlers were English in

the habit of observing that day with the usual Christmas festivities of England heavy eating and a general round of merriment that just naturally didn't fit into the summer weather they have in Australia in December.

Cold and snow are unknown at that time of year and skating and snowballing are sports unheard of at Christmastide by the youth in the Antipodes. Gradually the transplanted English had to adapt themselves to the habits of the tropics and eat food even on Christmas, that is suitable for weather 100 degrees in the shade. Such food did not include roast geese, spiced hama plum puddings with brandy sauce, roast beef and wild turkey.

Picnics Instead of Yule Legs

Instead they eventually brought about a holiday celebration that even to this day does not seem like Christmas to many who have known that day of days in other lands. Gone are the yule logs, which simply are not needed for either decorative or heating purposes, and with it the mince pies and old port, to say nothing of the champagne. In their places came the famous picnics in the Bush and in the Australian cities during the Christmas holidays with the mercury soaring as high as 112 and 115 degrees, the holiday schedule of the average citizen includes at least one day at the beach.

In normal times, most of the city homes are deserted. Office workers discard routine for glorious, sun-filled hours. A prosaic existence is overwhelmed in a revelry of sport and sunshine. Tennis courts are crowded. Cricket fields are thronged and the wooded hills are dotted with the forms of hikers and picnickers, while surf lovers "shoot the breakers" on their polished boards.

So much for the Christmas holidays in the Australian cities, where by comparison with the heat of the "outback" or the Bush, the days are mild.

To the visitor the great spaces of the interior offer vivid change of color that is kaleidoscopic, action that is swift, dangerous sport that is synonymous with life on the sheep stations where one paddock may extend for a hundred miles and one squatter may be monarch of a thousand square miles of land.

Carnival Offsets Routine

At Christmas the monotony of station routine is offset by the staging of a carnival. It may be racing, or a picnic conducted by the racing club, or a rodeo, or perhaps an impromptu local event held on a station run. In any case the spectator is sure to have a lively time, interspersed with plenty of thrills.

This Carnival is bound to be the high-light of the year's social activities in the "outback," where entertainment is not plentiful. It causes something to stir and participants think little of journeying 100 miles or more to the scene. Races and chores are put aside and it is a gay crowd that packs campers and grooms horses.

With Mercury Soaring

When rough handbills are posted announcing the date of a Christmas rodeo or race meeting, the training of horses becomes a serious business and to all appearances the stake may well be as high as that of the Melbourne Cup.

As the day draws near, excitement runs high and dust clouds are to be seen out on the plains, where riders, solitary or in parties, make their way through the heat haze to the chosen site. Misty mirages fade and shimmer ahead, and the sun beats fiercely down on the parched and blackened grass that crackles softly beneath the horses' hoofs.

Occasionally a kangaroo may hop to cover among the stunted

New Church in Rome

Vatican City. — The new Church of St. Eugene, being erected in Rome through the generosity of Catholics throughout the world in commemoration of the Silver Episcopal Jubilee of His Holiness Pope Pius XII, is situated near Villa Borghese, a heavily populated section of the Flaminian quarter, but one which has no Church.

"In short, it may be said that the religious sentiment and relations of the clergy to the people have undergone a deep change for the better in the Polish community."

trees or an auto speed across the open ground at an incredible pace. It is all very exciting, the action and color the thrills and spunk. But with the mercury soaring, it often does in the "outback," 120 degrees and the land parched and arid, with dust rising in clouds from the stock-trampled land, sometimes creates an envy for those back home in England whose eyes are seeing cool snow this Christmas and far-reaching green during the festive season. The heat is not conducive to appetite either, and the ability to enjoy steaming plum puddings by the log fire is another cause for envy. But these people possess a deep, rooted love for this land and this, is the grandest country in the world.

Serviers for Troops

The American Catholic boys in Australia this Christmas will have every opportunity to go to church as usual, for the Catholic Church down under has the same beautiful Christmas services that American Catholics are privileged to attend in the United States. They will also be Christmas Mass in the American camps and the welfare units will have holiday festivities that will be enjoyed by American and Australians alike.

Christmas in Australia will be an interesting and varied experience for the American arm forces. Only in one thing will remain unchanged for the Catholic service man and that is in the Mass that no matter where the Catholic men may go, remain eternally the same.

Brazil Missionary Answers Protestants

(Continued from Page 1)

The efforts of the missionary are recognized as humanitarian. It reminds one of the fairy tale where the witch offers gingerbread to Hansel and Gretel. The children know the gingerbread is good and accept it suspiciously however of the witch's intentions. In somewhat like manner the Latin America and even the Indian accept the good gifts of the "Yankee" war of his intention and especially of his preachments.

One final statement of the delegates merits analysis and comment. "We affirm with full and first hand knowledge of the fact that, so far from Protestant institutions and representatives of Protestant Christianity being peril to good relations between the Americas they are today with some easily explained exceptions, and have been for decades, regarded with extreme favor by governments and peoples in the countries where they are located."

It is to be regretted that all exceptions so easily explained were not set forth.

Moreover, whatever may have been the attitude of the governments of Latin America in past decades towards Protestant missionary activities, that attitude has definitely changed. The governments are more than aware of their national responsibilities and obligations to the citizens.

American Protestant missionary activities represent to the governments an intrusion of foreign substance into the political, and into national life, however good and excellent the substance may be in another environment. Even the first American Catholic Missionary endeavor in South America was viewed suspiciously as a coup to exploit the territory economically. The Protestant Missionary Movement is suspected precisely because it is Protestant.

Catholic to the Latin American means universal and all-embracing. Protestant for them connotes division, sects, a par spirit, something esoteric, exclusive and anti-social. In the days when the Latin American Governments are inspired by resurgence of social ideals, outlined in the Papal Encyclicals and when the spirit of universal cooperation and goodneighborliness are searching for a basis, only the word Catholic the sense of the universal, embracing Faith has any significance for Latin America.