

Full Text of Pope's Christmas Message Presented

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Bishop Calls Family Groups To Communion

Responding to the fifth annual appeal of His Excellency Bishop Kearney, the faithful of the Diocese will receive Holy Communion in family groups on Sunday, which is the Feast of the Holy Family.

In a letter read in all the churches last week-end Bishop Kearney stated that "no more acceptable prayer for the welfare of the absent ones could be found than the united prayers of those left behind," and invited all families to mark the Feast of the Holy Family by receiving Holy Communion.

Declaring that "the efforts of our men at war must be supported by the prayerful petitions of the laity at home," the Bishop asked, "May I not expect that every family in the diocese will be found kneeling together at the communion rail on next Sunday?"

The official custom of marking the Feast of the Holy Family was inaugurated in 1940 when acting Bishop Kearney's suggestion thousands of families met together at the communion rail.

Encouraged by the enthusiastic reception of his suggestion, the Bishop has continued each year to issue an invitation for family groups to receive Holy Communion on the Sunday on which the Feast of the Holy Family is celebrated.

This popular family devotion has now become an annual tradition among all the parishes of the Diocese.

Cell System Started By British Group

LONDON (By Wireless RNS) — The Grail, Catholic organization, has introduced the Christian "cell" system in its work, to facilitate cooperation with Catholics generally in social service and spiritual undertakings.

The cells will be groups of members meeting for spiritual unity, and the formation of programs of practical aid to individuals needing temporal or religious assistance. Membership in the Grail is internally restricted to active, associate, or prospective members, but in the future any Catholic who wishes to cooperate in its work will be admitted to meetings.

The Pope is also THE MAN WHO TALKS TOO MUCH!

But in the titanic struggle between the Vatican and the Kremlin, the Pope holds another advantage over the Asiatic despot. This consists in the fact that although Mr. Stalin pays lip-service (for the sake of foreign propaganda) to democracy and liberty, he in truth fears them. Therefore in Russia the government suppressed the Holy Father's Christmas Address and handed out instead via the pages of Pravda a distorted and dishonest account of what the Pontiff allegedly said. Is this a sample of "the democratic rule" which Moscow professedly wishes for Poland? The scordid dishonesty of the Pravda article not only insults Dictator Stalin, it also betrays him to the world for what he is. Pravda with its baseless lies betrays the fact that Stalin fears not only the Pope but also the people — especially when they're close to discovering the truth.

Here is a sample of the Stalin-PRAVDA technique. "One cannot find a single word in the Pope's Christmas Address referring to monstrous crimes, unheard of in all history, or the Hitlerite bandits. On that question, which agitates the minds and hearts of hundreds of millions of people, Pope Pius XII does not consider it possible."

(Continued on Page 6)

Church in Germany Faces Huge Reconstruction Job

STOCKHOLM (By Wireless RNS) — The Catholic Church in Germany faces a "tremendous" task of reconstruction after the war, according to first-hand reports here.

Informed German Catholic sources in Stockholm state that a major difficulty will be finding leaders to build up material and personnel resources depleted by the war. Since most of the bishops are old, it may be necessary to draft younger leaders to help solve complex and far-reaching reorganization problems.

The Church's spiritual work has been so seriously disorganized that it will take many years to restore the ministry to its former strength. The German clergy at present are being called upon to care for millions of evacuated people as well as workers deported from other countries who are denied their own priests. The fact that most of the younger priests and even theological students have been mobilized as front line soldiers has aggravated the problem.

Nazi restrictions on collections for relief needs have seriously handicapped the Church's social ministry. Help to impoverished evacuees can be provided only when special permission is given to collect funds. The destruction of convents has been a particularly severe blow to the Church.

Printing restrictions have resulted in an unprecedented shortage of Bibles, catechisms and other religious literature. Frequently, collections of such material have been organized to meet needs of the sick and of bombed-out evacuees. Many congregations are forced to borrow Bibles from neighboring churches where supplies are more plentiful.

Latest Nazi decrees forbid priests to take part in funerals of persons killed during Allied bombing raids. The funerals are conducted by the state, and priests are allowed merely to bless the graves in private — either before or after burial.

All Catholic schools and newspapers have long since been banned and the Gestapo is keeping an ever-vigilant eye on the activities of clergymen, both inside and outside their churches. Political persecution of so-called defeatist elements among the clergy has reached the point where reports of priests arrested are being heard daily.

State Department Reassures Protestants on Passports

NEW YORK (RNS) — Statistics on passports issued to Protestant and Catholic missionaries for travel to Latin American countries reveal that the volume is rather impressively in favor of the Protestants, according to Ruth B. Shipley, chief of the State Department's Passport Division.

In a letter received here by Willard Johnson, assistant to the president of the National Conference of Christians and Jews, the government official declared that during November passports were issued to 16 Catholics for all destinations in the world, as compared with 110 passports issued to Protestant heads of families, and 96 dependent wives and children, some of whom had separate passports.

Miss Shipley added that the destinations of 11 of the 16 Catholics were Central and South American countries, as compared with 49 Protestant individuals or heads of families and 45 Protestant dependents for various Central and South American countries.

The State Department, Miss Shipley said, "has no intention of departing from the traditional American policy of handling all applications for passports for foreign travel with every discretion."

Wise Communists Should Study Church Says Archbishop

CINCINNATI (NC) — Communists were urged by the Most Rev. John T. McNicholas, Archbishop of Cincinnati, in his Christmas sermon here, to abandon their atheistic materialism and to join Christians in the work of establishing a lasting peace.

Communist Tactics

"Atheistic Communism is most vocal in its peace plans," Archbishop McNicholas said. "Its thinking is bold and fresh; its action is quick and decisive; it loves opportunity to control a situation whenever possible; it changes its techniques according to expediency; it always obeys orders, changing its position without any explanation; it moves and directs under false fronts; it strives for results above all things, regardless of the means employed. Its adherents are crusaders, some fanatical, many sincere, most of them convinced that they are introducing a new world order that will change our whole economic and social way of living and give the common man a fair chance in life. Communism denounces many abuses that should be denounced."

"If communism were wise," the Archbishop continued, "it would, in its long-range program, reject absolutely its atheism; it would change its character to the extent of reflecting all the consequences of atheism. Perhaps a world party of the common man, which would take up all the principles of true Christian social justice which are now regarded by many as radical, dangerous and revolutionary, could eventually accomplish thousand times better and quicker an unbloody social revolution in the world, for the betterment of the whole human family, than Communism can through agitation and if need be a bloody strife."

"Peace will never come to the world through Communism. May thousands of sincere, capable, and educated communists take time out to investigate the claims — the revolutionary claims, if you will — of true Christianity. We need a revolution today in the economic and social order, but if it is to benefit the whole human family, if it is to prevent wars, it must be a Christian revolution."

New Vision of Faith



Rev. Louis A. Giles, founder and managing editor of the "Catholic Digest," well-known radio speaker and author, who will deliver the series of four informal talks on the Hour of Faith, broadcast over the Blue Network during the Sundays of January at 11:30 a.m. (EST). [Photo: CATHOLIC CHURCH]

Flays Religious Chain Letters

ALBANY Religious chain letters, promising special favors to those who maintain their continuity, drew sharp criticism here from the Rev. John G. Tracey, director of the Bureau of Information of the Albany Roman Catholic Diocese.

Father Tracey labelled such letters "pernicious" and "superstitious" and stressed that they were not sanctioned by the Catholic Church.

A letter for peace, he said, is the latest being circulated in this area, and throughout the country, the prayer allegedly approved by an order of nuns.