Discrimination Faced By Syrian Catholics

Rome — (NC) — Reports of discrimination against Catholics in Syria under the new regime are being received in Rome. Jesuit Fathers, Sisters of the Sacred Heart of Jesus and other Catholic missionaries who came from France have been deported, the reports state.

The Armenian school at Damascus and the Jesuit College in Homs have been forced to close, it is reported, and a group of Sisters of the Sacred Heart of Jesus, all of whom are native Syrians, are not permitted to conduct their schools.

College to Reopen Swiss Branch

River Forest, Ill. — (NC) — Authorities of Rosary College here have announced tentative plans for the reopening of the College's European branch in Fribourg, Switzerland. The branch, Etudes, has been closed since 1939.

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LEGAL VIOLENCE SEEN IN CLERGY'S DEATH SENTENCE

Vatican City — (Radio, NC) — The military trial in Scutari, Albania, which imposed the death sentence on three priests, whose innocence "tortured clerics were unanimous in proclaiming" was branded as one of "legal violence" by Osservatore Romano, Vatican daily.

"Nothing is known of how the hearing was conducted or how the unfounded accusations were upheld," the paper charges, calling the priests "victims of the recent anti-Catholic persecution."

In an article entitled "Religious Executed in Albania," Osservatore recalls "that for some weeks past newspapers had been carrying reports of capital sentences imposed on Catholic priests in Albania."

"The report stated that Fathers John Fausti and Daniel Dajani and a Father Shaplaku were among the group shot and that a certain Gjergji Bici and another person named Mirakaj were not killed. No reason was given for the execution of the first group and no explanation was given why the high military court should have commuted the sentence of the latter two," Osservatore says.

Report Corrected

"Our readers will recall that we remarked at the beginning of this trial that its pretext was, according to Radio Moscow, the investigation of 'a clandestine Fascist organization of Jesuits,'" Osservatore comments. "But since then we have corrected this report and pointed out the following facts:

"Since the last days of December there was allegedly in the Seminary of Scutari a clandestine activity on the part of certain clerics against the regime in power for which they were immediately imprisoned. Later, when some of them were tortured in order to force them into compromising confessions, the tortured clerics were unanimous in proclaiming the innocence of their superiors and of the latter's complete ignorance of any clandestine activity.

"Notwithstanding this unanimous testimony, Father John Fausti, Jesuit Vice-Provincial and Father Daniel Dajani, Rector of the College at Scutari, were also arrested on charges of having encouraged activities against national welfare; of having been in close relation with refugee Albanians abroad, and of having incited trouble in the hope of provoking foreign intervention; in short, of being organizers and directors of a 'terrorist, fascist organization, the Albanian Union.'

Anti-Catholic Campaign

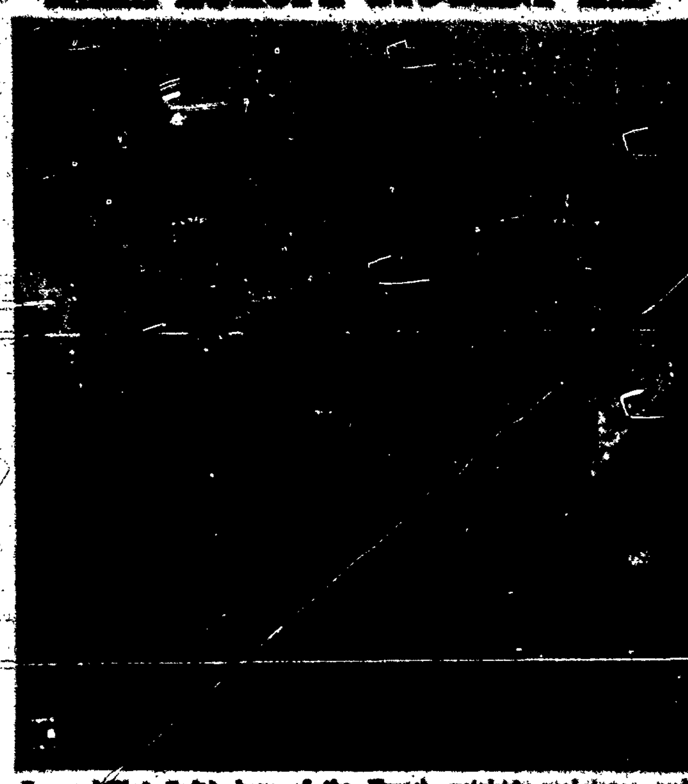
"While these calumnious charges offered pretext for an anti-Catholic campaign, the trial, which was to have such a tragic outcome, began in the military tribunal of Scutari. Nothing is known of how the hearing was conducted or how the unfounded accusations were upheld and what part Messrs. Bici and Mirakaj had in it — these two who were not sentenced to death, whereas there was no salvation for the other victims.

"Alas, it is clear," Osservatore continues, "that it was another of those numerous political trials of which the following characteristics are only too manifest: the revolutionary concept of the civil and juridical rights of the accused, and a revolutionary idea of innocence and guilt. They are trials of reprisals and not of justice; of vindictive passion in which injustices suffered are believed remedied by new injustices and seditious violence by legal violence."

Pope Gets Directory

Vatican City — (Radio, NC) — The first copy of the 1946 Annuario Pontificio, official Vatican directory, was presented to His Holiness by Msgr. Carlo Grano on behalf of the Most Rev. Giovanni B. Montini, Substitute Secretary of State.

ASKS EUROPE STUDENT AID



Roger Millot (left), head of the French patriotic resistance and leader of the Student Federation of French Catholics, visits the headquarters of the National Catholic Welfare Conference, in Washington, on his return from Lima, Peru, where he participated in the II Inter-American Assembly of Pax Romana. While in Lima, M. Millot, who is International Vice-President of Pax Romana, appealed to university students in the Americas for aid in behalf of needy students in war-torn Europe. He is pictured with the Rev. Paul Tanner, Assistant General Secretary, N. C. W. C., and Jaime Fonseca, editor of Noticias Catolicas, Spanish-language edition of the N. C. W. C. News Service. (Rel-NC Photos)

First Communion in Italy

By Bernard A. Seubert

(The author of the present article has just returned from Italy where he served for 18 months with the U. S. Army. Here he describes a simple and beautiful tradition: one of many which he observed during his stay in Catholic Italy.)

"Make straight and beautiful the way of the Lord" all North Italy seemed to be saying on the 30th of May.

The turmoil of war had died away and the last cannon had boomed leaving only the shattered marks of Mars here and there while the sun shone only as it can in Sunny Italy from a blue and cloudless sky.

To the left or South of the Autostrada the fertile Po Valley was well into its green clad summer with endless rows of vines and fruit trees putting forth their first blossoms and fruits — bright red cherries already peeped from amid the green boughs.

And Northward, the ragged outline of the high Alps cut the clear skyline — snow still hid in the crevasses and on the shady sides.

And the villages — narrow streets walled by houses of stone that showed the passage of hundreds of years; narrow streets that were a riot of the old and of the new, the bright and clean with the dirt and dust.

Treasures Displayed

From every window and balcony railing along the Way of the Lord and His Procession hung snowy-white or colored, newly laundered in some icy stream, linens, blankets, sheets, table covers, tapestries — all the valuable and precious cloths of the family. A linen cover that was new when Napoleon was young or a bedspread so carefully made by hand and then given from one mother to a daughter down thru unnumbered years. The family treasures.

Every archway leading into the patios and courts was open and an altar erected under the span. Fresh spring flowers — the mountain lily and sprays of edelweiss—and banks of candles surrounded the center piece of the Virgin or a favorite holy picture.

And then the procession thru the fields and streets led by altar boys carrying the Crucifix and ringing warning bells for the villagers who either were part of the procession itself or massed along the streets in doorways and windows. No one works on a feast day — shops closed and the fields empty of workers.

Behind the altar boys come the old men of the parish dressed in somber hued clothes neat but showing war wear, eyes agleam, with momentary agility restored to stiffened limbs, thanking God that they were alive and present once more on this day.

Come the angels — tiny tots all in filmy white, complete to halos and paper wings, looking ary thing but angels as they looked around and were in turn recognized by one of the onlookers.

The flower girls with baskets of fresh petals of all the lovely May flowers literally carpeting the streets for their Lord.

Proud and Happy

The communicants themselves in white with veils or their best suits as their sex dictated, uneasy but proud, eyes wandering from side to side, their happiest day.

The altar boys with censers and bells . . . the canopy with the village padre carrying aloft his Lord, surrounded by the parish assistants.

People in the windows and on the balconies cross themselves piously and those on the street genuflect as the Monstrance passes by.

And lastly the widows — and there are many of them in Italy —and those in mourning, all women, garbed in black, both young and old, bringing up the rear, bowed in grief, seemingly endless lines of them.

A stop in the main village plaza, the padre gives Benediction to all the assembled faithful and then the singing procession moves off again to the church, passing inside for the happy event.

And then the altars on the streets are taken down, the linens and cloths whisked in and people return to necessary household tasks for Maria and Luigino must have a fitting celebration to-nite. But the shutters on the shop stay down and the fields stay empty but for the grazing cattle.

And so it was that May 30th in every village across North Italy from Venice thru Verona and on to Milan and Turin. A universal First Communion Day celebrated in an old tradition in a Catholic Country and celebrated in the way it should be . . . respectfully and piously.

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REDS STIRRING SPANISH REVOLT WARNS PRELATE

New York — As the United Nations Security Council prepared to consider the Spanish question, the delegates were warned that any attempt by Communists to overthrow the Franco Government would result in revolution.

The warning came from the Most Rev. J. Francis A. McIntyre, Auxiliary Bishop of the Archdiocese of New York, who said Russia wanted to control Spain because of Spain's strategic position in the Mediterranean.

Will Never Surrender

"The Spanish people do not want Communism," he said. "They never will surrender to bloody Communism. If the United Nations or any group of nations insist on forcing a change in the Spanish Government a revolution is sure to take place.

"The Spanish people have shed too much blood and have suffered too long because of Communism."

Bishop McIntyre spoke to 900 employes of the Frank G. Shattuck Co., which operates the Schrafft restaurants, at their seventh annual communion breakfast Sunday in the Hotel Commodore.

Later he was asked if he didn't consider the Polish request that the U. N. investigate the Franco regime ironical, since both are Catholic countries.

"The Polish people are not the ones making the request," he said. "The avaricious eyes in the East are calling the Polish moves."

Asked what nation he meant by "avaricious eyes," he said:

"You can say I meant Russia in my speech. Who else is in the East now?"

The Communists, he said, have accused the Catholic Church of not supporting the principles of the Atlantic Charter, but there is a wide difference between the ideas of liberty and freedom as practiced by the Reds and the church's understanding of these ideals.

Chinese Reds Sack Cathedral

New York — (NC) — The Cathedral at Sienhsien in Hopeh, Northern China, has been sacked by the Chinese communist Eighth Army, according to a Vatican broadcast monitored by the Foreign Broadcast Intelligence Service here.

News of the devastation, which reached the Fides Agency, the broadcast said, was brought to Peiping by a young Chinese Religious who managed to escape. No details were known about several American Religious in that area, the broadcast continued. Some of the Religious were said to have been imprisoned.

The Vicar Apostolic of Sienhsien is Bishop Francis Xavier Tchao, S.J. The Vicariate has a population of 5,000,000 and, according to 1939 statistics, 86,100 Catholics.

Irish Friars Return To Louvain College

Dublin — Forced to leave their historic St. Anthony's College of Louvain after the outbreak of the war in 1939, the Irish Franciscans are making preparations for their second comeback in 300 years. The Rev. Theodore Crowley, O.F.M., a native of Fenit in County Kerry already has gone to Louvain to arrange for the necessary repair of the buildings, damaged during the war.

NCCW Relief Director Arrives in Germany

New York — (RNS) — The Rev. Richard A. Flynn of the archdiocese of New York has arrived in Frankfurt, Germany, to take up his duties as director of the program for displaced persons camps sponsored by War Relief Services-National Catholic Welfare Conference.

Father Flynn was accompanied by Matthew J. Brown, who also will represent War Relief Services in the organization's program for displaced persons in Germany. Brown will help supervise welfare services among displaced persons in the Third Army area and will have his headquarters at Munich.

New Registrations End For September at N. D.

Notre Dame, Ind. — Registration at the University of Notre Dame for the Fall semester beginning in September has been closed to all applicants other than former Notre Dame students returning from the armed services, it is announced here by the Rev. Louis J. Thornton, C.S.C., Notre Dame Registrar.

Residential facilities of the University are being exploited to the utmost in order that Notre Dame can accommodate the maximum number of students. The enrollment for the Spring semester which started March 14, was lifted to an all-time peak of 3,468 students. This exceeds by 200 any previous enrollment.

Paintings of Dominican [illegible] Ex-British Artist, [illegible]

New York — (NC) — The religious paintings and drawings of one of the most gifted British artists, now a Dominican nun in this country, are at present being exhibited at the Grace Gallery here. The artist is Sister Mary of the Compassion, who was known and won renown as Constance Mary Rowe before entering religion.

Those who have visited the exhibition are unanimous in hailing Sister Mary's works as those of an artist qualified to interpret for mankind the eternal truths that bind man to his God.

Constance Mary Rowe began the study of art at the age of fifteen in London and in 1922 won the coveted Prix de Rome in mural painting. During her Roman training she traveled extensively throughout Italy, studying the development of Christian art. She came to the United States in 1936, and it was while she lived and worked in New York that she decided [illegible] her life to religion [illegible] the community of [illegible] Sisters of the [illegible] ary in Union City [illegible] chose the name [illegible] of the Compassion [illegible] trance into the [illegible] completed many [illegible] individuals and institutions [illegible] of these paintings, on loan from the present owners, are included in the present exhibition.

Russian Ambassador Sees Crosby Film in Paris

Paris — (RNS) — [illegible] Celestine Cardinal Suhard, Archbishop of Paris, attended a special private showing of the Bing Crosby film, "Going My Way," at the American Embassy here. In the audience was Alexander E. Bogomolov, Russian Ambassador to France, whose appearance created surprise.

Near East Missions

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"Peace Be To You!"

This is the Christian prayer of our grateful Near East priests and sisters for you, whose kindness gives them peace of mind.

BISHOP ROBBED, CHURCHES SACKED

Things are not going at all well in Syria, Bishop Zehrahan tells us. In fact, he has been running against a streak of real bad luck.

"On my way home, my valise disappeared. It contained all my episcopal vestments and even my pastoral crozier. They were precious gifts, and it will cost much to replace them.

"When I got home, I received worse news. Some wandering bedouin [illegible] churches and [illegible] thing movable. In only one, did they leave a chalice behind."

All it it means that Bishop Zehrahan has need of replacements. It will cost all of nine hundred dollars. Won't you help to send this to the poor, distracted Bishop?

GOOD NEWS

Word comes that seven more novices have been added to the ranks of the American Medical Mission Sisters at Mary Gel, India. Your gift, in any amount, for "MARY'S BANK," will help them to realize their fond dream of security for abandoned children. For this they need a thousand dollars.

CHRISTIAN BROTHERS

The Christian Brothers run a school on the island of Syra, where kind friends recently built a chapel. Bishop Vucchio sends an urgent plea for five hundred dollars to pay the expenses of St. George's school this year. Ninety-five war orphans are taught there.

UNIQUE

Aside from Rome itself, the only city where there is more than one Cardinal is Beirut, Syria. Cardinal Agagianian is an Armenian, and Cardinal Tappouni is a Syrian. Help hope to make their humble Cathedrals worthy of the Roman purple. Won't you help them?

RAREST GIFTS

The BASILIANS, our Ethiopian Club, are growing all too slowly. But we must have more Near East schools. Seven hundred and fifty dollars will build a modest little one, and even your dollar monthly in the Basilians will do much.

SPECIAL PLEA

Bishop Ziemmara, of Jaffa, needs an urgent plea for mural vestments and altar furnishings. A chalice will cost twenty-five dollars, an alb a ciborium. The sum, to many Holy Communion, to the sick, might help. Complete altar furnishings come to one hundred and fifty dollars.

MIRACLE

Fifty dollars will support an orphan of Bishop Hakim's, little orphans in Cana of Galilee, where Our Lord [illegible] Christ's kindness?

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Would you believe that one leper hospital at [illegible], in the Sisters of [illegible], only two hundred dollars [illegible] run? Yet it cares for [illegible] Your gifts to our "TRANSFER LEPER FUND" helps hundreds of lepers in the Near East.

JOHN HABDAD

Two hundred dollars will bring this young man to St. Anne's Seminary, Jerusalem, to the happy day of his priesthood. Can you sponsor him? [illegible]

WHY?

Why did Immanuel call the attention of the Near East "Job" and our [illegible] the [illegible] will bring you "JOB AND JACOB," a pamphlet which answers the question.

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In the last three days of Holy Week only one Mass is permitted in each church. This is good because it makes us value the Mass more. Do you ever have Mass offered for loved ones, living or gone? These offerings are the main support of your Near East missionaries.

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