

503 Baptisms In One Parish

ROCHESTER, N. Y. — The year 1945 still has a few more weeks before running its course, but already baptisms of 503 babies have been recorded at St. Francis de Sales Church here, which has a parish registry of 12,000 members.

That figures out to a birth rate of 41.6 per 1,000 population for the parish, which compares with the last available national birth-rate statistics of 29.2 per 1,000.

The baptisms take place Sunday afternoon at 2 p. m. The record Sunday of this

year gives a hint why they start so early—there were 26 babies baptized on that Sunday. But the Sunday that stands out in the memory of Father Frederick J. Pooley, an assistant pastor, is one when 19 babies were brought for baptism. He recalled that while the ceremony was in progress and at a time when half the babies were making a tremendous din, a couple walked into the Church to be married.

"This noise didn't discourage them, either," Father Pooley recalled. "They went right on with the ceremony while the babies cried."

Document Sheds New Light on Zagreb Trial

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three days. He was released on September 23. During his imprisonment, he was held in a filthy cell which was crawling with vermin, and was made to lie on his back for 10 days subjected to torture.

Because of the key position in the Chancery which was held by Monsignor Slavice, his absence was a great hindrance to the efforts then being made under pressure of time to supply the advocates with the necessary material for the defense.

Canon Stipan Bakac, one of the Archbishop's intimate associates, was also taken in for questioning by the OZNA shortly before the opening of the trial.

From the time of the Archbishop's arrest until sentence was pronounced against him, the Yugoslav press and radio kept up a campaign of vilification against him such as is impossible for people in free countries to imagine. This campaign was obviously inspired, at the same time, by the same sources which repeated over and over again by the various newspapers and in broadcasts from different stations.

Meanwhile, not a single word was permitted to be spoken or written in defense of Archbishop Stepinac.

The particular bearing of these facts on the trial consists in this, that the tribunals in Yugoslavia are People's Courts, and are responsive in theory to the will of the people. The Public Prosecutor Blazevic referred to this function of the people several times in the course of the trial. Obviously if the people have an influence on the decision of the judges, they should also have access to information from both sides.

Petitions Forced

6. Throughout the Zagreb area, attempts were made in government offices, factories, etc., to force employees to sign petitions calling for severe punishment of the Archbishop. Meetings for this purpose were also called by the street secretaries, i. e., the communists in charge of surveillance on each street.

Refusal to sign, it was clearly intimated, might be followed by dismissal from one's job and consequent loss of the means of

livelihood. While these measures did not succeed, owing to the determined loyalty of the people to their Archbishop, they had the effect of heightening during the trial the terror which the city and all Croatia are living.

Immediately before and during the trial, the terror against bishops and priests was increased all over the country but particularly in Croatia. Auxiliary Bishop Lack was arrested while on a construction tour across the Odra, and released after a night in jail.

Bishop Bonifacio was turned back from pastoral visitation at Imotski where several communist "activists" threatened him with guns and slashed the tires of the hired automobile in which he was riding.

Bishop Puzos was forced to change his schedule of commissions in the islands because of a communitarian against him by "activists." In all these cases, the entire village had come out to meet the bishops and to conduct them to the parish churches, while the "activists" were few in number but armed. It is further worthy of note that the protests in the authorities by bishops and priests were answered by the statement that the "people" had a right to demonstrate against anti-national bishops.

Priest Murdered

On September 12, Father Paul Bedenik was murdered in front of his parish house at Sveti Martin pod Otokom.

On September 16, Father Alexander Cavlik was abducted from Krapinske Toplice and subsequently murdered.

On September 8, Father Joseph Ormuz, of Petrovsko, was severely beaten.

A few days after the Archbishop's arrest, Father Francis Ljubetic, of Plešivica, was clubbed and kicked into insensibility, and left gravely injured.

Two priests of the Djakovo Diocese, whose names are not yet available, were abducted from their homes about the middle of September, and their fate is not known.

A number of priests around the country were arrested for unspecified reasons, and held incommunicado.

Communist "activists" arrested many parish houses in the Archdiocese of Zagreb during the last half of September, and ordered the pastors to leave soon after threat of death. The Archbishop's Curia had no alternative but to submit them to such visits in order to save their lives. Many cases of this kind have become known to this

George Unrepresented

The pastor here in our case which has come to light (when any steps to protect the rights of these bishops and priests) were, Marshal Tito himself said in an interview at Zagreb last May that the "people" could handle certain questions themselves, as the Government did not care to interfere in religious matters.

Public Prosecutor Stepinac, responding to the statement of Archbishop Stepinac that the lives of bishops and priests were not safe night or day, said that the "people" were justified morally in expressing their dissatisfaction against him. Archbishop Stepinac said the Archbishop had no right to be arrested and that he would be free to return to his parish if the Government would not allow him to be arrested.

On the Sunday evening after the sentence was passed, at least 10,000 people crowded into the cathedral, constantly coming and going between 3 and 7 o'clock.

Most of the same opinion was revealed in every village church at Croatia. These were the real people of Croatia, and not the handful of paid communists who

have been set by the Chancery, and in which later in the Archbishop's sentence was expressed and prayer for him were said.

When it became evident that the people were visiting the churches in vast numbers, OZNA again visited every pastor in the city and suburbs, and issued the verbal order that no more than five people were permitted to congregate in front of the churches.

But anyone who was present in Zagreb those days will testify to the deeply moving sight of tens of thousands of the faithful who literally besieged the churches, and to the extraordinary spectacle of the Cathedral which was packed for the Holy and Benediction of the Blessed Sacrament night after night.

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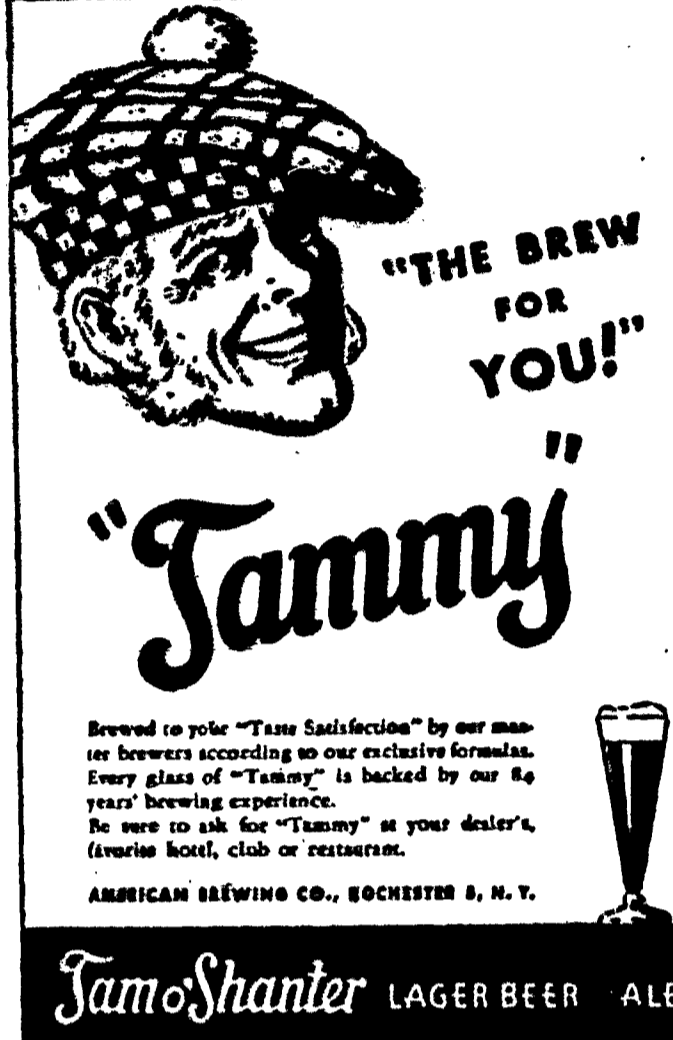
Madman Beheads His Alter Boy

WHEELING, W. VA. — A madman beheaded his 10-year-old boy in a madhouse here today. The boy was found in a cell in the hospital for the insane, and the madman was found in the cell with the boy's head in his hand.

THE LAW OF CROATIA

1. The law under which Archbishop Stepinac was tried is called "A Law on Criminal Against People and the State." It is original from the original form. The law passed on August 20, 1941, and was amended on its present form by July 2, 1945.

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