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Prague Reports Apparitions

Prague—(NC)—Reports are spreading throughout Slovakia concerning a new revelation by the Blessed Virgin Mary to three Slovak girls in the parish of Svaty Mikulaj, Topolcany, but as yet ecclesiastical authorities have made no pronouncement regarding these claims.

The three girls say the Blessed Virgin appeared to them on May 27 while they were tending cattle near the forest of Siskov. In their dreams on the following night they were told that the Blessed Virgin would reveal herself again on June 27 at the same spot.

The word spread abroad and more than 80,000 persons gathered on the appointed day. Throughs present are reported to have seen nothing, but the girls declared that the Blessed Virgin had appeared again. Some of those present are reported to have witnessed phenomena of the sun such as were observed at Fatima in Portugal.

Church authorities regard all such reports with extreme caution and warn the faithful against exaggeration.

INDIA'S FIRST OF LATIN RITE



Most Rev. Francis T. Roche, S.J., Bishop of Tutuora, India, who is visiting America, talks with Father Calvert Alexander, S.J., editor of Jesuit Mission, New York. Bishop Roche was the first Indian Latin Rite bishop consecrated. Next year he will celebrate the 25th anniversary of this memorable event for the Church of India and also his Golden Jubilee as a priest. There are today twenty Indian bishops, fourteen of whom are of the Latin Rite and six of the Oriental Rite. Bishop Roche, whose ancestors were converted by St. Francis Xavier, is extremely interested in helping some of the 1,000,000 Indians in India. For this Silver Jubilee as a bishop he intends to build a new leprosarium, dedicated to St. Joseph, in his diocese.

'Oldest Wooden Church' Scene of Festive Rites

Tadoussac, Que.—(NC)—The 200-year-old chapel erected here as a mission for the Montagnais Indians when Tadoussac was one of the busiest fur trading posts in North America on St. Anne's day, was once more the scene of a ceremony which yearly draws international attention to this tiny village at the intersection of the St. Lawrence and Saguenay Rivers.

Believed to be the oldest wooden church in North America, the chapel, which is only 30 by 20 feet, has a small belfry, where there still hangs a bell which was brought to New France from France 300 years ago.

Visions of Christ and Mary Reported from N. Germany

(Continued from page 1)

Arrested by Gestapo
The Gestapo, therefore, promptly arrested the four girls and confined them in an insane asylum. "There they were observed for weeks and most critically examined, with the result that the children had to be released as being perfectly normal."

The bishop of Osnabruck was sent a bill of over 1,000 marks (a considerable sum of money even in 1937) to cover the expense for the support and examination of the children while confined in the asylum. The bishop paid the bill without any objection.

Before releasing the girls to their parents the Gestapo strictly forbade the children ever again to return to the place of the apparition. But the Blessed Virgin apparently had ideas different from those of Hitler's secret police. According to Father Feltala she proceeded to appear to the children "in other places; in the midst of a meadow; near their parents' house—in short, now here, now there. All of the prohibitions of the Gestapo were of no avail," writes the pastor of Roschach.

Secret For Pope
As the apparitions continued, Our Lady confided to each of the children a secret message for the Holy Father. They were permitted to reveal this confidence only to their pastor in order that he might transmit it to Rome.

What else did the Mother of Christ reportedly tell these girls during the many apparitions? She advised them about the personal salvation of their own souls. She again and again ordered prayer, much prayer—especially for the conversion of sinners.

In all, says Father Feltala, there were a hundred appearances, the last of which occurred on November 3, 1940.

After this, matters seemed to rest but at the close of 1945 new rumors told of more apparitions at Heede. This time, instead of the Blessed Virgin, it was Our Lord Himself who appeared but to Gretchen Ganserth only.

Again the people were incredulous. Nearly all who heard it considered it an empty rumor.

Others, however, took a more serious view of the alleged apparitions of Christ. Shortly after, during Lent of 1946, the Rev. Joseph Englehart, pastor of Altoetting, went into his pulpit and spoke to his people as follows:

"Very serious news comes from northern Germany. There at Heede, which has become famous through the recent reported apparitions of the Blessed Virgin, Our Lord Himself now appears. However, only to one of the four girls who formerly saw the Blessed Virgin.

"I have," said Father Englehart, reportedly a very prudent and cautious man, "thoroughly investigated everything regarding these so-called apparitions and only after being myself firmly convinced that they are true, have I resolved, yes, I consider it my duty to speak of them in the pulpit.

"When the Bishop of Osnabruck," he continued, "heard of these new occurrences he sent two of his most shrewd and skeptical priests in Heede, as pastor and chaplain. They were to make vigorous investigations and report all to him."

The result of these investigations were also reported by Father Englehart in his Lenten sermon. "I myself," he told, "have read a letter from the present pastor of Heede in which he says: 'We have irrefutable proof of the genuineness of the apparitions of Christ.'"

"Hence," concluded Father Englehart, "both the pastor and

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Message by Christ

What was the tenor of Christ's communication at Heede? As reported by Father Feltala, Our Lord gave Gretchen Ganserth this message:

"Men did not listen to me. Most Holy Mother of Fatima when she appeared to them and admonished them to do penance. Now I myself am coming at the LAST HOUR TO WARN AND ADMONISH MANKIND. THE TIMES ARE VERY SERIOUS. MEN SHOULD FINALLY DO PENANCE. TURN AWAY FROM THEIR SINS AND PRAY FOR ME. MUCH IN ORDER THAT THE WRATH OF GOD MAY BE MITIGATED. PARTICULARLY THE HOLY ROSARY SHOULD BE PRAYED VERY OFTEN. THE ROSARY IS VERY POWERFUL WITH GOD! WORDLY PLEASURES AND AMUSEMENTS SHOULD BE RESTRICTED."

When a dance was planned for October 2, 1945, Our Lord reportedly said to Gretchen Ganserth: "Tell the pastor... I command that this dancing party may not take place. He must announce it publicly in church. Woe to those parents who neglect to do so. They shall at once have severe account to render!"

The pastor published Our Lord's message and as a result no one dared to go to the dance. Our Lord is reported to have said: "I want Heede to become a model parish! All abuses should be redressed and the inhabitants should give a good example to the pilgrims."

The town of Heede has now become a place of pilgrimage. Great throngs of people arrive constantly. Special bus lines had to be arranged. Large bridges over the Rhine, in the vicinity of Heede, that were destroyed during the war have, with the cooperation of the allies, already been repaired.

In the town of Heede destined to become the Lourdes and Fatima of Germany? At the moment, it is impossible to know. Until complete evidence in the case is published and until church authorities express official approval or disapproval, the events reported from Heede must be regarded with caution.

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