

Nun, Saved By Saint, Dies In Brazil
 St. Louis (NC) — Requiem Mass was offered in St. Charles Borromeo Church, here, for Mother Mary Gertrude Pierl, of the Missionary Sisters of the Sacred Heart, whose life once was saved by St. Francis Xavier Cabrini, foundress of the community of nuns. Mother Mary Gertrude died in Sao Paulo, Brazil.

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A Poor Princess and a Throneless King
Pope Pius Said 'No' To Princess Anne
Because He Cannot Dispense God's Law
 By REVEREND RICHARD T. TORNEY

Early in March two dignified noble women called on Pope Pius XII at the Vatican. They were Queen Helen of Romania and Princess Renee of Bourbon-Parma. They had come to the Holy Father to talk about the wedding of their children, Michael and Anne.

The much publicized royal romance was not moving smoothly for both families knew that a difference of religion was going to make the marriage a serious problem. Michael, as King-in-exile from Romania was a member of the Greek Orthodox Church. Princess Anne, of Spanish ancestry and related to the Danish royal family, was a Roman Catholic.

THE QUESTION WHICH the mothers put to Pope Pius was this: "Will the Catholic Church permit Anne to marry Michael?" As in the case of all mixed marriages where a Catholic marries a non-Catholic, the families wanted to know, "What compromises of faith will be required, and what promises must be signed before the church will approve this wedding?"

A few days later the Vatican announced: "Princess Anne has been refused permission to marry King Michael." Michael demanded that the ceremonies of marriage must be held in the ritual of the Greek Orthodox Church and that all the children of the marriage must be brought up in the Orthodox faith. This marriage, the Vatican indicated, would gravely endanger the Catholic faith of the Princess and their future children.

Therefore, no approval could be given. For the Church insists on a Catholic wedding ceremony, a promise of protection for the faith of the Catholic spouse and Catholic baptism for all the children.

During the months which followed, the wedding was planned and postponed, announced and cancelled. It was evident that strong forces were pulling on both sides. Anne claimed she would never give up her Roman Catholic faith and leave her Church to marry a non-Catholic who would not meet the Church's minimum terms. King Michael made it very certain that because he wanted to protect his right to regain the throne of Romania some day, he would not leave his Church.

THE ROMANIAN people did not want a Catholic marriage, for the Romanian constitution demands that the King and his heirs must be members of the Greek Orthodox Church.



KING MICHAEL **PRINCESS ANNE**
 A wedding but no marriage.

Anne, sacrificing her Church and defying the law of God, followed the guidance of her heart. She stood with King Michael before a portable altar in the Greek Royal Palace and was married in the ritual of the Greek Orthodox Church.

The news reports say that Anne's parents did not attend the wedding. They remained in Denmark, perhaps as a public expression of their disapproval of this forbidden marriage. Only one uncle was present to represent the bride's relatives in the Danish royal family.

In the eyes of the Roman Catholic Church the wedding of King Michael and Princess Anne was no marriage at all. It was invalid because no Catholic may marry heirs must be members of a non-Catholic without Church permission and no Catholic may be validly married in the cere-

mony of another Church. It makes no difference that this romantic young couple are nobility. A mixed marriage performed without the approval and dispensation of the Church is a sinful contract for the Catholic. The Church forbids such a union unless assurance is given that the faith of the Catholic party will not be injured and the future Catholic upbringing of the children will be protected.

There is no arrogation in the Church's claim that she has the right to control the conditions for a Catholic marriage. For a Catholic marriage is more than a contract or a civil problem. Marriage is a Sacrament and has been committed by Christ himself to the care of the Church. As the representative of Christ on earth she has the duty before God to declare who is fit and competent to receive this sacrament. She also has the right to safeguard her children and the faith from disastrous marriages.

INDEPENDENTLY of the state, the Church acts as the custodian of the religious side of the wedding. Thus she deserves the right to decide the form and the manner of the wedding ceremony. For a Catholic there is no valid marriage if the ceremony of the sacrament is not performed before an authorized Catholic priest and if the parties do not have the full approval of the Church to enter marriage.

The question may be asked: "Is it a Church law or a law of God which forbids a mixed marriage?" A mixed marriage is subject to both laws. For the law of God, aiming at the protection of the faith, forbids the Catholic to enter a marriage which would endanger his or her faith or would prohibit later the Baptism and Catholic upbringing of the children. If there is no such danger, when the non-Catholic party agrees to respect the Catholic faith, then God's law does not forbid such a union.

But as the guardian of the sacrament, the Church still retains the duty of imposing prudent conditions in order to certify the good intentions of the young couple.

That is why the bride and groom in a mixed marriage must agree in writing that these will be only the Catholic wedding ceremony and that the faith of the Catholic party will be neither injured nor restricted in this marriage. In addition, both persons must sign the promise that all the children of the marriage will be baptized and reared in the Catholic faith.

Officially the Church regrets every mixed marriage. But she knows that if the promises are honestly made and kept by husband and wife, practically speaking there is a good chance that no harm will come to the Catholic faith of the family.

Because of King Michael's membership in the Orthodox Church of Romania, it would be impossible for him to guarantee that the Catholic faith of Princess Anne was not being endangered by her marriage. If she was to be his queen she would have to share his faith. And if he wished to fulfill the Romanian Constitution he would never promise that the children of the marriage would be reared as Roman Catholics.

all these acts are forbidden by God Almighty—so the Holy Father cannot allow a marriage in which the fundamental virtue of faith is jeopardized. No exceptions can be made for kings or princesses. The Holy Father is obliged to demand the same guarantees from a royal couple as from the most humble and common couple.

History shows that Princess Anne, as the Queen of Romania would have little chance of preserving her Catholic faith and bringing up her children in the Church. The Greek Orthodox Church has been separated from the Roman Catholic Church for over 900 years because of its refusal to acknowledge the supreme spiritual jurisdiction of the Pope's authority. Through the centuries heresy has widened this breach; for these churches have serious doctrinal differences involving a denial of articles of Catholic faith. And over the years Catholicism has always endured a sorry story of broken loyalties in the Balkan royal houses.


Because of all this danger, the Church regrettably said to the Princess: "Do not marry this King. He may be honest and kind and deeply in love with you. But he will never share your faith and his nation's laws forbid him to allow your future children to be brought up as Catholics." BUT TO THE shame of her soul and to the scandal of the Catholic world, Princess Anne refused to be guided. Her wedding was an open defiance of her Church. Such conduct is a serious sin and grievously bad example. By her invalid marriage in a non-Catholic religion, she dropped herself from the Church. Her public disobedience of God's law and her surrender of Catholic principle are to be pitied as well as completely condemned.

But Princess Anne's problem is not unusual. Every day intelligent Catholic men and women who have fallen in love with good Protestants must make the same decision: "Shall I obey my faith and receive the Catholic sacrament of marriage, or shall I marry outside my Church because my chosen spouse will not fulfill the necessary conditions?" The Catholic Church is willing to be patient and tolerant and hopeful when her young people wish to marry persons of other faiths. For the Church cannot regiment the romantic longings of any heart. But she can never change God's laws for marriages nor can she compromise with her duty of safeguarding the Faith and the success of such a sacred union.

In the providence of God Princess Anne may find happiness while living in alien from God's love. But we may wonder "How happy will she be in her conscience?"

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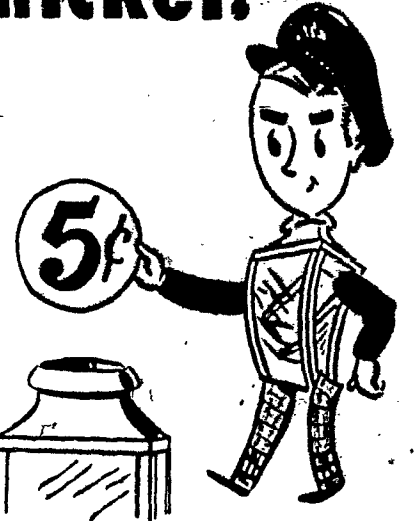
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