

Government of New Zealand Asks Nuns To Staff Hospital

By MARJORIE HACKETT
Wellington, New Zealand (NC) — At the request of the New Zealand Ministry of Health the government hospital on the Chatham Islands will be staffed by Catholic nuns.

Because of the hospital's isolated position it has always been difficult to staff it, but in recent months the personnel shortage became so acute that the authorities appealed to Bishop Patrick F. Lyons of Christ church to obtain the services of a Catholic nursing community.

THE BISHOP appealed to the Missionary Sisters of the Society of Mary. As a result three nuns, including an American, Sister Mary Imelda, have arrived from Australia to take charge of the nursing and domestic arrangements of the hospital.

"All these Sisters ask of life is to serve," the New Zealand Health Minister said in a statement.

"It is the same Order that conducts the hospital at the Leper colony in Fiji. The Sisters of the Order are excellent nurses and hardships do not seem to matter to them. I hope this will be the solution of our Chatham Islands difficulties."

The Society has worked in different parts of the Pacific for many years, their best known undertaking being the Makogai Leper Station in the Fiji group.

Church Vessels Returned
Cologne — (NC) — A large collection of church vessels and vestments belonging to Catholic churches in the Dutch border of Germany, which American Army chaplains had sent to Belgium and Holland for safe-keeping while hostilities lasted, have all been returned to their owners. Many valuable possessions were thus saved from destruction or looting.

Israelis Barred Franciscans From Cenacle On Mount Zion

Jerusalem — (NC) — Here are revealed for the first time the circumstances surrounding the refusal of the Israeli authorities to permit the American Franciscans to make their traditional visit to the Cenacle on Holy Thursday.

(The fact of the ban on the Franciscans' visit to the Cenacle on Holy Thursday was previously reported in a radio dispatch by Bro. Anthony M. O.F.M., from Jerusalem, dated April 18.)

ON MARCH 25 the Rev. Terence Kuehn, president of the Terra Sancta College in Jerusalem, wrote a letter to the Israeli government through the Ministry for Religious Affairs, requesting permission for the Rev. Theophane R. Carroll to go to the Franciscan convent of the Cenacle on Mt. Zion to celebrate Mass in the chapel there on Holy Thursday.

A week or two passed, and Mario Mendes, liaison officer of the Ministry for Christians in Jerusalem, came to the college to ask further details about the request. Father Theophane told Mr. Mendes that he expected to say a Mass there about nine in the morning on Holy Thursday, would take a small party of people with him, and that after Mass they would like to visit the Upper Room of the Last Supper in the original Cenacle next door to the convent and then return on foot to the college.

MR. MENDES said that a list of names of those wishing to go would be necessary, so Father Theophane agreed to get the list ready for Palm Sunday. He prepared a list of those desiring to go, chosen from members of the American, French and Belgian consulates, and a group of United Nations people — observers and members of the Palestine Conciliation Commission. These people were listed along with their nationality. There were besides the above-mentioned nationalities some Canadians, Dutch and English.

In submitting the list, Father Theophane requested that an Israeli soldier accompany them to and from the college.

Mr. Mendes did not show up on Palm Sunday, although he had an appointment with both Father Theophane and Terence. He came on Monday of Holy Week, received the list, and was urged to hasten the business as only three days were then left. Mr. Mendes promised an answer for Monday evening and did give one — a negative one.

THE REASONS given for refusal were: the present delicate military situation and the possibility of mines endangering the lives of the pilgrims.

Father Theophane pointed out that the military situation should be better rather than worse since an armistice had just been signed. Further, Father Theophane said, the presence of mines should not be an insuperable obstacle since, according to an article in the Palestine Post of April 7, headed, "Hassidim go to David's Tomb," the writer said:

"IN THE FAILING light of a spring evening a line of figures wound along the rough path which climbs from Hinnom valley up Mt. Zion. They were the Breslawer Hassidim... this year they could celebrate 'Rosh Hodesh Nissan the first night of the Passover month at the tomb of David.'"

Mr. Mendes, however, said that he could do nothing further, so Father Theophane told him that he intended to inform the United Nations authorities about it. He went to Colonel Shelby, chief U.N. observer in Jerusalem, who deplored the refusal to permit the American Franciscans to make their traditional visit to the Cenacle on Holy Thursday.

Colonel Shelby sent a message through Commandant Bourdieu, that he wished to intervene in favor of a reconsideration of the refusal. Mr. Silver said that the reason for the refusal was political, not military, and had no explanation ready for the apparent discrimination used in permitting Jews to go to the same place (Mt. Zion), and refusing permission to Christian members of nations friendly to the State of Israel.

This was Tuesday afternoon. On Wednesday Colonel Shelby phoned a Major Gluckman, asking him to intervene with the military from whom the refusal was said to have come. Major Gluckman got in touch with a Colonel Dayan, military commander of the Israeli forces in Jerusalem, and promised Father Theophane to give him an answer within an hour.

After three hours he phoned Father Theophane that the military was still discussing the matter, and that the final answer would be given to Mr. Bourdieu, Acting Consul General for the United States. Father Theophane then saw Mr. Bourdieu, who told him that the visit to Mt. Zion had been finally refused by Colonel Dayan on grounds of military security, and something like "no churches not in actual use now will be opened for use at the present time."

It should be noted that the Franciscan convent and the tomb of David are both within Jewish lines, not in no-man's land.

China Diplomat, A Convert, Marries Daughter of Dr. Wu

Rome — (NC) — A double ceremony of marriage and Confirmation took place here recently in the ancient church of Sant' Agnese when Miss Marguerite Wu, daughter of the Chinese Minister to the Holy See, was married to John Stanley McTee-Fan. Mr. McTee-Fan, a member of the U.N. Mission to Greece, visited Rome last Christmas and was received into the Church on the Feast of St. John, December 27, in the same church of Sant' Agnese.

Archbishop Celso Costantini, Secretary of the Congregation for the Propagation of the Faith, officiated at the marriage and celebrated the Nuptial Mass.

Immediately afterwards, he administered Confirmation to Mr. McTee-Fan. He is a former Chinese minister to Italy, and his wife and son who were received into the Church earlier this month, and to Chce-Tse-ten, a Chinese diplomat stationed here.

John Wu, Minister to the Holy See, had just returned to Rome from China where he had been called for consultation with his government. Two of his younger daughters were also confirmed by Archbishop Costantini on this occasion.

Dying Negro Sparks Drive To Know Moor Saint Life

Washington — (NC) — The curiosity of a colored patient at the District of Columbia sanatorium at Glendale, Md., about the life of St. Benedict the Moor, 16th century Negro, has sparked a campaign to make the Saint better known among the nation's Negroes.

It all began two years ago when a group of Franciscan clerics from Holy Name College here made their usual weekly visit to the hospital to cheer up some of its depressed tubercular patients.

THE GROUP was Father Dominic Casella, O.F.M., of Brooklyn, who chatted with an old colored man. The man wanted to know about the life of the friars and was surprised to hear of anyone living a life of poverty, chastity and obedience in the 20th century. It just didn't make sense to him.

Frater Dominic told the man that one of his own race had lived the life of a Franciscan friar, and very successfully, too, because he was later canonized by the Church as St. Benedict the Moor. At this point the colored man became intensely interested.

WHERE AND when did this saint live? What did he do? Why was he made a saint, the Negro patient wanted to know. To his embarrassment, Frater Dominic could give only a hazy account. But he determined he would get all the facts and tell them.

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Mother Seton Intercession Claimed In Cure of Cancer

Mt. St. Joseph-on-the-Ohio, O. — (NC) — One of the cases of miraculous intercession which has been submitted to Rome in the cause of Mother Seton was discussed at a conference here by the Rev. Salvatore M. Burzio, C.M., vice-postulator of the cause.

It was that of Sister Gertrude Korzenkorf, a nun who experienced a remarkable recovery from pancreatic cancer at a New Orleans hospital in 1935. Some long-forgotten medical slides were discovered, substantiating the fact that she had cancer.

AN AUTOPSY performed after she died in 1942 proved the cure in 1935, Father Burzio declared. "The pancreas was found to be in a normal condition, with no trace of cancerous cells. Even the scar tissue of the surgeon's knife had disappeared. Every organ was examined and slides taken. No malignancy of any kind was found in any of them."

"Doctor Seelig, expert doctor of this Court and a famous cancer specialist, was a Jew, turned agnostic," the priest continued. "He doesn't believe in miracles. But he said, 'If you mean by a miracle that this cure could not be explained in any scientific way, you have it here.'"

"Doctor A. L. Levin, who was present at the laparotomy in

the colored man on the next visit. However, before the following weekly visit came around the patient had died and was buried.

Frater Dominic told his experience to his fellow clerics and they decided to do something to get St. Benedict the Moor better known among the U.S. Negroes. Their first joint effort was a six-page leaflet, with a short life of the Saint, a prayer composed by the clerics addressing him as "heavenly friend of the Colored race," and a picture of St. Benedict at Palermo, Italy, where he is known as Il Santo Moro, the Holy Negro.

MORE THAN 75,000 leaflets have been sent to various parts of the United States. Their reception has been especially enthusiastic in colored parishes in the southern states, in prisons and in hospitals.

The second venture of the clerics here is a 35-page, up-to-date pamphlet on the Saint, which is now coming off the press at St. Anthony's Guild, Paterson, N. J. The clerics, about 80 in all, have also drawn up elaborate background material for a full-sized book on St. Benedict the Moor which is expected to be ready for publication by the end of the year.

Unitarians Oppose Parochial Schools

Chicago — (RNS) — Opposition to federal, state, or local aid to parochial schools was voiced in resolutions adopted by delegates to the 97th annual meeting here of the Western Unitarian Conference.

The delegates lauded the decision of a New Mexico court which ruled against public support of private schools. At the same time, they warned that similar public aid to private schools is given in other states, notably Illinois, where they stated, "25 public school systems use public funds for paying the salaries of parochial school teachers."

Seton? Why not pray to Our Lady of the Miraculous Medal? Sister Gertrude's response was: "I want the prayers to Mother Seton. She will intercede for my cure. I have faith in the children's prayers."

Even with this evidence, the vice-postulator concluded, the requirement that the cure was performed as a result of Mother Seton's intercession is still most difficult to prove. Thus, he said, he emphasized specially "at the opening of our Crusade of Prayer for evidence of miracles to advance the Cause of the Canonization of Mother Seton."

Quebec Churches Collect Funds For Smokers

Montreal, Canada — (RNS) — In a move designated as a "charitable duty," the Roman Catholic Church has entered the Quebec tobacco strike in the Province of Quebec by sanctioning special collections in most dioceses to supply the material needs of 5,000 workers affected by the strike which began Feb. 13.

In the Montreal archdiocese, numbering more than 1,500,000 Roman Catholics, special collections were taken at the doors of all churches, and will be taken each Sunday until the strike is settled.

The strike, which affects 3,000 employees in Asbestos and Danville where most of the world's asbestos is produced, has been marked by many acts of violence.

The Sacerdotal Commission for Social Studies, under the chairmanship of Mgr. Jean Chénier, has taken the way for special collections when negotiations in the strike were broken off. He said religious authorities had tried to put an end to the strike by studying possible solutions favorable to all parties concerned. However, neither their efforts nor the intervention of civil authorities have brought results.

"During this time," Mgr. Chénier said, "misery has made itself felt in thousands of homes; it touches the women and their children. Under the circumstances, charity becomes a duty to all, no matter what class, to accord sympathy to the workers and their families and to give them material help, of which they are more and more in need."

Instructions for the collections were given by Archbishop Joseph Charbonneau.

Slovak Catholic Paper Century Old

Katolcke Noviny — (NC) — The influential Catholic Slovak weekly, Katolcke Noviny, of this city, will observe its 100th anniversary next November. Popular among Catholic Slovaks, it had reached a circulation of 300,000 at the beginning of 1942, but its figures have been substantially reduced because of its small allocation of newspaper.

Throughout its existence, Katolcke Noviny has been the mouthpiece of Slovak Catholic opinion under the direct supervision of the Slovak Bishops. When early last year many Slovak Catholic publications were compelled to cease publication because their news print allocation was stopped, Katolcke Noviny escaped. Its material, however, is devoted strictly to religious matters and Catholic charities.

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