

# Pagan Mayor In Japan Refutes U. S. Atheist Attack On Church

Himeji, Japan — (NC) — The Buddhist mayor of Himeji not only has bluntly told off an American atheist who "warned" the city against receiving Catholic missionaries. He has written his "adviser" that his curiosity has been aroused about this "much abused" religion and that he has asked one of the priests for instruction.

The warning came from a member of the American Association for the Advancement of Atheism. In his letter to Mayor M. Iwami he charged that many countries in the past adopted Catholicism and later regretted it, that there is no human freedom where the Catholic Church rules, and that there is also in variably great poverty "because the Catholic Church knows how to take money from the poor."

IN HIS REPLY Mayor Iwami admitted that Immaculate Heart of Mary Fathers from Belgium had taken up mission work here and pointed out that their leader was a former prisoner of the Japanese. The Rev. Joseph Spar also noted that Buddha, whom the mayor follows, "was an atheist like yourself, that is, he did not recognize the existence of a Supreme Being, nor of the soul."

He added "And yet he did not attack them. The American had quoted Abraham Lincoln, Thomas Jefferson and Benjamin Franklin as repudiating the idea of a God. Expressing surprise at these quotations, Mayor Iwami writes:

"Here in Japan we still labor under the misgiving that these founders of the United States were God-fearing men. You tell us we are wrong. But why then did Lincoln in his Gettysburg Address resolve that this nation under God, shall have a new birth of freedom?"

"And how could Jefferson be so remiss as to write in the Declaration of Independence that all men are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable rights? How was Franklin in his right mind when he wrote that 'God helps them that help themselves'?"

"I think that these contradictory statements need clarification. Could you tell me, why your last two Presidents do not follow these so-called atheistic founders of the country?"

"President Roosevelt sent a message to Congress on January 6, 1941, wherein he asked for freedom of every person to worship God in his own way—everywhere in the world. And President Truman often talks publicly about God and implores his help. . . Surely, if you are right, all these men are fools."

"WE ABHOR THE evils that



"Peregrinatio Mariae" (Mary's Pilgrimage) which closed a two month's homage to the Madonna in Milan, Italy, assembles for the final ceremonies outside Milan Cathedral. More than 25,000 men and boys marched in the procession, (women were not allowed), which returned the statue to the church. The processions began two months ago, following damage to a famous Madonna statue by a bomb allegedly thrown by a Communist. Wide World Photo (NC Photos).

# Milan Men Parade For Virgin Mary

# Far East Needs 1000 Catholic Native Leaders

New York — (NC) — "One thousand native leaders can save the Church in the Far East," the Rev. Emmanuel Jacques, Belgian missionary, who recently arrived here from Louvain, Belgium has estimated. Father Jacques belongs to the Missionary Helpers, a Belgian community whose members serve as diocesan priests under native Bishops in the Far East. He is stationed in Viet Nam in Indo-China.

"COMMUNIST VICTORIES in China only emphasize the need for native Catholic leaders in Asiatic countries," he said. "We need them for the present struggle against communism, and for the future rebuilding of Far Eastern countries on a Christian basis."

THIS LACK of native leaders caused the Vietnamese Bishops to assign Father Jacques the task of placing students in foreign universities for training. The missionary already has arranged for Vietnamese students to study in Paris and at the Catholic University of Louvain, Belgium.

"Viet Nam has a higher proportion of Catholics, 2,000,000 out of a 20,000,000 population, than any other country in the Far East except the Philippines," Father Jacques said.

"There are but 350,000 Catholics out of 40,000,000 people in the rest of French Indo-China, Siam, Burma, and Malaya. However, we lack facilities for higher education. Few of our priests, and almost no Catholic laymen, have studied at universities. As a result, Christian influence is negligible in the political and social life of Viet Nam. No wonder the communists were able to take over our independent movement."

# MISSION CHURCH WINNERS



Congratulations to the winners of the South Mission Church Design Competition are given by His Eminence Samuel Cardinal Stritch, Archbishop of Chicago (second from left), to R. S. Granger, Glendale, Calif., architect, and Mr. Granger, A. J. Lett to Rev. Alfred J. Ziemer, president of St. Joseph's College, Rensselaer, Ind., sponsors of the National Catholic Building Convention and Exposition held recently in Chicago. The convention organization conducted the mission competition. (NC Photos)

# Fr. Lombardi Will Visit U. S. In September

Paris — (RNS) — Father Lombardi, Italian Jesuit, whose striking figure has been the subject of a new film, will visit the United States next September.

His last visit to the United States was in 1947, when he visited the Shrine of Lourdes in the diocese of San Francisco. He will return to the United States in September.

Fr. Lombardi will be accompanied by his secretary, Fr. Luigi, who will carry the Shrine of Lourdes to the Shrine of the Most Precious Blood in Chicago.

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# Church Designers Forecast 'Less Cumbrous Structure'

Chicago — (NC) — We are nearing the end of what has been known among architects as a battle of styles, and now church designers can go straight to their problem of enclosing "more noble spaces with less cumbersome structures."

Look through 4,000 years of architectural history and you'll find that problem like an unbroken thread, declared Thomas Hall Locraft, of the Catholic University School of Architecture.

"WE ARE NOW nearing the end of the period of 'revivals' which have prevailed for 600 years since Beauvais because we now have new structural means. With the development of steel, and steel in combination with concrete, we can do what earlier courageous builders wanted to do," he said.

Mr. Locraft spoke at the second National Catholic Building Convention and Exposition, held here from 33 States and four foreign countries, attended the event, which was sponsored by St. Joseph's College, Rensselaer, Ind.

IN HIS ADDRESS, at the closing session, His Eminence Samuel Cardinal Stritch, Archbishop of Chicago, observed that "all art is an expression of the times, and we can see the confusion of our times reflected in the confusion and groping found in modern art."

The Cardinal was confident, however, that "out of this groping will come a new period of Christian art and church architecture. We can almost see this development progressing in the

# Vassar Head Regrets Virgin Mary Story In College Paper

Poughkeepsie, N. Y. — (NC) — The president of Vassar College, Dr. Sarah Gibson Blanding, has stated her regrets that a story appearing in the college's literary review has brought us to our fall: haughty and ignorant racialism, military dictatorship, lettering of religious worship. To many of us it seems that the enemies of the former regime were at all times our true if unknown friends. And at the hands of the military no organization has suffered so unremittently and cruelly as the Catholic Church. And yet her missionaries persisted in coming to our shores, driven by some strange ideal, rather to die than disobey their Master's command. I have witnessed them in Manchuria where they enjoyed greater freedom than in Japan. They take care of abandoned children of the aged and infirm. Nobody, not even a bandit, leaves their church without a kind word, some food or clothing. To give everything away is, certainly a strange method of getting rich.

"Meanwhile," he adds, "I have decided that a religion so much abused and yet so much beloved as the Catholic Church, deserves my closer attention. I want to draw my own conclusion about the matter you brought up. Therefore, I have asked one of the priests to instruct me in his faith. Some day I hope to write you about the outcome of my studies."

HER REGRETS were an answer to Msgr. Michael P. O'Shea, dean of the Catholic clergy of Putnam and Dutchess Counties, who had protested that the story, which treated the life of the Blessed Virgin irreverently, was an attack on Christian beliefs.

Dr. Blanding said that the whole responsibility for the writing and printing of the story was in the hands of students. In this instance, she said, "the students lacked the maturity to realize that the story would give offense to many readers." She promised to "point out both to the author and to the editorial board of the review the serious consequences of disregarding public reaction."

COMMENTING on this reply, Monsignor O'Shea said that he was astonished that the Vassar president would base her regrets on the number of people offended and not upon the violation of

# Shrine Fund Now Totals \$1,853,000

Washington — (NC) — The fund for the completion of the National Shrine of the Immaculate Conception at the Catholic University has reached a total of \$1,853,000, Msgr. John J. Kelly, director of the Shrine, announced today. Special collections are being held annually in the Catholic dioceses throughout the country to raise a fund of \$5,000,000 to complete the Shrine. A number of bishops have set August 15 as the date for this year's collection. Monsignor Kelly said.

# Two Murphys In Hierarchy

London — (NC) — The first Bishop Murphy in British history—Bishop John A. Murphy, 41-year-old, Conductor of Shrewsbury—has succeeded to the title with the death of 78-year-old Bishop Ambrose James Moriarty after a reign of 15 years.

The new Bishop, 18 months ago pastor of a rural area with no more than 350 Catholics, now has in his care more than 100,000 in the northwestern counties of Cheshire and Shropshire.

Despite the thousands of priests of Irish origin in Britain and throughout the world the church has only one other Bishop Murphy today—at Saginaw, Mich., in the United States. He is Bishop William F. Murphy.

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