

# China Communists Cripple Church Life

The author of the following article, long an authority on Chinese affairs in the Far East, has in the past years covered the Soviet and Chinese of China as a correspondent for N.C.W.C. News Service. He founded and directed the Chinese Catholic News Service in Shanghai, which was suppressed after that city fell to the communists.

By REV. PATRICK O'CONNOR

**Beijing — (NC)** — The communist government has crippled religious freedom in China. At present the persecution is not a frontal attack. It takes the form of (1) personal restrictions; (2) impossible taxes; (3) commandeering of church buildings; (4) forced indoctrination in materialism, that is, atheism, and (5) general intimidation.

The Reds have killed no missionaries since 1948. But evidence of the continued indirect persecution is mounting as travelers pass through Tokyo and Hong Kong from Shanghai and Tientsin.

(1) The communists make it difficult, often impossible, for priests to go around their parishes. Foreign missionaries are allowed to work in large towns, but when they ask for permits to visit country villages, the Red officials find endless reasons for delay or refusal. In some places Chinese priests may visit rural missions, but usually under difficulties. "Outside the city, the care of souls is now virtually impossible," according to a letter received in Shanghai from a foreign priest.

**THIRD RESTRICTIONS** are known to prevail in, for instance, Hopei, Shantung, Shanxi, Szechwan, Anhwei, Chekiang and Kwangsi provinces — indicating that they represent a general communist policy. As 95 per cent of China's Catholics are peasant villagers, this policy of severely shutting out a large portion from normal religious services.

(2) Taxes imposed by the communists amount to virtual confiscation of religious resources, with the apparent aim of making the priests' position impossible. Writing to a colleague, one North-China priest says: "My endless measures of taxation, priests are forced to leave their parishes. When one is unable to pay the tax, he must be punished in prison and all his goods confiscated." A letter from an unidentifiable priest says: "If we were to sell everything we would not have enough to pay the taxes for one year."

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In one rural church in the Yangtze valley, pictures of the

# Sainthood Rites Listed During Jubilee Year

NCWC NEWS SERVICE

Nine canonizations, taking place on seven different days in Holy Year, have now been announced in word received from Vatican City. At the same time, dates were given for five beatifications to take place on five other days in 1950.

It is also announced that there will be two other canonizations and two other beatifications in the course of the Holy Year, but that the dates have not been fixed.

**THE FIRST** canonizations of Holy Year will take place on Sunday, April 23, when Blessed Maria Guilelma (Emilia) De Rodat, a Frenchwoman who was Founder of a community of Sisters of the Holy Family, is proclaimed a Saint.

Other canonizations for which dates have been fixed are: May 7, Blessed Anthony M. Clare, Spaniard, Founder of the Claretians; May 18, Blessed Bartolomeo Caplano, Italian Founder of the Institute of the Sisters of Charity, and (same day) Blessed Vincenza Gerosa, Italian Co-founder of the Sisters of Charity; May 28, Blessed Jean of Valois, one-time Queen of France.

**ALSO** JUNE 11, Blessed Maria Goretti, Italian martyr of chastity; June 25, Blessed Vincenzo Maria Strambi, former Passionist Bishop of Macerata and Tolentino, Italy, and (same day) Blessed Antonio Maria Giannelli, former Bishop of Bobbio, Italy, and July 9, Blessed Mariana de Jesus Paredes of Ecuador, apostle of charity.

Two other canonizations are expected to take place some time after July 9.

**THE DATES** for which beatification in Holy Year have now been fixed include: January 22, Venerable Vincenzo Pallotti, Founder of the Order of Pallottines; February 8, Venerable Maria Desolata Torres Acosta, Founder of the Servants of Mary; Ministers to the sick, February 19, Venerable Vincenza Maria Lopez Vicuna, Foundress of the Institute of the Daughters of Mary Immaculate for girls of domestic service; March 5, Venerable Domenico Savio, Italian Salesian student, one of Don Bosco's first pupils, example for youth; March 19, Venerable Paola Elizabeth Corbelli, widow of Barrett Case, and Foundress of a community of the Sisters of the Holy Family.

It is expected that on either Sunday, October 1, or Sunday, October 8, the Venerable Maria de Mattias will be beatified, while the Venerable Anna Maria Javonhey is expected to be beatified on Sunday, October 15.

**Boys Town in Spain** Melaga, Spain — (NC) — A Boys' Town, including dormitories, refectories, workshops and a sports arena, will be built in the vicinity of Torremolinos by the Spanish government.

# German Children Again Claim Visions; Report Seeing Christmas Story In Sky



German Children Who Claim Visions

By MAX JORDAN

Minch — Several children, who previously had claimed to have seen apparitions of the Blessed Virgin, reported further visions in the sky on Christmas Eve.

This time they said that they clearly saw such scenes as the Child Jesus in His Bethlehem crib, the announcement to the shepherds, the coming of the three kings, and the flight of Mary, Joseph and the child.

The four little girls, between the ages of 12 and 14, live at the village of Heroldsbach.

Thurn, near Nuremberg. Their reports are unanimous. Some 5,000 persons were present on the scene at the time. The visions were said to have lasted for some 30 minutes.

The children said that they could see figures in life size moving as if in real life.

Ecclesiastical authorities are carefully investigating their report. Archbishop Josef Kolb of Bamberg, in whose diocese the scene is located, has not, so far, released the findings of a special commission he sent to investigate several months ago at the time of the

first report of the children's visions.

Meantime, funds are being raised to build a pilgrimage church on the hill where the children claim they had their visions. A statue of the Blessed Virgin is to be erected on a tall pole, overlooking the woods where the first visions of Our Lady were said to have appeared.

At the time of these first reported apparitions, diocesan authorities cautioned people to withhold judgment for the present and say their prayers in church.

# Mass Celebrated In Soviet Zone Concentration Camps

By MAX JORDAN

Berlin — (NC) — Catholic inmates of all concentration camps in the Soviet zone attended Mass and partook of the Sacraments in divine services held in camp auditoriums on the day after Christmas.

This is the first time authority was granted for such services to be held. It was arranged with the Russian military governor by Bishop Heinrich Wienken, Coadjutor of Meissen, who resides in Berlin.

**BISHOP PAUL TROTSCH**, Auxiliary of Berlin, celebrated the Mass and presided at the services held at the concentration camp at Sachsenhausen, with 800 Catholic inmates present. A High Mass was celebrated for the men and a Low Mass for the women at this camp. Everyone received Holy Communion and took part in the singing, using hymnals that Bishop Trotsch had provided. At the close of their Mass, the women intoned the Te Deum.

Bishop Wilhelm Westphal, Auxiliary of Paderborn, who resides in Magdeburg, presided at the services conducted for Catholics in the Soviet zone.

# Italian Nuns Get Christmas Packages

Vatican City — (NC) — The Christmas holidays will be pleasanter for about 13,000 Italian cloistered nuns and about the same number of displaced persons thanks to the "Christmas packages" program here of War Relief Services — National Catholic Welfare Conference.

Each nun in 497 convents, representing 109 different societies, receives ten pounds of flour and five pounds of sugar as a special supplement. The living conditions of the nuns continue to be poor and their diet deficient.

The nuns were given similar assistance last Christmas and Easter.

The Soviet Government has four special concentration camps for Ukrainian priests. Many of them were executed. No monasteries exist. All Catholic schools are closed. Catholic newspapers, books and prayerbooks are not allowed to be printed.

People do not dare to profess publicly that they are Catholics. The Catholic religion is forbidden in the Ukraine.

**MOSCOW DOES NOT** tolerate anything that is independent of Moscow. As a consequence, the

# Ukrainian Catholics Resist Police State

The author of the following article is a refugee from the Ukraine and now living in the United States. Because he still has close relatives living in that Soviet-controlled land, he writes under a pseudonym.

By DR. TIMOTHY ST. MERECHT

(N.C.W.C. News Service)

In the Ukraine there is an ancient custom of erecting crosses of wood or stone along roads.

What has happened to these crosses stands in the minds of the Ukrainian people as a terrible symbol of what is eventually in store for all true Christians in that land now ruled by the Kremlin and its secret police. Orders have been given to the Russian secret police to destroy these crosses all over the Ukraine memorializing the Redemption of mankind.

Perhaps the Kremlin realizes that these reminders of the suffering Christ are a source of courage and consolation to the Ukrainian Catholics and serve to strengthen their determination to resist the yoke of materialism being foisted on them.

**THE PEOPLE** are definitely re-erecting the crosses during the night. Attempts are then made by the Red Police to track down the offenders.

Ukrainian women have been forced by Red officials to throw these crosses into the river. Even crosses marking graves of Ukrainian soldiers have been destroyed.

Actually the repressive measures taken by the Soviets against the Catholic Church in the Ukraine are but a continuation of the old Czarist policy. The Czars dreamed of making the Russian Orthodox church "the" Christian Church and of making Moscow the "Third Rome" the world's spiritual and cultural center replacing Rome and Constantinople.

**TODAY THE** Catholic Church in the Ukraine officially does not exist. Of the eight Ukrainian Catholic Bishops, two died in prison, the third was killed and the remaining five are in concentration camps in Siberia.

Archbishop Joseph Silypi of Lwow, who was condemned to eight years in prison, is now forced to do hard work in a coal mine in Vorkuta, near the Arctic Ocean.

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Ukrainian autocephalous Orthodox Church has been liquidated because it was not subordinate to Moscow but to the Patriarch in Constantinople.

The 26 Bishops of the Ukrainian autocephalous Orthodox Church became victims of bolshevik terror because they did not acknowledge the Moscow Patriarch as their ecclesiastical superior.

In the Ukraine the Greek rite Catholic Church has been forced to join the Russian Orthodox schismatic church. Five million Ukrainians were deprived of their religious rights.

The Ukrainian Catholics can only secretly hold divine service. The Soviet government has declared the Greek Catholic Church a "public enemy" organization. But Moscow is not able to root out the Catholic religion, which now has gone underground.

**THE KREMLIN** tolerates the Russian Orthodox Church only for the purpose of propaganda in other countries. This Church has become the servant of the Russian imperialism. It is called in Eastern Europe the "handmaid of the Soviet regime". The communist government is also an atheistic one. After a short break caused by foreign political matters during the war the atheistic propaganda again rose to a high pitch.

The last Greek rite Catholic church in the Western Ukrainian capital of Lwow was closed by communist officials and handed over to the Russian Orthodox authorities. When the priest was forced to carry the Eucharist out of the church the people wept bitterly. In spite of atheistic propaganda they remain deeply religious. Although they do not go to church — there are only Russian Orthodox churches — they pray at home if possible they gather in secret places for community worship.

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