

Pontiff Urges:

Laity To Organize For Catholic Action

By REV. JOSEPH J. SULLIVAN

Vatican City — (NC) — Pope Pius XII has called upon the hierarchy of Italy for a rejuvenation of the Italian Catholic Action organization as a manifestation of traditional collaboration of the laity with the apostolate of the hierarchy.

The Pontiff's message (issued Jan. 28) contained an Apostolic Exhortation addressed to all Archbishops, Bishops and other Ordinaries of Italy in peace and communion with the Apostolic See.

His Holiness referred several times to the fact that organizational activity is one of the chief characteristics of our time and even pointed out the use which the Church's activities make of this instrument.

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German Girls Sold As Slave Labor To Siberia Firms, Survivor Reveals

Munich (NC) — A story of the misery of the living and the deaths of hundreds of German girls in Siberian slave camps has just been told here by one who survived to return after four years.

In 1943 all the girls in her camp were promised freedom and their return to Germany, but two construction companies bought their services and con-

tinued to use them as slave labor despite the promise, the girl says in her graphic account.

The tale of ruthless modern enslavement begins in February 1945, when the Russians occupied the Silesian town of Blowitz. The entire population was interned.

"Our next stop was prison," writes the girl in Christ Under Way, a Munich publication. "We

had to walk 50 kilometers (about 31 miles) with hundreds of prisoners of war. The only meal in two days was a piece of bread.

Some weeks later they were all tried. News that they were all tried could have caused much joy, but disappointment followed.

Writes the girl, who signed herself as J. A. "Her sister is still in Siberia."

"MY SISTER, who had worked as a typist in the municipal administration, was accused of co-operating in extermination plans directed against Russians," she goes on. "She was forced to sign the accusation. I was charged with having taught children to hate the Russians in my nursery school. All hopes vanished when someone mentioned the word 'Siberia' to us."

"As Easter bells rang and people went to church, armed trucks drove us to Sanok in Central Poland. There we were joined by 400 girls and women and about 600 men. When we were loaded into freight cars, 40 per cent of us were lost."

"Our confidence in God was our only hope left, and as the train moved to take us into a dark and uncertain future we sang, 'Holy God, we praise Thy name.'"

"WE REACHED our destination — a camp not far from the Chinese frontier — after a month's journey in May, 1945. Inflammation of the lungs, typhoid and other diseases soon spread. Only 200 women and girls survived in our group of 400 in December, 1945. We moved to another camp, already occupied by 200 girls from Brandenburg. These Brandenburg girls had totalled 400 when they arrived there in April, 1945. Now we again formed a group of 400 women and girls."

"We had one huge room to sleep in with only one door to let in fresh air. But this camp had at least a separate wash room. After a while we got our own rooming places."

"The girls, she writes, more or less did the work of prisoners of war. They loaded and unloaded building materials, helped in building operations, laid bricks and did other heavy manual work. Rations were given out according to efficiency. Most of the girls were exhausted after two hours' work and then slaved on automatically."

"Release was promised to all prisoners early in 1948," she continues. "But in November we were construction firms bought all the women for their work purposes. We were reviewed like soldiers and the stronger group assigned to one and the weaker to another firm. Now we lived in smaller rooms with eight to 20 beds."

"On Good Friday, 1949 illness released the release of 18 of the 200 women now gathered at the camp. I was one of them as I had fallen from a truck and suffered a brain concussion. One grief overshadowed the joy of regaining freedom — my sister had to stay behind, and God knows how long her confinement will still last."

Pallium For Patriarch Of Jerusalem



Most Rev. Albert Gori, O.F.M., Latin-rite Patriarch of Jerusalem, receives the Pallium from His Eminence Nicola Cardinal Canali, Grand Penitentiary, at the Church of St. Onofrio, Rome. The ceremonies also marked the inauguration of Cardinal Canali as Grand Master of the Order of the Knights of the Holy Sepulcher.

Pope Receives U. S. Newsmen

Rome — (RNS) — Newspaper men have a grave responsibility "before God and man" to aid the cause of world peace and champion human rights, Pope Pius XII declared at an audience to seventeen American newspaper editors who are touring Europe under the auspices of the Economic Co-operation Administration.

"Never before, we dare say, has this responsibility been more exacting than today," the Pope said, "when communication has become so easy and far-reaching and the fragility of the ordinary citizen is being felt more and more in the government of nations."

Declaring that the press has a compelling obligation to tell the truth, Pope Pius told the editors that the press is today "the most potent voice reaching the general public."

He urged newspapermen to contribute to the attainment of the goal set for the Holy Year of 1950 — "a great return of the world to God through Christ" — which can only be accomplished, he said, "along the path of truth."

"When the individual man is recognized in his true stature as an image of God gifted with inherent rights which no merely human power may violate," Pope Pius added, "and when the State is recognized as divinely instituted to protect and defend its citizens and not enslave them, then the whole world will be united in open profession of the inescapable truth of its dependence upon God, and mankind will have made definite strides back to God and, by the same token, back to prosperity, peace and security."

U. S. Priest Enters Moscow

Moscow — (RNS) — Father John O. Arthur Brassard of Worcester, Mass., arrived here to take over Moscow's only Roman Catholic church.

The priest, who came via Leningrad, said he had an uneventful journey and was "glad to be here."

He will replace the Rev. George Laberge, who returned to the United States in February, 1949, for a vacation, but was not granted a re-entry permit by Soviet authorities.

Father Brassard will have two assistants to help him minister to the spiritual needs of Catholics here.

One is Father Jean de la Matina Thomas, a Frenchman, who serves the religious needs of the French colony. The other is Father Joseph Butkovich, a Soviet national, who conducts services for Russiaspeaking parishioners.

Nine Japanese Franciscans Given Tonsure In Ceremony

Urawa, Japan (NC) — Nine Japanese students of theology have received the tonsure here from Archbishop Maximilian de Furstenberg, Apostolic Delegate to Japan. The ceremony was performed at the Franciscan seminary. It is probably the largest group belonging to any one religious community ever admitted to the clerical state at one time in the history of the Japanese mission.

Their careers were perhaps the most checked since they began their studies in the Seraphic College of Nagasaki. Their studies

were interrupted for periods of from four to six years for service in the army. One was shipwrecked during the war, another was a wireless operator in China a third a bombardier, a fourth a guard in a Kyushu prison camp.

The Seraphic College was established in 1930. It was closed down when the priests were interned in 1941 and became a hospital. The building was wrecked by the atomic bomb. The new Seminary was built in 1938 and was used as an internment camp during the war. In 1948 seminary work was resumed.

Kremlin's

Anti-Church Agency Started In Warsaw

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

A central anti-religious office, directed by Soviet specialists, has been set up in Warsaw to help direct the communist fight against the Catholic Church and other Christian faiths, the Inter-Catholic Press Agency in New York reports.

Berlin Bishop Assails Red Prison Camps

Berlin — (RNS) — Conrad Cardinal von Preysing, Roman Catholic Bishop of Berlin, released a statement here denouncing the existence of concentration camps in the Soviet occupation zone as a "shame" and a threat to German peace and unity.

The Catholic prelate's statement came after Western Sector newspapers in Berlin had attacked two Protestant leaders — Bishop Otto Dibelius of Berlin and Dean Heinrich Gruber — for reporting favorably on conditions at the Buchenwald, Sachsenhausen and Bautzen concentration camps. The Protestant churchmen conducted Christmas services at the camps.

"DECLARING THAT for twelve years, concentration camps existed in Germany under the Nazi regime and many hundreds of thousands suffered in them or were cruelly annihilated," Cardinal von Preysing added that "after the capitulation, we hoped, together with all well-meaning people, that there would never again be concentration camps on German soil."

"This hope was a deception," he continued. "Again and again, sorely afflicted mothers and wives, husbands and fathers ask me desperately for help because their son or daughter, husband or father was taken suddenly away and since then has not been heard from."

"NO PUBLIC trial is heard. The deportees have no defense counsel. They are completely cut off from the outside world, even from their next of kin. They cannot even send word of their whereabouts. Among these unfortunate are even large numbers of young people who have hardly left the age of childhood."

Near East Missions

Francis Cardinal Spellman, President  
Messrs. Thomas J. McMahon, Nat'l Sec'y  
Rev. Harry M. O'Connor  
Rev. Andrew H. Rogosh  
Rev. Joseph F. Conroy

No Room in the Inn

An old story in Bethlehem. And an unfinished story. Homeless children there hear the same reply today. Monsignor McMahon writes: "When I was down in Bethlehem I agreed with the Sisters of Our Lady of Apostles to open a little orphanage in their building, and we shall have a monthly load to make it march. Our good people might like to adopt one of the twenty we shall take this month. We are really giving the Sisters only one hundred and fifty dollars to begin, and thirty dollars monthly. A dollar a day from you means life for a day for a child. Will you adopt one of the twenty for a month for thirty dollars."

OPERETTA WITHOUT MUSIC

Our musical show concept of the hard-riding, desert-dwelling Beduins has no place for quiet, gentle nuns. But they're very much part of the reality. The "Little Sisters of Jesus," founded by the famous Pere de Foucaud to work among Moslems, are right in the middle of the picture. A group of them recently arrived in the diocese of Bostons and Hauran. In fact, right now they're camping in the Bishop's Reception Room. One thousand dollars will get them out of the parlor into a little structure that will be chapel, convent and work-center.

I'LL HAVE A WING

Down in Malabar, India, Archbishop Kardinal is struggling to provide for his poor. He opened the first wing of a new building as a house of refuge for women. The wing is filled and two hundred more women await admission. Added shelter for women a dispensary for the poor and a maternity center are planned. But three wings remain to be built. Each will cost five hundred dollars. Will you have a wing?

SONG OF ROLAND

An epic title that stirs the imagination of every lover of literature. But this is a different song, a more plaintive melody. Roland Abajoudi is in his first year in the seminary of St. Francis Xavier in Beirut. His course will cost one hundred dollars annually six hundred dollars in all. His wealth is entirely spiritual. So Roland must "sing for his supper." Can you help him along the way?

SUPERMAN

Last week a bunch of school kids up in the Bronx rang a bell over in Iran. No wires, no mirrors, no tricks. They bought a bell for a mission chapel. No sounding brass or tinkling cymbal, but the clear sound note of Charity will ring out in that chapel down the years. It's nice to feel you're a fixed part of the daily Sacrifice of the Mass. You can be ever-present in a sanctuary lamp, a missal, a tabernacle, a chalice, any number of things, ranging in cost from five to fifty dollars. Write for our leaflet.

WOMEN'S HATS

Strange thought. But it was our thought when we saw the name Eugenie. This Eugenie is not a princess. She has no hat problem. She's Sister Eugenie, a novice of the Sisters of the Sacred Hearts of Jesus and Mary. Any problem? Sure thing. Finding three hundred dollars for her support during the two years of novitiate.

SORE THROAT

You had your throat blessed this week — to seek God's protection against throat ailments. It helps also to be warmly dressed in bad weather. That's why we so badly need clothing for our Refugees during this rainy season. Disease and death hover about them these days. Any clothing you don't need is clothing we need. Send it to our C.N.E.W.A. warehouse, 52-19 Flushing Avenue, Maspeth, Long Island.

CALLING SURGEY

And a priest or brother or sister with a medical kit comes s-running. That's the way it is in the mission fields. Medical treatment is one of the services that have to be supplied by the mission workers in many areas. And they carry their "hospital" with them — a medical kit. We need some medical kits, at fifty dollars each. Can you help the missionaries in their war on pain and suffering. It's possible to help a man's soul by healing his body.

Send all communications to:  
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480 Lexington Ave. at 46th St. New York 17, N. Y.

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