

What Father Morlion Said:

Secular Press Misrepresents Priest In Rossellini Stories

By ANNA M. BRADY Director, CIP Press Service

Press and radio reports involving the name of Father Felix Morlion, O.P., General Ecclesiastical Adviser of the International Pro Deo Union and President of the Pro Deo University in Rome, in connection with the Rossellini-Bergman affair have been false or distorted.

The latest story of this sort was an International News Service report which stated: "Father Morlion, ecclesiastical counselor to both Rossellini and Bergman since the beginning of their romance, said: 'The Rossellini-Bergman marriage, being between Protestants, is not valid in the eyes of the Catholic Church, and a Mexican or other divorce would suffice for a divorce of Rossellini-Bergman marriage.'"

Father Morlion did not make the above statement at any time to any one. It is not true that meetings between non-Catholics are considered invalid by the Catholic Church.

THE IMPLICATION that Father Morlion had condoned the behavior of Rossellini and Ingrid Bergman is vicious. It is perfectly true that Father Morlion has known Rossellini for some time—that he has acted as adviser to Rossellini on St. Francis of Assisi (in which even Rossellini is playing roles) and that he has endeavored to make Rossellini appreciate the responsibility he has incurred in connection with the baby born to Ingrid Bergman.

However, it is not true that Father Morlion announced the birth of the baby, was present at the birth, said he was going to baptize him, said Rossellini was "the father," or made any of the other allegations charged to him.

THE FACTS are the following: After the Bergman baby was born, one of the Rome daily papers in its MESSAGGERO column in its story that the baby was named "A United Front" correspondent, then telephoned Father Morlion at his office, asking for confirmation of this. This led to the following statement, given over the telephone and immediately released by the Catholic International Press in the following story:

"Rome—(CIP)—Questioned by journalists about the allegations published in a Roman daily newspaper that he would baptize the child of Ingrid Bergman, Father Felix Morlion, O.P., declared that he had not received any request of this kind.

"THE FACTS ARE, he stated, that Roberto Rossellini, like many other film directors and other persons connected with motion picture activities, has repeatedly come to him to ask for his advice on spiritual problems relating to his films, as well as on other matters. Signor Rossellini did so because for more than 20 years Father Morlion has been known as one of the few priests specialized in film problems.

"As a priest, Father Morlion stated, I have pointed out that the duties of parents towards the (material) soul of a child are not less great even if the child is born from an illegitimate union. Catholics will learn with Christian satisfaction that the parents here expressed a wish to have the child receive Catholic baptism and a Catholic education. This may constitute the first step towards obedience to the laws of God."

"IT IS SELF-EVIDENT," Father Morlion added, "that if I were requested to baptize the child, I should reply that normally the parents have to apply to the pastor of their parish for such matters."

In Italy the baby was accepted as Rossellini's. The question of his baptism was inextricably bound up in the question of the Church's teaching regarding the child of an adulterous union. To a priest to clarify that was normal. But the CIP release did not say, nor did Father Morlion state, that Rossellini was the father.

Since the resignation of Archbishop Charbonneau there have been secular press reports, which first emanated from a secular news service agency in France, intimating that Archbishop Charbonneau was considered "anti-capitalist," and hinting that this might have been a reason for his resignation.

This correspondent is in a position to categorically deny that Archbishop Charbonneau ever was considered "anti-capitalist." At the time of the asbestos strike when he ordered the collections, he made no pronouncements on the merits or demerits of the strikers' demands, but pointed out that the families of the strikers were in dire need and should be assisted in a spirit of Christian charity. Other pronouncements he made were explanations of the Papal Encyclicals on the duties and rights of labor and capital.

Seek Canonization Of Irishman

Dublin—(RNS)—A cause for the canonization of John Bourke, 17th century Irish nobleman who was martyred for having assisted victims of religious persecution, has been introduced in Rome. It was announced here Bourke, whose body is interred in St. John's Church, Limerick, was hanged, beheaded and his body quartered by British authorities after having allowed a priest to say Mass in his home.

Previously, Bourke, who was Baron of Brittas, had been openly threatened for having aided priests and other religious in defiance of laws aimed against the Catholic faith. When brought to trial he spurned the promise of a pardon and the restoration of his confiscated estates if he would conform to the Protestant religion.

Patroness of Agriculture San Juan, Argentina—(NC)—Mary Help of Christians has been proclaimed by the Government of this province as patroness of agriculture.

Archbishop In Montreal Resigns See

Montreal—(NC)—While the resignation of Archbishop Joseph Charbonneau of Montreal came as a surprise to many Canadians, it was not a surprise to his friends in this city. Overwork and extreme fatigue prompted the resignation.

An Archbishop of Montreal, the 58-year-old prelate carried the responsibility of administering the largest diocese in Canada and the British Empire, and one of the largest in the world.

LAST YEAR during the lengthy strike of Catholic union members of the asbestos industry in Quebec province, the Archbishop ordered weekly collections at all the churches in his diocese to provide food and clothing for the families of the strikers. Similar collections were ordered taken up by Bishop Philippe Desmarais in the Diocese of Sherbrooke where the strikers lived, and by Archbishop Maurice Roy of Quebec.

Work Begun On Rebuilding War-Ravaged Lisieux Abbey

Washington—(NC)—Holy Year pilgrims who visited Lisieux within the month, on the night of D Day the abbey was destroyed and 21 nuns lost their lives.

Because this destruction resulted principally from fires started by Allied bombs, reconstruction officials have allotted 180,000 francs (about \$300,000) towards reconstruction, of which \$300,000 francs has been made available. The estimated cost of complete reconstruction is 250,000,000 francs.

Hollywood Priest Joins Trappists

Salt Lake City—(RNS)—A Roman Catholic priest formerly assigned to a Hollywood, Cal., church, arrived here enroute to Huntsville, Utah, to join the Trappists there because he wants "to be closer to God."

Father John J. Spillane, 33, said his decision to enter the strictest order in the Catholic Church came after long and careful thought. He had been assigned to St. Basil's church in Hollywood.

ON MAY 8, 1944, despite enemy occupation of Lisieux, the 60th anniversary of the First Communion of St. Therese was commemorated with all the solemnity that existing circumstances would permit—the last of many important ceremonies.

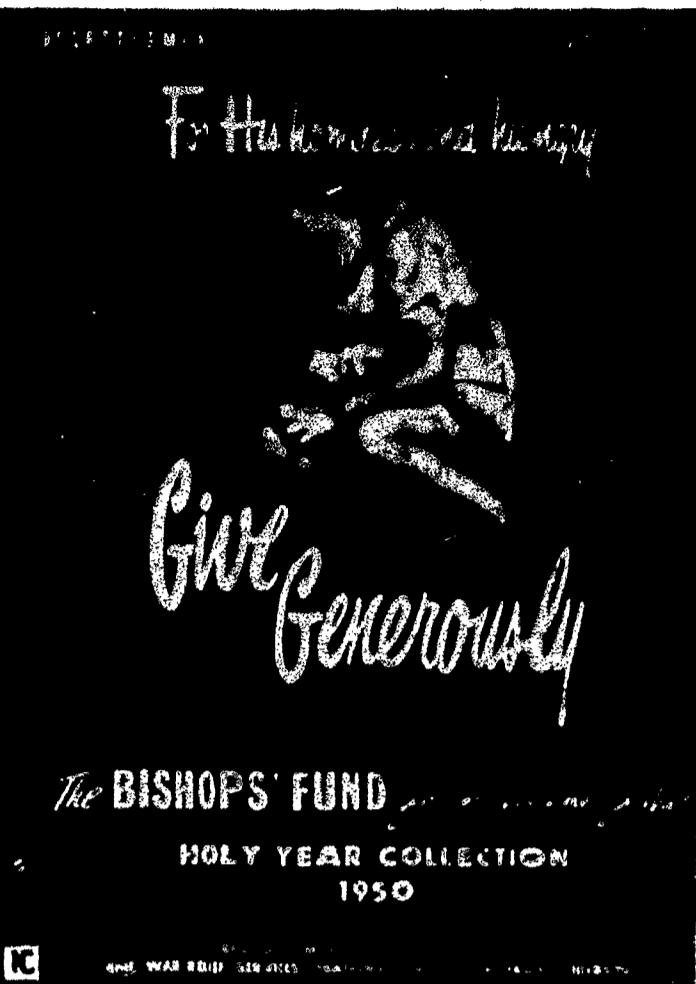
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'FOR HOMELESS AND HUNGRY'



This is the official poster of the annual drive of the Bishops' Fund for the Victims of War, to be conducted throughout the country from March 12 to 19, with a goal of \$5,000,000. Catholic school children of the United States, who are asked to participate in the campaign during Lent, will hear a special radio address from His Holiness Pope Pius XII on Ash Wednesday, February 22. The annual campaign is conducted on behalf of the Bishops' Emergency Relief Committee and War Relief Services-National Catholic Welfare Conference. (NC Photos)

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'Cruelty Incident'

'Report Of Miracle' Gives Reds Jitters

News from Czechoslovakia this week emphasizes the almost pathological terror of the supernatural on the part of the communist regime. The news concerns a reported miracle at the Bohemian village of Chost about 50 miles southeast of Prague.

Reports state that the figure of Christ on the cross in the Chost church moved its head in view of the congregation on several occasions. These reported supernatural manifestations immediately attracted large pilgrimages and then the Red authorities clamped down.

THE PASTOR, the Rev. Josef Toufar, and his church sexton have been placed under arrest. The church has been closed except for two hours on Sundays for Mass. Roads to the village have been blocked and the hundreds of would-be pilgrims have been turned back.

The communist press has been forced to take note of the phenomenon and has charged that it is an invention of "the village rich" and "reactionary circles" in order to rally Catholics against the regime.

One report stated that the corpus of the crucifix which hangs above the tabernacle moved on three occasions: on Sunday, December 11; on Christmas and on Sunday, January 1. The first phenomenon occurred, one story relates, during a sermon by Father Toufar. The priest said: "He Who is in the tabernacle and Who is among us, He will help us." At that moment the corpus is said to have bowed first to the right and then to the left and then leaned to the West.

FATHER TOUFAR himself did not see the phenomenon. It is reported, and was skeptical about it until 19 awed parishioners, including one communist, came to him after Mass and later signed a statement asserting that they had seen the corpus move. Father Toufar was reportedly arrested on January 23 and his sexton was taken into custody two days later.

Half a dozen government commissions are said to have gone from Prague to investigate the phenomenon and left the village baffled. There was no indication that church authorities had launched an investigation of the affair, nor was it considered likely that the regime would permit any ecclesiastical inquiry. Sunday Mass in the village is now offered by priests from a nearby parish.

WAR HERO CHAPLAIN STRICKEN



FR. JOSEPH O'CALLAHAN Boston—(NC)—The Rev. Joseph T. O'Callahan, S.J., first chaplain to win the Congressional Medal of Honor, underwent an emergency operation at New England Baptist Hospital here. The priest suffered a cerebral hemorrhage last December and had been in St. Vincent Hospital, Worcester. His condition was described by doctors as good.

Father O'Callahan, 44, has been teaching at Holy Cross College, Worcester. He was decorated by President Truman in 1946 for his wartime heroism in aiding the wounded and dying aboard the aircraft carrier U. S. S. Franklin.

Bishop Scully's Father Dead

New York—(NC)—William J. Scully, 86, father of Coadjutor Bishop William A. Scully of Albany died here in a Bronx hospital after a long illness.

Mr. Scully, who retired 16 years ago after 40 years in the Postoffice Department is also survived by two other sons, the Rev. Edwin T. Scully, pastor of St. Joan of Arc Church in the Bronx, and Joseph V. Scully, a vice president of the Chase National Bank.

A native New Yorker he was a member of the Post Office Holy Name Society and a charter member of the Holy Name Society of Blessed Sacrament Church, the Bronx.

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