Good Friday Church Attendance Issue Settled

White Plains, N. Y. —(RNS) — Employees of a plant here who were fired or suspended because they left work to attend Good Friday services were back on the job after a Roman Catholic priest intervened on their behalf.

The Rev. George Burles curate of St. John's church at which many of the involved workers are parishioners, interceded with officials of the Sonotone Corporation's Elmsford plant and induced them to reconsider their action.

A compromise was worked out at a meeting in the church rectory between company officials and officers of Local 428 of the United Electrical Workers, an independent union to which the dismissed and suspended workers belong.

Under the compromise, four shop stewards who were fired are to be reinstated and 111 suspended workers were returned to their jobs. Meanwhile, an arbitrator is to be selected to determine the workmen's future right to attend Good Friday services.

Not Partisans

The Church is not a party. Christians are not partisans. The Church will not win the world by opposing it as one force opposes another. — Cardinal Suhard.

BATTER UP!

Dearborn, Mich.—Mother Claudia of St. Bernadette's school opens the baseball season for her pupils by showing them how to slam a home run. Hopefully waiting for a strike behind the plate is Michael Conner. (Religious News Service Photo).

Soldier Pays Tribute To Chaplain, 'Never Lost A Race With Death'

With the 40th Infantry Division in Korea — Father (Capt.) Emil Joseph F. Kapusta, chaplain of the 40th Infantry Division's 223rd Regiment in Korea, is known as the man who never lost a race to bring the Sacraments to a wounded or dying soldier.

The tall ascetic-looking padre from Yonkers, N. Y., also has the distinction of having in one week alone written over 500 letters to the wives and parents of Catholic men arrived in the 223rd. His purpose: to assure the folks back home that he would keep watch over the spiritual welfare of their loved ones.

FATHER KAPUSTA'S incoming mail averages 50 letters a week. Some of them contain worried questions from the families of men who have been notified by the Army that their son or husband has been wounded in action.

Accordingly, the Chaplain inaugurated a system whereby, if possible, a slightly-wounded man writes a letter home direct from the aid-station, saying that the wound was light, and there is no need for concern. The mere fact that the soldier was able to write at the time of the wound is enough to assure most families.

His stern attitude toward the men "on the hill", along with a profound sincerity of devotion to them, is indicative of Father Kapusta's feeling that a chaplain must be a composite of priest and psychologist.

HIS DEEP and abiding love for his own parents, Mr. and Mrs. John Kapusta of Yonkers, N. Y., is seen when he chides any soldier who fails to write his parents regularly. Moreover, he has no sympathy for men who, of their own accord, fail to attend religious exercises after he has arranged the devotions for them.

Stationed formerly with the 1st Cavalry Division in Japan for four months, Father Kapusta's work in Korea began upon arrival at the 223rd Regiment in August, 1952. Since then, he has said Mass on every conceivable manner of "altar." On mess-hall tables, cots in bunkers, jeep hoods, ammunition boxes and logs, he brings the Mass to a different company every day. He is never without medals and other religious objects for the men. Often he recites the Rosary for men who kneel in the trenches in combat gear, with their weapons but a foot away.

THROUGHOUT the week, the infantry-paratrooper priest jots down notes on scraps of paper which are converted into a weekly paper, now famous with all denominations in the 223rd. It is called the "Panic Button Special." Through intrinsically Catholic in scope, it turns everyone's thoughts "to the brighter side of life," and argues that "things could be worse, so why worry?"

Well aware that most soldiers in Korea are subject to nostalgia, Father Kapusta has become famous in the regiment for several grossly exaggerated statements, designed to alleviate loneliness and anxiety. The statement, "Cheer up! We'll only be over here forever," is typical.

All of this, however, is secondary purpose in Korea: the saving of the American Catholic soldier's soul. Averaging four emergency calls a day, he has had to race time to administer the last rites to a dying or seriously wounded man.

MUCH LIKE those of the parish priest, Chaplain Kapusta's combat duties include administering the Sacraments of Baptism, Confirmation, and the First Holy Communion. Any convert to the Church in the 223rd Regiment has studies and examinations corresponding to any he would meet in his civilian parish.

Father Kapusta's working day is long and arduous. And he tries to keep others cheerful, too. But he does it with a smile. If all else fails, Father Kupusta has only to repeat the motto of his "Panic Button Special":

"Let's face it; we never had it so good."

That always draws a smile.

Divorce Rises In Austria

Vienna —(NC)— Statistics published here point to what observers regard as an alarming increase in divorce in Austria, where the latest census showed 89.1 per cent of the people are baptized Catholics.

Of 1,918 marriages registered in Graz, capital of Styria, and the second largest city in the country, during 1951, almost one third — 604 — involved couples of whom one, or both, had been married before. Of the divorcees who contracted a second marriage, 420 were men and 340 women.

Booklet Published

Dallas, Tex.—(NC)—A 32-page booklet called "Our Father Who Art In Heaven" by F. Gordon O'Neill, editor of The Texas Catholic, newspaper of the Dallas diocese, has been published here.

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Refugee Returns Home To Red Terror To Save Sister From Imprisonment

By JUDITH LISTOWEL
(Written for N.C.W.C. News Service)

This is a story of fear and heartbreak—and of Red terrorism stretching out beyond Europe's Iron Curtain to destroy a man's happiness.

It is the story of a refugee worker who had to turn his back on the peace and security he had found in England and to return to his native Bulgaria whence he had fled in 1945, with the almost certain prospect of being imprisoned in a forced labor camp.

The man's name may not be revealed, but we may call him Stefan. Stefan had been in England since 1948. He had learned the English language, was earning a decent living, and was thinking of marrying and settling down in the thriving city of Bradford, in Yorkshire. A bright future seemed to lie before him — until a letter reached him in March from his sister in Bulgaria.

BOTH [illegible] and disturbed, Stefan read his sister's words:

"My dear brother: I beg of you to come back. If you do not, in view of the new law, all of us will be ruined. Think of my children. It was hard enough to bring them up by myself, but they are now about to begin earning their own living, and my life promised to become easier. However, if you do not return, you know what will happen, not only to them, but to me ... Please, for the sake of our parents' memory — or for the sake of anything that is sacred to you—come home at once."

What was this new law his sister referred to? That was the question Stefan kept asking himself. He recalled that his sister had married a communist, and when the Soviet Army entered Bulgaria in September, 1944, she seemed to have done well for herself. But her husband died a few months later, and since then she had had to struggle hard to support herself and her children. But she had never complained, or asked for help. Why, now, was she demanding of him a sacrifice as great as returning to Bulgaria?

STEFAN ASKED other Bulgarians who, like himself, had come to England as European Voluntary Workers, if they had heard of the new law. None of them had. Neither had the British authorities to whom he turned in his bewilderment. Finally, Stefan wrote to a friend in France, who did know.

In the middle of February, Stefan learned, a law had been proclaimed in Sofia which threatened with liquidation the families, relatives and friends of every absent Bulgarian who refused to return to his native land. A number of Bulgarians in France, Stefan's friend told him, had already received letters ordering them to return home within three months.

REFUGEES ARE apt to exaggerate. So Stefan kept telling himself until another friend, a journalist in London, sent him the text of the law, which he had copied from the Bulgarian State Gazette. One of the articles, 72-a read:

"A Bulgarian citizen who leaves the territory of the State, in whatever way, without the permission of the respective authorities, as well as a Bulgarian citizen, including a military person who has left the territory of the State with the permission of the government authorities but fails to return within the specified time from his stay abroad, is proclaimed a traitor and punishable by death."

BUT THAT was unimportant, Stefan thought, compared to Article 72-b:

"All persons, including the close relatives of the traitor, who have known about the preparation of the crime, as described in Article 72-a, but have not informed the government authorities about it in time, are punishable by imprisonment of between five to ten years, and a fine up to 10,000 leva.

"The rest of the members of the family of the traitor, who are of age and have been living with him or have been supported by him during the preparation of the crime, are punishable with deprivation of rights under Article 28 and the confiscation of all or part of their property. They are also punishable by administrative action—labor educational work or forced domicile."

STEFAN THOUGHT of what would happen to his sister and her family if the police were to get on their trail. He remembered that when he left Bulgaria he had turned over to his sister his few worldly belongings, including his share in the small farm they had inherited from their parents. Now all this would be confiscated, his sister sent to a forced labor camp, and his two nephews and his niece deprived of all chances of employment or normal living. Even an old aunt to whom he had sent a tiny allowance during the war could be dragged to the police and made to confess.

After a week's tussle with his conscience, Stefan decided to turn his back on his own future and return to Bulgaria and thus save his sister and her family from ruin. He told his friends: "I know I will be imprisoned. Perhaps I will do a few years in a forced labor camp. But I will be able to sleep at night. Were I to have the tragedy of my sister and her children on my mind, I could never sleep again."

DURING EASTER week, when many people in the West were rejoicing over Russia's new "peace gestures," Stefan departed from the country which had come to mean home and peace.

Girls Promote Modest Dresses

[illegible]

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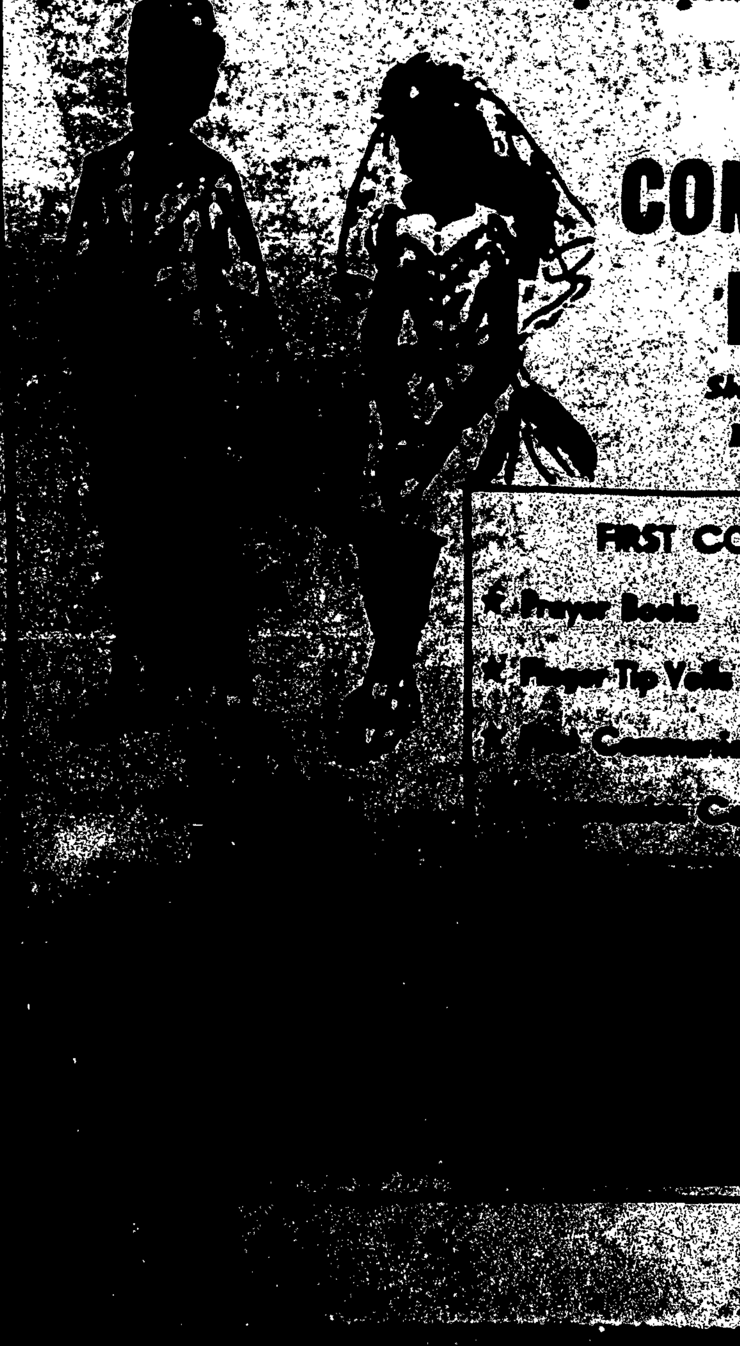

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