

Korea Reds Deny Religious Facilities To UN POWs

By FATHER PATRICK O'CONNOR

Freedom Village, Munsan, Korea.—(NC)—The communists ignored the Geneva Convention rules on religious facilities in their treatment of American and other UN prisoners of war.

They provided no priests or ministers to attend these prisoners, although the North Koreans admitted that they were holding three English-speaking priests—two Columban Fathers and one

if you spoke against their (the communists') teachings, you'd be penalized later. They would throw you in jail in a place where you could not stand up, he said.

After a while, the communists allowed prisoners to gather for religious meetings conducted by themselves. But the camp authorities created difficulties, for instance assigning the prisoners to work at the same time.

ONE AMERICAN told Protestant Chaplain L. W. Meschum of the Marine Division that the communists gave permission for regular Sunday services only seven or eight months ago. They required the prisoners to submit the Scripture texts and the words of the hymns to be sung in advance for censorship. If Catholics would gather to recite the Rosary together, the communist guards would break up the group.

How did the men react under these restrictions?

In spite of the communist attitude and the absence of priests and ministers, they met for prayers every Sunday in one camp, on big feast days in another. In one camp, containing British and American POWs, they gathered on days like Christmas, Easter and Thanksgiving, with American GI's taking the lead, according to Rifleman Cecil Anderson from Belfast, Ireland.

Corp. Ernest Coonters from Denver, Colo., who served with the 3d Cavalry and was taken prisoner in November, 1950, said:

"Religious services were held once in a while. Some of the boys conducted them." In another camp, an American Catholic soldier gathers the men every Sunday and, from a small table, reads the prayers of the Mass.

Exhibition At London

London.—(NC)—The work in Britain of the diocesan clergy and of the monks and friars, brothers and nuns of the religious orders will be graphically illustrated at a Religious Vocations Exhibition at the Grosvenor Gardens, London, from May 10 to 12.

Freedom Village, Munsan, Korea.—(NC)—A young soldier from Munsan had just been released by the communists. He told Father (Lieut.) Elmer F. Ernst, Marine Corps chaplain from Fort Wayne, that he had been baptized but never made his first Communion. He asked earnestly to be allowed to make it now.

Father Ernst questioned the soldier on his knowledge of Catholic doctrine and found he knew enough. He heard his Confession and then brought him to an improvised altar at the rear of the tent. There the man knelt as the chaplain opened the sacrament.

The day of that soldier's liberation was also the day of his first Communion.

Maryknoll—one French priest and about five Protestant missionaries. They also had Chinese priests available across the Yalu River and were holding Korean priests and ministers in captivity.

IN PRESS interviews here, released prisoners said that they never had a priest or minister with them, except one chaplain prisoner of war with one group. He died.

The communists argued against religion, said Pfc. Robert Michael of Syracuse, N. Y., who served with the 25th Division and was a prisoner since November, 1950. They spoke against religion in indoctrination classes, he said. They preached communism is an "atheistic religion" and that the Communists were allowed to have religion, but the communists wanted none of it. He also reported.

For more news on the religious activities of UN prisoners of war, see page 12.

AUSTRALIAN EUCHARISTIC CONGRESS



Sydney, Australia.—Some 3,000 school children form a tabernacle of a gold chalice during a huge outdoor "Christ's Night" rally held as part of the National Eucharistic Congress here. The symbolic gold chalice is seen surrounded by a White Host on a background of a living crimson cross in front of an illuminated altar (back-ground of Arena). Archbishop John F. O'Hara, C.S.C., of Philadelphia addressed the rally which was attended by about 75,000 persons.

Return of POWs Recalls Heroic Story Of American Chaplain In Korea

By FATHER PATRICK O'CONNOR

Munsan, Korea.—(NC)—The return of American soldiers from communist prison camps focuses attention again on the heroism of a Catholic chaplain: Father (Capt.) Emil J. Kapaun from the Wichita (Kan.) diocese.

Father Kapaun went into captivity with some of these men early in November, 1950, near Unsan in northwest Korea. He was captured because he went back to take care of wounded in a position almost surrounded by the enemy.

His name does not appear on the lists of war prisoners published by the communists. In press interviews here the released men said there was no chaplain in the prison camps.

As chaplain of the 8th Cavalry, Father Kapaun was the first American to be captured by the Chinese Reds.

ther Kapaun became a hero to his men. In October, 1950, when the driver of a jeep carrying litterers was killed at the wheel, Father Kapaun ran up, took the wheel and drove the jeepload of wounded over the fire-swept road to safety. This and other episodes, made the chaplain a legend in the regiment—even before that unforgettable night outside Unsan.

It was the first time that Chinese communists attacked United States troops in force. Hence, the 8th Cavalry men who welcomed here this week were some of the first American prisoners taken by the Chinese Reds.

IT WAS ALL SOULS' Day, 1950. The situation was already threatening in the afternoon, when Father Kapaun was saying his last of the day's Masses. The Chinese attacked during the day, but the full-scale attack, with bugles blowing, came toward midnight.

Father Kapaun stayed at the battalion command post to attend the wounded until it was overrun by the enemy. He was with a party that succeeded in withdrawing across a small river. Then the chaplain heard that there were more wounded men still in the area. With the medic, Dr. Clarence L. Anderson of Long Beach, Calif., he went back through darkness and the chaos of the battle.

Father Kapaun stayed with the wounded for the rest of that night and the next day. The men fought from a perimeter, with the wounded in the center, until further resistance became hopeless. It was decided that the injured might try to escape southward. The priest and the doctor stayed with the wounded and captured.

WITHIN TWO WEEKS, the Chinese communists released some prisoners taken on that occasion. One soldier brought a note from Father Kapaun for a fellow-chaplain: Father (Capt.) Francis M. J. McGuilburgh from Philadelphia archdiocese. "Dear Mac: I am a prisoner," the note said. "I am saying Mass."

It was a puzzling question how Father Kapaun could still say Mass, his legs and the trailer with equipment had been burned on the road during the night of the attack. It seemed hardly possible to salvage the Mass kit and carry it through the turmoil of that night and the next day.

Months later, I got a probable solution from Father (Lieut. Col.) Harold O. Prudell from Milwaukee archdiocese, who was then chaplain of the 7th Cavalry Division. "Early in the war, Father Kapaun lost his Mass kit in the battle along the Nakdong River. After that, he carried everything needed to Mass in the person of an evangelist, Father Prudell said.

Church Examines Holy Cross Founder

Yonkers City.—(NC)—The work of Father Anthony David Bernard, Holy Cross founder of the Holy Cross Congregation, was being studied by the Holy Cross province of the Society of Jesus, according to a statement here today.

Sermons Of No Use On Poor Prelate States

Manila.—(NC)—Speeches, sermons and conferences will have no effect on people who are hungry. "We must go to the poor and help them, otherwise all our talk about religion will fall on deaf ears."

Archbishop Rufino J. Santos of Manila gave this reminder to 150 priests and laymen attending the Institute for Social Action at the Ateneo de Manila. All Philippine dioceses were represented.

The Archbishop expressed grave concern for the families of the poor, whose conditions, he said, render them easy prey for communist propaganda. The very poor are willing to take any chance in the hope of improving their lot and the communists he warned his listeners, offer them such a chance with their easy promises.

THE ARCHBISHOP told of a recent visit to a small chapel in the poorest slum section of the city where he said Mass for the people, and how deeply impressed he was at the cordial reception by the poor. The "thank you" of the poor, he said, means that they will take you into their confidence and you can talk to them about many things, including religion.

The poverty and dirt in the homes he visited, the Archbishop said, were shocking. In one home he asked a little girl, "Have you eaten yet?" In answer he received only a shy shake of the head, while the parents were greatly embarrassed but helpless. The money he gave this family would bring only temporary relief, but inspired him more than ever to carry on his program of relief for the poor.

Nuns Purchase T.B. Sanatorium

Frankfort, O.—(NC)—Franciscan Sisters of Our Lady of Perpetual Help, of St. Louis, Mo., have taken over the tuberculosis sanatorium at Green Springs, south of here. It was owned and operated for some 20 years by Alex C. Johnson, a non-Catholic, who said he wanted to sell to an order of nuns because they would operate the institution.

It should be noted that the people of Korea gave us any medicine they had but they didn't have much," he added.

THE PRELATE said only one other priest out of his mission group of nine had survived since their capture by the Communists. He is Father Philip Crosby, an Australian, who may soon be released. The other seven members either were killed by the Communists or died during imprisonment.

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Irish-Born Prelate Pledges Return Too Korean Mission

Dublin.—(RNS)—A Catholic prelate recently released by North Korean Communists after nearly three years internment expressed his determination here to return to Korea and carry on his missionary work.

He is Magr. Thomas Quinlan, Irish-born Prefect Apostolic of Shijansen, whose arrival here drew the largest crowd ever assembled at the Dublin Airport.

The prelate had accompanied a group of six British civilian internees, including Anglican Bishop Alfred Cecil Cooper of Korea, who traveled to London from North Korea via Moscow and Berlin.

MAGR. QUINLAN, a member of the Maynooth Mission to China, said that to be home again "is a foretaste of heaven."

"Heaven cannot be much better than this," he said. "To be among friends and smiling people who are not afraid to talk of God and not be listening to people blaspheming Him and saying there is no God as I have been listening to for the last two years and ten months."

Since he had been unable to celebrate Mass during his internment Magr. Quinlan said that "heaven began" for him in Moscow when Father Georges Bissonette, A. A. American priest who administers to the diplomatic colony there, granted him the necessary faculties.

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God's Help Needed Against Red Peril

Los Angeles.—(NC)—Human wisdom and man are not equal to the task of combating international communism, and mankind must turn to God if it hopes to overcome this evil, His Eminence James Cardinal McIntyre, Archbishop of Los Angeles, declared here.

The Cardinal spoke at the fourth annual communion breakfast of the Catholic Press Council which followed a Mass in St. Vibiana's Cathedral which he celebrated.

He told the Catholic newsmen that despite the rapid development in press, radio and TV communications, the world still gropes for lasting peace because not enough attention has been given to sound thinking.

"The enemy, which gives increasing evidence of having a tank energy and cunning," Cardinal McIntyre said, "has sown cockle with the wheat. It is the duty of conscientious editors, newsmen and broadcasters, therefore, to follow the Biblical injunction to separate the cockle—to burn it rather than disseminate it through the channels of world public opinion."

Wacs Receive Patron Medals

Fort Monmouth, N. J.—(NC)—Fourteen members of the Women's Army Corps received medals of St. Genevieve, patron saint of Wacs, at the close of a week-long mission here.

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