

'Accept Christ As God Or Despise Him'

New York (NC) — A challenge to accept Christ as divine was made by Bishop Fulton Sheen in a "Story of the Birth of Christ" in Collier's Christmas issue.

"He would have us either worship Him or despise Him — a mere man or worship Him as true God," the New York Auxiliary Bishop wrote.

"It may very well be that the Communists, who are so anti-Christ, are closer to Him than those who see Him as a sentimentalist and a vague moral reformer."

Presenting Christ's "credentials" as the Son of God through prophecies and the expectations of pre-Christian peoples, Bishop Sheen concluded: "If Christ is not all that He said He was, namely, the Son of the Living God, the Word of God in the flesh, then He is a knave, a liar, a charlatan and the greatest deceiver who ever lived."

"If He is what He claimed to be, a Saviour, a Redeemer, then we have a veritable Christ for these days. Someone who will step into the breach of death and sin and gloom and despair, a Leader to Whom we can make total sacrifice and Whom we can love even unto death."

The article by Bishop Sheen was the first of three which Collier's will publish. The feature was illustrated by classic paintings of the birth of Christ.



REV. DAVID M. MURPHY

Auburn Youth's Ordination In Rome Slated

The Rev. David M. Murphy, son of Mr. and Mrs. Joseph A. Murphy, 13 Easterly Ave., Auburn will be ordained a priest for the Diocese of Rochester at the North American College, Rome on Saturday, December 19.

Born in Auburn, March 31, 1929, Father Murphy was graduated from St. Mary's Parochial School and East High School, Auburn and from St. Andrew's Seminary, Rochester.

The young man's parents will be present for the ordination in Rome.

He has two brothers, Richard, a student now at St. Bernard's Seminary and Michael, a student at St. Andrew's.

FATHER MURPHY studied for six years at the North American College where he was one of three students from Rochester, the other two being Joseph P. Brennan of Rochester and William Cosgrove of Hornell.

The Rev. George Cocuzzi of Rochester is doing post graduate work at the Gregorian University and the Rev. Eugene R. Malley, C.S.B., also of Rochester is at the Canadian College.

Czech Reds Jail Bishop For Urging Marian Year Rites

Vienna (NC) — Reports reaching here from Czechoslovakia state that Bishop Karel Skoupy of Brno has been arrested by the regime for his efforts to organize Marian Year devotions in that Communist-dominated country.

The Bishop reportedly defied a Red warning given Church authorities last month that they should ignore the Marian Year proclaimed by His Holiness Pope Pius XII on September 8.

BISHOP SKOUPY is said to have expressed his determination to go ahead with plans for strengthening devotion to the Blessed Mother during the Marian Year and to have readied a pastoral for this purpose.

The Red ban on Marian Year celebrations was made on the pretense that Marian celebrations would keep the workers from the factories and endanger the country's five-year plan of economic development.

The Red ban was made known in an instruction issued by the Prague Ministry of Education. It was reported to be the joint work of Zdenek Nejedly, education minister, and Alexej Cepicka, defense minister and generally regarded as the driving intellectual force in the Prague campaign against religion.

Bishop Skoupy reportedly ignored this order and went ahead organizing local celebrations in honor of the Blessed Virgin. He was also chosen by Czech ecclesiastics as chairman of a special committee for Marian Year devotions.

WHEN THE regime became aware of this, a flock of secret police reportedly swooped down on the Bishop's residence. They searched the place for 16 hours, seized the pastoral letter written by the Bishop and took the prelate away into the night.

Bishop Skoupy's place of detention is not known but it is presumed that he was taken to one of the special concentration camps for priests.

The November 8 issue of *Observatore Romano*, a Vatican City daily, stated that Bishop Skoupy had been taken by the regime "to an unknown place."

It is reported that the Russian Orthodox Metropolitan Nikolai Krutitsky urged the Communist leaders of Czechoslovakia, Hungary, Poland and eastern Germany to use force if necessary to prevent Marian Year celebrations in those countries. He is said to have impressed this recommendation on them during his visit to the recent meeting of the World Peace Council here.

The Russian Metropolitan is reported to have urged Polish Communists particularly to get rid of the popular shrine of Our Lady of Czestochowa, burning it down if necessary.

'Faith Of Fathers' Edition Issued By Korean Statesman

Seoul (NC) — Dr. John M. Chang, former Korean ambassador to the United Nations and the United States, is preparing the third edition of his translation of "Faith of Our Fathers," by Cardinal Gibbons. It will be a revision of his translation first published during World War II and should be ready by Christmas.

The book aroused great interest among non-Catholics as well as Catholics in Korea. Some Korean Protestant ministers were converted as a result of reading it.

Dr. Chang became Prime Minister of the Republic of Korea late in 1954. He retired from public life last year. He is a graduate of Manhattan College and holds an honorary degree from Fordham. Pope Pius XII conferred on him the rank of Knight Commander of the Order of St. Sylvester.

DEADLINE ADVANCED

With Christmas coming on Friday, this year, the news deadline of the *Courier Journal* will be advanced one day.

All news must be in the *Courier Journal* office, 33 Seneca St. before Monday, at 3 p.m. Dec. 21. Delivery will be Thursday, Dec. 24.

Last Minute Gift Tip! Give him a new wrist watch from "Thorne's." William S. Thorne, Jeweler, 318 Main St. East, Hamilton 581. —Adv.

'We're Not Dead Yet!'

Irish Nation Vanishing But Gaels Won't Issue Invitation To Funeral

New York (NC) — "The world would be a dreary place without the smiles, wit and humor of the Irish" — yet that is what could happen.

The Irish nation is in "grave danger of vanishing," according to a new book, "The Vanishing Irish," published here by the McGraw Hill Company.

This conclusion is reached by the book's editor, Father John A. O'Brien of the University of Notre Dame, and a group of Irish writers, playwrights, novelists and scholars who contributed to the volume. Among the contributors are Maura Laverty who contributed "Woman-shy Irishmen"; Sean O'Faolain, "Love Among the Irish"; Kathleen Norris, "Muted Wedding Bells," and Margaret Calkin Bangling, "There is Still Hope."

The book, which has been chosen as the book of the month by the Irish Book Club of America, states that 61 per cent of the people in Eire are unmarried. In America, the situation of those who migrated here from Ireland, is not quite so bad, the author says. But even here, too many of the Irish carry over their idea of not marrying at all or of marrying only at a late date. As a result, "there are more old bachelors and spinsters among the Irish in America than among any other national group," the editor states.

Ireland has been steadily declining in population for more than a century, Father O'Brien says. "If this ominous trend continues, in another century the Irish race will have vanished," continues Father O'Brien.

From a total population in 1841 of 8,177,945, Ireland has dwindled to a nation of but 4,538,172 in 1951. Northern Ireland has decreased during this period by a total of 278,586. The population of the 26 counties now constituting the Republic of Ireland has suffered a loss of 3,588,407.

Many reasons are offered by the contributors to the book for this decrease and for the very few number of people who marry in Ireland; engagements lasting from five to fifteen years, the idea of Irish mothers who feel that their sons should stay at home until they are 40, "the cagey attitude of the Irish bachelor who would rather sit at the local pub than court a pretty girl."

Even with all the dire statistics given, John D. Sheridan in his contribution, "We're Not Dead Yet," sees hope, for, as he says, "it will have no hand in sending out the invitations to the funeral. God is good and we aren't dead yet!"

Veterans Seek Red China Bar

New York (NC) — Members of the Catholic War Veterans C.W.V., along with the American Legion, Veterans of Foreign Wars and Jewish War Veterans joined the campaign here last week-end and will continue their work through this week.

The petitions have been circulated by the Committee for One Million Against the Admission of Communist China to the United Nations. The organization began circulating the petitions on a na-

tion-wide scale in October. The C.W.V., along with the American Legion, Veterans of Foreign Wars and Jewish War Veterans joined the campaign here last week-end and will continue their work through this week.

Nuns Accept Blind Postulant Yearly

Roseton (NC) — The Sisters of St. Joseph in Newport, R. I., have decided to accept one blind postulant each year, according to "Lutes," the newspaper of the Catholic Guild for the Blind.

Lutes said this year's blind candidate for the Sisterhood — now studying at the Novitiate of Mary Immaculate in Newport, is Anna Kofelsova of New York. A blind girl from Connecticut has already been accepted to fill the 1954 quota, the paper said.

Lutes added that the novitiate of the Sisters of Providence at Holyoke, Mass., has also accepted a totally blind postulant.

Bishops Officially Judge 'Weeping Madonna' In Sicily As Miraculous Phenomenon

Rome (NC) — The "Weeping Madonna" of Syracuse in Sicily has been formally recognized as a miraculous phenomenon by the Sicilian Hierarchy, according to reports here.

The reports stated that, following a conference at Palermo, the Bishops of Sicily issued a statement declaring that they had "unanimously concluded that the reality of the weeping cannot be held in doubt."

Earlier press reports had related that a terracotta bust statue of the Virgin in the home of a humble couple, Angelo and Antonia Giusto, was found on August 29 to have begun shedding tears, the phenomenon continuing until September 1.

'Weeping Statue' Draws Pilgrims



Syracuse, Italy—This marble statue of Our Lady in a girl's bedroom here has become a shrine for pilgrims from many parts of Italy since the girl, who is ill, said it began to shed tears after she prayed to the Madonna during a nervous crisis. Photo shows the girl, Antonina Giusto, on her sick bed, while her mother wipes the face of the statue. (RNS Photo)

Ruffini read the Bishops' statement, emphasizing what he said was the strength of the evidence in the case. He said: "One cannot close one's eyes to the truth of the facts and therefore, from today on, Syracuse will be considered by the Church the city of the miracle of the Weeping Madonna."

According to the new press dispatches, the Madonnas wept again on two occasions on the day, December 12, that the Bishops' report was issued. The previous reports carried word of two reportedly miraculous cures attributed to prayers to the Madonna. One was that of a small child recently afflicted with paralysis, and the other was that of a woman suffering from sciatica, abscesses, and other complications. Both cures were said to have occurred suddenly.

'Pope Of People,' Pius XII Story Told In 'Time'

New York (NC) — "The Pope of the people," *Time* magazine called His Holiness Pope Pius XII in the featured story of its December 14 issue.

"More than any other Pope in history, Pius XII is heard outside his own church, for millions of non-Catholics — disagree as they might with Roman Catholic dogma — have come to expect from him an occasional reminder of Christian morals, phrases with a lofty sense of values," the article noted.

WITH A portrait of the Pope on its front cover and a four-page spread of color photographs, *Time* devoted six pages to a study of His Holiness' life, his daily routine and his influence against communism.

The Catholic Church today faces a crisis as serious as any since the Reformation, *Time* said. "But the Reformation was a revolt only against the Church; the present crisis is, essentially a revolt against God . . . Its climax is Marxism; its accompanying symptoms include many ills of modern society — lack of moral certainty, an overdose of materialism, worship of the state, negation of all things spiritual. Therefore it is a threat not only to the Catholic Church but to all Christian ideals."

DESCRIBING THE Pope's leadership in combating the threat, including his inauguration of the Marian Year to call all peoples to Christian living, the article called the Holy Father "one of the world's leading spiritual fighters against Communism."

"Above all, he is the Pope of the people, in the sense that he is accessible to all," *Time* said. "He has met more people than any other Pope in history — hundreds of thousands of all nations, all stations, all faiths . . . He is, to Romans and to much of the world, something of a living and familiar saint."

Hungarian Reds Reported Worried Lest Marian Year Will Kill 'Cult Of Marx'

Dublin (NC) — Hungary's chief Communist theorist, it is reported here, has warned that the Marian Year must be suppressed in that country otherwise "the cult of Mary would in the end prevail over the cult of Marx and Lenin."

A dispatch in the *Standard*, Catholic weekly here, quoted from a speech it says Joseph Reval, head of the propaganda section of the Hungarian Communist central committee, gave in Budapest at a meeting of cultural workers.

"If we should allow," the paper quotes Reval, "the Catholic reactionary and conservative elements to carry out in Hungary's countryside, without any restrictions and interferences, their program of special devotion to the Virgin Mary, the cult of Mary would in the end prevail over the cult of Marx and Lenin and medieval superstition would again win a victory over the minds of Hungarian youth."

"The revival of the faith during the Marian Year will be more dangerous to Communist rule than a foot of superabundance from the capitalist world."

The paper reports that in Czechoslovakia the Communist minister of education, Zdenek Nejedly, has ordered all school principals to deliver at least two special lectures to each class explaining "the dangers of the cult of Mary to the people's democratic government."

'Priests Brigade' In Red Slavery

Vienna (NC) — One of the most horrid chapters in the book of Soviet slave labor has come to an end and another began. Nightmarish details of the former have just been revealed; little is known of the latter.

The "priests brigade" — a group of 210 Rumanian Catholic priests working as a construction gang on the Danube-Black Sea Canal project, have been quietly removed and shipped to Odessa in the Ukraine.

Construction of the 50-mile waterway in Rumania, the Kremlin's most ambitious post-war project in a satellite state, was abandoned a few months ago for reasons known only to Moscow.

A few of the brigade's aged priests were dropped from the slave-labor rolls and allowed to return to their homes in Transylvania and Banat (Rumania) with strict orders not to carry on their priestly duties.

It is from these priests, dismissed by the communists as of no further value, that outside world has learned something of the incredible hardships, atrocities and murders perpetrated during the 30 months of the project.

One cleric, returned to a village in Transylvania, said that of the original band of 450

Rumanian eastern rite Catholic priests, 215 died or were murdered since mid-1950.

He told of priests blown to bits in dynamite blasting operations, of mysterious drownings in the Danube, of slower deaths from exhaustion or malaria or typhus. Conditions in the prison camps, he said, made skeletons of the most hardy. Rations were meager, toilet facilities did not exist, filth was everywhere.

On occasion, he recalled, communist guards made sport of shooting at the priests—a sort of target practice. Many were wounded and some killed in this brutal game.

"We had no communication from the outside world since August, 1950," the aged priest said, "and we were completely isolated from our fellow slave laborers."

Often during the night, he related, the camp inmates would risk death to approach the barbed-wire enclosure to talk to a priest or go to confession.

The Transylvanian priest identified the original group of priests as predominantly Greek Uniate, but said few were Latin rite priests of German origin from the province of Banat.

When the waterway was discontinued, he said, the communists promised to restore citizenship rights to priests who would join the Rumanian Orthodox (schismatic) Church. None joined, he said, so they were herded into a boat at the Port of Constanta and sent to Odessa, deeper behind the Iron Curtain. He did not comment on their final destination or fate.

Have you seen Blanchard's Christmas Window—a beautiful setting in the True Spirit of Christmas. Blanchard, 58 Lake Ave. Baker 9486.—Adv.

Bishop Staggered To Freedom After Beating By Red Mob

Hong Kong (RNS) — A pagoda to provide alternate accommodation for himself, four priests, 15 nuns and 30 orphans, the bishop said he was later arrested and charged with the murder of orphans. The Communists offered him leniency if he would join their Church Reform Movement. After he had refused "things got tough." The prelate said he was brought before a people's court at which he was beaten and kicked by angry mobs.

He is Bishop Mario Civelli of Welhwei, Honan Province, a native of Milan, who arrived here under an escort of Communist guards and was immediately hospitalized.

Bishop Civelli, 63, a veteran, missionary with 41 years, service in China, was banished from his mission station two years ago. He said Communist officials forced him to repair a war-torn