

# Mystery Baby Found In Korea Orphanage Arrives In U.S. With Chaplain Escort

Seattle — (NC) — An eight-month-old boy, for whom there was no room when he was born, was chief VIP aboard the USS Gaffey when the Navy transport, with 1,714 passengers from the Far East, docked here to gay music of Seattle's welcoming bands.

A star shone above the blond, blue-eyed foundling when he was born in Korea—or wherever he was born—because he landed here in a loving mother's arms, headed for a wonderful Christmas and a good life in the home of Doctor and Mrs. Hugh Keenan of Spokane, Washington, who have adopted him.

**THE BABY** was discovered in Star of the Sea Orphanage at Inchon, Korea, by Father Edward O. Riley, Navy chaplain from Dubuque, Iowa. Visiting the orphanage in September when his ship, the aircraft carrier USS Point Cruz, touched at Inchon, Chaplain Riley noted the baby, obviously Caucasian, among the 400 children being cared for by 25 Korean Sisters. His parents were unknown.

Father Leopold Kim, Korean priest who is pastor at Inchon, deciding that the western child should have an American name, had baptized him "George C. Ascorn." The last name is that of the huge Army depot near Inchon.

The Sisters told Father Riley that on July 12, the child, then about two months old, wrapped in newspapers, was sneaked past patrolling sentries and placed in the Marine dispensary near Inchon. The Marines took the foundling to Star of the Sea Orphanage, and Chaplain Riley eventually brought the boy to the Point Cruz. The crew of the fighting flat-top "adopted" the baby and vowed to take him home. He was piped aboard with full honors, while the ship flew a diaper at its masthead.

Bringing the baby home also took some doing—there was a snarl of red tape to cut.

**FATHER RILEY** arranged with St. Mary's Orphanage in his home city of Dubuque and with "Boy's Town" Omaha, to care for and educate the boy.

Father Patrick O'Connor, American Columbian missionary and Far East correspondent for N.C.W.C. News Service, was one of the many people who helped to cut the red tape and arrange for the baby's transportation to the U.S.

Dr. Keenan left Hugh Keenan, of the Navy hospital ship USS Consolation, came into the infant's life in November. He visited Star of the Sea Orphanage and, seeing the "American boy," asked about adoption possibilities.

"You will have to ask Chaplain Riley of the Point Cruz," the Sister said.

Doctor Keenan wrote to his wife in Spokane and addressed a letter to Chaplain Riley. Before he mailed the letter to the chaplain, their ships' courses crossed.

Father Riley said, "Of course it would be wonderful for the baby—your home (of an orphanage)."

Mrs. Keenan said here that she immediately answered her husband: "By all means, bring the baby home, if you can."

Well, Lt. Keenan could with the Navy and the Lord helping.

**THE NAVY** decided it safer for the baby to travel on a transport which had nurses aboard, than on a carrier. It transferred him—and Chaplain Riley also—to the Gaffey for the homeward voyage.

Chaplain Riley handed the baby into Mrs. Keenan's eager arms as soon as the Gaffey docked in Seattle Saturday. Lt. Keenan is at sea with the USS

Consolation, "somewhere in the Pacific."

In the homecoming shower of toys and other gifts from Navy personnel there was a useful item from Admiral Alan Smith, commander of the 13th Naval District—a big box of diapers.

The Keenans have one other child, Coleen, aged nine.

**THE KEENAN** family are members of St. Augustine's Parish, Spokane. Dr. Keenan, a graduate of Marquette medical school, served in the Navy during World War II, and then on the Mayo clinic staff. He returned to the Navy a year ago on a Mayo fellowship.

Navy corpsman Dotty Martin of Sunrise, Wyoming, and Mildred Moore of New York, who had the duty for Baby George on the voyage home, said: "He's a wonderful baby—not one bit of trouble."

News and cameramen assembled for the little fellow smiled often and cried not at all during the melee of his half-hour "press conference." And shining eyes glowed Mrs. Keenan's agreement.

## Pastor Makes Suggestions On Achieving Ideal Parish

Birmingham, Ala. — (NC) — Using opinions gathered from twelve fellow pastors of the Birmingham area, Msgr. Joseph A. Durick, director of the mission band of priests in the Diocese of Mobile, made some suggestions on how to achieve an ideal parish.

Here are some of the suggestions he gave a diocesan convention of the National Council of Catholic Women here:

"WOULDN'T IT be wonderful to have a list at the rectory of people who are willing to stay with the sick during Sunday Masses, to allow those in charge of the sick to attend," said one pastor.

"Giving a lift to church can be a big factor in raising the level of a parish," said another pastor. "There are cripples and convalescents, need after-care. Make them feel at home." On conversion work he said:

"Though we want to convert all America to the true Faith, unless you are a St. Paul or St. Patrick, go easy. Don't try to convert America. Just try to convert one American."

## Priest Refugee On Way To U. S. Diocese

Frankfurt, Germany — (NC) — A 41-year-old Catholic priest who worked for months as a railroad yard hand in Prague while hiding from the political police in Communist Czechoslovakia arrived here seeking a permanent haven in the United States.

Following a reunion with a brother in Long Island, N. Y., the priest will go to Dallas, Texas, to serve in the Diocese of his sponsor, Coadjutor Bishop Thomas K. Gorman of Dallas.

**THE PRIEST**, who asked that his name be withheld in order to safeguard relatives still in Czechoslovakia, ran afoul of the police because he refused to adapt his methods of teaching religion in his high school class to the Communist pattern.

Forced to flee his home city, he made his way to Prague where, disguised as a section hand, he evaded arrest for almost a year. Several months ago, however, he was tipped off that his whereabouts had become known. He fled again, this time to the West.

Funds for the priest's trip to the United States were provided by the U.S. Escapee Program. His visa was obtained by the emigration staff of the National Catholic Welfare Conference.

## Cardinal Holds Foundings Party

New York — (NC) — Over 2,000 guests attended the annual Christmas party for the New York Foundling Home at which His Eminence Francis Cardinal Spellman was host.

Eighty children from the hospital attended the party in the Waldorf-Astoria Hotel ballroom, dined on ice cream, played with new toys and juggled at the ties of the Cardinal's robe as he inducted them to the group.

Cardinal Spellman announced during the party that he had received two gifts totaling \$10,000 and several \$1,000 gifts to help meet expenses of the Foundling home, which cares for over 3,000 children.

## MUM'S COOKIES WIN PRIZE



New York—Sister Maria Jose Cannon, a Maryknoll nun from Honolulu, Hawaii, is shown with the chocolate and coconut cookies which won for her third prize in the fifth Grand National Recipe and Baking Contest Bake-off at the Waldorf-Astoria here. She received a cash prize of \$2,500 plus an automatic washing machine. More than 100 cooks participated in the contest, which was sponsored by Pillsbury Mills and General Electric. Sister Maria came all the way from Hawaii to demonstrate her cooking ability at the contest. (EBS Photo)

Crowning of Virgin Year by the solemn pontifical Buenos Aires, Argentina — crowning of the statue of Our Catholics of Argentina anticipat Lady of Lujan, patroness of their the opening of the Marian country.

## Shrine Work To Begin Next Year

Washington — (NC) — Work on the great superstructure of the National Shrine of the Immaculate Conception, here will definitely begin in 1954, according to Archbishop John F. Noll, Bishop of Fort Wayne and chairman of the American Bishops' Committee for the National Shrine.

**COMMENTING** on what he called the "heart-warming" success of the nationwide appeal for funds for the Shrine, Archbishop Noll declared: "Thank God for the wonderful love and devotion our people in the United States have for the Mother of God."

"From every part of the nation," he continued, "we have received word indicating that our people really want this shrine to the Blessed Virgin, built, and as soon as possible. While, necessarily, it will be some time before we know the amount raised in Sunday's collections across the country, all early indications point to the fact that it was a magnificent success."

**ARCHBISHOP NOLL** said that the architects of the shrine are working at top speed to put plans into final form, and that the blueprints are to be ready by July. He stressed the fact that the Shrine is a tremendous building project; it will be one of the ten greatest religious edifices in the world.

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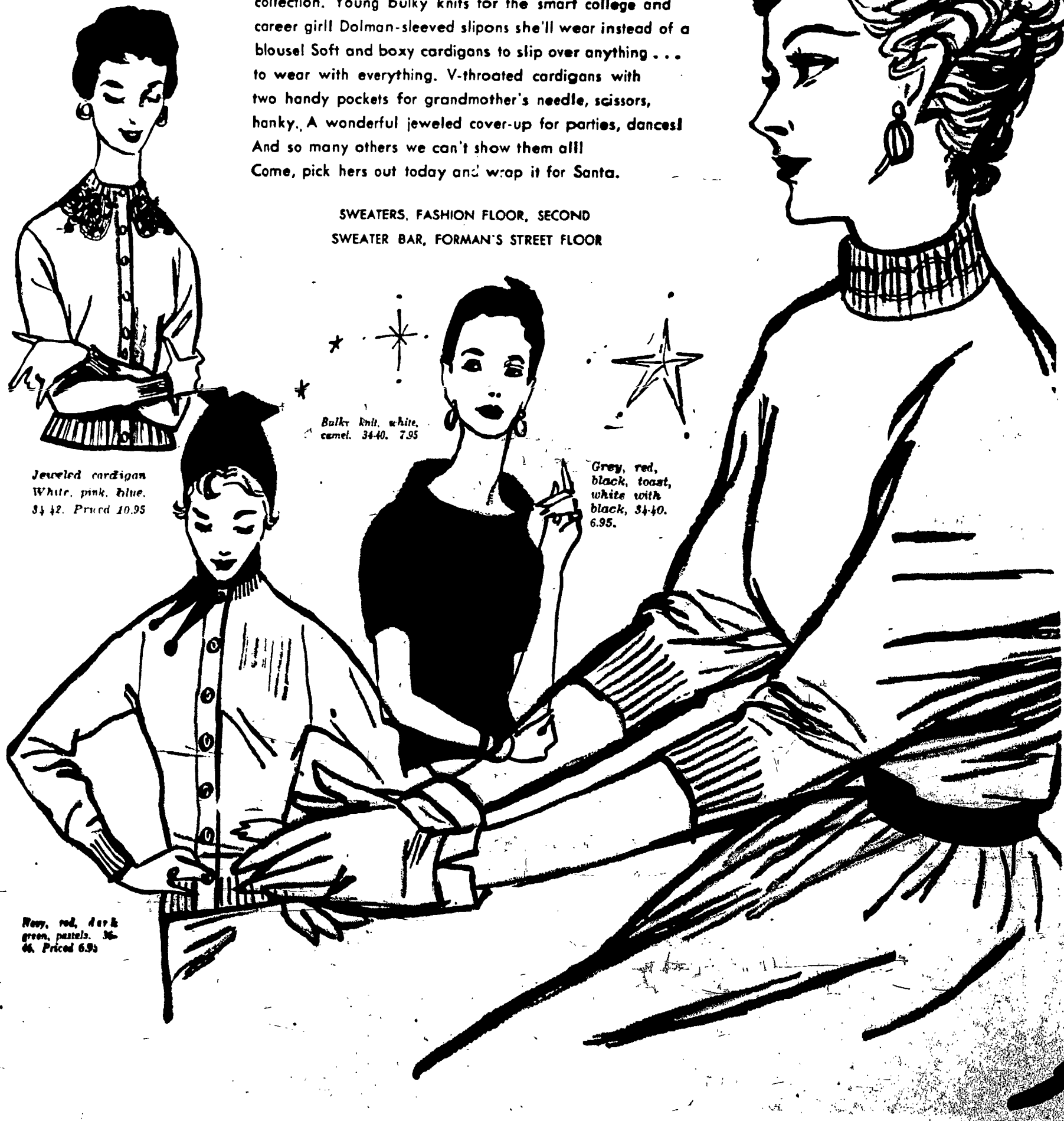
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