

Barriers Part For Pilgrims To Bethlehem

Bethlehem, Jordan — (NC) — Bristling barriers were parted to permit pilgrims to come here in observance of the feast of love. What is believed to be the largest number of Christians since the 1948 Holy Land war was permitted to cross a menacing no-man's-land to celebrate the Feast of Christ's birth here where God "so loved the world that he gave His only-begotten Son."

ABOUT A thousand Israeli Catholics and more than a score of diplomatic officials and members of the United Nations staff in Israel crossed from Israel to Jordan at Jerusalem's Mandelbaum Gate to attend the Solemn Midnight Mass at the Shrine of the Nativity here.

The barbed-wire entanglements, serving as a wall of distrust and animosity between Jordan and Israel, were cleared away at Mandelbaum Gate. Land mines were clearly marked and staked off. Steel-helmeted Israeli soldiers and Jordan legionnaires lowered their menacing rifles and watched peacefully as the stream of authorized pilgrims passed across the border.

Among the first to cross were 60 blind and crippled Christians accompanied by the Sisters of Mercy who maintain a charitable home for them in Israel.

Of the more than a thousand whom Israeli officials had approved for the crossing, some 150 were vetoed by the Jordan authorities. Among those disapproved was Jacob Maldenek, first secretary of the Soviet legation in Israel. No reason was given. But Jordan and the Soviet Union have no diplomatic relations and Russia has consistently opposed Jordan's entrance into the United Nations.

THE HUGE crowd of pilgrims which came from many foreign countries found themselves in something of the same predicament as Joseph and Mary two millenniums ago. They, too, found that "there was no room for them in the inn." Pilgrims without reservations found that all available hotels and other rooming facilities had been booked solid since last summer. Many had to return for lodging to such distant cities as Amman, Jordan, and Damascus, Syria.

Five Trappist Monks Ordained



Spencer, Mass.—Among the five members of the Order of Cistercians of the Strict Observance (Trappist Fathers) shown as they were ordained priests in St. Joseph's Abbey here by Bishop John J. Wright of Worcester (center, facing camera) is Father M. Daniel (Clayton D., Jr.) DeMers, O.C.S.O. of Rochester (second from left). Assisting the Bishop were: the Rev. M. Alberic

Gainer, O.C.S.O. (left); and the Rev. M. Lawrence Bourget, O.C.S.O. Kneeling and wearing dark chasubles over their shoulders, the five new priests are: (from left) Fathers M. Alfred Morrisette, O.C.S.O.; Fr. M. Daniel DeMers, O.C.S.O.; M. Gregory Norman, O.C.S.O.; M. Robert Wright, O.C.S.O.; and M. Pius Rivera-Martinez, O.C.S.O. Beside each Trappist is his priest assistant. (RNS Photo).

Diplomat Shows Church Catholic

Choshi, Japan — (NC) — When the catechist at the Columban church here tells people that the Catholic Church is genuinely Catholic, they believe him because he has seen the Church practically everywhere.

The catechist is Peter Szilazki, a former career diplomat who has served his government in China, Russia, Manchuria and the United States. He also had an audience with the Pope during a round-the-world tour. He made the trip as secretary to Japanese Admiral Yamamoto, also a Catholic.

Protestant, Jews Pray For Archbishop Cushing

Boston — (RNS) — Protestants and Jews as well as Catholics here prayed for the recovery of Catholic Archbishop Richard J. Cushing, who underwent two surgical operations within two weeks.

Archbishop Cushing's condition immediately after the second operation, which was for removal of a kidney cyst, was reported good.

A similar call for prayers in temples and synagogues in the Boston area was made by Rabbi Israel Harburg, president of the Rabbinical Association of Greater Boston and head of Beth El Synagogue.

Among civic officials who called for prayers were Gov. Christian Herter and Boston's Mayor John B. Hynes.

Rubber Kneelers For Nylon Wearers

London — (NC) — The ladies attending St. Anthony's Church in Leeds had been complaining that the hard kneelers were ruining their nylons.

They rejoiced, therefore, when Father Patrick O'Connell, the pastor, announced that he was spending close to \$500 on new rubber kneelers to be installed before Christmas.

"No doubt the ladies will soon save that amount on their nylons," Father O'Connell told Sunday congregations, adding: "I hope they will see that I get the money back."

Mexico To Bar Anti-Religious School Books

Mexico City — (RNS) — A government commission has recommended withdrawal from Mexican public schools of several textbooks branded as pro-Communist and anti-religious.

The recommendation was made by the Textbook Revision Commission appointed by the Ministry of Education.

Its action was regarded as an important victory for Roman Catholic groups in their long struggle against Communists in the education field.

Prof. Toribio Velasco, Commission president, announced that all textbooks used in Mexican schools during 1954 would have to conform to "historical truths," be "ideologically neutral" and lack any "political tendency."

Neither the Commission nor the Education Ministry elaborated on this statement, but it was understood that it meant elimination of pro-Communist and anti-Church books.

JOSE ANGEL Cenceros, Minister of Education, said the Commission's recommendation would be incorporated in official recommendations to be published some time in January.

The commission's conclusions were reached after nearly a year of investigation instigated by Catholic organizations. Pro-Catholic groups like the Nationalist Party and the National Federation of Technical Students, aided by many segments of the press, charged that Marxists had been spreading their doctrines in the schools.

Greensburg Slates Marriage Clinics

Greensburg, Pa. — (NC) — A six-week course on marriage, featuring lectures by priests, attorneys and physicians, will be held in seven cities of the Greensburg diocese starting January 10.

Bishop Hugh L. Lamb of Greensburg has announced. The guidance course, designed to aid young couples planning to marry within the next twelve months, will be given in Greensburg, Indiana, Uniontown, Connellsville, New Kensington, Ford City and Monessen. Director of the program for the seven areas is Msgr. Cyril J. Vogel, chancellor of the Greensburg Diocese.

Polish Bishops Forced On Oath, 'Voice' Charges

New York — (NC) — The Polish Communist regime "greeted the Christmas season martyrdom" of the followers of Christ, a Voice of America broadcast told people in 68 countries around the world.

As the Christian world again marked the birthday of its Savior, the worldwide message said, the communists announce victory over the Polish bishops as their "Christmas tidings."

IN AN analysis of the news that the Polish prelates took an oath of loyalty to the communist government, the broadcast said: "How many Bishops were actually present only (Deputy Premier) Cyrankiewicz and his police know since those who refused to attend cannot make that fact known to the world."

And how many were the new so-called "patriot" priests appointed by the anti-religious and atheist state to fill as vicars the vacancies left by the arrest of the rightful Bishops — "this also is a state secret."

The significance of the oath, the broadcast said, is not that it is "merely a pledge of loyalty."

"This would not have been news. Actually, the nub of the matter is an attempt to force the Polish hierarchy to permit the atheist and alien government to dictate appointment to clerical vacancies, transfers, and the training and appointing of future priests. Towards this end the State has been waging a ruthless war since last February 9, as the latest stage in a four-year struggle to break the Polish people's belief in their nationality and their religion, and make them submissive subjects of the men in the Kremlin," VOA said.

CHARGING THAT the oath-taking was "not a free act," the broadcast said it "has no more validity than the charges in a frame-up trial or the confessions made under monstrous tortments."

Shredding the argument of the official communist news releases that only "patriotism" is demanded of the bishops, VOA said:

"The 'patriotism' required of them is that they should renounce the example of their Primate, reject their relationship with the Vatican so central to the very structure and nature of the Roman Catholic Church, and become a schismatic church."

obedient to every whim and dictate of a state which is made up of men who neither believe in God, nor in the Catholic Faith, nor in the right of Poland to determine its own destiny."

In conclusion the broadcast said the communists may announce many such "hollow" victories, but eventually Poland will turn out to be the conqueror.

Poland's national memory and Poland's religious fervor have lived underground before. So, too, do the love of freedom and the belief in the faith of their fathers live on in the Russian land despite 36 years of varying but never ending persecution."

Priest Good Shot Saves New York Police Inspector

Tarime, Africa — (NC) — A missionary who can pin-point his rifle shots as well as his sermons is mighty handy to have around. Ask William Maley, retired police deputy inspector from New York City, who came here to visit his daughter, Sister Marie William of Maryknoll.

On a side trip to the North Mara Plains Mr. Maley saw lions, zebra, wild beast, topi and leopards. They paid little attention to him, except for a wild boar which decided to attack the jeep Mr. Maley was sitting in.

Before Mr. Maley could move, the boar was stopped dead by a single shot from Father Arthur H. Wille, 28, Maryknoll missionary from Watsonville, Calif. The boar fell only 15 feet from the vehicle.

Mr. Maley, once a marksmanship instructor for the New York police, is ready to concede Father Wille a sharpshooter award.



1868

1954

we said it in 1868 for the first time

we've said it every year since

once again we say it from our hearts

A H A P P Y N E W Y E A R

may health, happiness and good

fortune be yours in 1954

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