

China Archbishop's Death In Communist Prison Reported

Hong Kong—(NC)—An Italian priest expelled from Red China arrived here with reports that Archbishop Joseph Chou (Chou Chi Shih) died in a Communist prison here. The Archbishop was jailed in May, 1952, after refusing to head the so-called Independent Church of China.

The expelled priest was Father Baschin, 48, of the Parma Foreign Mission Society, who arrived from Hankow where he said the communists are making a special effort to force Catholics into the Independent Church.

FATHER BASCHIN said one of the priests at the Hankow Cathedral had received a message from Chou, personally from Nanchang stating that Archbishop Chou had died in prison. He recalled that it had been reported over a year ago that the Archbishop had died, but he said the news "did not seem to be as reliable as at the present time."

Born at Siqa Kwang Yang on January 23, 1892, Archbishop Chou joined the Vincentians in 1915 and was ordained in June, 1918. He was made a Bishop in 1926, and in 1948 became the first Archbishop of Nanchang. Father Baschin arrived here a few days ahead of two other priests, two Sisters and a Brother, who also were forced out of China by the communists.

Iron Curtain Catholics Fear New Persecution

Vienna—(NC)—Reports reaching here from Czechoslovakia, Hungary, Poland and Rumania speak of "deep pessimism" among Catholic circles as a result of the failure of the Four-Power Berlin conference. The fear, the reports say, that the outcome of the Berlin meeting will bring an intensification of the "cold war" which will make it even more difficult for the Church to exercise some spiritual influence. The present relative calm in the war against religion is feared to be the calm before the storm which, any day, may break loose with greater fury than ever. Some reports say that since early this year plans are in preparation for the "liquidation" of the remaining class enemies. These plans are said to include the elimination of all remaining "reactionary" Bishops and priests and the physical destruction of Catholic middle-class families.

Czech Nun Safe In U. S. After Helping Four Priests Escape From Iron Curtain

New York—(NC)—A nun who escaped Red arrest in Czechoslovakia after helping four priests to flee the Iron Curtain, has arrived in the U.S. for a future of freedom. Sister Makaria Barath, 42-year-old member of the Order of Daughters of Our Saviour, was greeted by relatives at Idlewild Airport where she arrived on a chartered American Clipper with 31 other refugees.

THE AFFLE-CHECKED nun told of her escape from Communist-ruled Czechoslovakia under threat of arrest for aiding four priests and two other people to escape. For four months she hid from the Communists, dressed in civilian clothes and moving from farmhouse to farmhouse.

In January, 1952, with nineteen other persons, she escaped across the Moravia River into Austria, serving in relay across the river in small rubber boats. Sister Makaria and the 31 refugees with her, entered the United States under the auspices of the War Relocation Authority. She was met at the airport by her sister, Mrs. Agnes Jablonicky of Toronto, whom she had not seen for 25 years. Her parents and two other sisters who remain in Czechoslovakia were recently released from prison after two years of arrest, she said.

SISTER MAKARIA will now live and work in Oakland, Calif., where her sponsor, Mr. Father George Kervold of Holy Redeemer College.

Sister said she was "happy to be free" and looked forward to life in America. She said Communism brought religious persecution to Czechoslovakia, that the Reds have closed every church in the country. Sister added that people were discriminated and unhappy with Communism, but that they were forced into silence—even some times afraid to speak in front of their own children, who are exposed to Communist indoctrination and taught the techniques of informants in Red-run schools. She said housewives, day after day, get up early in the morning to stand in line for foodstuffs—often finding after a three or four hour wait that the message supplies of the state stores had been exhausted.

Since her escape, Sister Makaria has been working in West Germany as a visiting nurse and with kindergarten-age children. Her work in America will be along similar lines.

Undersecretary Smith Says U. S. Should Reestablish Relations With Vatican

Washington—(NC)—Undersecretary of State Walter Bedell Smith thinks the United States should "reestablish some kind of formal relations with the Vatican."

Gen. Smith's views were disclosed with publication of his testimony before a closed session of a House Appropriations subcommittee on the State Department's annual budget. Representative Rooney, Democrat of New York, raised the question by asking, "What is the position of the Department with regard to a personal representative at the Vatican?"

"That is a political matter," replied Gen. Smith, "and the Department has no official position on it. In my opinion it would be advantageous to the government."

MR. ROONEY SAID: "The last Secretary of the Department (Dean Acheson) and many other officials in the Department have sat at this table and expressed the thought that having such a representative would be of great advantage to the United States."

and particularly in our global opposition to communism, it would be well worthwhile if we should reestablish some kind of formal relations with the Vatican."

"That is my opinion, too," commented Mr. Rooney "but, and to relate, all my colleagues around the table do not agree."

At Gen. Smith's suggestion, the discussion then went off the record. No further comments about the Vatican were printed.

THE STATE Department's budget contains no funds for financing a diplomatic mission to the Vatican.

(There was no immediate comment at the Vatican. Observatore Romano said a year ago that the Vatican would prefer regular diplomatic relations to "personal representation" such as President Roosevelt established during World War II. Speaking of that personal representation the Vatican newspaper said: "It did not have a sufficiently

Burma Premier Attends Mass For Pontiff

Rangoon, Burma—(NC)—Burma's Prime Minister U Nu and cabinet ministers for the religious affairs and education departments attended a special Mass in Rangoon Cathedral for the recovery of His Holiness Pope Pius XII.

REPORTS ON the Pope's condition were front page stories in the Burma daily newspapers, though 90 per cent of the readers are Buddhists. In an editorial, The Nation, Rangoon's principal paper, commended the Premier for attending the Mass saying: "To the thousands of Catholics in Rangoon, it must have been a heartening sight to see Prime Minister U Nu, the foremost lay Buddhist of Burma, attending Sunday Mass yesterday, to join in their prayers for the recovery of Pope Pius XII."

Father James Fisher, Columbian missionary who is general secretary to the Catholic Bishops in Burma, recalled that the Burma Premier had an audience with the Holy Father in 1949 and was deeply impressed. When the news of the Pope's illness reached Burma, the Premier inquired if there would be a public service for his recovery and said he would like to be present.

Son Of Pagan Chieftain, Born In Harem, Becomes Bishop In African Diocese

Calabar, Nigeria, British West Africa—(NC)—The first native Nigerian Bishop in this diocese is a former pagan boy. He was born in a harem and once used to help his father prepare sacrifices to the pagan gods.

He is Bishop Dominic L. Ekandem, who was raised to the hierarchy in the cathedral here by Irish-born Bishop James Moynagh of Calabar. Thirty-seven years old and ordained to the priesthood only seven years ago, Bishop Ekandem will serve as Auxiliary to Bishop Moynagh.

BISHOP EKANDEM'S consecration coincided with the 50th anniversary of the founding of the Catholic mission in Calabar. The mission was raised to a prefecture in 1934, a vicariate in 1947, and a diocese in 1950. It now includes some 75,000 Catholics in a population of 900,000.

The son of a pagan chief, Bishop Ekandem lived as a boy in a compound with his father's several wives and his brothers and sisters and many half-brothers and half-sisters.

The Bishop recalls that as a youth he and his brothers often helped his father prepare the sacrifices to the pagan gods.

THE BISHOP'S father was a progressive chief who realized the value of education and sent his sons to the Catholic mission school in the village. It was here that the future Bishop first became acquainted with Catholicism, took instructions in the Faith and finally was baptized. His instructor was Father Paul Blechy, now Bishop Blechy of Brazzaville, who served as a co-consecrator here.

On first being received into the Church, Bishop Ekandem had no idea of becoming a priest. "The fact is, I did not realize an African could be a priest," he explains.

But one day he heard of an African priest in another diocese. He went to the pastor of the mission and asked if he too could become a priest. He passed an examination and was accepted as a seminarian in a neighboring diocese.

This decision to become a priest was made with great difficulty, Bishop Ekandem recalls. Young Dominic had been the only member of the family to graduate from the mission school and his father had regarded him as the hope of the family. While at first opposed, his father, still a pagan, finally consented.

THE FUTURE Bishop's tuition was paid by a "spiritual mother" in Ireland, who has continued to help him and sent him a gift for his consecration.

Bishop Ekandem's father was received into the Catholic Church in 1946 one year before the Bishop's ordination. Other members of the family have also entered the Church since.

Bishop Ekandem was the first native priest of this diocese. He served as a parish priest and rector of the diocesan junior seminary prior to being named Titular Bishop of Hieropolis and appointed Auxiliary here.

Congress Gets Legislation For Assisting Italian Nuns

Washington, D. C.—(RNS)—Three Italian Roman Catholic nuns who conduct a day kindergarten for children of working mothers in Paterson, N. J., will be permitted to stay in the United States for purposes of citizenship if Congress approves a special bill introduced in their behalf by Rep. Gordon Cantwell (R-N.Y.).

Sisters Luigia Pellegrino, Angelina Nicastro, and Luigia di Martino work at St. Michael's Junior Day Nursery in Paterson. MEMBERS of the Daughters of Charity of the Most Precious Blood, they entered the United States from Italy in 1961 and face deportation unless they are admitted for residence.

With the Italian quota exhausted, their bill "take a special act of Congress," which Mr. Cantwell said he was happy to offer. Without the labor of the nuns, the children could not be cared for at the nursery, he said.

Another bill introduced in the House is designed to aid Sister to offer. Without the labor of the Sisters of the Pious Disciples of the Divine Master, to acquire citizenship.

A native of Italy, she is employed as housekeeper at St. Paul's Monastery, Canfield, O. Rep. Michael J. Kirwin (D-Ohio) is sponsor of the bill.

Lady Of Fatima
Dublin—(NC)—People throughout Ireland are donating jewelry toward a crown to be fashioned for the statue of Our Lady of Fatima at the convent in Coimbra, Portugal, where one of the last surviving witnesses of the "Fatima" apparitions now lives. She is Lucy dos Santos, a Carmelite nun.

Senator Byrd Aids Italian Nuns

Washington, D. C.—(RNS)—A bill to permit four Italian Roman Catholic nuns to remain in the United States so they can apply for citizenship has been introduced in the Senate by Sen. Harry F. Byrd (D-Va.). The measure would grant residence status to Sisters Anna Sermzi, Giuliana Paladini, Iolanda Manzochi, and Giuseppina Zanchetta, all members of the Missionary Sisters of Verona.

The nuns came to the United States last year at the invitation of Bishop Peter L. Breton of Richmond to do missionary and catechetical work in his diocese. Their visitors' visas were due to expire on March 15.

Canada's Far North Mission Ship Sold

Churchill, Man.—(NC)—The Regina Polar, the missionary ship used to supply the Oblate missionaries in Canada's far north, has been sold. Bishop Marc LaCroix, O.M.I., Vicar Apostolic of Hudson Bay, has announced.

The high cost of insurance and operation of the ship for so short a navigation season in the Hudson Bay proved beyond the financial means of the Vicariate, Bishop LaCroix explained. He said that the funds derived from sale of the ship will be invested in founding the first residential school for Eskimos of the mission territory.

London Universe Gains Circulation

London—(NC)—Circulation of The Universe, London Catholic newspaper, increased by more than 35,000 from June to December, 1953, the paper reported. In December, the Universe circulation was 250,996, greatest in the paper's history.

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Colombia To Honor St. Peter Claver

Cartagena, Colombia—(NC)—Negro slaves, Colombian Catholics will join the saint will be taken from their shrine here on a pilgrimage from St. Peter Claver, the Spanish-born Jesuit who in 1896 was proclaimed patron of all Catholic missions among the Negroes. The saint died at Cartagena in 1654, who is said to have baptized and nursed over 300,000 Negroes sacrificing work on behalf of fortunates.

LOVELY LADY YOURS

We have a lovely picture of "Our Lady of the Near East" in rubber and gold, suitable for framing, a copy of an original, painted some years ago in Rome for Magr. McMahon by a Russian exile. We offer one for each gift of \$10 or more for Mary's new YAVINA SHIRAZI in JORDAN. We do hope to get started in time to complete it during the Marian Year. Won't you help?

Our Near East missionaries endure the greatest poverty to serve their Master in His homeland. They receive almost no other support but their own. We need \$100 a year for her two years in training. Where will we find a kind heart to help her? Her grateful prayers await you. You may send a little at a time.

CARDINAL PLEADS FOR SICK POOR
Cardinal Tisserant, visiting India last fall, saw the urgent need of a MISSION HOSPITAL for the sick and suffering. He wrote: "The good bishop regards a hospital there at this time as the greatest mission need and most effective means of preaching Christ's charity to the poor. Won't you help him? Medical kit \$75; Layette \$5; bed \$25."

YOU'LL BE IN GOD'S WILL IF HE IS IN YOURS

ST. VINCENT DE PAUL SOCIETY, HELP!
The Society in Jerusalem begs for help from other Conferences and friends. The state of suspended war leaves thousands of unemployed on their hands. But their greatest problem is to provide shelter for the many homeless old folks. They can with \$3,000 provide a place in the Old City to house many. Can you help this worthy work?

We have young Sister Don Bosco with the Adoration Sisters at Keady, Lond. We need \$100 a year for her two years in training. Where will we find a kind heart to help her? Her grateful prayers await you. You may send a little at a time.

WON'T BE LONG
Time for First Holy Communion is not too far off. We must start thinking about the sacrament (for the sake of their Great Day). We have a wonderful group of 250 women who, under the Sisters and priests, travel through 125 villages in Syria and Lebanon preparing poor children for their Lord's Coming. For \$10 they'll give a lot a new outfit. Can you help?

MOVIE FOR LENT: Our 16mm. sound film will be just the right program for Lent. It shows many of the Sacred Miracles of the Holy Land. Rentals \$6 and Sales \$45 help feed the poor thru.

REFUGEE REFUSED
From Karlsruhe, Ind. The Parish appeals for the Refuge conducted by the Nuns of the Holy Family. It gives shelter for unprotected women and children. It is the only institute of its kind in this part of India. We have to deny admission to many deserving cases for want of space. The Sisters give many a mother and child for eternal life. Won't you help them put up a new block? It buys a brick.

For St. Eugene's Day, March 3, the Holy Father's patron, we appeal for another Eugene, a lad in the Ruthenian seminary in Rome. We must find a friend who will help him with \$100 each year of his six years training for the priesthood. You may give in any installments. He'll keep you in his heart and prayers all his life.

"SUFFER THE LITTLE ONES"
Our dear Lord was never tired to gather in and bless the little children, for they were so precious to Him. That's why the Church ever strives to gather more into our MISSION SCHOOLS to fill their young minds and hearts with love for Him. We have our BASILIAN and DOMINICAN MONTH CLUB. Members support this great mission need with their monthly gifts. Won't you join?

Near East Missions
Francis Cardinal Spellman, President; Magr. Thomas J. McMahon, Vicar
Send all communications to:
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