

### Four Million Desert?

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The "Christian Register" presents an interesting report that "more than 4,000,000 American Roman Catholics have joined Protestant churches" in the last ten years. At first hand reading there are a number of questions in reference to the report. Some of them are as follows:

1. WHAT IS a convert to the Protestant church? Is he or she one who was in good standing in the Catholic Church, or one whose religion had already been lost? Did he or she undergo a course of instruction before becoming a Protestant and is the same person a regular attendant and active in the Protestant church?

2. WHAT HAS been the total growth of the Protestant churches of the nation in the past ten years? If to the normal gain from births, increase of population, are to be added over 4,000,000 Catholics, probably a claim of 400,000 or 500,000 Jews, then one wonders how the Protestant churches can accommodate all the people they have. Many of our minister friends insist that they have only one service on Sunday, to a sparse congregation, and the numbers present are not even as large as ten years ago. The official year book "The Protestant Churches in America" for 1953, in other words more than one quarter of the growth is due to accessions from the Catholic Church, an almost unbelievable figure.

3. WHO ARE these millions of Catholic converts? Every so often we hear of an outstanding and well-known person who enters the Catholic Church, but it is when we hear of well-known Catholics who become Protestants. Last year when several well-known non-Catholics became Catholics, it was claimed by a Protestant priest that conversions were not a one-way street. Then the same person said a "Protestant" priest, who came to the United States from Spain and three years previously had been into himself a wife, thereby leaving the Church. Of the more than 4,000,000 persons transferring from the Catholic to the Protestant church can the "Christian Register" name even ten Catholics who are well known?

4. FINALLY, THE reports asserts many of the accessions can be attributed to marriages of Catholics outside of their Church. No doubt many Catholics desert their faith when the marriage laws of the Church interfere with the kind of life they desire to live. But this must be emphatically added: thousands and thousands of Catholics who leave their Church because of matrimonial problems return repentant within a few years after they leave.

### Rings, Medals Given For New Lourdes Bell

Lourdes, France—(NC)—Gold from wedding rings and buttons from military medals, collected in all parts of France, are part of the new bell that rang out for the first time from the tower of the Lourdes Basilica on the Feast of the Annunciation.

Named the "Marie-Jehanne" in honor of France's two patron saints, Our Lady and St. Joan of Arc, the new bell was made to commemorate the 10th anniversary of French Women's Catholic Action. Women throughout the country contributed whatever gold and copper objects they could spare that the bell might be cast.

The "Marie-Jehanne" was blessed by Bishop Pierre Thaux of Lourdes and His Eminence Maurice Cardinal Feltri, Archbishop of Paris, came to Lourdes to celebrate the Pontifical Mass before it was rung.

### Milwaukee Catholics Hold Evening Mass



Milwaukee, Wis.—More than 15,000 Catholics jammed Milwaukee Arena here to assist at the first evening Pontifical Mass ever celebrated in the Milwaukee Archdiocese. Towering over the assembled congregation was a huge statue of the Blessed Virgin Mary (right). Fellow Catholics that more than 2,000 others were turned away at the doors. (RND Photo).

### Archbishop Noll Marriage Status, Secret Societies Bar 10 Million Americans From Catholic Faith

Fort Wayne, Ind.—(NC)—There are 10 million people in the United States who cannot become Catholics while their present situations continue, Archbishop John F. Noll, Bishop of Fort Wayne, said in a statement made here.

Those Americans are remarried divorcees and members of secret and oath-bound secret societies under the Catholic Church's ban. Archbishop Noll was illustrating how it is "much more difficult" for a Protestant to become a Catholic than it is for a Catholic to turn Protestant.

THE ARCHBISHOP'S observation was prompted by the claim made in the current issue of the Christian Herald, an interdenominational Protestant magazine, that some 4 million Catholics became Protestants in the last 10 years, or a 1 1/2 of the Catholic Church "hoards" of receiving some 1 million Protestants in the same time.

Instead of boasting, Archbishop Noll said, Catholic prelates have frequently deplored the fact that there are not ten times as many converts. But, even if one were to concede the Christian Herald's figures the Archbishop pointed out it would only be two converts from Catholicism for each one of the 181,000 Protestant-pastors each year, while it

### 'Grimey Angels' New Name For Truck Drivers

Washington—(NC)—Those burly truck drivers who highball over the highways don't mind being called "grimey angels." They like the idea. In fact, so much that they boosted by 4,000 the number of requests for a Catholic Hour radio sermon which called them "Father Manton just that."

The sermon was called "Highway To Heaven." Father Joseph Manton, C.S.S.R., who gave the talk coast-to-coast on January 10, called it a "modern parable" based on a lonely truck driver's struggles to get his cargo to its destination.

COMPARING THE truck driver's soul to man's journey through life, Father Manton called today's truck drivers "the modern Good Samaritans of the road," "the most cautious of all drivers," and—because they often aid stranded motorists—"huge grimey angels."

A truck driver who heard the broadcast wrote to the National Council of Catholic Men, Catholic Hour producers, for a copy, and sent it to the American Trucking Association in the nation's capital. The association considered it a great tribute to trucking men and ordered 4,000 copies to be sent to its thousands of members.

Virginia truckers have also adopted "Highway To Heaven," obtaining permission to reprint it in the official publication of the Virginia Highway Users Association.

Father Manton's Catholic Hour series—in which "Highway" was included—drew a record 5,000 requests for copies of each talk. But the truckers' request topped them all.

AS FOR "HIGHWAY," Father Manton said it wasn't hard to write. During a sleepless night while heavy trucks boomed by his rectory, he just listened "and the first thing you know it seemed they were preaching a sermon to me."

"You could hardly get a better picture, a sharper modern parable of a man journeying toward eternity than the driver in the cab of his truck as he rolls along the grey stretch of road toward his far-off, unseen destination. The little sign on the windshield says, 'No Riders,' and in the cab of his own soul every man rides alone."

### Jesuit Journal Attacks New Survey On Converts

New York—(RNS)—America's Jesuit weekly review published here, charged that a Protestant magazine's survey of converts to Protestantism was not scientifically conducted and could not claim to be accurate.

The survey was made by the Christian Herald, a non-denominational monthly, which said it showed that more than 4,000,000 Roman Catholics had become Protestant church members in the last 10 years.

America's religion editor, the Rev. Thomas J. M. Burke, S.J., replied that the Herald survey proved nothing.

FATHER BURKE said the Herald had disregarded "the simplest requirements of scientific sampling."

The Herald sent questionnaires to 25,000 Protestant ministers and received replies from 2,311. It made the estimate of 4,000,000 converts by projecting the number reported by the 2,311 ministers against the 181,000 Protestant pastors which, according to the Herald, are serving U.S. churches.

Father Burke charged the 181,000 figure was based on the 1950 "Yearbook of American Churches," which reported only 131,000 pastors with charges, including Catholics, Orthodox and Jewish ministers.

If Catholic and Jewish pastors are deducted, the total of Protestant and Orthodox pastors is only 165,309, the American editor said.

He also cited the 1950 U.S. census which listed 109,419 pastors of all faiths and the 1940 census which showed 140,077.

Father Burke declared that the Herald's estimate "could have had no warrant for projecting backwards the puny figure of 181,000 clergymen, in extrapolating the figures they obtained."

CLARENCE W. HALL, executive editor of the Herald, replied that the 181,000 figure was "conservative." He said that the Yearbook figures of 183,800 included the church-serving pastors of only 195 of the 261 known religious bodies in the U.S.

Not reported, he added, were the church pastors of such bodies as the National Baptist Convention of America, Assembly of God, Seventh-day Adventists, Christian Scientists, Jehovah's Witnesses and the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints (Mormons).

In addition, Mr. Hall said, there are many pastors serving independent churches not affiliated with any denomination. He said the 181,000 was arrived at by taking the Protestant church-serving pastors reported in the Yearbook and adding "very conservative" estimates of pastors in those denominations which

did not report their statistics to the Yearbook.

"Even if we use 146,000, the mean figure of Protestant church-serving pastors reported in the Yearbook over the past 10 years," said Mr. Hall, "our projection shows 3,379,304 Catholic converts to Protestantism."

He said that the Herald had acknowledged the possibility of considerable error in its figures and had concluded that the number of converts "could hardly be less than two or three millions and in all probability runs closer to five millions."

FATHER BURKE also questioned the sampling techniques of the survey. He said all questionnaires were sent to cities and declared there was "no indication that pastoral charges of all types" (size, economic status, etc.) were adequately represented.

He also asked how the persons reported as converts were identified as Catholics and suggested that many of them were "lost" to the Catholic Church long before they identify themselves in some manner or other as Protestants.

The priest acknowledged that "leakage" from the Church was "a very serious problem" but added that Catholics becoming Protestants are probably a minor part of it.

"The most tragic thing" he concluded, "is the complete loss of religious faith, the complete forgetting of God, the failure ever to turn to Our Merciful Father in prayer."

### Red Dictionary Leaves Out 'God'

Berlin—(NC)—The word "God" does not appear in a one-volume, encyclopedic dictionary just published by the nationalized Bibliographic Institute in Leipzig, Saxony. Under the heading "Christianism" appear 54 lines, but 302 lines are devoted to Soviet art, excluding literature and music.

Wolfgang Pieck, Communist president of the East German Republic, receives 32 lines.

The introduction to the dictionary, published in an edition of 100,000, says that it is based wholly upon the social and political ideas represented in the German Democratic Republic.

The editors say they have endeavored to "apply the findings of dialectic historical materialism to all sectors of reality."

This, perhaps, explains the fact that the book contains no definition of the term "freedom."

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