

# Catholics Led Fight Against Segregation In U. S. Schools

The United States Supreme Court decision holding race segregation in the public schools unconstitutional will have sweeping effects on Catholics in the South and Southwest.

Those primarily affected, of course, are the Catholic children attending public schools in the States which up until now have been segregated. School officials have estimated that half of the nation's Catholic children are enrolled in public schools and, owing to the relatively small number of Catholics in the southern States, the ratio in public schools there is probably higher.

AT THE SAME time in most southern areas, Catholic school systems have followed in the long-standing tradition of separate schools for white and Negro youngsters. The general outlook is that the public schools themselves, the only ones directly affected by the Court ruling, the transition from segregation to integration in Catholic school systems will be a gradual one.

But heretofore, Catholic schools have set the lead in breaking down traditional race barriers, and the conversion among students of the problem in that they will continue to do so.

In handing down its unanimous verdict that segregation has no place in education, the high tribunal delayed issuing a formal decree ordering integration until after hearing arguments on certain side points.

WHILE THE Supreme Court decision met with statements of disapproval on the part of some southern members of Congress and State officials, it was hailed by the Catholic Committee for the South. Father Maurice V. Shea, C.O.S. of Rock Hill, S. C., research director for the committee, which was set up to study problems of the South in the light of the social teaching of the Church, declared that the ruling "has clarified the legal principle in the matter and at the same time gives time for proper implementation of the decision."

The study and work already begun by the C.C.S. he said, will bring about positive programs to make the changes easier. He added: "We feel that these efforts will speed the day when justice and charity prevail in all phases of our life and we are sure that these programs will be developed in the light of our Faith and the democratic principles of our country."

While Catholics in the deep South had maintained segregated schools in defiance to custom, and in some instances, State law, a number of Bishops and Archbishops have set the example for the integration of the public schools. In the District of Columbia — which has maintained a dual public school system under law — the schools of the Archdiocese of Washington have been successfully integrated for years.

Similarly, Archbishop Joseph E. Ritter of St. Louis won wide acclaim when he eliminated segregated parochial schools in his See several years ago.

Referring to the pending Supreme Court segregation case more than a year ago, Archbishop Joseph F. Rummel of New Orleans had called on Catholics to "exercise the role of peacemakers in interracial relations."

OTHER RECENT instances where the Church has taken the lead are those in San Antonio where Archbishop Robert E. Lucey had decreed an end to all race barriers in churches and institutions, and in Richmond where Bishop Peter L. Norcia only a fortnight ago announced that Negroes would be admitted to the Catholic high schools in the city.

These specific instances were among those alluded to in a statement by George K. Hunton, secretary of the Catholic Interracial Council of New York, made on behalf of the 21 other councils in the country after the Court ruling was announced.

"As Catholics, we feel extremely proud of the fact that among the original pioneers in integration in education have been many of our Catholic colleges and universities in the South, and of the part played by many of the best Catholic diocesan schools in southern dioceses," he said.

Mr. Hunton also declared that it was "particularly gratifying to all of us that this decision is unanimous, which leaves no doubt as to the position of our highest court on this great constitutional question."

Few Bishops Still Work in Red China

Only 17 of 100 seen in Communist China are the Bishops permitted to carry out their duties, it was revealed here.

Thirty-one sees are vacant. The heads of 70 sees have been expelled; six are in prison and 12 are impeded in the exercise of their pastoral office.

There are still three American Bishops in Red China: Bishop Ambrose Pinger of Chongtun, a Franciscan of Lindsay, Neb., is in prison. Bishops Frederick Donoghue of Wuchow, a Maryknoller of New Bedford, Mass., and James E. Walsh, a Maryknoller of Cumberland, Md., are permitted relative freedom.

# 'Our Lady Of the Sioux' Census Cites Mass. Goers In Paris

Paris (NC) — Some 600,000 persons, or 13 per cent of the more than 5,000,000 inhabitants of the Paris archdiocese, ordinarily attend Sunday Mass.

THE CENSUS found that on an ordinary March Sunday 226,131 persons actually attended Mass in Paris, while 205,513 persons went to church in the neighboring diocese of Versailles. Combined population of the two sees is 4,500,000, including 135,000 Moslems from North Africa and relatively small groups of other non-Catholics.

No effort was made during the census to discover the number of young children not obliged to hear Mass or the number of the sick and aged unable to attend.

Commenting on the results of the Paris census alone, His Eminence, Maurice Cardinal Feltz, Archbishop of Paris, pointed out that the number of Catholics actually attending Mass exceeded by a wide margin. He also noted that the number of Parisian Catholics who normally attend Sunday Mass could be estimated at about 650,000. If account were taken of those who did not fill out census cards and of those who were out of the city during the census and went to church somewhere else.

CONCLUDING HIS remarks on the census, the Cardinal said: "It seems to us that if the 650,000 Catholics who attend Sunday Mass would profit by this short moment in Church and unite fervently in the Holy Sacrifice, the number of practicing Catholics would grow rapidly, the reign of Jesus Christ would greatly be extended and the Church in Paris would become more alive."

U. S. Priest Well In Red China Jail

Wong Kong (NC) — Father Harold W. Rigney, Chicago Divine Word priest, was visited in his Peking jail last month and found in fair health but exceptionally thin, according to information received here.

The former rector of the Catholic University of Peking was jailed by the Communists without trial in July 1953. He is still being "interrogated" by Red officials once or twice a week in the early part of his imprisonment. He was often chained hand and foot.

Father Rigney is one of 22 American missionaries still in Communist China, 13 of whom are in prison.

# THOUSANDS WILL PASS IT DAILY



In the City of San Francisco's magnificent Golden Gate Park is this beautiful tribute to mark the National Marian Congress. The lavish floral tribute, just inside the park will be observed by thousands daily. It is the work of the city's Park and Recreation Commission. (NC Photos)

# Love For Eucharist, Our Lady

San Francisco (NC) — "My impression of American Catholics? Two things stand out. One is their obvious and very fervent devotion to the Blessed Sacrament. The other is their equally powerful love of the Blessed Virgin."

The opinion was expressed by the man who directs 26,000 brown-robed, sandals-wearing Franciscans working for the Church. Father Augustine Sepinski, O.F.M., Minister General of the Order of Friars Minor, was interviewed on his first visit to San Francisco — his first in the United States on two previous occasions.

The Franciscan General said he would like to see Rome with him a high esteem of the firmness of faith and devotion of America's Catholics.

"Everywhere in America I find Catholics going into Churches to visit and pray before Our Lord on the Altar," Father Sepinski said. "This is most inspiring. And in those same Churches I always see some shrine of the Blessed Mother under one of her many titles, beautifully kept, tenderly cared for. Americans must love Our Lady very deeply."

"I want American Catholics to know how much they impress me," he said. "You have tremendous spirit of willingness and cooperation among the laity here — it's immediately noticeable to someone from Europe where the Faith is sometimes, shall we say, less dynamic. The American laity, it seems, have a greater sense of vision of their responsibility to build and support their parishes and their schools."

Father Sepinski speculated that maybe this is because U.S. Catholics are a minority in a non-Catholic country and constantly are being stimulated to prove their faith. He added: "Unfortunately, Europeans don't usually have the same stimulus."

Free China Names Minister To Vatican

Taipei, Formosa (NC) — The Nationalist Chinese cabinet has formally approved the appointment of a new envoy to the Holy See. He is Dr. Hsieh Shou-jang who will have the rank of Minister, Plenipotentiary and Envoy Extraordinary.

There has been no Chinese minister at the Vatican since July, 1949, when former Minister Wu Ching-hsiung resigned and Mr. Tchou Yin was named charge d'affaires. In October, 1952, a Vatican legation was set up here in Taipei.

Dr. Hsieh will not be serving at the Holy See for the first time. Following the establishment of diplomatic relations between the Vatican and China in 1943, Dr. Hsieh served as Chinese Minister until 1947.

Czechoslovak Priest

Vienna (NC) — A Czechoslovak Catholic priest, Father Vladimir Hisek, was sentenced to 14 years in prison by the Prague communist regime, according to information reaching here.

# Israeli State Regrets Ruin Of Cemeteries

Jerusalem (NC) — The Israeli government has expressed regrets and offered to repair damages done to Catholic cemeteries in Haifa.

The offer was made through Dr. Cabby of the Ministry for Religious Affairs. Dr. Cabby replied to a strong protest made by the heads of five Christian communities in Israel to the desecration of the cemeteries around Easter time by vandals.

The heads of three Catholic sites and the Greek Orthodox and the Protestant Churches in Israel had sent protests to President Itzhak Ben-Zvi, Premier Moshe Sharett and the Ministers of Interior and Religious Affairs, the President or Prime Minister.

The main cemetery desecrated in Haifa belonged to the Greek Catholic rite headed in Israel by Archbishop George Hakim, Bishop of Acre-Haifa. Two graves were opened. One coffin was destroyed. Seventy-two crosses — 27 of them of stone and marble — were destroyed. At the same time nearly all the crosses in Latin and Maronite Catholic cemeteries in Haifa were also destroyed.

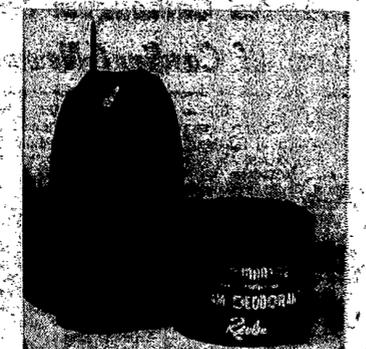
Priests Captured At Dien Bien Phu

Hanoi, Indo China (NC) — Two Catholic chaplains are believed to be among the French Union troops captured when the Dien Bien Phu fortress fell to the Viet Minh Communists, according to information here.

The priests are Fathers Paul Gillion of the Bayonne diocese and Paul Guerry of the Lyon archdiocese. They refused to be flown to safety when the fort's military situation became critical.

Hit Indecent Ads

Memphis, Tenn. (NC) — Three hundred members of the Nashville Diocese Council of Catholic Women went on record as deploring immoral motion pictures and literature, and indecent advertising in newspapers, magazines, and television.



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