

Theologian Says

Apparitions To Schismatics Possible In Favor Of Truth

Washington (NC)—It is not impossible that the Blessed Virgin should appear to heretics or schismatics in order to confirm them in a true doctrine or practice, Father Francis J. Connell, C.S.B., stated here.

The dean of the School of Sacred Theology of the Catholic University of America made this comment to the N.C.W.C. News Service on reports of apparitions of the Blessed Virgin in a Coptic church and school in Jerusalem.

"SCHISMATICS and even some heretics believe in the divine maternity of Mary and in her intercessory power," Father Connell said. "Therefore, if she did appear in a Coptic church it would be to confirm these people in their confidence and belief in the Blessed Virgin which are fully in accord with Catholic doctrine."

Father Connell noted that a parallel question, frequently discussed by Catholic theologians, is whether members of a heretical or schismatic church can be God's instruments in the working of miracles. The Catholic University theologian said that it is generally conceded that they can, provided that they are evidently in support of a true doctrine.

FATHER CONNELL quoted from Father A. Tanqueray, S.S., prominent French theologian, author, to support this point. "God can, sometimes, work miracles through those who profess a false doctrine," he quoted Father Tanqueray. "God would work these miracles not to approve error but to promote something good and true."

The Catholic University priest also gave the comment of a leading Dutch theologian, Father G. Van Noort, on miracles attributed to a Russian schismatic priest.

"If it is true," Father Van Noort wrote, "it proves nothing in favor of schism, but only in favor of those truths which the Russian Orthodox Church retains from the Catholic religion."

Father Connell explained that the miracles attributed to the Orthodox priest were in support of Christ's real presence in the Blessed Sacrament, which is preserved in the Russian Orthodox churches.

Priest-Scholar
Washington (NC) — Msgr. Patrick W. Skehan, professor of Semitic and Egyptian languages at the Catholic University of America, has gone to Jerusalem to study Biblical and secular manuscript fragments recently discovered in the Dead Sea area.

Coptic Church Reports Third Marian Apparition

Jerusalem (NC)—A third apparition of the Blessed Virgin has been reported on Coptic (schismatic) Church property here.

The latest apparition was reported by a large group of persons visiting the Coptic chapel at the ninth station of the Way of the Cross here. The chapel adjoins the Basilica of the Holy Sepulcher. The crowd had reportedly gathered in the chapel in anticipation of a "promised" apparition.

Those claiming to have seen the apparition include some Coptic women. They allegedly saw the Blessed Virgin in an attitude of blessing and surrounded by angels. Some of the group said they did not see the apparition.

TWO EARLIER apparitions of the Virgin were allegedly seen in the Coptic school and in the Coptic church. Meanwhile the Coptic Bishop of Jerusalem has sent a report on the alleged apparitions to his patriarch in Cairo, Egypt. The Bishop is awaiting the appointment of an ecclesiastical commission to investigate the apparitions.

The Coptic Church broke from the Church in Rome after the Council of Chalcedon (451), rejecting the council's declaration of two complete natures—the human and divine—in the one person of Christ. The Coptic Church adheres to monophysism (one nature), the heresy asserting that Christ has only a divine nature which entirely absorbs his human nature. The Coptic Church has about a million members, mainly in Egypt.

Pope Pius Urges Federal Housing Aid

Rome (RNS)—Pope Pius XII recommended that governments give subsidies to poor families to help them buy their own homes. He also said ways to cut building costs and eliminate "odious" real estate speculation should be found.

His comments were contained in a letter to Bishop Albino Gonzalez y Menendez of Cordoba on the occasion of the 14th Spanish conference on housing at Burgos. The Pontiff said a home was one of man's most vital needs. He expressed regret that many people no longer save to buy a home. Such persons lose sight of the "significance domestic peace has for the family," he added.

Formosa Gets First Native Nuns



The Chung, Formosa—The first order of native sisters was established in Formosa when six young women took their temporary vows as novices in the Sacred Heart Sisters at a ceremony here. Photo shows one of the sisters, who is dressed in a simple habit in keeping with the region's tropical climate. Officiating at the ceremony was Msgr. William F. Ruffner, M.M., Prefect Apostolic of Taichung (center). The order was formed under the guidance of four Hungarian Sisters of Mercy who have been working in Maryknoll missions in Formosa since their exile from Communist China three years ago. (RNS Photo)

Carmelite Nuns Leave Red-Threatened Hanoi

Hanoi, Vietnam (NC)—The Carmelite community here, which St. Therese of Lisieux, the Little Flower, once volunteered to join, has left for France via Saigon.

The growing communist threat to Hanoi caused the nuns' departure. They felt that under a communist regime they could not live the Carmelite life properly. They wept as they left.

"THIS IS OUR Good Friday," said the prioress, Mother Teresa of the Sacred Heart. She came to Indochina from France with her family at the age of 18 and entered the Carmel here in 1902. She had hoped to die here.

The community comprises 13 professed nuns, 7 Europeans and 6 Vietnamese. The novices had already been sent to France.

The nuns are likely to go to a Carmelite convent in Vendee, where a community now small can accommodate them.

"We will still be the Carmel of Hanoi, even as refugees," said Mother Prioress. "We will still be united in prayer with the Catholics here."

THE HANOI CARMEL of the Sacred Heart is an offshoot of the Carmel of Lisieux. It was founded in 1895 from Saigon, her statue at the entrance to the convent here.

Argentine Press Hits 'Cure' Claims Of American Preacher

Buenos Aires, Argentina (NC)—Newspaper articles here cast doubt on the claim of an American Gospel preacher who told a newspaper on his arrival in Washington from Argentina, that he had "healed" 50,000 persons at recent revival meetings here.

The Catholic daily, El Pueblo, after investigating certain "cures" called them spurious. Doctors and educators wrote articles in an attempt to expose the mystery of such "cures" as claimed by the preacher, the Rev. T.M. "Tommy" Hicks of California.

THE ARTICLES pointed out that they were not attacking religious preaching, which is guaranteed by the constitution, but rather the curative practices of the minister.

The "cure" of a nine-year-old girl, Alba Alice Gonzalez, who had been afflicted with paralysis since birth, was proclaimed, following one of the revivals, in the magazine Hechos en el Mundo. When a reporter from El Pueblo visited the family, he found the child lying in bed. The child's mother exclaimed: "No, she is not cured . . . It is all false."

In public statement, claimed El Pueblo, Mr. Hicks affirmed that he had cured paralysis, blindness, arthritis, liver trouble, rheumatism, and cancer. "We place our hands over them," he said, "and at once we command that the cancer disappear. Many people have vomited their cancer. It is something marvelous."

Some of the articles analyzed the possibility of the cures by means of suggestion, in cases of infirmities of a nervous or phycic nature, but denied by supernatural character to any such cures, which, said the articles, could be explained by an atmosphere which comes close to hypnosis brought on by the chanting and invocations.

THE ARTICLES in El Pueblo pointed out that what it termed "the quick-cure preachings of the minister" were facilitated by (a) the low level of religious education of the people; (b) the tolerance of those in power who did not object against such things; (c) indifference from the first on the part of medical organizations and irresponsible newspapers.

Dr. Carlos Alberto Veronelli wrote that "these quick healers" endanger the religious beliefs of the people, harm the name of Argentines as a cultured people, do harm to the prestige of the medical profession, and snatch

Teachers Want Religion In Bolivia Schools

La Paz, Bolivia (NC)—The great majority of Bolivian teachers are in favor of religious instruction in the public schools. Presencia, a Catholic weekly here, reported on the basis of a nationwide poll.

The poll was conducted in view of prospective legislation for the reform of the national educational system. According to Presencia, efforts are being made by communist and Masonic groups to change the present law by banning any form of religious indoctrination from the schools.

PRESENCIA SAID 1,535 teachers had given a "yes" reply to the question "Do you wish the Catholic religion to be taught to all Catholic boys and girls in Bolivia?" while only 22 said "no." It added that opinion was 1,530 to 18 in favor of having paid teachers of religion in the schools and colleges.

Commenting on the results of the poll, Presencia said: "The teachers of the nation agree that the education of youth would be incomplete without religious instruction in the schools. . . . Should the government lend an ear to Masonic and communist groups who wish to restore the dismal period of secularism (existing under former regimes), it would go against the will of the people and repudiate official statements proclaiming Bolivia to be a Catholic nation."

Boy Stamp Fans Mark Marian Year

Cincinnati, O.—(NC)—A Cincinnati boys' stamp-collecting club has brought the Marian Year to the attention of stamp collectors throughout the U.S. and Canada. It was learned here.

Into the headquarters of the Bellarmine Stamp Club, requests still were pouring in for the special Marian Year cachet to be used in connection with the club's third annual exhibit at Xavier University, July 18.

The cachet was prepared by James Cissell, club president, from a painting by Father Paul Scates, O.F.M., associate editor of the St. Anthony Messenger. Rubber stamped on an envelope, which is then postmarked the same day as the exhibit, the cachet makes the envelope an item worth saving.

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