

### Catholic Action Prize Set For Lay Groups

Washington (NC)—The winner of the 1955 Catholic Action Award will be announced in the May 1956 issue of Catholic Men, monthly magazine of the National Council of Catholic Men, which sponsors the competition.

Designed to encourage the work of Catholic men's organizations throughout the country and to encourage other organizations in their programs, the award will be made for the third time to the council or organization of Catholic men which submits what is judged as the best report of a work of Catholic Action, an activity aimed at restoring all things in Christ.

Last year the \$200 prize went to three organizations—the Cincinnati Archdiocesan Council of Catholic Men for a report on its speakers bureau, the San Antonio Archdiocesan Council of Catholic Men for its "Crusade for Souls," and the St. Louis Census and Information Program.

The following rules govern the competition:

Lay organizations of men in the U. S. and its territories are eligible to compete.

Judgment will be based on a written report of a Catholic Action project inaugurated or completed between September 1, 1954, and December 31, 1955.

The activity described must be one of Catholic Action performed by a group of lay people with the expressed or implied approval of their Bishop.

The statement submitted must be limited to 750 words, and must be signed by an official of the group and carry the written approval of the spiritual moderator.

All entries must be in the hands of the editor of Catholic Men, 1312 Massachusetts Ave., N. W., Washington 5, D. C., by March 1, 1956.

Athletic events or money raising activities will not be considered eligible.

The judging will be done by the editorial board of Catholic Men.

### Parish Starts Bus Service

Cleveland (RNS)—St. Ignace Catholic Parish, one of the largest in this city, has inaugurated Sunday bus service for its 900 families.

Each Sunday, nine Cleveland Transit Co. buses will run over three routes in the neighborhood, bringing people to the 8, 10, 10:30 and 12 o'clock Masses.

Buses will stop anywhere along their routes, at a signal from the curb. No fare will be charged.

Msgr. A. J. Murphy, pastor, said he launched the bus service as an experiment to relieve the parking problem in the vicinity of the church and to help older people get to Masses.

After the initial four-week experiment the bus service may be expanded, Msgr. Murphy said.

## Christmas Day In Bethlehem

The author of the following article spent Christmas of 1953 in Bethlehem and here recalls her impressions of celebrating the feast in the city of Christ's birth.

By FLORENCE HETZLER

The privilege of having been in Bethlehem last year at this time has made this Christmas very different, more awe-inspiring.

On the morning of December 24, I found myself with "our small group" leaving the hotel in Jerusalem and walking through the Damascus Gate into the Old City. It was five o'clock and bitter cold. We certainly did not reserve our fur coats as we saw people barefooted or sandaled, thinly clothed and carrying on their backs three or four crates of cabbage or cauliflower or other produce.

PROCEEDING THROUGH the narrow streets of the bazaars we bumped people and donkeys, mounted and descended old cobblestone steps until we reached the famous Church of the Holy Sepulchre where we assisted at Mass, offered by our chaplain inside the rotunda of the Tomb of Our Lord.

Here, in order to view the tomb itself, we had to bend our heads almost to the low narrow entrance to the lower chamber kneeling on the marble floor of the still small outer chamber, my knees bespoken the small amount of on-the-knees praying I had done.

For the Mass the very tomb itself was the altar table. How strange to think that here upon the tomb the priest was offering Him Who had once been within that tomb to God the Father—a continuous offering and all offering continued.

After Mass we mounted the steps, conceive by wear, to Golgotha, the place of the crucifixion which is also under the same roof of the Church of the Holy Sepulchre. Here we paused to reflect that Christ's death was somehow part of the same plan of redemption as was His birth, the anniversary of which we were to celebrate that night.

IN THE AFTERNOON of the 24th, we drove along the hair-pin curves of the Judean hills from Jerusalem to Bethlehem to witness the triumphal entry of the Patriarch, Msgr. Alberto Gori, whom our group had already personally met and with whom we had chatted the day before in his official residence in the Old City of Jerusalem.

At the Church of the Nativity, a Catholic throng of peoples of various color, creed and race vibrated their silent greeting to the Patriarch at his public entry, there was no milling, no pushing. People stood at their posts on the ground or on the rooftops. There was a respectful, meditative silence. The white-haired Patriarch, accompanied by Church dignitaries and flanked by the Arab legionnaires, some of whom were mounted on elegant Arabian stallions, proceeded on foot in a most impressive procession, down the Street of the Staff and across the Manger Square into the Church of the Nativity. Here, he too had to bow his head in order to enter.

## Atom Blasted Mother Sees Son Portray Christ Child

Los Angeles — (NC) — Atomic radiation was overshadowed by a mother's glance here this Christmas season.

Mrs. Michael Tanaka glowed with joy witnessing Maryknoll School's Christmas pageant here for "Baby Jesus" was her own four-week old Stephen.

The reason for her joy was more than ordinary parental pride.

Tiny Stephen shouldn't have been there at all, for Mrs. Tanaka happened to be in downtown Hiroshima on August 6, 1945, when the atom bomb was dropped on that Japanese city.

The streetcar in which she was a passenger burst into flames. She was injured by blast and radiation.

Mrs. Tanaka — then Tomi Kado — was told by doctors she could never have any children.

So that was the reason for her joy this Christmas.

As a child she had been sent to Japan for her education. After the war she returned and here at St. Francis Xavier Maryknoll

French Bishops

Paris — (RNS) — Members of the French Roman Catholic Hierarchy, in pastoral letters and special statements, stressed the moral and civic responsibilities of Christians as voters. French voters will go to the polls on Jan. 2 to elect a new Assembly.

no situation of any kind, no fuel for heat. One could not even stand erect in the loft. Its occupants with their barefeet on the muddy ground shivered without complaint.

I LEFT my suit coat and wool socks and a little money, all of which was reluctantly and tearfully received. They did not beg, but were glad, I know, to receive the little that they did.

Would that they could have known how happy that little gift made me, and how happy they made me by having finally accepted it.

Whenever we went that day, we gave. This was real Christmas giving and receiving. The Santa Claus teddy bears and the office parties back home were a far cry from this sheer need, this existence in search of more existence, more being.

Our departure from Jordan was set for noon of December 26. How reluctantly we left this nation and the people who had been so very kind and selfless to us, the people who suffered without murmuring their troubles to us.

On my final walk back to the hotel, the walk from St. Stephen's, I passed a poor ragged woman sitting on a side dirt road where she was almost fully nursing her famished infant whose hunger her meager body could not assuage.

Being a rather typical Armenian girl, I had some last minute Christmas shopping to do. Accompanied by a lovely girl who had been sent as my escort we set out to various convents to purchase an embroidered altar article for our chaplain. The Carmelite nuns at the Church of the Pater Noster on the Mount of Olives did not have what we were seeking, so we returned to the dark streets of the Old City to two other convents that my friend knew about.

AT THESE cold convents, something strange and wonderful occurred. Both nuns who had answered the doors were French Canadians from Quebec City and went for joy at the Christmas visit of someone who spoke French and who had studied in their home town.

We babble on eagerly and happily in their mother tongue and even discussed mutual friends, including Msgr. Alphonse-Marie Parent, rector of Laval University, and Dr. Charles de Koninck, dean of the University's School of Philosophy. How very small the world is!

By midnight, we were back in Bethlehem along with thousands of other Catholics, Protestants, and Mohammedans attending the Mass at the Church of St. Catherine, which is attached to the Church of the Nativity.

Later our group had a private Mass offered by our chaplain in the Chapel of St. Jerome where the Vulgate was translated.

AFTER MASS, when the others of the group were still in church, Abraham, my guide, and I walked down the slope to the Shepherds' Field. Here, standing in the wild grasses, came many thoughts: sheep on the hillsides were still out in the cold; off in the distance there were still caves inhabited by humans and animals. The Basilica bells were pealing over the little window-lit hamlet, and the stars gleamed like suns.

The silence was full; the silence was loud not only for me, but also for Abraham, the Moslem guide. The hour was running over with its own apologetic newness, with its own greatness and wonderment.

We caroled all the way home. It was a thoughtful carolling. Back in our hotel where the wonderful staff was awaiting us, I gave a Christmas party before a blazing fireplace that was burning olive wood.

Moss the head waiter, and Mary the Armenian chambermaid, the guides, all were there. No one served; everybody served; we served each other. In addition to the muzzers so warm in our hearts, we had on the table in front of the fireplace a creche of olive wood.

DAYLIGHT CAME and we walked outside and down the streets towards the entry gate that was "armisticed" to allow the Christians on the Israeli side, of whom there are very few, to visit their relatives on the Jordanian side for the day. Those from the Israeli side could visit but briefly before the mandate to return. Refugees on the Jordanian side could only dream about their former homes now on the Israeli side. In fact, many refugees could see their own former homes on the other side of the wall.

In the afternoon we drove by some refugee camps — rows of miserable, old, leaky, cold tents lined up like stacks of corn in a deserted field and surrounded by barbed wire. Was this the barbed wire of the "peace on earth?"

We encountered a few unguarded tents close to the road and I stopped to look inside one of the tents. Huddled together were a lean mother and her four frail children. The father "went" in the war, so my interpreter told me. I thought at first that it was too bad that they all didn't "went" together.

The tent had been pitched many times and the beds consisted of patched burlap sacks filled with a dirt damp with the dampness of recent rains and leaky canvas. Not a cooking utensil, not a bite of food was to be found; there was no water.

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