

Catholics Decline

Edinburgh, Scotland—(NC)—The Catholic population of Scotland last year totalled 768,420 or

15 per cent of the whole nation, the Scottish Catholic Directory for 1956 reveals. In England and Wales the proportion is just over ten per cent.

BOOK SHELF

All Manner Of Men

By Sister Margaret Tavano
Nazareth College

ALL MANNER OF MEN edited by Riley Hughes, Kennedy, 328 pp. \$3.50. (Reprinted with permission from BOOKS ON TRIAL, Jan., Feb. '54).

Authors did not win entry into this book; only stories did. There are three or four big-name people in it, simply because they had a story among the twenty-five best-Riley Hughes selected from stories published in the past five years in Catholic periodicals. For this project sponsored by the Catholic Press Association. Here is a collection of surprising quality, a kind of "good wine kept until the last," some appearing out of sources more or less unregarded in the fiction world: college quarterlies, current-topic weeklies, mission magazines, etc. A composite picture of the author reveals him as a professional or soon-to-be-one; he is between just twenty-two and fifty, has published a novel or soon will, is a Catholic college graduate and once taught English. He gets his salary from some hard, unglamorous editing job, and his bonus and joy from writing and selling good short stories. There are, also, a couple of non-authors here, and one or two priests—as in Catholic society so in Catholic authorship. This composite author writes stories that tug at the mind and heart—about a boy who kills himself because his teacher is a liar, about a youngster who weeps because she cannot manage a kiss, about brave men and brave women, and cowards whose faith stumbles into bravery; stories of fidelity to new vision or to old love; stories of innocent or deadly self-absorption; short stories, long stories, good stories.

The editor, who recently added a novel, "The Hills Were Liar," to his laurels of twenty-odd years as columnist and book-reviewer, prefaces each story with a succinct biography and enlightening comment. The book projects two points of cardinal importance to its sponsors, the Catholic Press Association: Catholic periodicals have not succumbed to the general reign of the depersonalized, factual article, but have steadily fostered that native American mode of vision, the short story; and we Catholics as a group fail, not in producing authors, but in intelligently supporting them, by demanding and buying good work. To quote from the Introduction: "What our Catholic literary culture needs above all at this moment is the emergence, within the pages of magazines already established and with loyal readership, of a 'little magazine' movement. . . . Artistic writing, Catholic in its inspiration and thoroughly competent in its craftsmanship, should be given a hearing in magazines which already provide their readers with such inspiration and such competence in their articles. . . . We need sculptors of the word, carving the objects of their vision of real life and presenting them without machine-made gloss."

Chartered Buses Increase Sunday Church Attendance

Cleveland—(NC)—A portal-to-portal transportation system inaugurated by a Catholic pastor here to bring his parishioners to church on Sunday apparently is working out to the happy satisfaction of both the parish and the public transit officials.

Mgr. Albert J. Murphy of St. Ignace Church introduced the plan, under which he charters ten public buses for Sunday coverage of his parish. He said the credits far outnumber the debits in the plan, after a month's trial, and two other parishes—St. Charles in suburban Parma and St. Rose in a heavily populated West Side district—are adopting the arrangement.

TRANSIT OFFICIALS say it promises to be a boon to the public transportation system and to its employees. It has been possible, a spokesman for the transit company said, to use parishioners employed by the company for this extra duty. They are familiar with the parish, and this helps in calling for and returning the parishioners, and they are able to obtain extra income.

Monsignor Murphy said that, in inaugurating the bus plan, one of the chief aims was to help the more than 2,000 families in the parish to become better acquainted. He admits that he might have been encouraged to start it at this time because part of the large parish parking lot is being used to stack materials for a new school annex of 12 rooms now under construction.

THE PLAN HAS thus far seen a definite increase in church attendance and a decided increase in collection envelopes with names never before on the parish rolls.

The increase in collections covers the cost of the chartered buses, Monsignor Murphy said.



Leukemia Boy Seeks Lourdes Cure

Lourdes, France—(RNS)—Seven-year-old Randy Eckman, of St. Joseph, Mich., a victim of leukemia, holds a lighted candle as he looks toward the altar in the Basilica of Our Lady of Lourdes here. The boy was brought to the world-famous shrine by his mother, Mrs. Joseph Eckman, a Lutheran, to bathe in its miraculous waters. Neighbors helped to finance the trip.

Lenten Masses Slated in GE Plant

Bridgeport, Conn.—(RNS)—Bishop Lawrence J. Shehan of Bridgeport has authorized special Lenten Masses at the General Electric plant here during Lent for the convenience of employees.

It is the first time such permission has been granted in the Bridgeport diocese.

The first Mass on Ash Wednesday, Feb. 15, will be offered by Bishop Shehan in the G.E. Institute Hall. Other Masses will be held each Wednesday at noon.

Arrangements for the Masses were made by a committee of Bridgeport priests and officials of the General Electric Company.

Fatima Shrine Lists Statistics

Fatima, Portugal—(NC)—Statistics for 1955 show that 370,000 Communions were distributed at the shrine of Our Lady here.

During the year 3,515 Masses were offered in the Chapel of the Apparitions and an additional 5,000 Masses were said in the Basilica itself and in other chapels connected with the shrine.

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