

# Chinese Reds Free American Bishop Held For 5 Years

Hong Kong — (NC) — American Bishop Ambrose Pinger, O.F.M., of Chowtsun has been released by the Chinese Reds in Shanghai, it was disclosed here.

The Bishop, who has been held by the Reds since August 1951, told of his release in a telephone call to Francis X. O'Connell, Bishop of the Holy See in Shanghai. The Bishop is staying at the Franciscan mission in Shanghai. He said that he is in fair health and expects to leave for Hong Kong in about a week.

## Pope's Letter Banned In Tito State

Belgrade — (RNS) — Communist Yugoslavia has banned the publication and distribution of a recent apostolic letter in which Pope Pius XII exhorted Roman Catholics behind the Iron Curtain to remain faithful to their religion and resist every effort to infuse atheistic doctrines among them.

The ban was announced by the Yugoslav federal prosecutor and was made public by Tanjug, the official news agency here.

Issued on June 29, the day after the workers' uprising in Poznan, Poland, the Pope's letter paid special tribute to three cardinals in Communist-dominated countries.

The Pontiff lauded Cardinal Stepinac, Archbishop of Zagreb; Cardinal Minzenty, Primate of Hungary; and Cardinal Wyszyński, Primate of Poland, for their zeal in defending the Church.

The prosecutor's announcement asserted the Pope's letter "was written with the intention of harming our country by making untrue allegations."

"THE LETTER," it said, "contains a number of slanders and false allegations on conditions in our country, particularly that it is not possible for religious communities and their members to carry on unhampered religious work."

"This," the announcement added, "represents a brazen attempt to misuse faith for political purposes and an inadmissible interference in the internal affairs of our country."



## Lay Mission Work In Africa

Uganda, Africa — (NC) — Marie Therese McMurtrie (left) of Nanty-Glo, Pa., head nurse at a Catholic Mission here, represents a new type of career for young women: overseas service in the lay apostolate of the Church. This fall, The Grail, a modern lay apostolate movement at work today in 15 countries, will open an "Institute for Overseas Service" at 308 Clinton Ave., Brooklyn, N. Y., to train American girls for overseas assignments.

## 50 Years In Africa Missions

### Convert Doctor Retires To Monastery

Durban, South Africa — (NC) — After nearly 50 years of work among the native tribes in South Africa, Dr. K. F. McMurtrie, founder and promoter of medical service in many Catholic missions, has retired to the Benedictine monastery at Pietersburg in the northern Transvaal.

He will live at the monastery as an Oblate of St. Benedict and take in the daily sung Mass and the Divine Office.

Dr. McMurtrie, who is 74, was born in Somersetshire, in the south of England, and was raised as a member of the Church of England. He received his medical degree at Edinburgh University and came to South Africa in 1908.

One of the doctor's first surgical patients was a young boy very ill with appendicitis. After the operation the boy became

worse and the doctor made a vow to adopt and educate the child if he got well. When the boy recovered, he was sent to England to study and today as an orthopedic specialist in London.

Dr. McMurtrie started a hospital for the Anglican Missionaries of St. Cuthbert at Sekukuniland in the Transvaal province. Among the Anglican missionaries who came there, the doctor found a wide divergence in belief and in attitudes toward the doctrines and liturgy of the Anglican church. He decided to take instructions as a Catholic and came into the Church in 1925 at Um-tata, Natal.

Dr. McMurtrie soon after became the first resident doctor for the missionaries at Mariannhill, 18 miles from Durban. He supervised the construction of St. Mary's Hospital, which was completed in 1928. It has since been expanded to become one of the largest mission hospitals in southern Africa.

In recognition of his services at Mariannhill, he was awarded the papal decoration, "Pro Ecclesia et Pontifice."

## Priest, Freed By Chinese, Tells Of Prison Ordeals

San Francisco — (RNS) — The Communist government of China is "determined to exterminate the Catholic Church," he said, "fantastic lies to the contrary, an American Jesuit who was released from a Shanghai jail in June declared upon his arrival here.

The Rev. John Cliff Ford, S.J., arrested and imprisoned in 1953 on the charge of "spreading rumors" reached his home city aboard an airliner from Hong Kong.

THE 35-YEAR-OLD priest, whose hair is almost snow white, said that in Shanghai about 50 native priests and hundreds of lay Catholics, including children, are locked up in Red jails. He added that to his knowledge, at least 200 foreign Catholic priests have died in Chinese prisons.

"That's something people ought not to forget," he said. Father Clifford said that although he was never tortured, he underwent at least 100 interrogations, some of which lasted for seven hours during which he was required to stand at attention.

HE ADDED that he also underwent the "manic treatment" reported by American priests released previously. This, he said, consisted of being put in a cell next to a madman who roared day and night and beat on the walls and floor with a mallet or sledge-hammer.

Mrs. Anna Clifford, the priest's mother, greeted him at the airport. It was their first meeting since he went to China ten years ago.

New Provincial Detroit — (NC) — Father Nell Parsons, C.P., was re-elected Provincial of the Holy Cross (Western) Province of the Passionist Fathers at the provincial chapter meeting here.

## 600,000 Flee Reds In North Vietnam

Salgon, Vietnam — (NC) — At least half of an estimated 1,200,000 Catholics have fled from Communist-dominated northern Vietnam in the past two years, according to reports.

A compilation of information gathered here gives the following picture of conditions in northern Vietnam:

TEN MISSIONS are still in existence in the territory. The movements of the people are under strict control of the Red regime. In order to leave his village, a person must have an identification card and it is difficult to obtain one.

If a priest has to answer a sick call, he must receive permission from the authorities in his village. Upon arriving in the sick man's village, the priest must report to the officials there and he must notify them when he is leaving. In general, a foreign missionary seldom leaves his city or village.

PRIESTS ARRESTED by the Reds are always accused of the same sort of crimes, such as plotting against the government, extortion, and offenses involving violence. They are stigmatized as criminals and the Communists pose as defenders of religion.

Father Gabriel Lajeune of the Paris Foreign Missions Society, who arrived here recently after being imprisoned in northern Vietnam for six months, said that he was arrested because he was considered a hindrance to Marxist propaganda.

## Zulu Negro Given Papal Honor

Vatican City — (NC) — Pope Pius XII has conferred the cross, "Pro Ecclesia et Pontifice" on Mark Sikkana, a 70-year-old Zulu Negro.

Called the "man of peace" by the people of his area, Mr. Sikkana was baptized a Catholic at 32 and became an untiring apostle for the Faith in South Africa. He was instrumental in the conversion of several hundred Zulus.

At the height of a recent malaria epidemic he baptized 300 dying Zulus. Three of his daughters are Benedictine nuns engaged in mission work.

## Papal Relief Work In Russia Recalled

Vatican City — (NC) — The 25th anniversary of the Papal Relief Mission to Russia to help thousands starving in that country was observed with a special Vatican Radio broadcast.



CARDINAL WYSZYNSKI

## Cardinal Prisoner On 55th Birthday

Vatican City — (NC) — The Vatican radio station stressed the fact that His Eminence Stefan Cardinal Wyszyński, Archbishop of Gniezno and Warsaw and Primate of Poland, spent his 55th birthday and the 32nd anniversary of his ordination (August 3) as a prisoner of the Reds.

Although recent news is lacking concerning the fate of the Polish Primate, it is believed he has been confined for several months to a convent of the Nazareth Sisters in Komancza in the southeast part of Poland.

Eucharistic Congress Manila — (NC) — The Catholic Church in the Philippines will observe the fourth centenary of the feast of the Sacred Heart with a four-day National Eucharistic Congress beginning next November 29.

Vatican Radio recalled that on August 5, 1921, Pope Benedict XV referred to the large-scale starvation in Russia as "one of the most frightening disasters in history."

IN A LETTER written to Cardinal Pietro Gasparri, then Vatican Secretary of State, Benedict XV dealt with the project of organizing vast-scale relief from the Holy See for the starving Russian population.

Only under Pius XI in 1922 was the Soviet government distrust of the mission overcome. It was then that a commission of 13 priests dressed in ordinary clothes left for Russia, not on a religious apostolic mission, which was forbidden to them, but on a mission of charity.

The mission was headed by Father Edmund A. Walsh, S.J., of Georgetown University in Washington.

VATICAN RADIO noted that the papal mission organized five centers with 10,000 kitchens, and supplied food for over 160,000 persons daily. Food and clothing for the mission were contributed largely through the efforts of the National Catholic Welfare Conference.

At Christmas in 1922, Russian youths held street carnivals in which they ridiculed the Pope and the Catholic Faith. Furthermore, on March 23, 1923, the Soviets sentenced to death Bishop John Cieplak. The Bishop was later reprieved and sent into exile. He arrived in the United States in 1925 and died in February 1926 in Passaic, N. J. His cause for beatification is now under way.

DESPITE THE many infamies committed by the Russians, Vatican Radio said, the Papal Relief Mission continued to operate until September 19, 1924, when it was sent home by the Soviet government.

It has been estimated that during one year the Papal Relief Mission distributed 28 million daily meals to the destitute.

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