

Oberlin Conference Shows Denominations Seek Unity

FATHER JOHN R. SHEERIN, C.S.P. (Written for N.C.W.C. NEWS SERVICE)

Two features of the recent North American Faith and Order Study Conference in Oberlin, Ohio, were the seriousness of the delegates and the frequent use of a Catholic vocabulary in the discussions.

The writer attended the Protestant-Catholic gathering as a Catholic unofficial observer along with Jesuit Father Gustave Weiss, professor of ecclesiology at Woodstock (Md.) College. Hundreds of Non-Catholic delegates, consultants and observers attended.

We were impressed by the seriousness with which delegates addressed themselves to the theme: "The Nature of the Unity We Seek." Troubled in conscience by Christian religious divisions, they studied ways of bringing the various denominations together.

It was agreed the Bible demands unity of the church of Christ, but there was disagreement about the nature of the unity Christ desired. Some thought a mere cooperative activity would suffice.

The general trend, however, was in the direction of visible, corporate unity.

As for the Catholic vocabulary, there was, for instance, the address of Dr. Robert C. Calhoun of Yale University Divinity School. He referred to "the Incarnation," and spoke of Christ as "God-man, the Word Incarnate." He made reference to the Holy Spirit as "Creator Spiritus," and to the Church as "one, holy, Catholic and apostolic."

Of course his interpretation of the words was, at times, quite different from the sense in which we use them. But the very use of this vocabulary seems to me to be a "Catholicizing" element in the ecumenical movement.

One group discussed the sacrament of Baptism, and another studied the Eucharist. They did not arrive at a fully Catholic concept, but they did stress the sacraments' importance in Christian life.

The first group noted with regret "a wide-spread carelessness or apparent slackness" in regard to the teaching and practice of the sacraments. The Eucharist was described by the other group as "central in the Christian life" and "the continuing sacrament of unity." While they did not enunciate the Catholic doctrine of the Real Presence, they did agree that it was more than a mere recollection or memorial.

It seemed to be the mind of the conference that the exercise of authority in the name of Christ is an essential part of the Church's life.

There were only a few explicit references to the Catholic Church. A Nashville, Tenn. study group orientation report condemned "anti-Romanism" as an unworthy motive for Protestant unity. It said that the cult of bigness sometimes takes the form of Protestant unity as competition to Roman Catholicism.

"Now and then it seems that the only cause that can draw together some sharply divided Protestant groups is a project against an ambassador to the Vatican," it said.

The most dramatic allusion to the Catholic Church came in an address by Bishop Johannes Lijke of Hanover, Germany, at a worship service in Finney Chapel.

Surprisingly, it was Bishop Lijke that had discussed at the Lutheran World Federation meeting at Minneapolis a month ago—and favorably—the Lutheran project to re-study Catholicism.

At Oberlin, however, he spoke in a different vein. He asserted that much can be said for the unique position which Peter holds among the Apostles in the New Testament. This does not include total justification of the claims made by successors on the papal throne, he asserted.

The absence of official Catholic representatives may have served one good purpose at least: It tended to dissipate any false hopes of Catholic compromise.

Catholics want to cooperate in every way possible with lovers of Christian unity, but we must ask them to realize that it is not pride, but fidelity to the Gospel, that makes compromise impossible for us. If the Catholic Church were to surrender an essential teaching, it would cease to be Catholic.

JOSEPH BREIG

Two Letters From Two Mothers

I have received two letters which I treasure far more than any others that have ever come to me. Both are from sorrowing mothers.

One mother lives in the state of Washington. Her 10-month-old son died the other day. The other woman is a Californian, whose son, aged 15, was killed in an auto accident last year.

I am deeply grateful that they took the trouble to write to me, and I am touched by the similarity of what they said.

THEY THANKED me for my column on "The Pope and Red Skelton" in which I quoted St. XII's words to the famed comedian whose son is gravely ill: "Death never separates members of a family. They will live together for eternity in Heaven."

Then I spoke of the fact that two of our children died in infancy. The memories of them, I said, are two sorrows which go through life with us, sometimes receding, sometimes becoming vivid and bringing us close to tears again.

But "death never separates members of a family; they will live together for eternity in Heaven." Daily we communicate with our children in prayer, because they are saints, they are with God, waiting for us.

THEY LOVE US MORE not less than our five living children. Indeed, they are more alive, because life reaches full intensity and complete fulfillment only with God in eternity.

The two mothers, as I said, used strangely similar words in writing to thank me. The woman in Washington said of her sorrow:

"Many tried to give words of comfort, but that's all they seemed to be. Just words; they never got through to me. Then I read your article, and you put into words exactly how it has been for me."

"But besides that, your words lifted a fog from my mind, and eased the terrible ache in my heart. From now on I will be able to think of little Joe as an angel in Heaven, and not as flesh and blood buried in the earth. That is what has hurt all these months, and the thought has been a terrible thing to live with."

"How can I put into words what you have done for me? It is as if a great weight has been lifted from my heart, a weight I thought I must carry for the rest of my life. I have cut out the article and will carry it with me always."

The California mother wrote: "Your column on Red Skelton and the Pope was special for me. I lost my lovely 15-year-old son in a car accident. 'People are good. They try to say many kind things, but mostly their words are hollow in spite of all their efforts to help. One reaches out for words of truth. One has to have truth.'"

She quoted two sentences from the article: "How many years of honest love are enough?" and "There cannot ever be a moment when any true love can endure ceasing." She wrote:

"Those are true words. This love that we have goes on... 'And what becomes of laughter? The good laughter that Danny and I had, will we have it again?'"

Indeed, they will have their laughter again. Their merry laughter will shake the stars in their courses, and enthrall the angels. All the hosts of Heaven will pause to listen, because not only Danny and his mother will be laughing, but Christ and His Mother will be laughing with them.

JESUS WHO died dreadfully on the Cross, and Mary who suffered unthinkable agonies watching Him die—they know our sorrows better than we know our own, and will replace them with the joys that not even Christ could describe to us because "It hath not entered into the mind of man what God has prepared for those who love Him."

I would rather have these letters from these mothers than to win the Pulitzer prize, or the Nobel prize, or any other literary honor on earth.

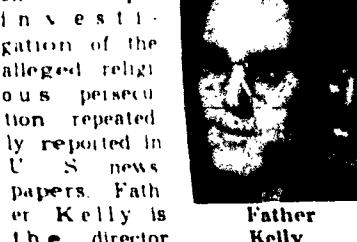


Auriesville statue of St. Isaac Jogues lands on site where 17th century Jesuit missionary instructed savage Iroquois in truths of Catholic faith as he died for his martyrdom in 1646. Present day Jesuit priest describes heroic priest's life to ceremonial clad descendants of New York's famed Indian tribe. Feast of St. Isaac and seven additional Jesuit martyrs, all victims of Iroquois brutality, is marked Thursday, Sept. 26.

Colombia Protestants Enjoy Church Freedom

The alleged "religious persecution" of Protestants in predominantly Catholic Colombia "is unheard of and unknown to most long-term Protestant Americans in Colombia," a Catholic priest from Rochester has reported.

Rev. John E. Kelly, a graduate of Corpus Christi school and Aquinas Institute, Roches-



ter Kelly is the director of the Bureau of Information of the American Bishops National Welfare Conference in Washington.

The most recent charge made before the World Council of Protestant Churches, which met in Connecticut, that there was less religious freedom in Colombia than in communist countries, prompted Father Kelly's personal visit.

He said "most of the false reports published abroad came from the Evangelical Confederation of Colombia, a group of small Protestant sects."

He added that "most of the representative Protestant clergy and lay in Colombia, such as the Episcopal and Lutheran groups, are embarrassed by the unfounded reports."

The Catholic clergymen said he had several interviews with high government and church officials and talked with dozens of Protestants and Catholics both American and Colombian.

He said he attended Protestant church services and "noted the freedom of worship of Protestants."

Father Kelly wrote that in an interview he had with Cardinal Lugo, Archbishop of Bogota and Primate of Colombia, the Cardinal stated:

"In Colombia the highest authorities, religious as well as civil, have never approved much less decreed any acts of violence against the Protestants. Since the very idea of the word 'persecution' presupposes some intervention on the part of the authorities, to state that in Colombia there is a 'religious persecution' against Protestants is to spread a very serious false rumor."

"We readily understand and are grieved at the indignation of misinformed people of the United States, Canada and England because of the malicious campaign spread there by a group of smaller non-Catholic sects."

"Any impartial visitor will look in vain for 'persecutions.' If he does hear of some act of violence, he will find that it is a small, local conflict. These disturbances, often between individuals, are due to a spontaneous reaction of a simple people who love their religion."

More often than not they are caused by the provocative words and actions and by illegal propaganda of the pros-

elying Protestants."

The Washington priest also interviewed Enrique Meleda, the governor of Valle del Cauca, an area where there have been reported incidents of supposed violence.

Father Kelly wrote: "Governor Meleda stated that Catholics and the very few Protestants in the department of Valle del Cauca had lived in mutual respect and peace until a heavy influx of missionaries from Evangelical, Pentecostal, Adventist and Jehovah's Witness sects came to the area about 1948. These foreign missionaries with their often vituperative propaganda, disobedience to civil laws, have constantly embarrassed the Protestant clergy and people who have lived in peace with the Colombian people."

Father Kelly noted that most of these groups are allied with representative Protestantism in the United States as the National Council of Churches.

FATHER KELLY outlined his report with the following points:

1. "Colombians like Americans are grateful for the expansion of American-owned industrial plants which are mutually advantageous to both countries. American residents in Colombia, with the exception of a few zealous proselytizing missionaries like and are liked by the people of Colombia."

2. "The number of converts of proselytizing groups is not at all in proportion to the large amounts of money being poured into Colombia by American individuals and groups. Colombia has been and will remain Catholic."

3. "Disturbed conditions, as a result of bandit activities, in some of the sections where the large amounts of money being poured into Colombia by American individuals and groups have been and will remain Catholic."

4. "For every native Protestant hundreds of thousands of native Catholics have suffered violent injury or death. But unopposed U. S. press reports picture the Protestants as 'martyrs'—the Catholics are just dead."

5. "I was not told the Catholics who were about her death. During the man's operation of Rome she had hidden under a mountain of empty crates in the back of the bus of Jews sought refuge."

The secret of her success lay in her own extraordinary, unassuming personality. But more than that it was to be found in her most admirable desire to meet the needs of people despite all difficulties. When it came to asking something for her poor, there was no such thing as timidity for her.

Probably no one had known the extent of her charity until they saw the great crowds that came to mourn her. For 24 hours an endless procession of men and women from every part of the city and belonging to every class filed past her body. There were those who had been recipients of her kindness and those whom she had ordered to do charity.

Or she would phone a business man and say: "Dear Mr. Santucci, I don't need you at this time, but I do need a cradle. All you have to do is call this number to confirm the order I have already placed in your name."

WHEN A PERSON in need came to her, she would go through the mental index she had made of the people who could help. And when an occasion presented itself, she knew how to

Exiled Bishop Aids Chinese In Faith Struggle

(The author of the following article is director of KNA, German Catholic news agency, who recently completed a tour of the Far East.)

By KARL BRINGMANN (Written for N.C.W.C. News Service)

Singapore — A man with an alert look sat behind a massive desk piled high with documents, letters and books.

As we entered the room, he arose quickly, put aside the large pipe he had been smoking, and stretched out both hands in greeting. He was Bishop Carlo M. J. van Melckebeke, of Ningxia, China, expelled from his diocese in Red China after a period in prison. Bishop van Melckebeke is now Apostolic Visitor to Southeast Asia.

He is in charge of preserving and strengthening the Faith among all Chinese Catholics outside of China, whom the Reds are trying to win over by appeals to nationalism.

His duty is no joke. With a sweep of his hand indicating a big map of the world dotted with colored pins standing for groups of Chinese Catholics all over the world, he said: "This is my parish. My 250,000 parishioners are strewn all over the world. They have naturally formed heavy concentrations of Chinese Catholics in certain areas of South and Central America, in East Africa, but more than anywhere else in the eastern Asiatic lands: Malaya, Vietnam, Thailand and the Philippines."

The Belgian-born bishop of a Chinese See takes his obligations most seriously. He has studied the needs of the Chinese everywhere and he stays in contact with his "parishioners" by means of special publications.

Every two weeks 7,000 copies of Hai Sing Pao ("Star of the Sea"), a periodical for adults, go out to the Chinese in 54 countries. A children's magazine, Lo Feng Pao ("The Joyful Guardian") is published in Chinese, Vietnamese, Siamese, Tamil (the language of southern India and Ceylon), Korean, Indonesian and English. Its illustrations are in attractive colors and there is a section of American style comics.

Bishop van Melckebeke is also in charge of the publication of a bimonthly magazine for Chinese priests. It is called Sin Toun Sheng ("Voice of the Priest") and is edited in Rome.

For all of the joy Bishop van Melckebeke takes in his work, there still is great sorrow in his life. He speaks of it sadly and seriously — the loss of China to the light of Faith.

"I am no longer Belgian," he told us. "I am Chinese in every way except birth. When I see

(Chinese) people pursuing their busy lives throughout the world, making their contributions to the world's culture, becoming Americans, Frenchmen, Germans, but retaining so much of their ancient heritage, I am proud. But I am aware of the pain that lies in their hearts — even in the hearts of those who have never seen China. The Chinese want to be free to return to a happy, free and prosperous China — to the land of their ancestors."

SINGAPORE IS the perfect place to see the Chinese at home outside of China. The atmosphere is a blend of many Oriental cultures. The air is filled with many Oriental dialects and languages. Almost everyone speaks a kind of English as well, for Singapore is the last great bulwark of the British Empire in Southeast Asia.

Singapore is the Gibraltar of the Far East. Its strategic geographical position is obvious to anyone who looks at a map. Its strategic political position is obvious to anyone who visits the Crown Colony.

Among students there is a strong undercurrent of communism. Several times in the past months communists were being able to stir up the students which naturally results in the political tension surrounding Singapore, and from the influx of refugees from the dominated areas nearby, it has nearly burst into rioting.

Only the vigilance and the many of the Singapore police and the wisdom of many of the Chinese and Malay authorities, its leaders have prevented disaster.

Although 80 per cent of Singapore's population of 1,000,000 persons is Chinese, there has been little defection to communism in spite of the pressure from the Red underground. But there is still a danger partly because of the gradual increase in Chinese prestige under Mao Tse Tung and partly because of the increased Red underground activity.

"Our Chinese people," Bishop van Melckebeke told us, "know very little about communism itself, but they know and have heard about Mother China Under Mao Tse Tung. China seems to be emerging for the first time as a power of worldwide importance. This makes a good propaganda point for approaching the masses outside of China, and agents have not failed to see it."

Making Marriage Click

By MSGR. IRVING A. DEBLANC (Director, Family Life Bureau, N.C.W.C.)

The day has come or will come for most of us when our mutual level of our bodies, when the human machine will chatter and clank, and when we will no longer find satisfaction doing the things we once so much enjoyed.

Fortunately for many we have not inherited some pagan cultures, one of them teaching "meretriciously" killed aged parents. Old age for them was a curse. Rather, the University of Michigan in one of its surveys stated that 50 per cent of our oldest find that particular period of their lives the most enjoyable of all.

We can then safely say that we have produced an odds of five to one that our senior citizens will find their old age the most pleasant period of their lives. This depends, of course, on certain successes which preceded this period. Just getting old is not bliss itself. Many have such strains in their old age that they are crowding our mental institutions.

We should remember that going into old age is a gradual process. It rarely hits us all of a sudden. This gradualness actually decreases the impact. It is remotely, very remotely, like becoming a saint or losing one's faith, or like going to heaven or going to hell.

Those going into old age like wise gradually work fewer hours each day, he it at the office, the factory, or the kitchen. There is a general change of pace which is occurring and which must be accepted by the aging.

Daily Mass

Sunday, September 22—Fifteenth Sunday after Pentecost (green), Gloria, 2nd prayer* of St. Thomas of Villanova, Creed, Trinitarian Preface.	Isaac Jogues and companions, martyrs (red), Gloria, 2nd prayer* of Sts. Cyprilian and Justina.
Monday, September 23—St. Ignace, martyr (red), Gloria, 2nd prayer* of St. Thecla; VR.	Friday, September 27—Sts. Cosmas and Damian, martyrs (red), Gloria; VR.
Tuesday, September 24—Our Lady of Mercy (white), Gloria, Creed, Preface of our Lady.	Saturday, September 28—Saturday Mass of our Lady (white), 2nd prayer* of St. Wenceslaus, Preface of our Lady; VR.
Wednesday, September 25—Mass as Sunday except no Gloria nor Creed, Common Preface.	omitted at High Mass.
Thursday, September 26—St. ed	VR—Votive or Requiem permitted.

Strange But True

The Blessing of Herbs

is traditionally carried out on the first of the Assumption in the Black Forest, Germany. The maidens carrying Our Lady's statue wear crowns of herbs.

The Vatican Museum

has a picture of Our Lady on the head of a pin!

DANIEL DE KONIN, A BAIN EMPLOYER, TOOK 6 YEARS TO FINISH THE WORK WHICH FINISHED IN 200 OF A SQUARE INCH.

The famous EAST INDIA TRADING COMPANY

which for 250 years played a major role in India was largely founded in 1600, on economic reports and trading prospects from FATHER THOMAS STEVENS, S.J. to his father.

BEHIND SO MANY PEOPLE WHO LEFT THERE TO LIVE IN IT

WAS THE 700-NEW CHURCHES AND MONASTERS OF THE FATHERS.

Rome Pays Tribute To Charity Nun

By LUIGIA O. CASIMIRRI (N.C.W.C. News Service)

Rome — Not many people here have ever seen a funeral procession as long as the one that followed the body of Sister Modestia to her grave.

It was so long, in fact, that those who knew her might have suspected that she had commanded the cars that took part in the procession. They would have suspected it, that is, had they not already known to their intense sorrow that Sister Modestia of Alexandria was dead.

SISTER MODESTIA was head nurse of Rome's Polyclinic Hospital. Ever since she had joined the Congregation of the Sisters of Charity of St. Vincent de Paul 20 years ago she had "commanded" the charity of the well-to-do in favor of her poorer patients.

Sister Modestia's specialty was her habit of ordering things she needed by phone.

"My dear lady," she would say, "I absolutely need a mattress and I have already pledged your name for one. It will be picked up at your house tomorrow morning at eight."

Or she would phone a business man and say: "Dear Mr. Santucci, I don't need you at this time, but I do need a cradle. All you have to do is call this number to confirm the order I have already placed in your name."

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This particular period of a couple's life is referred to as the period of the empty nest. Mom and Pop will now look each other straight in the eye. Remember this: their life may have been especially centered on their children, but it will be more focused on each other.

The children have left home to start their own nests, now for the old folks life seems to be starting all over again. It is a new honeymoon. This time it will be a permanent one.

By 1960 it is estimated that there will be over 32 million people in this country over the age of 45.

As dry as statistics can be you may get an important vision of a vital issue if you contemplate some of the following figures.

THE AVERAGE parents can anticipate living together for 13 years after the home becomes an empty nest. A widow can expect to live alone, when she and her husband are separated by death, for a full 15 years. The average widower, on the other hand, seems less able to survive a separation from his wife and will live only 7 years after her death.

"How to age gracefully" has become one of our greatest American challenges and social achievements.

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Dutchmen in Fishing

Six W

This is the completed assistant editor Paris.

Wooden shoe make Holland one of the partner-sque...

They also studying battle which the daily if they b...

One sage D think in his "God made earth, except to make this selves."

He pointed a green field at a house-top nearby canal.

"One is it but now elu the water whic pours the way chartered boat and at low d dumped into th...

AS HOLLAN expands new one vast mile under consti U.S. Marshall...

Holland's bo lands are almos always moist because our shoes would moisture and t...

We rode a m to the island of the people still to the Spaniar Holland—in the countries. The staunchly Cath...

The island a were told, des out religious, good neighbors...

Diocesan Rochester