

Bishop's Appeal For Seminaries

September 15, 1959

My dear People:

With the opening of our seminaries, may I ask your generous support in the annual Seminary Collection to be taken up at the Masses on Sunday, September 27, 1959.

The vision of that great Churchman, who was the first bishop of Rochester, brought into existence our Seminaries — St. Andrew's and St. Bernard's. They have been the lifeblood of the priesthood in this diocese. The story of their development and improvement year after year is a blessed page in the history of the people of this diocese and their self-sacrificing generosity. These Seminaries have served the church all over the United States.

We have been obliged to make very extensive and expensive improvements in St. Bernard's Seminary this year. Our concern for the safety of several hundred students remains ever a priority in the diocese and as a result we are spending large sums of money this year to insure that safety.

The time has come also for a complete refurnishing of the buildings on Lake Avenue. They were furnished 35 years ago, and now it is imperative that the entire equipment be replaced.

May I ask from every wage earner a gift of \$2.50 for each Seminary, i. e., \$5.00. Such a gift will make it very easy for your parish to reach the minimum quota which we have asked each parish to accept if these seminaries are to continue.

I ask you to be generous to this cause which is so dear to the Heart of Christ, so necessary for the salvation of souls, redeemed by His Precious Blood. Your gift will bring you rich blessings for so work in the diocese is of such importance, and I am convinced of no gift which will bring more graces in return.

I know you will do your share to keep your seminaries worthy of their great tradition.

With a blessing, I am
Your devoted Shepherd in Christ,

+ James Kearney,
Bishop of Rochester

East Germany's Grim 10 Years Under Reds

Berlin — (RNS) — The Catholic Church in Communist East Germany is engaged in a battle for souls that is on a grimmer and far more challenging scale than in any other Soviet satellite country.

This is the consensus of Catholic leaders as the Red rulers prepare to celebrate on Oct. 7 the tenth anniversary of the formation of the so-called German Democratic Republic.

In their war against religion during the past decade, the East German Communists have progressed farther than their comrades in any other part of the Soviet orbit. This is especially true in regard to their campaign to wean the young from religious loyalties.

For the first time, many Catholic youths are beginning to reject the faith. This is largely because of the new mandatory Jugendweihre or Youth Dedication, which the Reds have set up as a "substitute" for First Communion and Confirmation.

This apparatus for Marxist indoctrination consists of 24 class hours followed by a festive public assembly at which each participating youth takes a solemn oath of loyalty to the Communist state and ideology.

Since atheism is now a basic subject in the state schools—there are no parochial schools in East Germany—the dilemma for Catholic youth is tragic. They are told that access to higher education and job opportunities depend on taking the oath.

So great has been the Communist pressure on third and fourth-grade school pupils that Catholic authorities are now beginning to give instruction for Confirmation to the second graders instead of waiting until they have reached the fifth or sixth grades.

Catholic officials claim that only 19 per cent of their youth took Jugendweihre last year. But other sources insist that as many as 30 per cent have done so. They noted that Protestant leaders have admitted that 35 per cent of their youth have taken the Communist loyalty oath, despite warnings to parents in which both Protestant and Catholic authorities have joined.

For years, the Jugendweihre was "optional." However when the Communists found that they could only enroll 20 per cent of the youth for their course despite the most energetic and persuasive campaigns, they decided last year to make attendance at the dedication rites compulsory for any youth desiring high school education and good-paying careers.

But so far this form of coercion has been more effective with Protestant young people. Protestant leaders in certain areas, after debating the issue at length, decided to allow their youth to take the Red oath and then after a probation of six months to take Confirmation instruction if they prove their church loyalty.

As a sequel, Communist leaders are going to the homes of Protestant parents whose children are delinquent in regard to Jugendweihre and telling them: "See, even your Church leaders see no incompatibility."

The pressure on the Catholic young people has been less because the shrewd Reds see no immediate point in insisting on a policy which bucks the firm stand of the Catholic hierarchy that no child who subscribes to the Jugendweihre oath may be admitted to the Sacraments. Furthermore, according to one Catholic official, no case is yet known of a Catholic youth who has been denied higher education or an apprenticeship because of refusal to take Jugendweihre.

Meanwhile, a variety of other factors explain why, in 1958, over 13,000 of the less than two million East German Catholics formally announced they had left the Church, as against 9,873 in 1955.

Other factors explain why, in 1952, however, a seminary was opened in Erfurt, and now there also are four small Catholic seminaries in four other localities.

It is in the realm of religious vocations that the brightest spot appears in this part of the Soviet orbit where religion fights against mounting odds for survival.

One major reason is that Catholicism in East Germany is a "disapport" Church, numbering only 11 per cent of the population and with many villages having no resident priest. The parish of Zeitz in Thuringia, for example, has only eight priests to minister to 20,000 parishioners in 158 scattered villages.

Coupled with the inadequate spiritual care available for great numbers of scattered Catholic families, and the resultant risk of greater susceptibility to the ceaseless pressure of Communist atheistic propaganda, is the incidence of mixed marriages, the highest in any European country.

Another major explanation for the plight of East German Catholicism is the long-term Communist plan to destroy the institutional structure of the Church.

This crippling campaign began with the prohibition of charitable work. Social institutions such as orphanages, hospitals, etc., seized by the Nazis were returned to the Church after the war, but without the traditional state subsidies.

The seven Catholic dioceses in the Soviet Zone today maintain 36 hospitals, seven clinics, 110 homes for the aged, 78 children's homes, 14 mothers' homes, 217 parish nursing centers and 145 kindergartens. These have not yet been federalized because of the urgent need for all available care facilities in view of the flight of doctors, nurses and technicians to the West.

But the Communists have been paving the way by producing a new crop of specialists from their own ideological camp and these are receiving high salaries and luxury privileges.

Catholic Germany suffers especially from lack of an adequate Catholic press. Prior to the founding of the German Democratic Republic, Western publishers furnished Catholic publications, literature and books.

After five years of negotiations, a license was granted in 1951 for the St. Benno Publishing House in Leipzig. Permission was given for a fortnightly periodical, "Das Heilige Wort," but it was limited to eight pages, and it could only print 100,000 copies.

This was obviously not enough to cater to the present total of 1,763,595 Catholics in the Soviet Zone. Another periodical, the weekly "St. Hedwig's Blatt," is published in East Berlin, but it is permitted a circulation of only 25,000.

Attesting to the vitality of Catholicism in East Germany is the fact that the Soviet anniversary year finds it with the largest group of candidates for the priesthood since the war.

In proportion to population, the East has drawn even with Western Germany. In fact, Bishop Otto Spießbeck of Meissen declared recently that his diocese has a larger percentage of candidates for the priesthood than any diocese in West Germany.

The quality of the young seminarians is described as excellent. This is especially hopeful since the older priests have suffered increasingly from exhaustion and breakdown because of parish problems and the augmenting political pressure under which they live.

Is Khrushchev In Wrong Orbit?

Camp David, America's demer-paradise, this weekend faces a future which may link it in infamy with Munich, Pearl Harbor and Yalta.

Free people with faith, however, who have trust in prayer, can hope that President Eisenhower can accomplish what Americans across the nation have so far failed to do — convince Soviet Premier Nikita Khrushchev that our national ideals are rooted in our souls far more than in our factories or farms.

We can't help but feel a keen disappointment in the way the Kremlin leader has been shown our country.

Political and business leaders in the areas he has visited have flattered before him our vaunted progress in producing everything from Ramacs to sweet corn — all ingredients in our national prosperity but still as materialistic as Karl Marx could hope to be.

Union leaders in their rough, three hour, tussle with Mr. Khrushchev at San Francisco, according to reports, at least alluded to the "spiritual" ideals of the country.

But what must he think of us when we promptly compromise our stated convictions by discreetly skipping prayers at the banquet where he is guest of honor and what must he think of our program chairman judge it better to offend God rather than offend Mr. Khrushchev.

We do not mean to enter that perfunctory table prayers at public banquets would prove American are deeply religious people but carefully to omit them along with all other references to religion in the present circumstances betrays our hollow boast to be a nation founded "with a firm reliance on the protection of Divine Providence" as affirmed in our Declaration of Independence.

Cardinal Spellman in his dedication talk at West Point's new Catholic chapel pointed out that the Kremlin goal to take over America and the rest of the free world is best aided by the current breakdown in the "religious fiber" of our country.

He termed the present day, widespread religious apathy and indifference "a form of treason" pushing the country to destruction.

Even Mr. Khrushchev — avowed atheist that he is — could call a "Can-can" dance immoral, a picture show to be released to the theaters so youngsters can learn corruption while God, prayer, religious instruction are all banned from our public schools with the same relentless censorship as in any Iron Curtain country.

Placards have charged Khrushchev with murdering innocent victims who balked his efforts to impose the Communist system. We need other placards, though, to charge home-breakers, anti-peddlers, corrupt public officials, and all down the litany of miserable depravity with a treason worse than Communism, one that destroys souls.

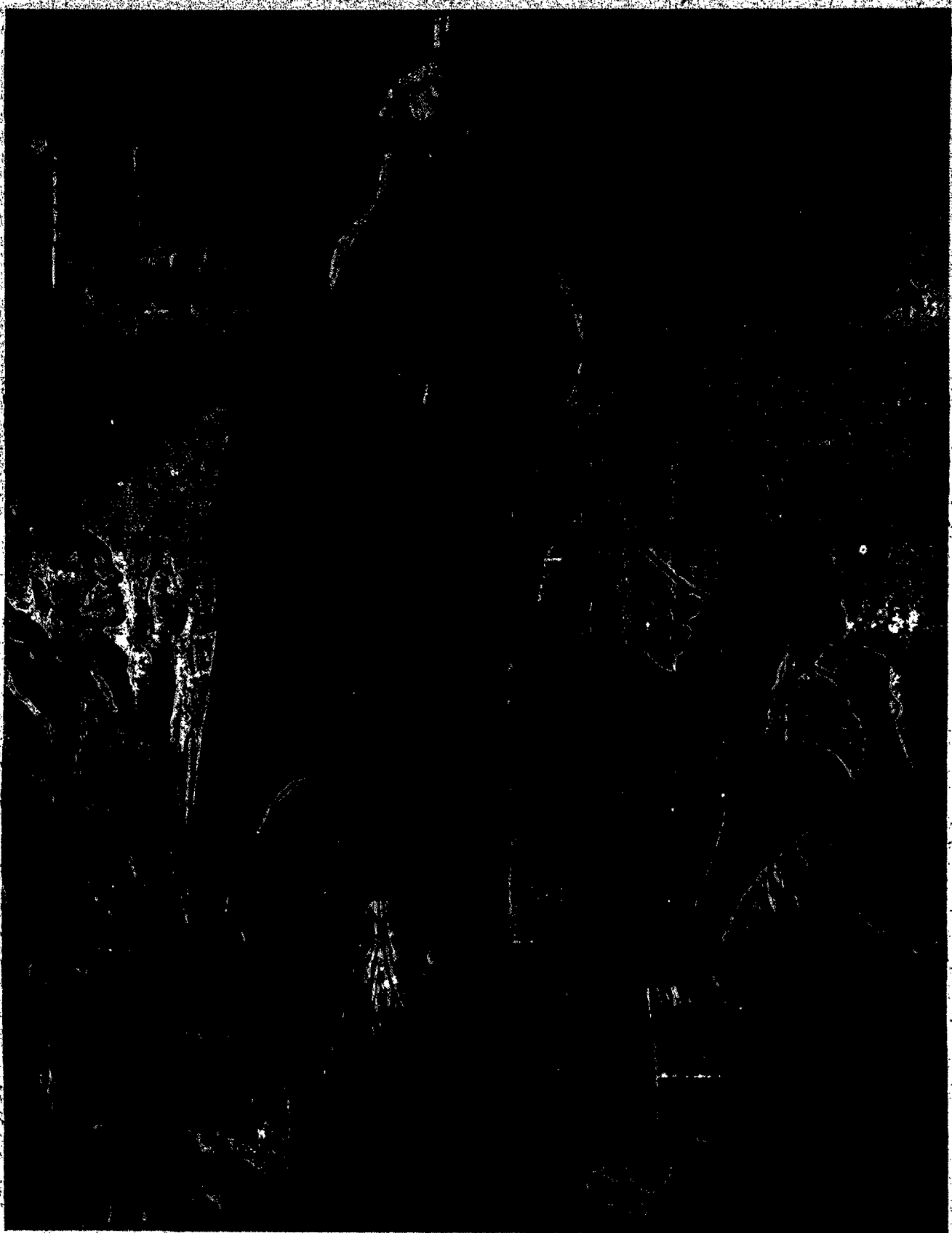
THIS "CHAIN OF DARKNESS" — as Pope Pius XII described it — is a struggle to be waged independently of nuclear weapons. We can negotiate an end to the cold war and disarm the world as Khrushchev wants and still lose the ultimate war because we lost our souls.

Despite all these portents of despair, however, we are still convinced that most Americans do have those basic religious convictions which made our nation choose as its motto, "In God we trust."

We are further convinced that Mr. Eisenhower will point out this aspect of American life to the Soviet dictator. And we are finally convinced that God who made Saul the persecutor to be Paul the apostle can penetrate the Iron Curtain around Khrushchev's heart and the hearts of his henchmen.

As Christians we cannot believe that anyone is irredeemable.

To achieve this hope, we can play a part even greater than a diplomat's role at Camp David. We can pray — as the President and our Bishop have asked us to — and if we pray with confidence we have God's own assurance of His answer.



Iroquois Torture Jesuit Missioner

St. Isaac Jogues, Jesuit missionary in New York State, was brutally tortured and "mutilated" at Iroquois village near present day Auriesville. Seven other Jesuit priests and lay helpers were martyred by Indians in early seventeenth century, three at the New York site and five at Midland, Ontario. A shrine honors their heroic courage at both places. Tomorrow, Saturday, Sept. 26, is observed as their annual fast day.

Nikita Invokes God

"The Soviet Premier in his quest of America has made frequent references to God, the Bible, Commandments and the teaching of our Lord. At the Iowa farm of Roswell Carr, he said, 'God is on our side,' but admitted God helps all who seek to work intelligently."

New York — (RNS) — Although he professes not to believe in God, Soviet Premier Nikita S. Khrushchev invoked the name of the Deity during his visit to this city.

Addressing civic, business and political leaders at an official luncheon in his honor, the Russian leader declared: "God knows what the difference between the capitalism described by Marx and the socialism... that Mr. Lodge (Henry Cabot Lodge, U.S. delegate to the United Nations) described. It seems to me to be one and the same thing."

And later, speaking on this subject again, he told the guests: "If you like capitalism, and I am sure you do, God will be with you. Continue in your efforts."

Some observers said this seemed a bit odd, especially coming from a man who reportedly told Catholic miners in Poland that "if there were a God, and if He had any sense at all, He would take a broom and sweep all capitalists off the face of the earth."

To find this self-proclaimed atheist using the name of God has been hardly a surprise however to those who recall that "the amiable character" of some foreign diplomats in Moscow have dubbed him, has often made speeches which were later officially "corrected" by the Kremlin.

"The reference to God will stand on the record here, but it is a moot question whether his remarks will be relayed for the benefit of the Russian masses."

When the 54-year-old Mr. Khrushchev was elected by the Supreme Soviet as Premier of the U.S.S.R. last year, he gave an interview in which he declared that "there is no God" and described himself instead as an "absent of a scientific outlook."

However the Premier needed in agreement with his interviewer remarked that while Mr. Khrushchev had "dedicated his life to the struggle against religion," he had "never spoken openly against religious feelings."

It has been commonly agreed that while the one-time shepherd boy and coal miner, who is now Russia's most powerful figure since the death of Stalin, is not openly opposed to religion, he has shown what might be termed a tolerant attitude toward religious believers.

He made world headlines in fact in November, 1954 when, as First Secretary of the Communist Party, he signed a decree ordering that "in the future, party organizations of the Union Republic shall in no manner permit any insults to the feelings of believers and clergy nor any official interference in the activity of the church."

The decree was issued suddenly after the Soviet press had waged a long campaign against religion marked by public denunciations of various creeds and religious practices. Anti-religious propaganda continues unabated in Russia, but while still as steady as ever, it is no longer marked by the same outright vituperation as before.

Mr. Khrushchev has confounded that Communists "are the most human people because they are waging this struggle to achieve a good life, and not just for themselves."

In advancing this claim, the Russian Premier has not only invoked God's name, but has even made lavish use of Bible phrases in his attacks on free world leaders. A conspicuous example was a speech last January to the 21st Soviet Communist Party Congress in which he described free world politicians as "money-changers like these Christ drove out of the temple."

At another occasion the Soviet leader claimed that the U.S.S.R. "never had a conflict on the basis of religious differences." He said that "far from being intolerant, we respect religious people. We fight them only when religion is used to do harm, to do something detrimental to man."

A special plea to Mr. Khrushchev was sounded by the New York Board of Rabbis who urged that the Soviet government provide Russian Jews "with the means for the pursuit of Jewish religious and cultural life as guaranteed by the Russian constitution and eloquently professed by its leaders."

A conspicuous feature of the two lunches given for Mr. Khrushchev in New York was the absence of any "inviting" or "hegemonic" atmosphere. The spokesman for the Department of Commerce and Public Events, who said: "We try to do what the guests would like." He added that such ommissions are not unusual at City functions, and the Russians had made no request in the matter.

SERMONETTE

Who Possesses God is Wanting in Nothing
(From the Prayer of St. Therese)

By the Rev. Richard C. Madden, O.C.D.

The little Spanish monk was just looking for trouble. He was really asking for it. Favored with a vision, he heard Christ say, "John, how can I reward you for your service to Me?" Juan's answer, "To suffer and to be despised for love of You."

He got his wish. His life became a living set-back, a constant frustration. Then he died among people who hated him on a bed and under a roof that was not his own. Yet before dying this is what he had to say:

Mine are the heavens, and the earth is mine.
Mine are the angels, and the Mother of God.
All things are mine, because God is mine.

Screwball? Some people might think so. But when you think about it he was a lot smarter than the rest of us. He found the secret. The more you possessed God, the less you needed of the world.

Today, voracious man grinds through life like a giant vacuum cleaner, drawing into his maw the flossom of earth, and still he is hungry. He seeks to fill himself completely with the things of earth. And he fails.

Money is not the answer. It never could be. Neither is beauty, nor glory, nor material possessions. For those are things that create an even greater void within the heart of man. With all these things, there still remains the deathless yearning for something more. Something that will satisfy completely and remain forever.

And only God alone can fill this kind of hunger. So if we have God, we have no need of anything else. We won't want anything else. And the little Spanish monk, John of the Cross, proved it conclusively. He came into this earth with nothing; he lived his life with nothing; but when he went back to God at the end of his life, he owned the whole world.

THE CATHOLIC
Courier Journal
OFFICIAL PUBLICATION OF THE ROCHESTER DIOCESE

FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 25, 1959 - VOL. 70, No. 52

MOST REV. JAMES E. KEARNEY, D.D., President
MAIN OFFICE — 15 So. St. — Baker 3-4111 — Rochester 4, N. Y.
AUBURN OFFICE — 41 Grand Ave., Auburn 3-4111
ELMIRA OFFICE — 311 Brady Bldg. — Phone RE. 1-6111 or RE. 3-4111
Entered as second class matter in the Post Office at Rochester, N. Y.
Authorized under the Act of Congress of March 3, 1879.
Single copy 10c; 1 year subscription in U. S., \$4.00
Canada \$5.00; Foreign Countries \$6.00