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What Are Good Norms For Summer Wearing Apparel

By FATHER JOHN L. THOMAS, S.J.
St. Louis University Sociology Professor

With the coming of summer we mothers face the usual problems of deciding what is proper wearing apparel for our daughters. I've talked to others and they're not too sure of themselves. Our neighborhood is fairly conservative, though I guess we follow the general pattern in regard to dress. Some of us wonder whether this is all right. Are there any good norms we can follow?



It's easy to understand why you modern mothers are a little confused about how your daughters should dress. Clothes serve so many purposes, and fashions change so rapidly that it's frequently difficult for a Christian to distinguish between passing fad and pagan folly.

Yet history shows that beneath changing fashions in dress lies a whole philosophy of sex and society. The way people dress reveals the values they esteem and strive to preserve, for clothes are both a symbol of sign and a practical need. What they stand for is frequently more important than the physical protection they afford.

We can tell a great deal about the character of a person by his manner of dress, just as we can learn much about a society by studying the fashions that it accepts or tolerates.

Because traditional Christian principles related to sexual morality exert little influence on contemporary customs or conduct, you have every reason to question some current fashions in dress. Your daughters will normally want to follow the crowd; and because teen agers generally feel quite insecure, the need to conform is particularly powerful at their age.

Hence if you cannot allow them to follow some of the prevailing fashions, it will be highly important to point out the reasons for your disapproval. Besides, your job is not only to protect but to instruct and train for life.

Although some helpful norms related to dress can be formulated, their balance application implies an alert Christian conscience, togeth-

er with some understanding of the general principles upon which they are based. Assuming an alert Christian conscience, what are the pertinent facts and principles to be kept in mind?

In regard to the facts, clothes serve many different purposes. They protect from heat and cold according to the climate and seasonal changes; they may indicate a profession or social status (a uniform); they are usually designed to be both useful and ornamental; they are symbolic of distinctive social situations (formal or informal); and they are related to the observance of chastity by regulating one of the normal sources of sexual stimulation in our society. This latter purpose is the crux of the modern problem.

Particularly during the summer, fashions in dress reflect

an easy-going naturalism, characterized by emphasis on comfort, the display of physical rather than spiritual beauty, and a practical denial of moral significance to sex.

There's nothing wrong with dressing for comfort, and clothes should be attractive, though some girls apparently can't distinguish between charming exposure and vulgar disclosure. Nevertheless, young women must face the fact that the way they dress has moral implications. It is not only a question of audacity; in some cases, as one observer remarked, "What they don't show, they put on!"

Some general norms to follow. Dress should be appropriate for the occasion. What is modest within the home, at the beach, or in sports may not be adequate for street wear or in public.

Mass Asked In Japanese

Tokyo — (NC) — The Bishops of Japan will ask the Holy See to let church congregations sing parts of the Mass in Japanese.

The Bishops decided on this petition during their annual conference here. The conference was also attended by the new Apostolic Intermuncio to Japan, Archbishop Domenico Emici.

Those parts of the Mass which would be sung in Japanese are the Kyrie, Gloria, Credo, Sanctus and Agnus Dei. In the case of the Gloria and Credo, only the celebrant's intonation would be in Latin.

Rites To Be In Chinese

Taipei — (RNS) — The Catholic hierarchy of Formosa mapped plans here to set up a special commission which will translate ritual prayers into Chinese and make a study of Church rites for adaptation to local customs.

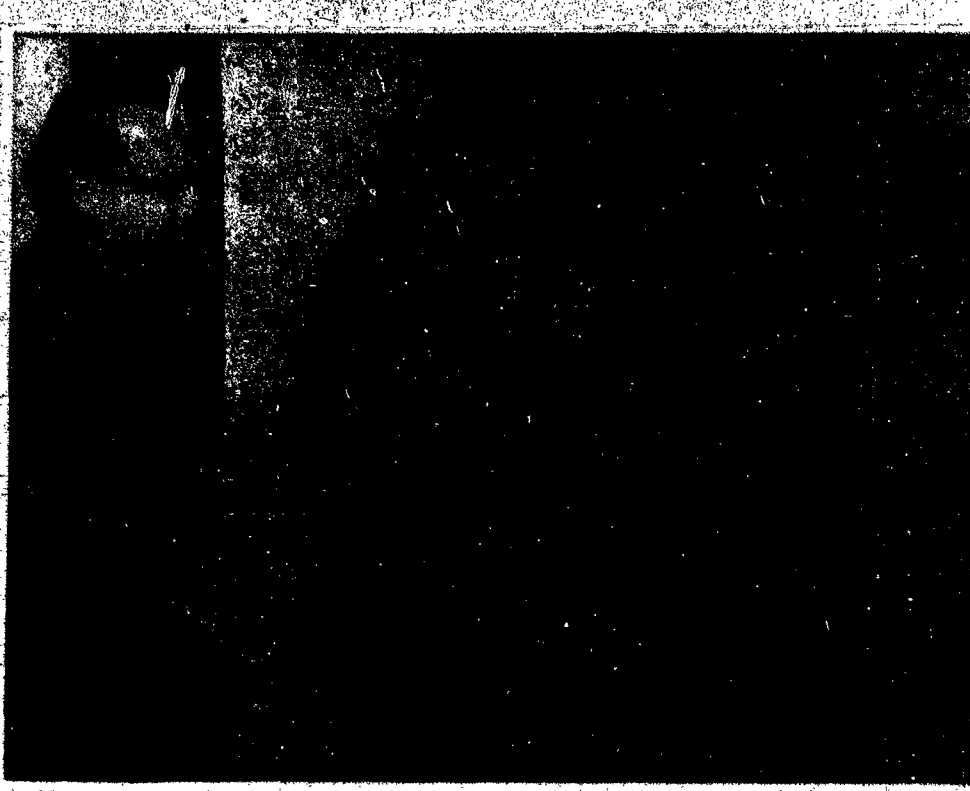
The island's missionaries have long maintained that the use of the vernacular in church ceremonies and the adaptation of "Christianizing" of certain local observances would serve to intensify the religious life of Catholics and make the Church's teachings more acceptable to pagans.

Queen Honors Top Chaplains

London — (RNS) — Msgrs. Cyril Fay and Bernard Navin, Vicars General, respectively, of the Royal Navy and Army, were made Commanders in the Order of the British Empire by Queen Elizabeth II.

Their names appeared in the Queen's Birthday Honors List among a number of other prominent Catholics. These included Harman Grisewood, Chief Assistant to the Director-General of the British Broadcasting Company, and Brigadier J. C. de B. Steeman, one of the founders of the Challenger Club, London's national social center for Catholics.

Eight Catholic priests were on the list, including several missionaries serving in British colonies.



Globe For Pope Shows Dioceses

Vatican City — (RNS) — Father Henry Emmerich, S.V.D., looks at the giant globe he designed for use in the private study of Pope John XXIII. Measuring 13 feet in circumference and five feet in diameter, the illuminated globe — which took one and one-half years to complete — is inscribed with the names of 2,200 of the Church's archdioceses, dioceses and other spiritual jurisdictions. It will be consulted by the Pope when he receives ad limina (to the threshold) visits from members of the episcopate in all parts of the world. Father Emmerich, a Swiss citizen, heads the Map-Making and Statistical Institute at Divine World missionary headquarters in Rome.

Prelate Chides Mayor For Anglican Worship

London — (RNS) — Councillor John Croghan, newly-elected Mayor of Chester, ignoring instructions from Bishop John Murphy of Shrewsbury, became the city's first Catholic mayor since the Reformation to attend the annual civic service in the local Anglican cathedral.

Last year's mayor, Councillor C. H. Talbot, also a Catholic, did not attend the cathedral service, but a civic Mass in the parish church of St. Werburgh, where Mr. Croghan also is a parishioner. This has been the usual custom of Catholic mayors.

"I am sorry," Bishop Murphy said later, "that the present Mayor of Chester, unlike his predecessor, Councillor Talbot, feels that he must change his place of worship when he becomes Mayor."

When Mayor Croghan's action was played up here by the Sunday Express, Bishop Murphy had this to say:

"Catholic mayors up and down the country are worshipping God in the church of their baptism. One cannot honestly expect any newspaper to treat this as news. Such an event (as Mayor Croghan's decision) is still rare enough to make hot news." Mayor Croghan is a 60-year-old railroad man and belongs to the Labor Party.

One And Only

New York — (RNS) — A Roman Catholic priest was graduated from Columbia University Teachers College with three unique distinctions:

He ranked first in the section which received the master's degree in special education.

He was the first priest to have participated in the university's teacher training program at Lexington School for the Deaf in New York, and he was the only man in his class.

The graduate is Father John P. Hourihan, director of the Mt. Carmel Guild Apostolate for the Deaf of the Archdiocese of Newark. Not the least remarkable thing about Father Hourihan is that he held down his archdiocesan job while devoting 34 hours a week to his studies.

Portugal Honors Hero Saint

Lisbon — (RNS) — The bells of a special year commemorating Portugal were rung to usher in of Catholic churches all over the 800th anniversary of the death of Blessed Nunez Alvarez de Pereira, national hero-saint.

The relics of the saint, who was the Constable of Portugal before he became a Carmelite lay brother, were taken in procession from a chapel here to lie in a ruined Carmelite monastery which he founded and where he died as Brother Nunez de Santa Maria.

Meanwhile the Portuguese hierarchy issued a joint pastoral letter urging Portuguese Catholics to follow in the footsteps of the patriot saint by imitating his piety, faith, charity, generosity and courage.

Blessed Nunez, whose image is displayed in many shrines in Lisbon dedicated to his memory, commanded Portuguese forces at the battle of Aljubarrota which freed the nation from Spanish rule. After his wife's death he joined the Carmelites in Lisbon at the age of 32. He was beatified in 1915.

Priest Heads Labor Board

Newark — (NC) — Archbishop Thomas A. Boland has established a labor-management institute in the Newark archdiocese.

The institute will deal with social action programs. It will be directed by Father Aloysius J. Welch, professor of theology and sociology at the archdiocesan seminary.

Cuba Taxes Church Items

Vatican City — (RNS) — Evidence of increased opposition to the Catholic Church in Cuba was seen here in reports that the Castro regime has classified crucifixes, rosary beads and other religious articles as luxury goods subject to heavy taxes.



THE KEYS TO THE CITY

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