

Proud Mother

Buenos Aires — During Christmas Family Day at the First Inter-American Marian Congress in Buenos Aires, Mrs. Dominga Buena de Castellano was honored as the Argentine mother who has done most to boost vocations for the Catholic Church. Here she listens as her daughter, Sister Juana Castellano of the order of Our Lady Help of Christians, reads the act of consecration of Argentine Catholic women to the Blessed Virgin Mary. Mrs. Castellano has given seven children to religion — her daughter and six Salesian priests. On the extreme left is Marcello Cardinal Mimmi, Secretary of the Sacred Consistorial Congregation, who served as Papal Legate to the Congress. (RNS Photo)

Oblivion for One

Honor To Another

Braunau — (RNS) — This Austrian town on the German border is preparing to celebrate the centenary of the death of one of its two famous sons, Franz Gruber, composer of the Christmas hymn "Silent Night."

Over the memory of the other famous son, Adolf Hitler, it has cast a mantle of oblivion.

Braunau has set up a committee to establish a memorial here for Gruber. It will be known as "The Tower of Christ, Peace" and will be placed over Gruber's grave in the village cemetery.

Every Christmas Eve his grave will be lit with a torch by a local choir. It will be broadcast throughout the world.

The townfolk of Braunau plan to finish the memorial tower by 1935, the 100th anniversary of Gruber's death.

Gruber, like Hitler, left Braunau early in life. He became a teacher and church organist in the village of Hallein, 40 miles due south of here and also on the German border.

Toothache At Vatican

Vatican City — (RNS) — Pope John XXIII granted his customary midweek audience with a swollen left cheek after having had a tooth extracted. He was reported to have been suffering from a toothache for a few days, with a slight rise in temperature.

The 79-year-old Pontiff spoke to the 3,000 visitors in a clear voice and seemed to be in good health. Vatican sources, however, said he had called off other audiences planned for the day.

Martyrs To Be Canonized

Vatican City — (RNS) — Forty English Catholics, beatified in the past 75 years as martyrs during the Reformation period in Britain, may be canonized before the opening of the Second Vatican Council in 1962, the Vatican Radio reported.

The martyrs include 14 secular priests, nine Jesuits, three Benedictines, three Carmelites, two Franciscans, one Augustinian, one Bridgettine and seven lay Catholics, of whom three are women.

Peace Group Plans Meeting

Fribourg — (RNS) — Pax Romana, an international Roman Catholic movement for intellectual and cultural affairs, confirmed here that its Second Pan-African Seminar will take place at Louvain University in Leopoldville, Congo, from Dec. 26 to Jan. 6.

Approximately 100 students from all the African universities are expected to attend the seminar, as well as observers from Europe, Asia and the United States.

Germans Help Africa Schools

Munich — (RNS) — Some \$180,000 has been collected so far in a fund-raising drive to aid Catholic mission schools in the South African Diocese of Marianhill.

The project was initiated three years ago by Bishop Michael Kellie of Münster who after a visit to the Marianhill diocese asked his See's parishes, families, schools,

Aided By Theodore Roosevelt

'Avalanche' Mission Nears Half Million

By FATHER L. NITNOV
Arus, Uganda — (RNS) — Close to half a million African Catholics here in northern Uganda are celebrating the 50th anniversary of their region's first mission, set up with personal help from American President Theodore Roosevelt.

When the mission was founded in 1878 there was not a single Catholic in the area, which is almost as large as West Virginia. Today the Catholic community makes up a third of the population and is growing at the rate of 25,000 a year.

Efforts to Christianize this central African country — now a British protectorate — began in 1876 with the appeal for missionaries sent out by British explorer Henry Stanley — the one who found Dr. Livingstone. Two years later, the first mission in Uganda was established by Anglicans.

The first Catholic missionaries, White Fathers from France, arrived in 1878. But both the White Fathers and the Anglicans concentrated their efforts in the relatively highly developed central part of the country.

An unsuccessful attempt to send missionaries to northern Uganda was made at about the same time by Bishop Daniel Comboni, Apostolic Vicar of Central Africa with headquarters in Khartoum in the neighboring Sudan. Bishop Comboni was the founder of the Institute for the African Missions in Verona, Italy, which in 1885 was reorganized as the Congregation of the Sons of the Sacred Heart of Jesus (Verona Fathers).

When the Bishop heard about Stanley's appeal, he organized a mission expedition to Uganda with the aid of Gen. C. G. "Chinua" Gordon, famous British officer then the Sudan's governor general. The expedition failed in 1878 when the missionaries sent by Bishop Comboni died before reaching their goal.

Because of the uprising in the Sudan led by the fanatical Moslem chief, the Mahdi, nearly a quarter century passed before a second effort was made to send missionaries to Uganda from the north.

THIS SECOND attempt, made in 1902 by Bishop Comboni's successor, Bishop Antonio Ruggiero, also failed. British authorities gave his missionaries permission to enter northern Uganda only after they had already decided to turn back because of illness.

The final effort was made from Khartoum in 1918 by Bishop Francis Geyer, a Verona Father from Germany. The Bishop sailed 2,000 miles up the Nile River to Nimule on the Sudan-Uganda frontier and asked the British there for permission to establish a mission in northern Uganda. The local British authorities refused.

At that time Theodore Roosevelt, who had left the U.S. presidency two years before, passed through Nimule on a big game safari. When he was told about Bishop Geyer's request, he successfully urged British officials to grant it.

The first missionaries in northern Uganda, who set up their first station at Omach on the Nile, it was raised to the rank of an apostolic vicariate in 1924 when the Catholic population reached 10,000. It became the Diocese of Gulu in 1963 and two years ago the Arus diocese was established.

The Gulu diocese has about 8 million people, a quarter of whom are Catholics. Half of Arus's 450,000 inhabitants are Catholics. Of the region's 122 priests, 18 are natives.

The Church operates 655 schools with a total enrollment of 67,000 students in the two Sees. The schools are staffed by 2,458 teachers, including Verona Brothers and Xavierian Brothers from the U.S. There are also three Catholic hospitals and five maternity centers.

Church authorities here are now stressing Catholic action work to train by leaders to educate the people for approaching independence and to combat the increasing threat of communism.

A few days later, Father Vigante founded the mission here in Arus, where conversions were made so fast it became known as the "avalanche mission."

By 1923 northern Uganda had 2,000 Catholics and was organized as an apostolic prefecture of communion.

Following the war, a missionary was permitted from the British to enter the West Nile district by threatening to go on a hunger strike. Father A. Vigante bicycled 100 miles from his mission station to see the provincial governor and to tell him he would not eat or drink until he had permission to start a mission in West Nile. The governor gave in.

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Billion Sent To Aid Needy

Washington — (RNS) — American religious and voluntary groups distributed \$17,025,115 worth of food, clothing, and other supplies to needy persons overseas during the first six months of 1960. The Advisory Committee on Voluntary Foreign Aid of the International Cooperation Administration reported here.

This was a 16 per cent increase over the amount of aid sent by the voluntary groups during the first half of 1959.

ALMOST ONE billion pounds of food, valued at \$61,771,000, were sent overseas, of which all but 10,000,000 pounds came from the voluntary groups. The U.S. Department of Agriculture donated more than \$100,000,000 worth of surplus food stocks acquired in price support operations.

Some 27,786,000 pounds of clothing and other supplies were distributed overseas, with a value of \$26,048,000, the report said. Medical and medical supplies amounted to \$3,383,000 in value during the first six months of the year.

The voluntary agencies also sent "self help" aid, including \$278,000 worth of educational, recreational and vocational supplies; \$39,000 of agricultural aid; and \$1,794,000 in other occupational aid.

Cash remittances by the agencies totaled \$1,213,000 during the first half of 1960.

Marriage Problems
Ascham — (RNS) — Marriage problems in the light of Catholic theology were discussed at a two-day conference here of some 50 priests and theologians from France, Belgium, Holland, Luxembourg, Austria, Switzerland and West Germany.

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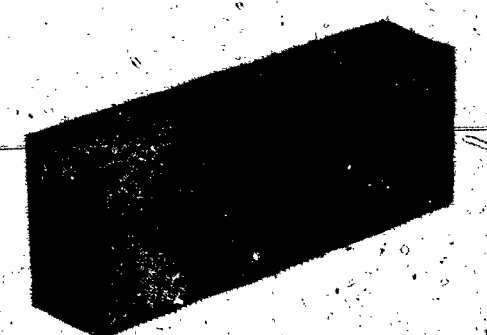
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