

200 Couples Renew Vows

New York — (RNS) — More than 200 couples married 50 years renewed their wedding vows at a ceremony in St. Patrick's Cathedral here marking the New York Archdiocese's Catholic Family Day.

As a memento of the event each couple received a special Golden Wedding Anniversary certificate signed by Francis Cardinal Spellman, Archbishop of New York.

The jubilarians, accompanied by children and grandchildren, were welcomed by the Rev. William F. Manus, assistant director of the archdiocesan Family Life Bureau, sponsor of the observance.

One Church For Nation

Kabul, Afghanistan — (NC) — The first Christian church in this virtually 100-per-cent Moslem nation has been opened here.

Msrgr. Vittore Ugo Righi, Apostolic Internuncio to neighboring Iran, blessed the new Catholic church, which is located on the grounds of the Italian embassy. Nearby is a house for Father Raffaele Nannetti, the only priest in the country.

Until now the 220 foreign Catholics here attended Mass in a room at the Italian embassy.

The government of Afghanistan, a Texas-sized country of 13 million people in central Asia, forbids mission work among its Moslems and has refused to allow religious instruction for even foreign children.

'Great Mission' For Mexico

Mexico City — (RNS) — Preparations will begin shortly for a large scale Roman Catholic spiritual mission to be held in this city in 1962, according to an announcement by Archbishop Miguel Dario Miranda y Gomez of Mexico.

The exercises, to be known as "The Great Mission" have been planned to "renovate the religious sentiment of the Mexican people and to give an improved Christian life to the archdiocese."



Atom-Smasher for Boston

Newton, Mass. — (RNS) — Shown above is an atom-smasher recently installed at Boston College for use in connection with the school's nuclear research program. The program was made possible by an \$80,000 grant from the Atomic Energy Commission. Father William G. Guindon, S.J., chairman of the college physics department, observes technician John Breen at work on the mechanism. The atom-smasher, one of the smallest of its kind, is described as a Van de Graaff positive ion accelerator.

Church Construction Sets Billion Record

Washington — (RNS) — Church construction topped one billion dollars for the first time in history in 1960, the U.S. Census Bureau reported here.

Construction of new religious edifices passed the mark by \$16,000,000 despite a sharp drop in December construction resulting from adverse weather conditions and possibly some impact from the gathering recession that is affecting other areas of construction.

December construction amounted to \$73,000,000, a drop of \$21,000,000, or 22 per cent from November. This was \$10,000,000 less than the figure for December, 1959, but was still the second best December on record.

PRELIMINARY estimates — subject to later revision — place church construction at \$69,000,000 above the 1959 figure of \$947,000,000 — a gain of seven per cent.

Ceylon

School Seizure Scored

Colombo — (NC) — The Catholic Bishops of Ceylon labeled government plans to seize ownership of private schools "drastic legislation which is without parallel in any democratic country."

They made the charge in a Jan. 6 statement after Cabinet Chairman C. P. De Silva said in a broadcast to the nation:

"The government proposes to summon Parliament immediately and introduce the necessary legislation whereby all school premises and buildings will be taken over completely and the ownership thereof vested in the government without compensation."

The Bishops in their statement nonetheless reiterated their "willingness to arrive at a fair and just settlement of this vexed question."

The government announcement came at a time when, according to government sources, 70 out of the 704 vernacular Catholic schools — whose management was supposed to have been taken over by the regime on December 1 — were still under protest occupation by Catholic families.

Archbishop Thomas Cooray, O.M.I., of Colombo, head of the Catholic Hierarchy, said in a

Forty Years Aid To Needy

Bonn — (RNS) — West German President Heinrich Lübke has awarded his nation's Great Service Cross of the Order of Merit to Msrgr. Alex Gabriel of Paderborn, vice-president and manager of the Roman Catholic St. Boniface Association.

The award was made in special recognition of Msrgr. Gabriel's efforts in providing spiritual and material care in this country for millions of Catholics displaced persons expelled from their former homelands in the German Eastern provinces at the end of World War II.

Msrgr. Gabriel will complete soon 40 years of service in the St. Boniface Association, founded in 1849 to strengthen Catholicism in areas where Catholics are a minority.

New Year's message: "The purpose of our struggle is not to do violence or cause harm to anyone, as some seem to fear; it is not through lust for worldly gain as some very unkindly have said; much less is it through a desire to subvert or destroy the secular state."

He added: "Not only have we always disassociated ourselves from all acts of violence in this regard, but we continue to protest against all such measures with all possible vehemence and to forbid such designs with all the authority at our command."

"Our struggle is for the souls of our children, for their correct education according to our religious tenets on which, we believe, their eternal happiness depends. We should not be penalized for our religious beliefs or their proper exercise. That would be most cruel indeed."



Inauguration Band

San Francisco — (RNS) — Tuning up their drums during a recent parade in this city's Chinatown are, from left, Mary Lenz, Grace Lee and Sharon Fong — all members of the famed St. Mary's Chinese Girls Drum Corps. This unit, sponsored by the Paulist Fathers of St. Mary's Chinese Mission, is one of three bands selected to represent California in the Inaugural Parade in Washington, D.C., on Jan. 20.

Tuition Payment Ends In Vermont

Burlington — (NC) — The South Burlington School Board probably will not appeal to the U.S. Supreme Court against a ruling that use of public funds to pay tuition for students attending Catholic high schools is unconstitutional.

The ruling, which has been the practice in Vermont towns which do not have a high school to let the parents of high school students select a high school on a list approved by the Vermont Board of Education, and to pay the tuition of the students at the school of their choice.

IT WAS POINTED out here that South Burlington's new high school will be opened in September, making it no longer necessary for the town's students to attend other high schools. It also was indicated that two Vermont courts have ruled on the issue, holding the practice unconstitutional, and that taxpayers might object to the expense of further court action.

For more than 90 years it has been the practice in Vermont towns which do not have a high school to let the parents of high school students select a high school on a list approved by the Vermont Board of Education, and to pay the tuition of the students at the school of their choice.

Nasser Regime Closes Schools

Cairo — (NC) — Egyptian Catholics hear that the government take over of a Jesuit school here is the first step in a new series of measures against Catholic education in the Egyptian province of the United Arab Republic. Of its 80,000 inhabitants, some 30,000 are Christians.

Last year 20 Catholic schools in the Asyut area of Upper Egypt were closed by the government, and the province's Minister of Education, El Sayed Ahmed Naguib Hashem, said teachers, both Christian and Catholic schools throughout the U.A.R. may be obliged to accept Moslem-directors.

The Jesuit school here was seized by the government following charges by lay teachers that the priests there are "antinational," have tried to convert Orthodox students and have discriminated against Moslem students.

The Jesuit Fathers have since brought suit in the Council of State — Egypt's high administrative court — against the Minister of Education, at whose order their school was taken over (Dec. 22).

The Jesuit school is located in the Kotall quarters of Cairo.



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