



Eastern rite bishops with bright crowns and robes are followed by Latin rite prelates in copes and mitres . . . Pope John opens Council with prayer "Come, Holy Ghost" . . . row on row of bishops fill vast St. Peter's basilica.

On the Spot In Rome

With Bishop Casey at Council's Opening

This letter from Auxiliary Bishop Lawrence B. Casey was written Thursday afternoon, October 11, just after the twenty-first ecumenical Council of the Catholic Church opened at St. Peter's in the Vatican. The letter gives a vivid, first-hand account of the historic event.

This is a letter for the people back home, a running account of the most important and colorful Church ceremony to take place so far in the twentieth century.

It promised to begin under adverse weather conditions, the rain began yesterday afternoon and continued straight through the night until 7:30 this morning. As the great bells of St. Peter's began to peal out over the city, the sun broke through the clouds and the rain stopped — an answer to prayer.

We arrived at St. Peter's shortly after 8 a.m. and entered the Scala Regia (a marble staircase close to 200 yards long). After the bishops had assembled in the Corridor of the Lapidari, Archbishop Enrico Dante, the Pope's Master of Ceremonies, promptly at

8:30 a.m. asked the bishops to form in procession. Surprisingly, considering there were 45 different units in the long line of march, there was little confusion. As we reached the end of the Scala Regia, just before reentering the Square, a look backward revealed a whole sea of white mitres as the bishops, six abreast, descended the Scala Regia.

At the business sessions of the Council the bishops will be seated according to seniority (the date of their consecration). Today, it was obviously impossible to observe protocol. Archbishops and bishops, the

young and the very old, the Eastern Rite bishops with their robes of many colors and picturesque head-dresses mingled with their brethren of the West, 2,600 of them, the largest gathering of bishops in the history of the Church.

The line proceeded through Bernini's Colonnade and out to St. Peter's Piazza at a pace. At one point the people (we estimated 35,000 to 50,000, with the square two-thirds filled) began to sing Our Lady's hymn "Salve Regina" and the bishops, like a group of pilgrims from the far places of the world — and such they were — joined in with one voice.

We walked through the great center doors which are opened only on special occasions and entered the majestic Basilica itself, always a breath-taking experience. The altar of the Chair of St. Peter at the opposite end seemed a long distance away.

with a magnificent baldachin. Thomas Church Double doors, which long run the length of the central nave from the bronze doors to Bernini's Baldacchino. Each bank of tiers is 20 feet wide and rises 12 feet — red upholstered seats for the Cardinals and green chairs for the cardinals below Cardinal.

The Holy Father's Throne was set up on the platform of the papal altar. We noticed six tribunals located in the arches framed by the giant pillars supporting the central nave, providing seats for the 200 "Perti,"—experts—the canonists and theologians assigned to the Council by the Holy See, the 28 observer-delegates from Non-Catholic Churches, special foreign missions, royalty, the diplomatic corps, and the press. This morning there were many TV cameras to cover all phases of the ceremony.

Preceding us in the Basilica were the General Superiors of the major male religious orders of the world, the abbots, the prelates nullius (who are not bishops), and then the archbishops and bishops (who are called the Fathers of the Council).

As a youngster we learned, like yourselves, that the Church has four marks, one of which is universality, and it was a bit theoretical. Here today we saw this Church of ours is really universal — archbishops and bishops from the five continents — all the races and nations of the world (L'Osservatore Romano, the Vatican newspaper, yesterday listed the 143 countries which were represented at today's session). Each bishop wore red cassock, sash, rochet, pectoral cross, white cope and white mitre.

We saw Bishop Kearney, now almost 78, walk by hale and hearty, and thought of his predecessor, Bernard McQuaid, who walked in a similar procession at the First Vatican Council in 1869, almost a hundred years ago—the first Bishop of Rochester and now his successor—the fifth Bishop of the See, taking part in an Ecumenical Council. A century is a short time in the life of the Church.

There was a short delay before the Patriarchs of the Eastern Church and the Cardinals entered. Preceded by a cross-bearer, the members of the Sacred College filed in two by two, wearing white chasubles over their purple robes, about 75 in number. The five Cardinals from the United States were there, Spellman, Cushing, McIntyre, Meyer and Ritter.

Many legendary figures were in the line of march, spiritual giants in the life of the Church. Probably the one who attracted the most attention was Cardinal Wyszyński of Poland who arrived in Rome Sunday from behind the Iron Curtain with twelve Polish bishops. Bishop Zaleski of Detroit pointed him out to me—a slim, regal figure with an imperturbable personality—a man who has crossed swords with the Communists and, so far, has preserved the Church in Poland.

There was at least one empty seat in the section near the Papal Throne reserved for the members of the Sacred College—the chair belonging to Cardinal Mindszenty of Hungary, who has sought sanctuary in the American Embassy at Budapest for the past few years. The vacant chair was a mute symbol of the Church of Silence, that part imprisoned and persecuted by the Communists.

As the Cardinals filed up the aisle, one could hear the roar of the crowd in the piazza outside, signalling the approach of the Holy Father. Heralded by

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Conflict At The Council?

THE CATHOLIC Courier Journal

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Bishop Burke Of Buffalo Dies In Rome

Rome — (RNS) — Bishop Joseph A. Burke of Buffalo, N.Y., in Rome for the Second Vatican Council, died here following a heart attack at the age of 76. He was the first bishop to die in Rome since the world-wide gathering of some 2,600 bishops opened Oct. 11.

According to attendants at the Rome hotel where Bishop Burke was staying, he appeared in good health until his attack and was taken to Salvo Mundi Hospital overlooking the Vatican.

Bishop Burke served as ninth spiritual head of the Buffalo diocese since 1952 when he was named to succeed the Most Rev. John F. O'Hara, who became Archbishop of Philadelphia and later a cardinal and who died in 1960.

Prior to his appointment as bishop he was the diocese's auxiliary since 1943. When he was installed as bishop by Francis Cardinal Spellman, Archbishop of New York, Bishop Burke became the first native of Buffalo to head that See which includes eight counties with more than 800,000 Catholics.

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Guardian Angels

First Masses at New Parish

A dream of nearly two and a half years is about to come true, as last minute preparations are being made for the first Masses in the new Guardian Angels Church, 2061 East Henrietta Road.

Special crews of men will finish the placing of the pews, and towards the end of the week the Rosary Society Bands will come in to do the final cleaning and polishing. Everything is being done to get the new church in readiness.

PEOPLE REALIZE that the altar and sanctuary will not be completed for several weeks, but it is planned to use a temporary altar so that, at least on Sunday, the good and patient people of Guardian Angels can pray together in their own church after a little over two years in their temporary chapel in the public market. No one will mind the few little inconveniences that must still be faced until the work is complete.

The Mass schedule will be the same as before. 9:00, 10:00, 11:15 a.m. and 12:15 noon with first baptisms scheduled for 1:30 p.m.

Final grading and preparation of the parking lot will be completed so that there will be ample room for all. Deputies from the Sheriff's office and members of the Auxiliary Police will be on hand to direct traffic and park the cars. Drivers are advised to use the north driveway off of East Henrietta Road for entrance, and the south driveway for exit.

It was noted recently by a visiting missionary that never in all his travels had he seen priests in work clothes on their hands and knees working so diligently side by side with the many helping hands of the parish, except in the mission fields. The people of Guardian Angels Church are proud indeed of their pastor, Father John B. Kleintjes, and his assistant Father Edward Zenkel. Such efforts as these, in addition to the many prayers of all, have made this day possible.



Father John Kleintjes watches workmen put finishing touches on pews in new Guardian Angels Church scheduled to open for Masses this Sunday.

Safety Belts For Priests

Muenster — (NC) — Priests in the Muenster diocese of Germany have to install and use safety belts in their cars, according to the official journal of the Muenster diocese.

Authorization for personal cars will not be given from now on unless the safety measure is followed, the journal said. Priests are also required to recommend the use of safety belts to all laymen employed by the Church.

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Pope Authorizes Priests To Give Confirmation

Vatican City — (NC) — Pope John has granted heads of Sees attending the ecumenical council the special faculty of allowing certain Church officials in their dioceses to confer the Sacrament of Confirmation in their absence.

If necessary even simple priests may be given this permission.

The decree making the grant, issued by the Sacred Congregation of Sacramental Discipline, specifies that the faculty is authorized only when there is no bishop still in a diocese who is able to administer Confirmation.

Permission to administer Confirmation is valid only while the head of Sees are attending the ecumenical council and until the council ends.

Council Rites On Color TV

New York — (RNS) — The Second Vatican Council will be featured in an NBC News special filmed in color at the Vatican and in Rome to be televised nationally on Tuesday, Oct. 30, from 10:30 to 11 p.m.

Besides the opening of the Council (Oct. 11) in St. Peter's Basilica, sound-film cameras will cover the general setting in Rome and the Vatican, behind-the-scenes activities, and the arrival of the Fathers of the Council and official delegate-observers representing major Protestant church bodies.

The program also will carry interviews with Catholic bishops and observers. In addition, the program will deal with the purpose of the Council, its meaning to Christianity, the results that can be expected from the world-wide gathering of bishops and efforts for Christian unity.

The special was filmed by the network's European production crew, with NBC news correspondent, Irving R. Levine, serving as reporter.

Council Photos From Telstar

Only two diocesan papers in the United States ran actual photos of the Vatican Council in their last week's editions — the Tidings of Los Angeles and the Courier Journal of Rochester.

Both relied on catching pictures from Telstar. All other papers have waited until this week's editions to carry air-mailed photos from Rome.

Courier Journal photos were obtained from NBC reports on Channel 8 on a television set in the studios of WHEC-TV, Rochester CBS outlet, channel 10. The NBC program was telecast at 9 a.m., an hour before a similar CBS program.

Space was left on page one while composition work proceeded on other pages. Pictures were developed, plates engraved and the presses started at 2 p.m.

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