

Maryknollers Info Center

Lima — (RNS) — A national Catholic Information Center has been established here by Father Joseph E. Michenfelder, a Maryknoll missionary from St. Louis, Mo., under the sponsorship of the Peruvian hierarchy. He will be assisted by two Papal Volunteers, Daniel B. McCarthy and John Leahigh, professional journalists with long experience in the United States.

The information center will serve as a public relations office for the Peruvian hierarchy and a coordinating bureau for mass communications throughout Peru. A pilot project for similar agencies that may be set up in other Latin American countries, it is expected to be of continental importance as a source of information on Catholic activities.

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Ecumenical Tea in St. Louis

St. Louis — (RNS) — Members of the St. Louis Archdiocesan Council of Catholic Women, carrying out the ecumenical spirit on the home front, invited 400 prominent Protestant and Jewish leaders to a tea. Shown above, from left, are: Mrs. Robert Mass, of the American-Jewish Committee; Mrs. Virgil Border, National Conference of Christians and Jews; Mrs. Bernard Rice, National Council of Jewish Women; Mrs. Arthur Kummer, Archdiocesan Council of Catholic Women; and Mrs. John F. Bredehoeft, Unitarian Women's Alliance.

Parishes Help Cuba Refugees

St. Louis — (RNS) — Over the last year and a half Catholic parishes in the St. Louis archdiocese have assisted 200 Cuban refugees in making homes here.

Coordination of the parish efforts has been handled by the Archdiocesan Resettlement committee headed by Msgr. Victor T. Suren, pastor of St. Stephen parish. Msgr. Suren also supervised the resettlement of refugees from the 1956 revolt in Communist Hungary.

Cardinal Ritter, Archbishop of St. Louis, has made funds available for the Cuban assistance program and a dozen parishes in the archdiocese are aiding the families on a continuing basis.

Lay Catholics are helping the Cubans to learn American ways and culture, help them find jobs, paint and repair apartments, visit them often to assure their prayers in employment and everyday living.

Many of the Cubans have come here because of better job prospects. Job opportunities are severely limited in Florida where thousands of Cuban refugees have settled. Catholic Relief Service of the National Catholic Welfare Conference helps Cubans who wish to leave Florida to find work in other areas.

Once in St. Louis, the Cuban refugees are taken under the wing of a Catholic parish cooperating with Msgr. Suren's committee. The parish supplies a month's rent, furniture, kitchen equipment and other household goods a family might need to get started.

TYPICAL OF the Cuban refugees is Mario H., 22, and his young wife who live in a low-rent, four-family walkup in southwest St. Louis. The apartment has three small rooms with creaky floor boards.

Both Mario and his wife have been well educated. He was a second year law student in Cuba and she was a first-year-law student. Both speak English fairly well.

After apologizing for "my poor English," Mario expressed his gratitude to a reporter for the apartment, the furnishings and winter clothing given by people of St. Joan of Arc parish in St. Louis.

"These people have been wonderful to us," he said. "We are grateful beyond words. We have been in St. Louis only seven weeks and everyone has been wonderful to us."

Mario said the Catholic Church in Cuba is now in "bad shape."

"My mother says people are permitted to go to Mass, but

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Charities Back UN 'Decade'

Rome — (NC) — The International Conference of Catholic Charities has assured the United Nations that it will support and cooperate in the UN's "Decade of Development" proposal.

Backing of UN General Secretary U. Thant's proposal that the next 10 years be devoted to the economic and social improvement of less developed countries was voiced at the conference's sixth general convention here.

THE SIX-DAY meeting (Oct. 22 to 27) was held to coincide with the opening sessions of the ecumenical council for the convenience of bishops who wanted to attend.

The convention decided to continue the conference's work with the UN through its New York delegation.

Msgr. Raymond J. Gallagher, secretary of the U.S. National Conference of Catholic Charities whose headquarters are in Washington, and head of the New York delegation, reported to the convention:

"During this year, I have been studying and conferring about the International Conference of Catholic Charities and about the New York delegation which it maintains at the United Nations. I believe this study has produced in me a sufficient understanding of the program to . . . maintain a practicable and successful delegation in the future."

Msgr. Karl Bayer of Germany, who was re-elected secretary general of the conference, reported that the active role played by the conference's delegations with UN organizations in New York and Geneva assures their continued good standing. (The UN is now revising its list of nongovernmental organizations with accredited status to eliminate those not deemed active enough.)

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"We are sorrowfully aware," the resolution stated, "of the tragic divisions within the body of Christ; therefore we commend all efforts toward Christian unity and cooperation to the prayerful concern of our people."

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'Betterment' Group Backs Sterilizing

New York — (RNS) — The Human Betterment Association, guidance agency for a controversial sterilization clinic at Fauquier County Hospital in Warren, Va., has appointed a committee of clergymen to gain support for the program.

Announcement of the committee's formation was made at the association's annual membership meeting here.

The Virginia clinic has caused widespread debate in religious circles over the last two months. The program came to national attention in September when Roman Catholic Archbishop Patrick A. O'Boyle of Washington, D.C., condemned it as being "absolutely immoral."

Statements supporting Archbishop O'Boyle's stand came from other Catholic leaders, some Jewish spokesmen and Evangelist Billy Graham.

However, other clergymen in the Washington area and elsewhere voiced strongly opposite viewpoints. The Rev. Duncan Howell, minister of Washington's All Souls Unitarian church, said that "without hesitation and without qualification" the program was "a good thing."

The committee appointed by the association has no Roman Catholic member. It is headed by the Rev. William H. Genne, director of the department of family life at the National Council of Churches. Members include prominent New York ministers and rabbis.

Target for Guns

Ben San, Vietnam — (NC) — Vietcong guerrillas have killed six people in a new attack on a Catholic hospital here.

The rebels made their third attack (Oct. 24) in the past four months on St. Joseph's leper hospital, two days before this country's national holiday.

Underground Church Built

Bilbao — (NC) — The formal opening of this Spanish city's first underground church has been set for next Holy Week.

The parish church of Our Lady of the Magi and St. Ferdinand will have a standing capacity of 1,700 persons when it is completed.

The parish, which was established in 1956, decided on an underground church because the price of land above ground in the center of the city is so high.

Brazil Elects

Rio De Janeiro — (RNS) — Eight Roman Catholic priests were re-elected to the Brazilian Congress at recent nationwide elections.

The priests are exempted from the recent ban of the hierarchy against priests' seeking elective office. Brazil's bishops ruled that priests currently in office could stand for re-election.

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