Diocesan Newspaper A Bond of Unity

My dear People:

During Catholic Press Month—the month of February—it is our custom to renew our subscriptions to the Catholic Courier Journal, our diocesan newspaper.

The importance of a diocesan newspaper cannot be overemphasized. It brings every Catholic home into direct contact with the bishop and enables his people to know the mind of their Shepherd in Christ. This paper is a means of diocesan unity by keeping before your eyes the activities of all organizations in the diocese. Again, it offers a treasury of Catholic thought on marriage, education, labor problems—on all matters that pertain to Catholic life and right living.

This year we urge you to bring your paper—the Catholic Courier Journal—into your home. The price you pay is small in comparison with the rich benefits you will derive from reading it.

May I, then, again solicit your generous support of the Catholic Courier Journal.

With a blessing, I am

Your devoted Shepherd in Christ,

+ James E. Kearney

Bishop of Rochester

Christian Faith Survives Despite Relentless Opposition

New York—(RNS)—Leaders of the National Council of Churches starting Feb. 27 will be hosts to 16 ranking Russian Christians from the Soviet Union. The delegation of Russian churchmen will travel in separate groups to various sections of the United States.

The three-week visit is the latest in a series of exchange trips by American and Soviet Christians, begun when a Baptist group visited Moscow in 1955 and continued in 1960 when the National Council and Moscow Patriarchate traded deputations.

More than any of the others, however, the four this winter will put a spotlight on one of the most isolated segments of Christendom: the mysterious, 50-million-member Russian Orthodox Church.

The confrontation of the Christian East and the West has come into sharp focus in the last 18 months. First, the Russian Orthodox Church was admitted to the World Council of Churches in New Delhi, India. Then last fall, two Russian Orthodox observers attended the Second Vatican Council, by invitation, and afterwards praised the "very friendly attitude" which prevailed in Rome.

These and other signs of inter-Christian communication (the World Council of Churches alone sent two delegations of theologians in Moscow last year) have caused many to wonder: What is the Russian Orthodox Church? How big is it? What is its relation to the anti-religious Communist state? How free are churches generally in the Soviet Union? Are these contacts valuable?

"The walls which divide us don't go up to heaven," said Dr. Paul S. Anderson, the National Council's consultant on Eastern Orthodoxy. He was quoting Metropolitan Platon of Moscow, 19th century prelate. "We are divided only here on earth and we should welcome every step toward cutting down these barriers," Dr. Anderson said.

The best guesses place Russian Orthodox strength at an estimated 50 million believers. When Moscow Patriarch Alexei sent his Church's application to the World Council in 1961, he listed 30,000 parishes; 73 bishoprics; 50,000 priests; 40 monasteries and eight theological schools.

Church closings have sharply reduced the total of parishes in the last year, according to Dr. Anderson. A major reason for these is that worshippers have been unable to keep up repairs on church buildings, so parishes have been combined. The total number of believers, however, has not necessarily lessened.

Three of the eight theological schools—at Leningrad, Saratov and Kiev—have been shut down in recent months. Their official reason has been their ineffectiveness in anti-Soviet atheistic campaigns and reducing enrollments. Recent reports also give accounts of prosecutions of monks and monasteries, notably at the famed Pechersky Monastery in Western Ukraine.

The candlelight kingdom of Orthodoxy and church life generally have been persecuted and hampered for four decades. Yet, as with religion behind the Iron Curtain generally, it occasionally displays evidence of great vitality.

For instance, the Union of Evangelical Christians (Baptists) in the Soviet Union, where from 4,000 to 5,000 houses of prayer. The former 545,000 Baptists in the U.S.S.R. experienced tremendous growth at once the revolution disestablished the Orthodox Church and removed the prohibitions against transfer from one church to another.

The state's blueprint for religion in Russia today is in Article 124 of the 1936 Soviet Constitution: "In order to ensure citizens freedom of conscience, the church in the U.S.S.R. is separated from the state, and the school from the church. Freedom of religious worship and freedom of anti-religious propaganda is recognized for all citizens."

The result, according to Dr. Anderson, has been to "separate the whole of religion from worship—the sacraments and prayer." With religious schools and other organizations outlawed, "a tremendous wave of vitality" is seen within the churches.

Those who use the country's churches are obligated to keep them in first class condition. This has become a major problem under Soviet restrictions on obtaining building materials for repairs, Western church leaders say.

During the 1930s the number of Russian Orthodox parishes was reduced to "perhaps 1,000," no theological schools existed, clergymen were arrested by the hundreds and the campaign against religious education of children was continuous. But people continued to pray. They were resilient.

So, in 1944, according to Dr. Anderson, the Soviet authorities relented for a time. They permitted the establishing of theological schools and the reopening of many churches.

Relations between Russian Orthodoxy and Western Christians seem to have gone through two stages—of caution and cooperation. When the World Council of Churches held its first assembly in Amsterdam in 1948, the Russians, suspicious that the Western ecumenical movement was more political than spiritual, rejected a bid to join it. The World Council kept the door open.

A long, cautious examination by the World Council's aims by the Moscow Patriarchate followed. Exchanges were arranged. Finally, led by Archbishop Nicodim, 32, head of the Church's department of foreign church affairs, the Russian Orthodox delegation joined the World Council's ecumenical ranks in New Delhi.

This latest church delegation from Russia to the United States, which will also include Baptist, Lutheran and Armenian churchmen, will again be led by Archbishop Nicodim.

WHAT IS the value of these exchanges?

Dr. Roswell P. Barnes, American secretary of the World Council of Churches, who was on the National Council visit to Moscow in 1960, has found them stimulating to both sides.

"Religion is very much alive in the Soviet Union," he said, "and attendance at public worship is not merely a conventional thing."

It is difficult for Americans to analyze what this means, he continued. For church attendance itself is a mark of disagreement with the policy and program of the Communist Party, Dr. Barnes observed.

"For an appraisal of the situation, we must take into account the measures of opposition, even though indirect, because they enhance the significance of the continuing, evident vitality of religious faith," he said.

Russian attitudes have shifted markedly in seven years of talking with Western churchmen. At first, Dr. Barnes noted, the Russians were obviously ill at ease. The framework of Western Protestant thinking appeared "utterly unfamiliar" to them. As the talks have continued, "real communication" has become much easier.

The exchanges should be considered "from the viewpoint of the Christian community," he advised. It is "gratifying," he said, to come to know people who are called upon "to pay more for their faith than we have been called upon to pay."

To Dr. Anderson, keeping communication lines open with Soviet churchmen "gives moral support" to Iron Curtain Christians. It "reminds the Soviet government that Christians do exist" despite Communist efforts to stifle as "unscientific" and "unproductive," the importance of religion to the Russian soul.

Do We Really Fear 'Control'

How 'Different' Are Our Schools?

Congress this week began hearings on President Kennedy's aid to education proposals. Comments in Congress and across the nation indicate there is still widespread misunderstanding about the kind of education being given to 7,000,000 American children.

Many people have the notion that these youngsters in the non-public schools have a "different" course of study than pupils in the public schools.

The fact of the matter is that the curriculum, in New York State, is prescribed by New York State Education Law (Title 4, art. 65) for all students in public and non-public schools alike. Non-public schools, like public schools, teach arithmetic, reading, spelling, writing, English, geography, United States history, civics, hygiene, physical training and the history of New York State.

Others say that, if non-public schools are to receive government funds, then the public has a right to "control" these schools.

This is a reasonable demand.

As a matter of fact, even without getting government funds, the non-public schools are controlled in many ways — for example, the detailed curriculum already indicated for New York State pupils; health and safety requirements; attendance regulations; and some states even now require official state approval of non-public schools, and periodic inspection.

Furthermore we don't resent and we don't fear control of education in America.

Our country has a long tradition of aiding its citizens, but leaving them almost unrestricted freedom to do the job as they want to.

Our public school system is graphic justification for our confidence. New York State provides forty-five percent of construction and operational costs of the public schools and up to ninety percent of payment for all school bus transportation. The state, obviously, keeps a reasonable check on how its money is spent, but each public school district retains extensive control at the local level of its own school system.

The federal government, particularly since World War II, has poured massive allotments of money into research programs in colleges and universities, public and private. In New York State most of this federal money has gone to the private colleges such as University of Rochester, Cornell, Syracuse University, Columbia, Fordham and N.Y.U. To our knowledge none have complained about federal control.

As the debate about federal aid to education continues, facts like these, rather than mis-informed emotions, should determine what is best for all the children in the schools of our country.

Faith from Ashes, China War

(The author of the following feature is a convert and former officer of the Japanese Imperial Army, who is now serving with his wife as a lay missionary at the Takada Catholic Mission in Japan. He relates how his faith was born in stark loneliness as he knelt before the cremated remains of his grandfather and nurtured in the havoc of war as he crawled through French terrain under enemy gunfire.)

By AUGUSTINE AOYANAGI

(N.C.W.C. News Service)

It took the war in China to make me realize the power of Catholicism in a man's life.

At 28 I was in the 116th Regiment of the 13th Division Army on that February 11, 1940. That day things had been tough, leaving us exhausted in body and spirit. With nightfall came a terse order from the regimental commander:

"Captain Aoyanagi, take two NCO's and two soldiers and infiltrate into the enemy lines. Find out their numbers and locate their gun emplacements."

The Chinese were up in the mountains, less than a mile away. During the day we had advanced but lost over half of our men. We were now reduced to about 200. How strong was the enemy? I had to find out. So we crawled out into the darkness of that bitter wintry night like hunted animals.

I feared death that night as I had never before. During the day, soldiers had died all around me but I was too busy, too keyed up to be affected. Now, exhausted, cold, crawling towards a trap, fear coursed wildly through me. The joy, the peace of Easter 1934 in Tamatsukuri church were so far away. It was a joy that had begun in this stark loneliness of death and sorrow.

It began with the death of my grandfather. To me, 12 years old, it had been a profound shock. He was cremated and I used to kneel before our Buddhist family altar, mesmerized by the small urn holding his ashes.

What is life — life that ends like this box of ashes? The only answer my Buddhist parents could give was a shrug, a stoic face.

Perhaps that Catholic Church had a better answer. I used to pass it often and one sign out front said: "Catechism for men, Thursday nights 7 p.m." I was 18 before I accepted the invitation. It was 1930 yet I remember that Thursday night as if it were last night.

It was January and very cold and dark as I stepped into the grounds of Tamatsukuri church in Osaka. Disaster befell me immediately. I turned left instead of right. I ended up in a garden and couldn't see a thing. I was not sure I was glad I came now to this headquarters of the "foreign religion."

Good grief! Something walked towards me like a ghost out of a children's ghost story, all shrouded in black. I retained just enough self-possession to ask where the catechism class was being held. A light snapped on and I gazed uneasily at a nun. This Catholic church was a scary place!

Father Furuya was the catechism teacher. There was something in him that appealed to me immediately. One sensed an optimism, a warmth of soul. I studied for eleven months. And a month later, just to be thorough, I enrolled in the Methodist mission school. For half a year I attended catechism with Father Furuya every Thursday, attended Sunday Mass and spent Sunday evenings at the Methodist service and Bible class.

By summer, I decided I had given Protestantism a fair trial and left. No doubt there was much good in that church which I failed to see because of my immaturity.

Father Furuya taught the catechism for six wonderful months and then was sent to France, to my great regret. Under another priest I finished the course. But I did not ask for Baptism. I still believed Catholicism to be true BUT . . . the brash teenager did not fancy a life spent under Catholicism's stern morals and discipline. I wanted something less exacting.

We moved to another house and I called to get the local church's book over. I had to admit that the young French priest and his middle-aged Japanese catechist were an admirable pair. I was in a quandary. The soundness of its teaching, the quality of its believers, attracted my heart to Catholicism. Yet, its demand of sacrifice, obedience I feared to take the plunge.

Perhaps as compensation I often took my two young sisters along to church. My now-widowed mother did not oppose this, on the principle that "it couldn't do anyone any harm."

We moved back again near Tamatsukuri church. The pastor was now a young Japanese priest I had known in the days of my first fervor. As soon as I could I made an appointment with him and opened my heart. It was an eventful discussion. I left him resolved to be baptized into Christ.

Father Miyakado gave me a program of preparation, plenty of prayer and reading. I presented myself before him in Holy Week, 1934, for a short examination on my belief and motives. I don't remember his questions but I do remember that I resolved to become a "top" Christian. On Easter Sunday I was baptized Augustine, a name with tremendous appeal for me.

I knew that the truth had made me free, despite the solemn declarations of the scientists in a Japan that was almost wholly godless in its leaders and scholars.

I found a job with the Mainichi newspaper in Osaka and set out to become a reporter. Life was good. Then came the shock of the February 26, 1936. Out of the blue (as far as most of us were concerned) young army zealots assassinated a group of politicians who opposed their war theories. Though "people in the street" did not realize it at first, the army was in control of Japan from "the day of that bloody Ball."

On July 7, 1936, the China War began. I knew as little of the motives and machinations of this as of the February coup. But in January of 1938 I was told to report to Sendai for army training. The 10 months' training was a shock. Being bossed, lashed with a sergeant's belt, face-slapped, rifle-butted, kicked, were considered part of our training.

Another shock was to take into a place openly hostile to Christianity, the "un-Japanese religion." Among 1,000 soldiers I was the only Christian, as far as I knew. At no time during the training course was I able to attend Mass. But sometimes there were free hours on a Sunday afternoon when I slipped off, cut through back streets and entered the church. If the German priest was a home I would take off my bayonet and go into the confessional to receive the sacrament of peace.

I left the training unit as a sergeant. Military training over, I returned home to Osaka, feeling like a released prisoner. But not for long! On August 23, 1939, I received a letter ordering me North, and three days later was in my second lieutenant's uniform of a train bound for the embarkation port of Hiroshima.

I had to leave for China without seeing any of my family. I had a good talk with Father Miyakado. Now, before I reported to my regiment. As a Japanese, he knew any special temptations that might come my way at the front.

"If you're taken prisoner, that's no disgrace. But it would be a disgrace if you, a Christian, committed suicide," he said. The army still taught the old "Samurai" tradition.

As a parting gift Father gave me a beautiful medal of Our Lady. I wore it round my neck all through the war. The medal was to lose its gilt in the hard years ahead but it never lost its beauty in my eyes.

The death of my grandfather had brought me to study Christianity. Now death's constant closeness was to keep me up to the practice of the Faith. I never had a single chance of going to confession during my two years in China.

One night came that command to get behind the Chinese lines. As I listened to the instructions the chill of fear gripped my soul and body. Death had long been in sight. Now it turned its gaze directly on me and seemed about to strike. I tried to calm myself to make an act of "perfect contrition." From my heart I asked His forgiveness and I prayed for the strength to fulfill my duty as a soldier. Then as I crawled along in the wretched darkness, I found that my fear of death had gone.

Several hours later we were trudging back with the information. Maybe because such calm made me careless, maybe because my limbs shivered with cold, I disturbed a rock. A brass band could not have made more noise!

A Chinese machinegun opened up and a bullet tore through the flesh of my left thigh. That bullet wound was a blessing. My comrades dragged me to safety. I was hospitalized and sent back to Japan. The wound was to heal perfectly but I was to spend the rest of the war in Japan.

My mother met me at the station though it was late at night. What a reunion!

As soon as I was up next morning I set off for that landmark of my youth, Tamatsukuri church.

Mass was over but Father Miyakado was only too happy to let me approach Christ in the sacrament of forgiveness. My nation was to enter an all-out war that led only to chaos. But I had peace "such as the world cannot give."

Courier Journal
OFFICIAL NEWSPAPER OF THE ROCHESTER DIOCESE

Friday, Feb. 15, 1963
Vol. 74 No. 20

MOST REV. JAMES E. KEARNEY, S.T.D.
Publisher

Member of the Audit Bureau of Circulations and the Catholic Press Association. Subscribe to National Catholic Welfare Conference News Service. Published Each Week Except Two Holidays Every Friday by the Rochester Catholic Press Association.

NAME OFFICE—50 Rio—Mailing address: P.O. Box 1818, Rochester 4, N. Y.

BUSINESS OFFICE—217 Buffalo Road, Lake St. Rd. 1-1000 or N.E. 4-1423

ADVERTISING OFFICE—76 Capitol St., AL 1-4040

Entered as second class matter in the Post Office in Rochester, N. Y., as provided under the Act of Congress of March 3, 1879.

Single copy 10c; 2 year subscription in U. S. $2.00; Canada $2.50; Foreign Countries $3.50

In The Vineyard

THE SOCIETY OF JESUS . . . Commonly known as the Jesuits, was founded in Rome in 1540 by St. Ignatius Loyola, aided by nine other companions, the best known of which is the great missionary saint, Francis Xavier. The members of the Society are priests, scholastics (those studying to be priests) and brothers known as temporal coadjutors. Today the Society is spread throughout the entire world, divided into fifty Provinces. Two works may be said to comprise the main fields of labor of the Jesuits—Catholic education and missions in the foreign mission. High schools, colleges, and universities are found in every country, under the care of the Jesuits, while one out of every seven Jesuits is a foreign missionary. One out of every ten American Jesuits is in foreign missions work. Nine out of ten are teachers in colleges and high schools (like McQuaid Jesuit High School in Rochester), or give parish missions or edit Catholic publications such as America Magazine.

President Needs our Support in Cuba Controversy

Reapings at Random

By GERARD E. BRENNAN

Editor, Georgia Bulletin

One of the silliest things in the current controversy over Cuba is the injection of political propaganda at the expense of national unity of purpose.

We have witnessed the spectacle of politicians of both parties hitting the headlines with charges that the administration is ignoring the Communist military threat on Castro's Isle.

They have been participating in a numbers game as to the amount of Russian hardware in Cuba and the strength of Russian troops in the area. The administration has denied the basic premise of these politicians, but it is they who steal headlines. If you say something long and loud enough, you are bound to sow the seed of doubt among the people. In this regard, these politicians certainly caused confusion in the minds of many of our citizens.

So much so that the Secretary of Defense was forced to publicly deny them and back up his reputation with facts available to the government. Secretary McNamara's presentation was imperative, and he drew upon the immense intelligence resources at his disposal. Tragically, he was also forced to expose certain intelligence reports, which could only give comfort to our enemies, in order to prove the politicians wrong. He had to disclose information which might have been better kept secret.

One thing about this Cuban mess, which has always bothered me, is that the politicians keep claiming that their private source of information is vastly superior to that of our government's. Admittedly, this could be so in an isolated instance, but only a fool would suggest that one man can know more than our whole Central Intelligence Agency.

The stakes are too high in Cuba for a numbers game. Yet, despite the government's presentation on television, some still insist that they are right and the government is wrong. It is easy for those who lack the awesome responsibilities of deciding peace and war to prattle off about invading Cuba or crushing Castro. Alas, only the man in the White House be he Republican or Democrat, can make the decision; and nobody but a fool would jump into the situation without examining it fully, viewing all the risks involved and making the decision which is in the best interests of these United States.

Impatience is one of the biggest vices of today's politicians. While they believe that their views, and their demands, are for the best interest of the country, they are often unaware of other forces involved. I suppose all Americans are impatient over our lack of progress in effectively eliminating Communism in Cuba. Many of us are also impatient with the methods used by our government in forcing the withdrawal of Russian troops.

But patience is the only virtue that will see us through the crisis without the holocaust of atomic warfare.

This is not to say that President Kennedy would shrink from this possibility if he judged there was no other way out. He proved this last fall. No doubt he is impatient with the lack of a Russian withdrawal. He knows, too, that he will have to exercise all his political and diplomatic skill in order to accomplish it without war.

It seems to me that fewer politicians are not making matters with their public policies of impatience and their demands for speedier action. This President needs support, not only of the politicians, but also of the people. He will find it very difficult to get this support if the scaremongers keep talking at him.

It is said the government is not giving the public all the information they need to know in relation to the Red build-up in Cuba. I do not know what more information the government could give, except perhaps to list the name of its informants in Havana and elsewhere on the Cuban Isle. I suppose Castro would like nothing better. There are obviously things which cannot be disclosed to the general public.

I have no doubt that the President's critics realize this. The whole thing smacks of politics—and after all the 1962 elections are just around the corner.

Declined

Davao—(RNS)—A Maryknoll priest saved the life of a young boy here by rushing him by jeep to the nearest hospital, 100 miles away.

When young Domingo's family learned of what Father Gerlock had done, they came to thank him. The boy's father told the Maryknoller:

"Padre, I can never repay you for all that you did. We have no money. But I want to give you my boy. He will be strong soon and he will be a good worker."

It took Father Gerlock a half hour to refuse the parent's offer.