

Again... an American Ambassador to the Vatican?

(Guest editorial by the Rev. Robert F. McManis, Professor of Church History, St. Bernard's Seminary)
Should the United States have an ambassador at the Vatican?

A very ticklish question, raised often in years gone by, it has been raised again during the past few weeks.

At a July presidential press conference, a reporter asked President Kennedy "In view of the increased contact between the Vatican and the from Curtin countries, do you feel it would be fruitful at this time to consider setting up some regular channel of communication between the United States and the Vatican?"

The President answered: "No, it seems to me that the present methods of communication are the obvious ones and have been in effect for a great many years — anytime that anyone wants to get into communication it's possible to get messages to the Vatican. The embassy at Rome, I'm sure, would be available. But it doesn't seem to me that there's any need for changing procedures. I don't think there is any lack of information or communication back and forth."

This was the answer which would be expected. Mr. Kennedy has never taken a stand for establishing formal diplomatic relations with the Holy See. He pointed out this fact in his famous address to the Greater Houston Ministerial Association on September 12, 1960.

President Truman attempted to set up such relations in 1951. He failed completely. And he is a Baptist. It is easy to see why a Catholic president should not want to repeat such an attempt. Under normal circumstances it would doubtless cause more trouble than it was worth.

Some day, however, we will have an ambassador at the Vatican. And we will have one whenever our government becomes convinced that it is in its own greater interest to be represented permanently at the Holy See.

The Myron Taylor missions to the Holy See under Presidents Franklin D. Roosevelt and Harry S. Truman, though not formally diplomatic, brought to us and to our allies many diplomatic benefits. "When the full story of his mission is finally recorded," wrote the late Sumner Welles, assistant secretary of state, "it will be recognized that it has been of great service to the United States."

As Archbishop McNicholas pointed out in the midst of the anti-Taylor furor, it was not Catholics who had made an issue of a mission to the Vatican. American Catholics, he said, have always considered the matter of our representation at the Vatican as involving "enlightened self-interest." A political matter to be decided according to whether it helps or harms our country. A strictly practical consideration.

Pope Pius XII said in a letter to President Truman on July 10, 1952: "Following its traditional practice, the Holy See has obtained and abstains from exerting any pressure whatsoever for the establishment of diplomatic relations with the United States of America, leaving the way open for the competent organs (of American government) to take their deliberations in full liberty."

Are there reasons for making this action right now? Some.

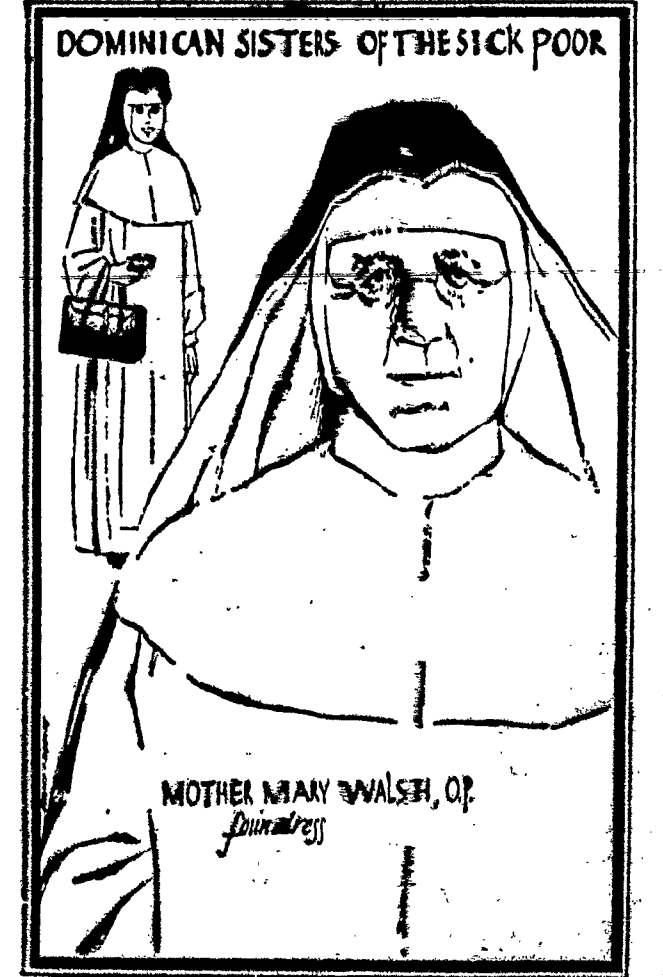
One argument is certainly the fact that today forty-five nations (including Mexico, Iran, Turkey, Indonesia and Pakistan) have full diplomatic exchange with the Holy See, and others (including Great Britain) have partial diplomatic relations. This fact prompts one to ask: if they have all found the arrangement permanently helpful, wouldn't we?

Many American scholars have expressed mystification at our national hesitancy. Professor Arthur M. Schlesinger, Jr., advocated such a step as long ago as January 1952, in his *Atlantic Monthly* article, "Relations with the Vatican: Why Not?"

Charles Upson Clark, in a letter to the New York Times of October 11, 1958, said "We are foolishly depriving ourselves of an unsurpassed listening board, envied by many of the best men in the foreign service."

Granted, the advantages accruing to us through peaceful Vatican representation may not be as great as those which would accrue during a war. In this sense, President Kennedy's impromptu acceptance of "present methods of communication" is understandable.

Actually, the "present methods of communication"



In The Vineyard
The Dominican Sisters of the Sick Poor... were founded in New York City in 1879 by Mother Mary Walsh to provide an urgently needed free service for the sick poor in their own homes. The early days of the Community were marked by trials, misunderstandings, and utter poverty. Through it all Mother Mary, who died in 1922, and her first companions clung to their ideal of service to the poor, upheld by the belief that if their work was from God it would ultimately prosper. Two of the clergy contributed particularly to the final approval and future stability of the Community, Father Peter O'Callaghan of the Paulist Fathers, and the Dominican Father John T. McNicholas, later Archbishop of Cincinnati.

tion" could prove inadequate if a prolonged contact was advisable. The President suggests that the U.S. Ambassador to Italy can serve as a regular go-between. He seems to have forgotten what happened when that method was proposed in 1953.

In 1953 Mrs. Clare Boothe Luce was named ambassador to Italy. Some concluded from the appointment of a Catholic to that post that Mrs. Luce would also serve as an intermediary between this nation and the Holy See.

Learning of this rumor, the editor of *Observatore Romano* firmly declared that according to diplomatic usage "no person having an official responsibility in a diplomatic mission to the Italian government can at the same time carry on diplomatic activity with the Holy See."

"This," the article continued, "is a norm and a practice from which the Holy See has never departed."

The author of the following fourth of five articles writes under an assumed name to forestall retaliatory measures by Czechoslovakia's communist regime.

By Karel Holcik
Munich. — (NC) — The apparent apathy of the once-Catholic Czechoslovak people to the strangulation of the Church can be ascribed psychologically to a mass depression brought about by a whole chain of melancholy events. A quick review of the causes must precede any prognosis.

Czechoslovakia emerged as an independent state following World War I. In effect it was the rebirth of the old empire of Great Moravia, which had been subjugated by its neighbors for 10 centuries. It owed its existence to a great extent to Woodrow Wilson, and in the years between the great wars it had close ties to the west.

With the Munich pact of September, 1938, the Western powers sold it out to Hitler for "peace in our time." Czechoslovakia lost her heart. The peace, furthermore, was a short-lived mirage, not only was Czechoslovakia swallowed up by the Nazis, so was most of the rest of Europe.

In May of 1945, when World War II was coming to an end and the American Third Army was within Czechoslovakia, had stood still to let the Soviets take Prague, the national capital. It was another blow to the people's faith in the West.

The communists immediately gained control of key ministries in the postwar government. They completed their takeover in 1948 with a coup d'etat. The people were helpless before them.

The Hungarians fight for freedom in the fall of 1956 perhaps fanned an ember of hope and a memory of the viable democracy of the between-the-wars Czechoslovakia. But when the West again stood by and watched Soviet tanks bloody the streets of Budapest, the Czechoslovak masses became more apathetic than before.

The communist regime adopted brutal, Stalinist methods from the start, and was able to tear the visible Church asunder within three years after enforcing totalitarian control. Today, the bishops are imprisoned or, figuratively, paraded on leashes. The clergy is controlled or dispersed, the number of practicing Catholics decimated.

Christians in Czechoslovakia even feel themselves thwarted and betrayed by their own

leadership — sometimes because of naïveté, sometimes viciously.

They see the fate of Bishop Ladislav Hlad as a case in point. Bishop Hlad was convicted of "performing in secret the functions of a bishop" in March 1960, and sentenced to a nine-year prison term. The Prague newspaper *Svobodne Slovo* stated at the time that he was consecrated a bishop in secret without the required government permit.

A feeling general among Czech Catholics is that Bishop Hlad was discovered because the Holy See published his name in the *Annuario Pontificio*, the official Vatican directory. His name appears in the yearbook simply as titular Bishop of Cedae, with none of the usual personal statistics and without listing his nationality or assignment. The thinking in Czechoslovakia is that the Holy See by listing him as a bishop unwittingly handed him over to Stalinist justice.

On a more culpable level are some members of the clergy in Czechoslovakia. Some, because of weakness have aligned themselves with the regime. Some have become apologetic and informers. The greatest scandal of all comes from the type of priest who takes a woman and continues to live in the rectory — a man and wife.

and does not intend to depart." Indeed, the exchange of his own ambassadors by the Holy See is an important demonstration of its independence of any other national government.

Observations further went on to say that the Holy See was an exceptional method of contact not likely to be repeated. "At the present moment it is evident that there could be no question of anything but an official and stable diplomatic representation."

It looks, therefore, as if the Holy See would accept only formal diplomatic relations in the future. The United States should request closer contacts. No more personal representatives. Certainly no working through the Ambassador to Italy.

President Kennedy's questioner posed his query because of the increased contact between the Vatican and the from Curtin countries. Further development along this line — for instance if the U.S.S.R. should establish diplomatic relations with the Holy See

— might easily cast a different light upon the whole matter. Then it would be to our own national interest to do the same. Congress would realize it, and so would any current president.

For American Catholics this is principally a political consideration. We can watch its development with interested detachment. We can view our national opposition to "Vatican ties" as perhaps the last phase of old-fashioned American isolationism. We need not expect, and perhaps should not hope, that our present chief magistrate will reestablish those diplomatic ties with the Holy See which Presidents Polk, Fillmore, Buchanan, Lincoln and Johnson did not think it un-American to maintain.

An embassy to the Holy See will doubtless come. But as former Vice President Nixon said last month, perhaps with a bit of nostalgia, "It will be easier for a non-Catholic than a Catholic to take step."

been in recent months some novel approaches which could prove strains in the wind.

Following the lead of the Kremlin, the communist regime provided broad publicity for Pope John's peace encyclical, *Pacem in Terris*, when it was issued last April. The late Pope was praised in the controlled press, and one radio commentator asserted

that the encyclical had placed the Church on the side of peace for the first time. The Bratislava periodical *Kulturny Zivot* published a cartoon (April 27) depicting a militaristic Uncle Sam confronting Pope John and denouncing him as a "Soviet agent."

And on the death of Pope John, Czechoslovak Premier Vladimir Siroky sent a telegram to the Holy See expressing "profound condolences on the sad occasion of the death of His Holiness." He said Czechoslovakia was "highly appreciative" of the Pope's work for the protection of peace among nations.

Pope Paul VI too has had a "good press" in Czechoslovakia. In the meantime, Radio Prague — which for years acted as if the Church did not exist — has made frequent use of Catholic news.

There have been grounds for hope, however. Back in 1961, the economically pressed regime began encouraging tourism. Visitors from Western European countries began coming, and their spending of francs, schillings and guilders has been welcome. With it has come a new stimulus to the government to provide an outward show of religious freedom.

When Catholics come from abroad and seek out churches to they can participate in the Mass, members of the communist apparatus are impressed. Many seem really convinced of their own line — that God

is a myth, and that only ignorant and culturally deprived are believers.

Their feelings were spelt out last February by a Soviet writer, Konstantin Simonov, who wrote: "I meet persons who are called, cultured, evolved, ecclesiastical, but I can convince myself that they truly believe in God, I truly believe in Jesus. I think them persons of a city and dishonesty. I head simply refused to understand how a young man lives in this our world, not but be an atheist."

One instance stemmed from the state visit of Ethio Emperor Haile Selassie to Czechoslovakia in the fall of 1961. In the course of visit, the Emperor — himself a member of the separate Ethiopian Church — too gift to 600-year-old shrine of the Blessed Virgin Svata Hora, at Pribram, 35 miles southwest of Prague. It is generally understood that by this gesture, he sought to win the favor of the ancient pilgrimage center from being closed and seized by the regime.

The new opening of the country to tourists from the West is very welcome to Catholics of Czechoslovakia. They are bound to be about some relaxation in the rigorously controlled life. Eventually, they hope, it will spell a return to at least much religious freedom exists in neighboring Poland.

Women in College to 'Get A Man' — "Definitely Not!"

New Orleans — (NC) — Does a woman go to college to "get a man?" "Definitely not!" scoffed Rosalie Parrino, dean of women at Loyola University here. She insisted the fairer sex at college primarily to receive an education and secondarily to become a wage earner.

"However, this does not alter the fact that one of the chief causes of drop-outs among college women is marriage," she admitted. "It is the unusual woman who doesn't get married and have a family. This is true about a woman's goal in life, whether she goes to college or not, college does not create the desire for marriage although it is a means of fulfilling it."

BECAUSE A WOMAN foresees her role as wife mother she is apt to go about her education differently. "Someone once said a man is educated to do a job while a woman is educated to be a better person," Parrino said.

Mrs. Parrino said a woman who leaves a professional college to raise a family does not have to stigmatize intellectually. She can keep mentally alert through discussion groups, lecture clubs, workshops and community projects.

Of the point is, such a reply would have unheard of even ten years ago. Women are obviously more freedom than some men are willing to admit. The problem is how to use it, collaborating with the hierarchy, always in the interest of the Church. The faculties of the laity seem to be the same world over. The more we all grow up in the Church, the more we will come to realize.

In the spirit of charity and understanding, British laity is suffering from growing pains. But their most conspicuous lack is their lack of the Catholic hierarchy. They are not even on their bishops, who are "opposing the" to greater collaboration in every square

Reanims at Random

by GERARD E. SHERRY

Religion in Great Britain is hard to evaluate. It is a land where Christianity dates back to the fifth century; where Catholicism flourished until the 16th century, when the Reformers broke away from the Papal See and confiscated churches, cathedrals and abbeys all across the land.

Many of these religious edifices still stand as monuments to skilled craftsmen who built not for tourism but for God. The great cathedrals of England are no longer centers of culture and worship — they stand majestic but empty of all but the thousands of tourists who daily visit them and wonder at how they have stood the ravages of time.

We said empty of worshippers — this, alas, is a fact. A prime example is Salisbury Cathedral which dates back to the 12th century. It is a most beautiful church and I made a visit there several Sundays ago. It happened that the main morning service was taking place. I was shocked to find that there were more clergy and choir in the sanctuary than there were worshippers in the pews. I counted 29 persons in an area which can hold almost 1,000.

This same scene can be observed in most Church of England cathedrals and chapels. Although it is claimed that the Anglicans have 26 million communicants in Britain, I was told that less than 200,000 attend services on Sundays. In all fairness to them it must be

said that those who do not claim membership in the Presbyterian, Baptist, Methodist or Congregationalist groups, nearly always refer to themselves as Church of England. This despite the fact that many of them have no religion.

None of the Protestant groups have an abundance of worshippers, although their memberships are quite impressive. There is also a growing number of Seventh Day Adventists and Mormons, which converts are mostly the work of American proselytism. It is not a pleasant thing to report, nor can Catholics grow very much about their own performance.

The official Catholic directory lists almost four million Catholics in Britain. However, it is recognized that in reality there are about five million. They represent about ten per cent of the population. On the surface, the Church looks prosperous and progressive, but it faces the same problems as the Protestants. Not enough Catholics attend Mass regularly. One Bishop told me that about 50 per cent attend Sunday Mass on a regular basis. Another said 30 per cent would be more accurate. Whatever the percentage is not good enough. However, experts agree that Mass attendance in the U.S. is not much better.

One thing is true, though. The Church has more moral influence in public life than its numbers would indicate. But this influence is provided more by the hierarchy than by the laity. It is the Catholic hierarchy that is listened to, rather than the Catholic educators,

lawyers, politicians. This is surprising considering the fact that specialized Catholic Action is far more advanced in Britain than it is in the U.S. Movements abound in all parts of the country, and they seem to be working within the community as a whole.

The reasons for the apparent failure of the laity to come forward in greater numbers is hard to diagnose. There are conflicting answers, according with whom you speak. One leading Catholic layman gave the perennial answer, and all over the world. "We don't have enough freedom to express ourselves. Every time we open our mouths, we are set upon as arrogant and illiterate." Another suggested that the laity were considered more fundraisers and that most bishops were afraid to delegate real responsibility. He added that there was plenty of encouragement to think, but none at all to act.

On the other side of the coin, several bishops complained that there were not enough educated laymen. They think all they have to do is form committees, plan actions, and apply for approval. As if that, in itself, was all there was to it," one bishop remarked. He complained that even among the better educated Catholics there was not enough study of the Church, its theology and philosophy. He stated that the Catholic hierarchy in Britain had much more freedom than its counterparts in the U.S. They can't always take advantage

Feast of Assumption

Our Lady's Assumption into Heaven will be marked on the feast, Thursday, August 15, a holy day of obligation.

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British Laity Seen Suffering From Growing Pains

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