

Council Slow Pace Opens Door to Church Renewal

All Colleges In Line for Federal Aid

Washington — (RNS) — The Senate passed here, by a 54 to 27 vote, compromise legislation designed to assist public, private and church-related colleges in the construction of specific educational facilities.

Previously passed by the House, the measure now goes to President Johnson for action. (It is expected to sign the bill into law before the end of the year.)

The bill authorizes aid to all colleges for the construction of facilities required for instruction in mathematics, modern foreign languages, natural and physical sciences, and engineering and for the establishment or expansion of college libraries.

Sen. Wayne Morse (D-Ore.), who had introduced a college aid measure in the upper house, called on the Senate to endorse the compromise legislation worked out by a joint House-Senate conference committee. He said it was the best legislation that could be secured in this session.

Sen. Samuel J. Ervin Jr. (D-N.C.) led the opposition in the Senate debate. He called for its defeat, noting that the conference committee had killed a "bulletin" Constitutional test provided for in an amendment he had tacked on to the Senate's original bill.

Legion of Decency Pledge Renewal To Be Made in Parishes Sunday

Comelets of the Rochester Diocese and throughout the nation will renew their pledge in the Legion of Decency at Masses this Sunday.

A newly written form of the pledge stresses positive aspects of a Catholic's moral duties concerning motion picture entertainment — supporting good films, guiding youngsters in choosing attendance at good shows and to encourage "higher standards" in movie production.

The Courier Journal publishes the Legion of Decency ratings list each month as soon as it is released by the Legion's national office in New York City and ratings of new films as soon as they are reviewed by Legion officials.

Following is the text of the pledge for this Sunday:
In the Name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, Amen.

I PROMISE to support what is morally and artistically good in motion picture entertainment.

I PROMISE to discourage indecent, immoral and unwholesome motion pictures.

I PROMISE to guide those under my care in their choice of motion pictures that are morally and culturally inspiring.

I PROMISE not to patronize theatres which regularly show objectionable films.

I PROMISE as a member of the Legion of Decency to acquaint myself with its aims, to consult with its classifications and to unite with all means of good will in promoting higher standards in motion picture entertainment.

I FREELY MAKE these promises in the honor of God, for the good of my soul and for the welfare of my country. Amen.

'Renovate from Within'

By FATHER EDWARD DUFF, S.J.
Special Correspondent

Vatican City — (RNS) — Those who rushed home from the Second Vatican Council will have to revise their departing impressions before joining the lecture circuit.

A more leisurely review of the decisions and of the documents, not least the rather unexciting but sure-footed and carefully composed closing speech of Pope Paul, will suggest that the second session of the Council was really a significant and positive step in the process of the inner renewal and updating of the Catholic Church.

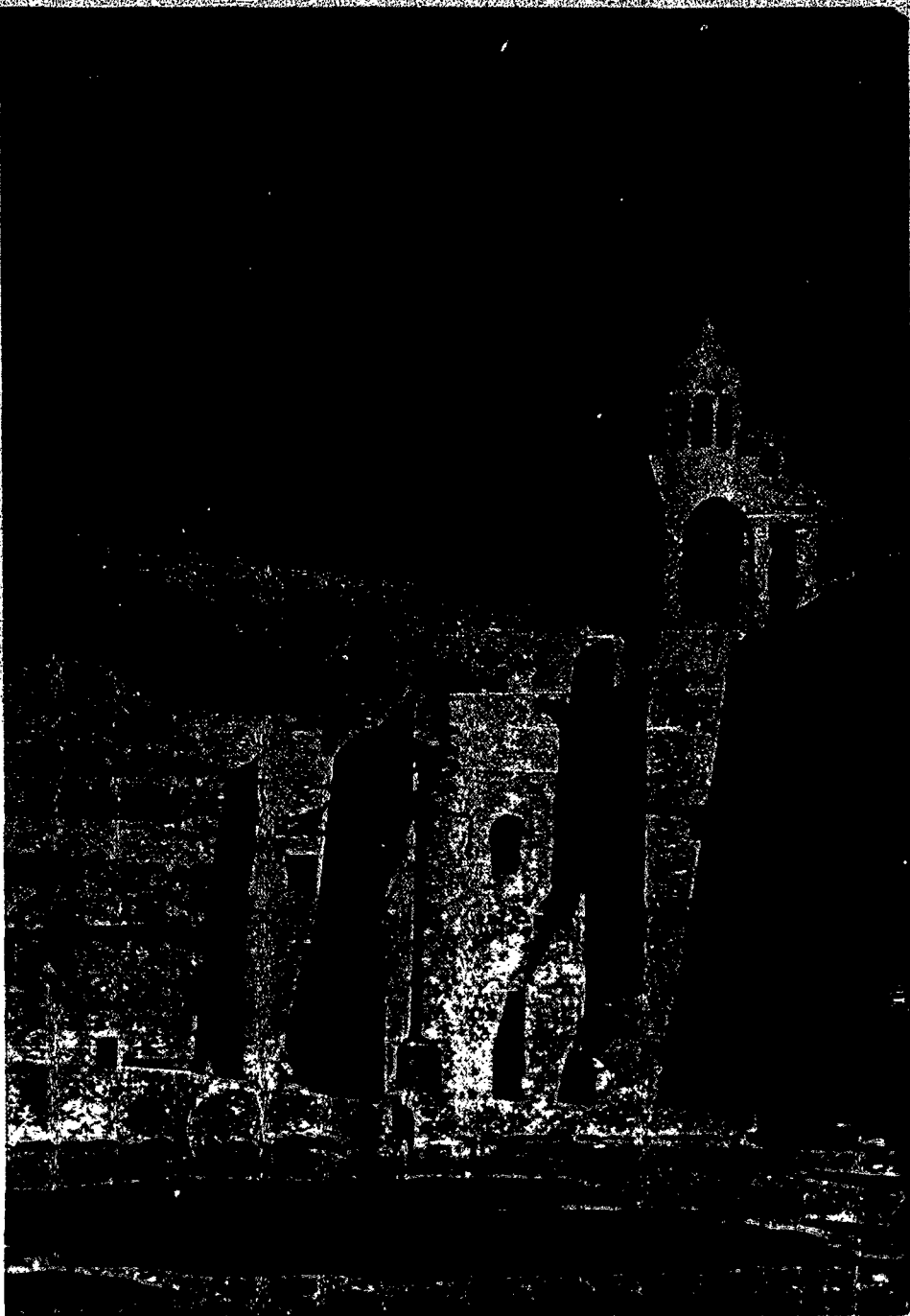
THE CRITICS of the session have made the late Pope John XXIII the symbol and almost the battle cry of their aspirations.

They might profitably recall his wise words in Pecten in Terris: "There are some souls, particularly endowed with generosity, who, in finding situations where the requirements of justice are not satisfied or not satisfied in full, feel emboldened with the desire to change the state of things, as if they wished to have recourse to something like a revolution. It must be borne in mind that to proceed gradually is the law of life in all its expressions. Therefore, in human institutions, too, it is not possible to renovate them for the better except by working from within them, gradually."

After 43 general congregations or working sessions and (by my count) 612 speeches on three schemes — On the Church, On Bishops and the Government of Dioceses, On Ecumenism — the Council adjourned until next September. There was, to be sure, what the Italians (a few seemed to have had some advance word) called a "bombetta." The announcement added as "one last word" at the close of the Pope's speech that he was going as a pilgrim to visit the Holy Land. The historic significance and the ecumenical implications of this were not, however, immediately grasped, the applause was moderate.

To this sense of being misled in talk and stultified by a stubborn and sometimes insolent small group manifesting a determination — and, indeed, a capacity — to frustrate the will of the majority of the Council has joined the disappointment, particularly of the Americans not cured by very many, that the condemnation of anti-

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Bethlehem's Church of the Nativity — beneath its main altar is the grotto where Christ our Lord was born and where Pope Paul will offer Epiphany feast day Mass on January 6.

Pope to Jet to Holy Land

Vatican City — (RNS) — Pope Paul VI, in his first Christmas message on Dec. 23, will discuss his scheduled three-day visit to the Holy Land next January and explain the reason for his unprecedented journey, according to reports here.

Meanwhile, Vatican authorities said a "wave of messages" have poured in from all parts of the world enthusiastically hailing the Pope's projected pilgrimage. They said many of the messages have come from non-Catholic religious leaders.

THE POPE is scheduled to leave Rome on Jan. 4, at 5 a.m. Alitalia, the Italian air line, said his 500-mile trip will probably be made on a DC-8 jet. It will be the first journey by a reigning pontiff.

Expectations are that the Pope's pilgrimage may develop into a historical meeting with

leaders of other Christian faiths. This would be in response to a proposal made in Istanbul by Ecumenical Patriarch Athenagoras, supreme leader of Eastern Orthodox and Protestant churches, to meet the head of the Roman Catholic Church.

Patriarch Athenagoras proposed a "summit meeting" of the heads of Christian churches. However, there has been no official Vatican comment on his suggestion. What is considered most likely to happen are informal — not formal — meetings between the Pope and other religious leaders. There has to be no indication that the Pope's suite would include Patriarch Athenagoras himself.

Vatican sources said it would be the protocol officers' responsibility to see that any meeting between the Pope and

other Christian leaders does not become a formal gathering where the Pope would be merely one of several representatives of different churches.

Among those expected to accompany the Pope are Augustin Cardinal Bea, president of the Secretariat for the Promoting Christian Unity; Msgr. Jim Willebrands, secretary of the secretariat; Eugene Cardinal Tisserant, dean of the Sacred College, who speaks Arabic; and has shown a lifelong interest in Orthodox-Catholic relations; and Archbishop Peter-Vincenzo, the Pope's Vicar General in the Bishop of Rome.

The Pope's suite, it is believed, will also include a small group of priests and 11 papal gendarmes.

It had earlier been reported that Amleto Giovanni Cardinal Cicognani, the Pope's Secretary of State, also would accompany him. However, the cardinal very likely will remain in Rome to handle pressing Church matters in the pontiff's absence.

Ignace Gabriel Cardinal Epoum, Patriarch of Antioch of the Syrians, may accompany the Pope. The 84-year-old patriarch was visited on Sunday by the Pope in a Rome nursing home where he was reported in "very good condition" after an emergency operation upon an ulcer.

"Do a good job and get him well," the Pope told a doctor as he bade goodbye to the patient, whose patriarchate includes some of the Holy Places. The pontiff is expected to visit.

AN UNOFFICIAL Vatican source outlined the following tentative itinerary for the Pope's pilgrimage:

Saturday, Jan. 4: Departure from Fiumicino International Airport near Rome before dawn by chartered jetliner. Arrival at Jerusalem (Jordanian sector) airport or Amman airport around 8:30 a.m. Visits to Bethlehem and other Holy Places in Jordan. Spend night at Apostolic Delegation in Jerusalem (Jordan sector).

Monday, Jan. 5: Visits to Nazareth and other Holy Places in Israel, probably using a military airport in Israel territory. Return to Jerusalem (Jordanian sector). Spend night in Apostolic Delegation.

Monday, Jan. 6: Epiphany Mass at the Church of the Holy Sepulchre (Jordanian sector), possible meetings with Orthodox leaders, and return to Rome, either directly or with a stop-over in Beirut. Arrival at Fiumicino Airport Monday night.

Premier Rashid Karama of Lebanon, which has the largest Christian population of any Arab-ruled country, has declared that all Lebanese "would be especially happy if His Holiness's program should permit him to visit Lebanon."

Commenting on preparations in the Holy Land for the Pope's visit, the Vatican Radio voiced satisfaction over expressions of welcome from Jordan and Israeli authorities, but remained conspicuously silent about Arab attacks on Israel occasioned by the announcement of the pontiff's pilgrimage and the fears of possible assassination attempts, expressed in some Arab quarters.

'Defenders' Distort Confession Seal

The following article by Father Frank Gardini, C.S.C., religious director of the Holy Cross Fathers, was written for the Pilot, Boston archdiocesan newspaper, concerning an episode shown Nov. 20 on "The Defenders." CBS-TV network show centered around the seal of confession.

After the November 20th presentation of "The Defenders" on CBS television I'm worried what millions of Americans must think of the Catholic priest's handling of confessional secrets. It was sloppy drama — about as true to life as a nightmar.

Fear-stricken after murdering a prostitute, the criminal barges into a church, spots a young priest, asks him to hear his confession. Unconvinced of the man's sorrow, the priest withholds absolution. Both leave the confessional perplexed and dissatisfied.

NEXT MORNING the priest consults with his pastor, expresses his worry. "Last night a man confessed murder. I didn't absolve him; he didn't seem sorry."

"I see by this morning's paper," the pastor replies. "The police have jailed So-and-so for murder." The young priest looks shocked. Next minute the police phone to tell him a prisoner wishes to see him.

At the station the prisoner turns out not to be the penitent of the night before. Shielded from the prisoner's view, the priest blurts out to "The Defenders": "That's not the man."

Without meeting the accused he rushes away. But the lawyer want him to clear their client. The priest says he must keep quiet.

However, the priest's conduct at the station together with some double-checking leads to the murderer's identity. Before

he is picked up the murderer returns to the confessional, upbraids his confessor for breaking the seal.

More distraught than ever the priest visits the murderer's home and without seeking his permission rediscusses the case, urges him to make a sincere confession and give himself up to free the accused. He does.

This distressing episode of "The Defenders" gives the impression priests have over the sins of their penitents, are bumbling babbles disloyal to the seal, reckless of the rights of the faithful, retailers of crime and criminals.

What's the theology of the seal?

Any priest who would directly violate it by revealing the crime and the criminal would incur excommunication, could be absolved only by the pope. Others who become privy to this sacramental knowledge themselves become bound to the seal. As "The Defenders" pointed out, in most states this knowledge is not admissible in court.

If in a complex case the

confessor must consult an expert he would be so circumvented that the expert couldn't remotely guess who was involved.

In this case, though the priest didn't identify the criminal to the expert, his imprudence soon led to the name of the murderer. In real life the disastrous universal effect of such conduct would make the sacrament unbearable to millions — precisely why the Church guards the seal with such heavy sanctions.

At the police station the priest violated the seal by acting on knowledge he had gained only in the sacrament. For centuries priests take St. John Nepomucene have died rather than break the seal.

In the murderer's home the priest directly broke the seal by presuming to discuss the crime with the criminal. He cannot do even this without the express voluntary permission of the penitent.

I do not presume to read any bad will into "The Defenders" or CBS. But with all Catholics I wish the producers had based up on theology before sending their actors before the cameras.



Pope Paul is shown at prayer in one of closing ceremonies of Vatican Council's 1963 sessions just prior to announcing he would go "as a pilgrim" to the Holy Land to pray for the Council's success and peace.

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Dispensation, Fasting Choice

Catholics of the Rochester Diocese have been dispensed by Bishop Keane from the laws of fast and abstinence for Ember Friday, Dec. 20.

They may individually choose to fast and abstain on either Monday, Dec. 23, or Tuesday, Dec. 24, in observance of the Vigil of Christmas.

Wednesday and Saturday, Dec. 23 and 24, are Ember Days on which meat is permitted but not wine.

Monuments and Statues for Holy Sepulchre. The better way to choose a monument is to see our indoor display. You will appreciate our program plan. TRUST BROS., 1180 E. ST.



Prelate Asks Summit Meeting

Athens — (RNS) — Patriarch Athenagoras of Istanbul, supreme leader of Eastern Orthodoxy (center), has proposed that Pope Paul VI's pilgrimage to the Holy Land be used as the occasion for a summit meeting of Eastern and Western Church leaders to further Christian unity. The Patriarch is shown during a recent visit to Athens.

Scientists Elect Jesuit

New York — (RNS) — Father J. Joseph Lynch, director of Fordham University's seismic station and one of the world's most prominent seismologists, was elected here as president of the New York Academy of Sciences.

The academy, dating back to 1817, has a membership of 18,000 scientists. It was founded "to advance scientific research and discovery" to provide a forum for the presentation and discussion of scientific problems; to publish and distribute the results of research and to interpret them for the promotion of the common welfare.

At the time of Father Lynch's election, Dr. Emerson Day, director of the New Strang Clinic here and an authority on the early detection of cancer, was named president-elect of the academy.

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Freedom Medals Given Kennedy, Pope John

Washington — (RNS) — President Lyndon B. Johnson provided a dramatic surprise for witnesses attending the ceremony involving award of 31 Medals of Freedom at the White House when he conferred, posthumously, medals on President John Fitzgerald Kennedy and Pope John XXIII.

Remaining at the lectern after bestowing the awards on 31 outstanding men and women whose names had been disclosed months ago by the late President Kennedy, President Johnson unexpectedly announced the two additional awards.

"I have also determined," he said, "to confer the Presidential Medal of Freedom posthumously on another noble man whose death we mourned six months ago: His Holiness Pope John XXIII."

Turning to the 200 witnesses in the state dining room of the White House, President Johnson described Pope John as "a man of simple origins, of simple faith, of simple charity. In his exalted office, he was still the same gentle pastor. He believed in discussion and persuasion. He profoundly respected the dignity of man."

President Johnson, in describing the posthumous award to President Kennedy, described his action as "a simple gesture, but one which I know he would not have counted small."