

## Pope Praises Friars For Unity Devotions

Garrison — (RNS) — A letter from Pope Paul VI assured the Franciscan Friars of the Atonement here that he had complied with their wish and offered a special Mass for the intention of the Chair of Unity Octave on its first day Jan. 18.

The Octave, held annually under auspices of the Franciscan Friars at Graymoor, is a week-long period when Catholics around the world pray for Christian unity.

Pope Paul expressed his "paternal encouragement to the whole family of the Atonement in its efforts to cultivate ardent fervor for the cause of unity among Christians."

As he lauded the society for "dedicating its principal ministry" to church unity, the Pope called on the "better disposed and more responsible" to offer prayers and sacrifices for this noble purpose.

## June Workshop To Study Progress Toward Unity

Baltimore — (NC) — The Baltimore archdiocese's Commission for Christian Unity will be host in June to a national workshop of ecumenical leaders.

Archbishop Lawrence J. Shehan of Baltimore said in his Lenten pastoral letter that the local commission will "make available to delegates of bishops throughout the country the experiences which have thus far been gained in this vital work."

Other dioceses in the U.S. which also have ecumenical commissions will collaborate with the local group, a 15-member unit formed in January, 1962, and charged with advising the archbishop in "the great spiritual enterprise of advancing Christian unity."

## Moral Experts Divide on 'Pill'

(Continued from Page 1)

thoritative guide in moral matters.

The 40-page article of Father Janssens is occasioned by the parallel experiments in human reproduction of Doctors J. Fernin of Louvain and Rock of Harvard.

THE ARTICLE includes an extended and learned review of the place of sex in marriage in the history of the Church. It observes that modern scientific knowledge of the fertile and infertile periods for a woman now makes conception more a matter of human choice, a fact implying an increase of both liberty and responsibility for the married couple.

These anovulatory pills create a pseudo-pregnancy by inhibiting the formation of an ovum. They directly produce, then, an artificial sterility while continuing as long as the pills are taken. They are sold under the name of "The Pill" or "The Pill" and, if used, must in conscience decide what in the concrete is the measure of "generous fruitfulness" it is to achieve.

Although traditional morality forbids recourse to artificial (mechanical or chemical) means to prevent conception, the legitimacy of family limitation for proper cause and by morally acceptable methods had been recognized by the Catholic Church.

Thus the restriction of marital rights to the period of the month when conception is impossible because of the absence of the ovum in the woman's womb is recognized as a non-frustration of nature and morally permissible. Promising research is under way to determine more accurately the time of ovulation. Such studies were explicitly encouraged by Pope Pius XII.

The appearance a few years ago of the anovulatory pills and their advocacy last year by Dr. Rock in his book "The Time Has Come" as a means of birth control acceptable to Catholics

promptly engaged the attention of Catholic moral theologians. Their therapeutic use for regulating the rhythm of ovulation so as to make the cycle of fertility and infertility of the wife more predictable, their advent would have been hailed as a primary purpose for the pills of the present promotion of the pills sponsored by Dr. Rock and discussed in Father Janssens' article.

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The Belgian professor seems to lack confidence in his own moral analysis, drawn admittedly in good part from Dr. Rock's amateurish theologizing.

Somewhat unexpectedly, Father Janssens writes: "By way of conclusion, we would say first of all that one must not have recourse to progestogen pills when the practice of periodic continence is possible and sufficiently efficacious to assure a deliberate and gener-

ous fruitfulness. In the case where periodic continence is indicated but is not practicable or sufficiently efficacious (for example, when it is difficult to determine the moment of the return of ovulation after childbirth, if the cycles are too irregular, if temperature changes cannot be detected, if the method of "instructions" in the method, especially in underdeveloped countries, constitutes an obstacle etc.), it seems to us that periodic continence can be replaced by progestogen pills as far as these pills are used in the framework and within the limits of a generous fruitfulness, that is to say, in function of a justified regulation of children."

The only reason offered by the author for preferring periodic continence to the birth control pills is that "drugs are not to be taken when their use is not required."

Nor is any indication offered as to what "generous fruitfulness" would be. Obviously, it has reference to a number of children in a family after which the avoidance of a new conception through a pregnancy of anovulatory pills would be, in Father Janssens' judgment, morally permissible.

The purpose of the Belgian moral theologian is understandable and laudable. He wants, he says, to promote discussion among his professional peers that will "enrich the content of conjugal morality." Such a goal, he writes, is demanded "not merely by a love of truth but also by a love of Catholic couples who in the uneasiness pressing upon them have a claim on our aid."

Father Janssens' professional



## 'Romance' in Vocation

Bishop Kearney begins prayer at Mass for vocations in St. Mary's Church, Rochester, Tuesday evening.

In his sermon at the Mass which was sponsored by the Rochester Serra Club, he stressed the importance of prayers for vocations, citing the Saviour's promise to send "laborers into his harvest" in answer to prayer.

The Bishop said parents should manifest "enthusiasm" for their children who show signs of a religious vocation and said teachers should also directly promote interest in their pupils' becoming priests, brothers or nuns.

He referred to his own more than fifty years as a priest and said there is "no greater romance" than "a life of loving

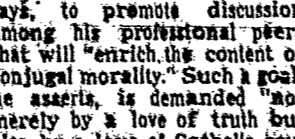
service of our divine Lord." He said he has found "a fresh beauty, a fresh inspiration and never monotony in his long career in the priesthood."

Serra Club members and their families, delegates from diocesan colleges and high schools and many parents attended the Mass. The Serra Club is a laymen's group which fosters religious vocation.

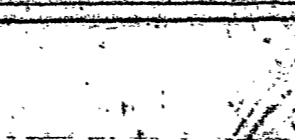
In an obvious allusion to Father Janssens' invitation to speculation, Father Ford continued: "Theological journals will continue to publish the speculations of moral theologians on these problems. Some of these speculations are merely tentative, and among the most recent case some are proposed for consideration and discussion by fellow theologians. Such publications cannot be considered definitive or practical, nor justified in dealing moral obligations on which the Holy See has already given its decision."

The American result himself concluded: "Catholics should realize, too, that not only theologians who tend to enlarge the legitimate scope of the pill but those who tend to restrict it are equally concerned over the trying problems mirrored people face today. The moral dilemmas occasioned by generous married love, generous in its self-donation, generous in its fruitfulness, as the preoccupation of all theologians concerned. Neither they nor the married Catholics can stop to solve these dilemmas by ignoring the teaching of the Holy See."

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