

## A Club for Everybody Are Catholics Over-organized?

A venerable old pastor long since gone to his eternal reward used to remark, "Organizations ruin a parish." He stood by his conviction by ruling out any parish activities except the strictly spiritual.

Few pastors these days, whether they hold his conviction or not, are able to hold to such a position. Now there is a parish organization for everybody — Cubs, Brownies, Boy and Girl Scouts, Youth Club and Sodality for youngsters, Mothers Club, Rosary Society for the women, Men's Club and Holy Name Society for the men, and, of course, the bowling league.

And just in case these do not provide enough activity, the diocesan directory lists 104 other organizations and the national Catholic almanac counts another 229 national organizations — including a Catholic Aviation League, a Catholic Petroleum Guild and the Crusade for a More Fruitful Preaching and Hearing of the Word of God, Inc. (abbreviated to CFAMFP and HOTWOG).

Then there are also the international Catholic organizations.

A New Jersey priest writing in a recent issue of U.S. Catholic magazine said, "Anyone who starts a new organization in the Church to do away with all existing clubs and societies will be well on his way toward canonization."

Claretian Father Stanley M. Grabowski obviously thinks there are too many organizations in the Church — many of them competing against each other.

Although some lay societies have their importance and usefulness, he said, "Catholics must choose the best means available and concentrate their efforts without dissipating their energies in various groups often working for the same goal but in competition with one another."

Asserting that some of the traditional parish societies have lost much of their impact, Father Grabowski maintained that "too many are still answering the needs of a 19th Century world, now nonexistent."

"They are trying to carry on in the same way today as they did 40 years ago," he wrote. "Others are so devalued they have to depend upon meetings featuring hot dogs and beer for the men and tea or coffee for the ladies with a short film or guest lecturer to attract the members."

Father Grabowski said that the problem of having "irrelevant" Catholic groups could perhaps be solved by having the laity and priests "work together in the job of transforming and divinizing the temporal order."

"To accomplish this, new and continually changing forms will be needed," he added. "Old organizational patterns and approaches may have to give way even at the risk of disappointing loyal and faithful members of existing groups."

"The job to be done is too important to be frustrated by tender sensibilities and jealous guarding of personal privileges."

During these days of the Vatican Council when the world's bishops are up-dating the Church itself to make it more effective in the modern world, certainly members of the numerous organizations in the Church should do some honest soul-searching to decide how best they too can adapt themselves with the Church to the needs of the present era.



Patroness Of France

The Little Flower — St. Therese of the Child Jesus entered the Carmelite convent in Lisieux, France at the age of 15. Her simple but heroic religious life of nine years was dedicated to saving souls and to praying for priests. The young Carmelite longed to lead her hidden life of prayer in a pagan land, but illness kept her in France. Yet so well did she fulfill the essential vocation of a missionary that in 1927, two years after her canonization, Pope Pius XI declared her patroness of all missions. Together with our Blessed Lady and St. Joan of Arc, she is patroness of France.

## 'No Reason for Panic' Report Shows

# Catholic Schools One Year Ahead of Public Schools

New York (NC) — Archbishop Lawrence J. Shehan has said he sees no reason for panic about the future of parochial schools, despite the vigorous criticism they face today in some quarters.

The Archbishop of Baltimore said that a major study upholds the competence of academic instruction in parochial schools, that the shortage of sister-teachers is not a decline, but a temporary interruption in the flow of new graduates, and that the financial burden does not warrant pessimism.

Archbishop Shehan, who made his observations in the April 4 American magazine, "National Jesuit Weekly Review," is a widely known commentator on education.

He is both former chairman of the U.S. bishops' Department of Education of the National Catholic Educational Association.

The Archbishop, taking note of the criticism of Catholic schools, said he is not concerned when defects are criticized and constructive proposals for improvement put forward.

But he added: "What causes us apprehension is that some of our own people should attack the very existence of the parochial schools, as if they had become an unbearable burden, dragging the Church down, impeding her progress and preventing her from fulfilling her mission to the people of this country."

Archbishop Shehan, in making his observations in the April 4 issue of the magazine, pointed to the 1963 publication of a study giving comparative performances of eighth grade public and Catholic school students who took the Science Research Associates high school placement tests in 1959 and 1960.

The authors of the study, he reported, concluded that on a national basis in 1960, "Catholic school eighth grade groups showed significantly higher levels of achievement in three curriculum areas than did public schools."

## Old Proverb Says 'Na Bba'

Kampala, Uganda (NC) — In this country there is an old proverb that goes: "Eka gwana musajja na bba" (In a home there should be wife and husband).

The proverb was pointed out by Father F. Mgoniwe, a professor at Gaba Seminary here, as proof that monogamy is a traditional belief in Uganda, and polygamy is a more recent acquisition.

To drive his point home he quoted another: "Naamka abirya afa enjala" (He who has two homesteads is likely to die of hunger).

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## His school eighth grade groups

The Archbishop wrote: "The 1959 tests, administered to 50,000 children of public schools and 80,000 of parochial schools, showed that the group from the parochial schools showed a mean grade equivalent one year higher than the other sample."

"The 1960 tests, administered to 120,000 public school students and 100,000 from parochial schools, showed that the Catholic school students scored about one-half a year higher on

their achievement tests in language, arts, arithmetic and reading.

The prelate said that the apparent decline in the number of sister-teachers available as teachers in the United States is not a decline, but a temporary interruption in the flow of new graduates, and that the financial burden does not warrant pessimism.

He said that there is no reason to doubt the future will see

an increase in the number of teaching sisters.

"I do not mean that the supply will meet the demand in the foreseeable future, but the picture, I believe, is not nearly as dark as some have thought it necessary to paint it," he writes.

Archbishop Shehan also said a financial burden exists, but he expressed confidence that parents will make sacrifices to support the schools and that relief in the form of tax credits guaranteed by a mere general

or other public aid "may not be so far away as it seemed a few years ago."

The prelate also said he does not believe all children should attend neutral public schools and get their religious instruction from the Confraternity of Christian Doctrine.

The Confraternity, he said, is just as important as the parochial school, but it is "not an adequate substitute for religion, a tendency to limit religious education."

## Priest Asks Greater Interest in U.N.

Geneva (NC) — A priest-expert on international affairs has called for Catholics to take a greater interest in the United Nations, and warned that a proposed U.N. declaration on religious intolerance may not be satisfactory.

Father Henri de Riedmatten, O.P., advisor to the International Catholic Information Center here and a frequent representative of the Holy See at international conferences, spoke in an interview on the proposed U.N. declaration.

The Human Rights Commission of the U.N. failed to complete action on the declaration at its meeting that ended March 18, partly because of delaying tactics by communist nations. The Soviets and their allies, U.N. observers said, sought to prevent any U.N. document safeguarding religious freedom. At the same time, they tried to have the proposed declaration so worded as to equate religion with "nonreligious belief" and spell out the right to carry on atheistic propaganda.

Father de Riedmatten said: "Even though they do not have the same direct significance as national legislation, the discussion of international instruments by the U.N. should certainly rouse more active inter-

est among Christians and especially among Catholics."

He said the declaration debated by the Human Rights Commission concerned a matter of utmost importance since it will become the standard by which the U.N. will judge future cases of religious discrimination. He added that it is likely to be the basis used by new countries for their constitutions as well as of an international treaty which will legally bind the nations that sign it.

"There is a danger," Father de Riedmatten pointed out, "that the text which will be adopted may practically confirm the opinion that religion is a mere subjective phenomenon, for which governments generally show respect, but the exterior manifestations of which are kept under state control for the sake of public order or common good."

"Religion cannot be compared with other private opinions. Religious belief is transcendent and informs the whole life of the faithful. With religion man's destiny is at stake. And for this reason man's right to religious freedom is basically prior to the rights of the state."

Father de Riedmatten insisted that religious and other freedoms cannot be sufficiently consensus and by the recogni-

tion by the state of certain principles.

"In other words," he continued, "if the declaration on religious freedom which is now being discussed, does not heed religion in its essence, if there is a tendency to limit religion

to a mere matter of freedom of thought, then it will be said that the state is the ultimate judge of what is permitted and what is not, where religion is concerned. . . . It will mean that freedom of religion is recognized or granted must be severely controlled by the state."

## Triple Attack On Alcoholism

New Orleans (NC) — Treatment of alcoholism demands a three-pronged attack involving body, mind and soul.

This was the message given to priests from throughout the country attending the sixth annual Pastoral Institute on Alcoholism which met here March 31-April 1.

Seaton Brisolara, executive director of the Committee on Alcoholism for Greater New Orleans, said that unless all three areas—body, mind and soul—are in working order, there is little hope for success in coping with alcoholism.

Treatment of the body is necessary, he said, "to overcome the physical tensions, nervousness and nutritional factors involved in this compulsive addiction."

The mind must be treated, he said, "to dispel the fears, anxieties, guilt, resentfulness and feelings of inadequacy which prevail in the alcoholic's thinking, to create a healthier self-image and a sound evaluation of one's capabilities as well as deficiencies, in order to adjust to reality, with the deep conviction that the 'world is not against' the alcoholic."

tion that the 'world is not against' the alcoholic."

The soul requires treatment, he added, "to clarify God's position in life in general, and particularly in the alcoholic's life; His forgiveness of sin; His interest in each human being's welfare, and to instill God's role in the maintenance of society."

The priest, Brisolara said, doubtless plays an important role in the detection and treatment of alcoholism.

Father Bernard J. Lenarz of Mayhew Lake, Minn., also emphasized the part the priest plays in the team approach to alcoholism.

Father Lenarz, who for 13 years has given annual retreats and days of recollection for alcoholics, stressed the help the priest can give the alcoholic as a spiritual father.

"The priest," he said, "will find that most alcoholics respond to such encouragement and as a result will be better able to maintain their sobriety, but will be a real asset to the parish and to the Church."

## Remarkable Coptic Revival in Progress in Egypt

By DR. GARY MACDON

The future of Catholicism in Egypt, as I noted last week, seems intimately linked with the fortunes of the Orthodox Copts. Numbering two millions and perhaps considerably more, they form the biggest Christian community in any Moslem state.

For more than 1300 years, since the armies of the Caliph Omar invaded the Nile delta in 639, they have been on the defensive. About the 13th century, they were forced to withdraw from the cities and form isolated communities in the southern desert. But many have returned to the north during the past 50 years, to re-enter the economic and cultural life of the country.

They are now starting an impressive spiritual and intellectual revival of the Coptic Church.

The Coptic leaders are extremely conscious of how much they have lost through their long isolation from the rest of Christianity. They have, accordingly, created a special bishopric in Cairo for what they describe as ecumenical and social services.

Bishop Samuel, who is in charge, visited the United States to attend the Brasenon conference of the World Council of Churches

and has been back again, more recently. He has also traveled widely in Western Europe, including a stay in Ireland in search of traces of Coptic monks from Egypt, said to have participated in the flourishing of Irish monasticism during the century following Saint Patrick.

These efforts of the Orthodox Copts to renew contacts with other Christians are sincerely welcomed by Egyptian Catholics.

Many theologians today consider that a large part of the conflict in the fourth century over the two natures in Christ was semantic. They believe that further historical and theological research will confirm that the Copts and others do not in fact hold teachings condemned by the Council of Chalcedon in 451.

But an essential step in the process is the development of learning within these churches to enable them to establish in a scientific and emotion-free atmosphere the precise content of their faith.

In Cairo, I was able to visit the Coptic Institute, a school of higher studies associated with the Coptic Orthodox seminary. Established on a modest scale in the late 1950s, it is Bishop Samuel's principal tool for cultural revival. It has sections for Coptic studies,

Semitic language studies and African studies.

A major current project is the recording on tape and discs of the entire Coptic liturgy, which has been handed down for countless generations without written music. I arrived while the seminary choir led by a priest was casting a tape of part of the marriage service.

The ceremony, developed in the heavily atmospheric of remote villages, is extremely long. When carried out in its full form, it goes on all night. The music sounds monotonous to the Western ear but is appreciated by Africans that Catholic bishops further south in that continent are studying ways to adopt it for liturgical use.

For several million widely scattered people, the Copts have fewer than a thousand priests, and the only seminary is that at Cairo with 120 resident seminarians. They are trying hard to raise the level of training, but they have to set modest goals. For work in the country, they admit boys with only two years of secondary schooling and give them a 5-year course—mainly practical and pastoral—before ordination. Those intended for city work or higher studies complete high school before starting a 5-year course of philosophy and theology.

Among Catholics the view is growing that

they should help provide priests for their Orthodox brothers. Bishop Skandar of Assiut and Superior General P. Hage of the Basilian Fathers spoke in this sense at the Vatican Council last fall. Father Hage urged in particular that the rules of canon law regarding participation by Catholics in religious services of others be modified. The Orthodox, he said, teach no heresy, but many of them are losing their faith for lack of priests. Catholics should, in agreement with the Orthodox hierarchy, take care of their spiritual needs in such circumstances.

Cooperation would require one significant change in Eastern rite practice, a return to a liturgy and canon law closer to Orthodox observance. Both in Rome and the Near East, I have found those working for closer relations with Orthodox unanimous on this point. The Latinizing of the Eastern rites they regard as indefensible in principle and tactically mistaken.

"Imagine the scandal of three different starting dates and regimens for Lent," I said to me in Jerusalem. "All Catholics in Egypt should follow the Orthodox rules for Lenten fast," another said to me in Cairo. "Fasting is very important here, because the Moslems neither eat nor drink from dawn to sundown during the month of Ramadan."

## Pope and People at Easter Mass

Vatican City (RNS) — Pope Paul VI is shown as he offered an Easter Sunday Mass facing a crowd of more than 100,000 Romans and pilgrims. The Mass was celebrated at a temporary altar placed on the steps of St. Peter's Basilica. Earlier he had celebrated an Easter Mass in the Church of Santa Maria dell'Oliveto in Settignano, a working class community just outside Rome.

## Diocesan Historian Asks Letters of Bishops

Father Robert McNamara of St. Bernard's Seminary, who is writing the history of the Rochester Diocese, this week asked that anyone who has a letter from Bishop Bernard J. McQuaid, Archbishop Thomas F. Hickey, Bishop John F. O'Hern or Cardinal Edward Mooney contact him at 618-2444 so he may arrange to obtain a copy.

Father McNamara is preparing the diocesan history for publication in 1966, centenary year of the Diocese.