Aged Priest, Adviser to Four Popes

Rome—(RNS)—An 82-year-old pastor from Brescia is today not only one of Italy's best known priests, but one of the closest friends and spiritual advisers of Pope Paul VI.

Father Giulio Bevilacqua, who each Saturday goes on the air over the Italian national television network to give a talk on the problems confronting the Roman Catholic Church, accompanied Pope Paul during the pontiff's pilgrimage to the Holy Land.

"You can't imagine the trouble I've had ever since that trip," the white-haired, blue-eyed priest with the firm jaw said smilingly. "A lady even wrote me from Paris addressing me as 'His Eminence, the Cardinal-Confessor of the Pope.' And I am neither a cardinal, nor a papal confessor!"

FATHER BEVILACQUA is a consultor of the Sacred Consistorial Congregation and one of the experts named for the Second Vatican Council.

Only reluctantly will he admit that Pope Paul not only very often deigns to seek his advice, but indeed looks to him as his confessor.

"That may be so," the stubborn priest from Brescia will say, "we've known each other a long time and I lived in his home for five or six years. Now I come to Rome, and the Vatican regularly, in my capacity as a Vatican expert."

On these visits Father Bevilacqua generally lunches with Pope Paul. And on such occasions the simple priest who is a member of the Philippine Order of the Brescia Oratorium, and the tireless, dynamic Pope must have much to say to each other.

For Father Bevilacqua, despite his poverty—he continued to live in his humble parish on the outskirts of Brescia — is sought after by cardinals and bishops, by the great contemporary Catholic thinkers as he was sought, for his knowledge and advice, by Pope Pius XI, Pius XII, John XXIII and the present pontiff.

"I'm a parish priest, and want remain one until I die," he insists, turning aside praise and honors.

Nor does Father Bevilacqua mince words when it comes to giving his opinion.

According to the priest, the difference between Pope John and Paul VI is this: While John liked to talk all the time, Paul has learned the difficult art of listening, and listening well.

"Once Pope John called me in but when he never stopped chatting I finally got nervous and said to him: 'Santità, you wanted this audience, not I. So let me talk a little too!'"

Pope John stopped, looked at him, and smiled widely.

The priest's voice shook as he added:

"John changed the whole face and future of the Church. He was one of the greatest popes the Church has known. And he loved Don Battista (then Cardinal Montini) deeply. So much so, in fact, that a few days after his election to the pontificate he said to me:

"'Do you know the first thing I've done, Father Bevilacqua? I've put down Don Battista's name in my notebook for the purple! Understood?'

"Pope Paul is a good man, a great man. An intellectual loaded with ideas, of extreme sensitivity. John was right when he told me: 'How good Don Battista is!' It is true. He is humble, but has the right sense of authority. I am certain John saw, in Cardinal Montini, his successor.

"The Pope also wants to be closer to the people, to the world, irrespective of race or creed. Palestine was only the beginning, and I think he will travel throughout the world! He'll have to hurry if I am to accompany him. After all, I'm 82."

But Father Bevilacqua's family is a long-time one. He has a brother who is 90 today and is a well-known painter in Italy. He himself studied political and social sciences at Louvain University in Belgium, and was ordained in 1908.

During the first World War he was the chaplain of an Alpine regiment. Later he had to flee his home when the insurgent Fascist movement attacked him for some of his newspaper articles and devastated his home.

He sought refuge with Don Battista Montini, in the latter's house in Rome. During World War II he was a naval chaplain, serving on a cruiser first, then on a destroyer. In between, to

"But Paul VI is a harder worker than I," he says. "When we used to spend a brief holiday in Switzerland in a Benedictine convent, Don Battista would work 14 hours a day, and still found time to write. consider that a 'vacation.'"

Before returning to his distant parish in northern Italy, ten hours away from Rome by train, Father Bevilacqua had a final thought. "God has given us two pages to read in life," he said. "The Scriptures and reality! It is essential to understand reality, to experience it in depth!"

Philosophical Group Convenes

Kansas City — (RNS) — Dr. John Oesterle, professor of philosophy at Notre Dame University (left), was named president of the American Catholic Philosophical Association at its 30th annual meeting in Kansas City. Shown with him going over some notes at the sessions are Bishop Charles H. Helmsing of Kansas City-St. Joseph, host to the meeting (center), and Father James A. Weisheipl, O.P., of the Dominican House of Studies, River Forest, Ill., out-going association president.

New School To Promote Latin Study

Vatican City—(RNS)—A Pontifical Superior Institute of Latinity to promote the study of Latin—the Church's official language—will be established in Rome, Pope Paul VI announced in a *motu proprio* dated Feb. 22.

The Pope said the new institute would be set up at the Pontifical Salesian Atheneum and would begin its academic courses "as soon as possible."

Entitled "Studia Latinitatis," the *motu proprio* was issued on the second anniversary of the constitution, "Veterum Sapientia," of Pope John XXIII which stressed the importance of Latin as "the living language of the Church" and instructed the Sacred Congregation of Seminaries and Universities to establish an institute to foster its study.

Pope Paul said the Salesian Society of St. John Bosco had offered a site wor the new institute and its operation would be entrusted to the Sacred Congregation to which his predecessor's instruction was issued.

The Grand Chancellor of the institute, he added, would be the Cardinal Prefect of the Congregation, Giuseppe Cardinal Pizzardo.

'Shared Time' On Increase

Atlantic City—(NC)—Experiments in shared time are increasing in number, with 150 communities in the nation presently participating, and more joining each year.

This was reported here as 25,000 members of the American Association of School Administrators attended their recent 100th conference in Convention Hall.

Two of the convention's major discussion meetings were devoted to shared time, while three programs on a special closed television circuit, which enabled delegates to follow the programs in their hotel rooms and lobbies, had shared time as a theme.

During discussions on shared time it was agreed that the programs must be administered at a community level and there must be complete harmony between officials of both schools to make the plan successful.

It was said there was no cited instance of where shared time had been tried and discarded as a failure.

Papal Blessing

Trenton — (NC) — Pope Paul VI has given an apostolic blessing on the 10th anniversary of the Monitor, Trenton diocesan newspaper, to Bishop George W. Ahr of Trenton, its publisher, Father William E. Maguire, its editor, the newspaper's staff and its readers.

Racism Infects Whites, Negroes

Buffalo — (RNS) — A Negro Catholic priest, addressing Buffalo's first Interfaith Conference on Race, asserted that racism "has infected every religious body — including Negro bodies."

To counteract this racism, Father Rollins Lambert, first Negro ordained in the Chicago archdiocese, suggested that the equal rights movement be regarded by all "not as a struggle of Negro versus white, but an effort to establish human dignity."

"WE MUST work for the rights not only of respectable, hard-working religious Negroes, but all of the deprived and even the depraved," he told some 500 Protestant, Catholic and Jewish clergy and laymen.

A continuing dialogue between whites and Negroes was advocated by the Rev. Porter W. Phillips, Jr., former president of the Council of Churches of Buffalo and Erie County, and the first Negro to hold that post.

"Some of us," he said, "need to sit down together to talk frankly and honestly and work together to eradicate those things that stand between our Negro citizens and full participation in the total life of our community."

Rabbi Abraham J. Heschel of the Jewish Theological Seminary, New York, suggested formation of a National Association for the Advancement of All People to involve every one in the struggle for equal rights because "all of humanity has a stake in each man."

He called racism "worse than idolatry" and racial inequality "blasphemous."

Sponsoring the conference were the Buffalo interdenominational church council, Buffalo Catholic diocese and the Buffalo Board of Rabbis.

No Dialoque With Reds

Vatican City — (RNS) — Osservatore Romano, the Vatican City newspaper, emphasized here that Catholicism and Communism are incompatible and there can be no meeting between them.

The newspaper also hailed the mayor of Florence for calling on Premier Nikita Khrushchev of the Soviet Union to rid the party of atheism.

Osservatore commented on a story appearing in Unità, Italian Communist paper, which had stressed the possibility of a dialogue between Catholics and Communists.

In a message to Premier Khrushchev, the mayor appealed for an end to state atheism and anti-religious campaigns in the Soviet Union. "Announcement by Pravda of a new anti-religious campaign must be due to Stalinists, your enemies and enemies of peace and fraternal coexistence," he told the Russian leader.

Indians To Hear Own Language

La Paz, Bolivia — (NC) — Not only Spanish but the Aymara and Quechua Indian languages will be used in the celebration of the Mass in Bolivia, the hierarchy announced here.

The prelates said they share the eagerness of the priests and people for introduction of the vernacular. But they said that "a bit of patience" is in order.

Young Adults 'Neglected'

New Orleans—(RNS)—Young single people between high school graduation age and the mid-20s represent "the most neglected age group" in the Roman Catholic Church, an Air Force chaplain said here.

Chaplain (Capt.) Robert Goedert, O.P., held many of this group are lost to the Church because they have lost touch with it.

The priest feels that one of the best ways to keep them in contact with their faith is through young adult social clubs. And working with young adults, he added, is one of the easiest things for a priest to do and "one of the most profitable. It got more results in that work than in any other work I tried to do."

Before joining the Air Force in 1960 Father Goedert spent eight years in New Orleans with the Dominican Fathers. While here he organized the "Padua 20's" of St. Anthony of Padua parish, one of the first Catholic young adult groups in New Orleans.

Philosophy Courses Merge

Haarlem—(RNS)—Three seminaries in the southern part of Holland have agreed to merge their philosophy courses in an effort to conserve manpower and improve their teaching standards.

The seminaries are those of the Redemptorist Fathers at Wittem, the Picpus Fathers at Velkenburg, and the Society of African Missions at Aalbeek. Their decision, however, is subject to the approval of the local provincials of the three orders.

Laymen Lag On Race Issue

Minneapolis — (RNS) — It is the white layman who is hampering the response of religious institutions to America's racial crisis, a Roman Catholic lay leader told Minnesota's first Conference on Religion and Race here.

"Though clerical leaders have not exhausted their teaching institutional opportunities, by and large, in many communities it is the layman who lags behind," said Mathew Ahmann of Chicago executive director of the National Catholic Conference for Interracial Justice.

HE PREDICTED that while religious groups will gradually take larger and more significant steps in meeting the "just demands and needs of Negroes," a breakthrough to assuming initiative, along with Negro leadership, is unlikely.

However, he added, "we hope, pray and must work for a more radical response on the part of ourselves and our religious groups."

"The toleration of racism within our religious communities is blasphemous, a denial of our God and our relationship with Him, and a 'God-damned thing,'" he said.

Ahmann, a native of Minnesota, noted that ghettoes in this state are not as large as elsewhere. But, he said "our discrimination is as apparent. Our job and housing discrimination is as rank. Our social discrimination is as abominable."

"We religious people feel too comfortable with our expanded role in race relations," Mr. Ahmann declared. "We don't adequately realize the suffering of those subject to discrimination, be they Negro or American Indian. . . . Our programs in race relations are still avocations . . ."

The Catholic lay leader said the demands for racial justice "now" require "substantial concessions toward racial integration on the part of the white community."

"Coupled with Negro pressure, organized religion is the one force which has a possibility of shaping the national consensus necessary to give us truly intergrated society," he added. "To realize the possibility before them, religious groups have to boldly step up their institutional efforts to convert their own adherents, and to use the moral force they represent."

Middle Class 'Desert' Poor

Washington — (RNS) — A priest in Washington's "central city parish" has charged that the newly affluent middle class which moves from the older areas of American cities to the suburbs neglects an obligation it has to the poor left behind.

Father Gene Baroni, assistant pastor of SS. Paul and Augustine church, told a convocation of Trinity College students that it is up to the middle class to "get its hands dirty" and do something about closing the gap it is widening between the two levels of society.

He said that with wealth, the middle class forgets its past, and looks with a type of scorn at the persons who have taken their place.

"It is time for the middle class parishes to stop being afraid of the world and help understand some of the realities other people are facing, such as a regular income, adequate housing and respectability," he said. "Where are Catholics"? Where are they in the world? What are they doing to help the poor?"

Episcopalians To Hear Prelate

Cincinnati — (RNS) — Archbishop Karl J. Alter of Cincinnati will address the 90th annual convention of the Protestant Episcopal Diocese of Southern Ohio in Columbus May 4-5.

It will mark the first time a Roman Catholic dignitary has addressed this convention, and it comes as a result of several conversations between Archbishop Alter and Episcopal Bishop Roger W. Blanchard of Cincinnati.

Bishop Clarence Isenmann of Columbus and several other Catholic clergy and laymen will be among the guests at the convention.

Catholic Aid Fights Measles

New York—(NC)—The Malagasy government appealed for help to Catholic Relief Services — National Catholic Welfare Conference, overseas relief agency of U.S. Catholics, to combat an epidemic of measles in the Malagasy republic.

Father Jean-Louis Pelissier of Holyoke, Mass., director of the CRS—NCWC program in Malagasy, reported to the agency headquarters here that 2,000 persons already are afflicted with measles, and medication is needed urgently. The agency immediately shipped (Feb. 28) 400 5cc vials of virus vaccine by air freight. CRS—NCWS also made arrangements with Secous Catholic (Catholic Charities of France) and the CRS—NCWC Geneva office to supply additional vaccine.

The U.S. Catholic agency began a relief program in 1952 in Malagasy and intensified its efforts this year to assist more than 112,000 needy persons.

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