

Pope Asks, 'What is Church'

God's World

Jews Ask Tax Relief On Tuition

Atlantic City — (RNS) — A Jewish educators' council called upon the U.S. government to allow a partial income tax deduction for tuition at full-time parochial and other private schools.

Some 500 delegates at the 38th annual conference of the National Council for Jewish Education approved the proposal in a resolution noting the tax deduction "would have a salutary effect to some degree on the overall issue of religious school financing."

The delegates said that parents of private-parochial school pupils were subject to "a system of double taxation" in that the religious school relieved the public school system of the costs of school construction, maintenance, teaching and other pupil costs.

They agreed, however, that while there could be "no quarrel with the principle that those who desire a special type of education for their children must be ready to pay for it, it is also a fact that they are paying, as well for the approximate half of the total cost of the day school program devoted to the secular subjects which the law requires for all children, regardless of the particular framework of education."

The resolution urged a study by "appropriate public and governmental agencies of the possibility of writing into existing federal tax laws a provision which would permit relief for such parents in the form of deductions from their taxable incomes for a portion of the funds spent for the cost of religious school education for their children."

Holding that such deductions would not infringe on the principle of church-state separation, the delegates stated that "such an arrangement would ease the present unfair burden of double taxation on such parents at relatively little cost to the federal treasury without upsetting the existing local real estate taxation base for public school financing."

Vatican City — (NC) — Pope Paul VI has pointed to an ever more pressing need for an answer to the question, "What is the Church?"

But the "immense and complex reality" which is the Church, he said, refuses to be hemmed in by "the terms of a hasty definition."

The Pope was speaking to a regular weekly general audience. Among his hearers were an American Legion group and members of the United States Armed Forces with their families. Pilgrims from Uruguay, France, Great Britain and Germany were also present.

He said the question "What is the Church?" is not new, but has become "more urgent, with greater need of an adequate answer."

"While we all think we have a ready reply," he said, "which the catechism teaches us and which our experience gives us, we all feel it is not easy. And when we try to marshal our words, we perceive that the reply is incomplete. For it is difficult to define the Church."

"It is good we should realize this difficulty, because then we begin to understand that the Church is an immense and complex reality, which we are unable to circumscribe by the terms of a hasty definition. There always remains something to say about the Church."

The Pope referred to the Gospel of the previous Sunday, the Second Sunday after Pentecost, and its parable of the man who invited guests to a feast. He said this parable "foreshadowed the Church."

"It is known," he said, "that the word 'Church' means precisely 'a calling together.' The Church is the meeting of those called by God. It is the people whom God has brought together. It is the assembly of those who have been called."

"It would be good to bear in mind this root idea of the Church, because it reveals many things to us. Above all, it reveals that the Church does not make itself, but it bears of a divine initiative. It rises from a thought of God, who wants to bring men together in a religious society in which His mercy manifests itself in a very particular way. It then reveals to us that this call demands ministers, those who bear the invitation and conduct the meeting. The Gospel we refer to says the host sent his servant to announce to those invited the hour of the feast."

"It also reveals to us how membership in the Church is founded on free acceptance on the part of the faithful. The Church is a voluntary society. But it results from the responsible, supreme and decisive choice of the man who has understood what moral obligation and what happy destiny arise from the loving divine call to the happiness of the Kingdom of Heaven."

"Liberty and duty are at the human basis of the Church, as free giving and love are at its divine basis," the Pope said.

Joy in Faith

By LEO J. TRESE

How would you classify your attitude towards religion — as legalistic or as Christocentric?

A person who has a legalistic attitude towards religion sees religion as a complex of regulations, a series of commands and prohibitions. Believe these truths — or else! Assist at Mass, pray and receive the sacraments — or else! Do not lie, steal, hate or fornicate — or else! The crucial question always is, "Is it a sin or isn't it?"

A legalistic orientation towards religion makes for a plodding and a joyless sort of spiritual life. It is a spiritual life which is largely sterile, too, because the practice of charity is so narrowly limited. The legalistic Catholic does what he has to do. He avoids what he has to avoid. Having done that, he has done everything.

The Christocentric Catholic builds his religious life on the one overwhelming truth that God, loving us with an everlasting love, has sent His own Son into the world to make that love known to us and to unite us to Himself. Made one with Christ in baptism, we live joyfully and confidently as God's beloved children.

Laws and regulations become almost incidental. They are important, yes; but important as opportunities to express our love for God by fulfilling our nature as His children.

Conscious of God's unwavering love for us and of our intimate union with Christ, our zeal and charity know no bounds. We feel a concern for others. We have eyes which are sensitive in detecting the needs of others and a spirit which is generous in ministering to those needs.

We do not quake at the thought of hell nor become discouraged by our occasional failures. The memory that God loves us best like a father purges in the depth of our being. Knowing that God has gone to such extreme lengths to bring us to Himself, we are confident that God will not let us easily escape Him. If we but do our best, however poor that best may be by man's reckoning, God's never-failing grace will draw us on to that final ecstatic embrace with Himself.

IF OUR OWN attitude towards religion has been a legalistic one, the fault may lie to some extent with our early religious training. In times past, religious teaching did tend to cast itself too narrowly in a "do and don't" mold. Bible history and catechism were two distinct subjects.

The catechism itself was presented as a series of dry truths to be memorized like theorems in geometry, rather than as a "grand unfolding of the wonder and beauty of God and of His loving commerce with men. The Creed, the commandments and the sacraments were taught as separate divisions of religious knowledge.

Their interrelation as elements of one great symphony of divine revelation, with Christ as the central motif, was lost sight of. The fact that we have done as well as we have, religiously, is due more to the devotion and shining example of our parents and teachers than to the books which they and we used.

Fortunately, in recent years things have changed radically in the field of religious education. Religion courses now are built increasingly around the Good Tidings of salvation — around the fact that God has lovingly revealed Himself to us in the

Association For Better Church Music

Vatican City — (NC) — Pope Paul VI has set up an international association of church music to promote and coordinate the various undertakings for developing and spreading liturgical and choral singing.

The institution of the new association was announced in an apostolic letter published Feb. 22 but dated Nov. 23, 1963, the feast of the patron of music, St. Cecilia.

The association will have its headquarters in Rome and has been placed under the presidency of Arcadio Cardinal Larraona, Prefect of the Sacred Congregation of Rites. Its goal, according to the apostolic letter, will be carried out in accordance with the directives and spirit of the Constitution of the Liturgy approved by the Second Vatican Council and promulgated by Pope Paul.

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Dominican Tertiary Picnic

Dominican Third Order members will hold a picnic at the Cenacle Convent garden Sunday, June 14. Outlining plans are Mrs. Frederick Boehmer and Mrs. Edwin Hart with Father Thaddeus Murphy.

Missioner in Peru Starts First Parochial School

By FLOYD ANDERSON

Lima — (NC) — The first parochial school in Peru is almost literally bursting at the seams. The school now has 1,100 students — "but we turn away 300 for every 100 we accept," says Father John Lawler, M.M., of New Bedford, Mass., the pastor.

St. Rose of Lima parish was started 14 years ago by Father Lawler. He had \$1,000, given by his superiors to rent a house, furnish it and provide his maintenance for a year. His instructions were to found a parish.

He did. On a large city block he has now a beautiful church, a large convent and social service center, a grammar school and high school, a large auditorium — and plans for expansion.

"The parish," Father Lawler points out, "is not very large in size. It is only 10 blocks by 7 blocks. But there are many multiple apartment buildings — so the parish has around 27,000 people living in it."

What Father Lawler wants to do is duplicate the school. "We feel the urgency to enlarge our school as much as possible," says Father Lawler.

"The first point is to get teachers for the running of the schools. When I was home (last fall on sick leave), I talked with the council of the Maryknoll Sisters. They promised

that Maryknoll Sisters would take it over, and that they would increase the number of students as they would be needed. That is the first big thing."

The next "big thing" is land on which to build the school. The area around St. Rose of Lima church and school (the first named after St. Rose in Peru) is pretty well occupied — except for an adjoining beautiful park and playground.

FATHER LAWLER'S ingenuity and gentle persistence is shown by his approach to this problem. Generally it is forbidden to use "green areas" as such parks are called, for any other purpose, even for schools.

Father Lawler wondered whether it might be possible to effect an exchange — an equivalent sized piece of land elsewhere in the city, which would make another green area, for a part of the park.

The military junta was then in power in Peru, and Father Lawler talked to the president of the junta. A special commission was named to study the matter, but finally decided against Father Lawler's proposal.

However, an alternative was suggested. On the other side of the park a third of a block was vacant. This might be obtained by eminent domain, the streets alongside closed off — and that property turned over to the parish for a new high school. The present high school would then become an addition to the grammar school, doubling its facilities.

It was further suggested that the park area between the present and proposed school could be used as a playground especially for the school children, so long as no high fences were erected. And there, at the moment, the matter rests, awaiting further action by the present government.

However, Father Lawler is not resting. Some nearby property has been donated to the parish by a prominent daily paper, La Prensa, and on it Father Lawler plans to build a social service center. The present one is attached to the convent but is not large enough for the parish requirements.

Bishop Joins Jewish Union

Jerusalem — (NC) — Bishop Georges Hakim of Acra and 60 priests and Sisters have been granted membership in Histadrut, Israel's trade union organization, to make use of the sick fund, medical services and old age pensions available to members.

The Melkite Rite Bishop told the press he had studied the union's regulations and found nothing contrary to the beliefs of the Church or his own position, and said he had encouraged the same 24,000 Catholics under his jurisdiction — almost all Arabs — to do the same.

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