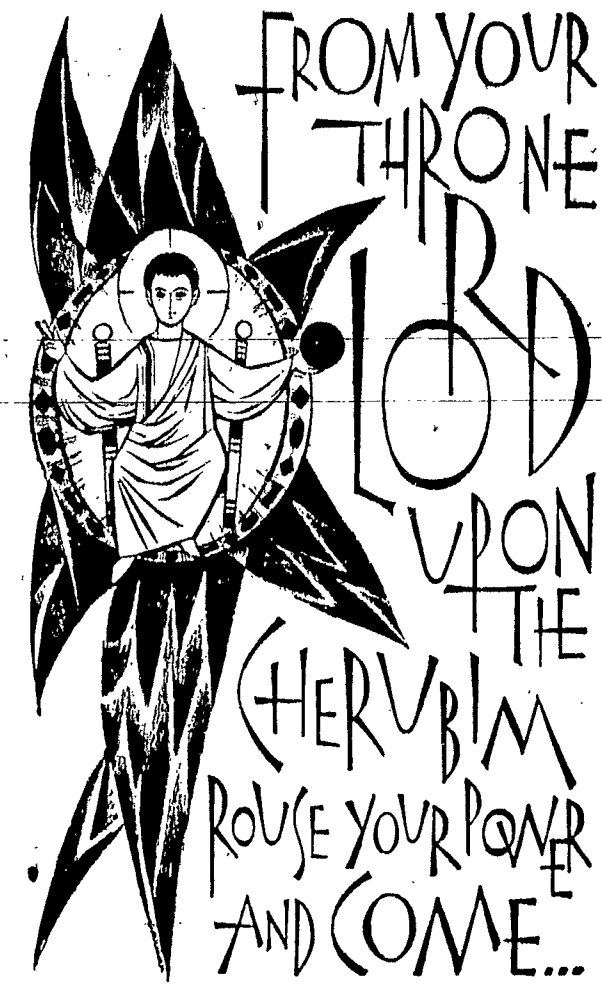


The Church, a Bridge to Unity for a Divided World



Mission Bishop Describes Brazil

A Brooklyn Bishop from Brazil came to Rochester last week to thank Mother Agnes Cecilia of the Sisters of St. Joseph for sending five nuns to be missionaries in his diocese.

Bishop Benedict Coscia, on his way home from the Vatican Council, stopped first in Brooklyn to see his family and then came here on his errand of gratitude.

The five nuns from the Rochester Diocese are in charge of the public schools in the city of Matiera, an area where nuns had never been before although virtually all the residents are Catholics.

Bishop Coscia, a Franciscan missionary, said, "Brazil is starving for priests and nuns."

Why don't Brazilians themselves enter the priesthood or the convent?

"The people there were long divided between the rich and the poor, the educated and the uneducated, the few and the many. Relative to their numbers, many of the rich, educated young people did become priests and nuns but compared to the vast numbers at the other end of the social scale, there just weren't enough to staff the churches and schools.

"The grinding poverty which has haunted Brazil for years forced its victims to spend all their time on surviving — we can't expect religious vocations to develop in such tragic circumstances."

He voiced his conviction, however, that improved economic conditions and increased educational opportunities will ultimately change Brazil's present plight.

"But we need hundreds of missionaries to tide over the time until Brazilians can meet their own religious needs," Bishop Coscia said.

He also described the Vatican Council's efforts to focus the church's attention on the worldwide mission problem. A proposed statement on the subject he described as "inspired."

Pope Paul presided at the Council the day the statement was put to the bishops for approval. Even the Pope admitted it needed to be strengthened so the bishops sent it back to a committee to be rewritten. Bishop Coscia is convinced the new "collegiality" concept of bishops that they share responsibility for the faith around the world and not just in their own area will also open the door to a new missionary era in the Church.

"It really all goes back to the question of how well we are keeping the command given us by our Lord to 'go into the whole world' with the gospel He taught us," Bishop Coscia concluded.

He spoke to the nuns at the Sisters of St. Joseph Motherhouse and described the work to be done by Sisters Rose Alma, Michael Marva, Adelaide, Regis and Anna who are now in Brazil studying the language and customs of the country. They expect to begin their school duties early in 1965.

Vatican Studies Honors For Martyrs of Paris

Vatican City (RNS) — A cause for the beatification of French Resistance hero, a martyr of the Second World War, was approved by the Vatican Council on Monday. The cause of the late Joseph Becket, a member of the Paris commune, was approved by the council. Becket was a member of the Paris commune and was executed by the Gestapo in 1944.

The cause of the late Archbishop Darboy was approved by the council. He was a French bishop who was executed by the Germans during the Second World War. The council also approved the cause of the late Sister Marie Madeleine, a member of the Sisters of St. Joseph who was executed by the Germans during the Second World War.

(This is the first of the eight chapters of the Vatican Council's Constitution on the Church, as released by N.C.W.C. News Service.)

1. Christ is the Light of nations. Because this is so, this Sacred Synod gathered together in the Holy Spirit eagerly desires, by proclaiming the Gospel to every creature (cf. Mk. 16, 15), to bring the light of Christ to all men, a light brightly visible on the countenance of the Church.

Since the Church is in Christ like a sacrament or as a sign and instrument both of a very closely knit union with God and of the unity of the whole human race, it desires now to unfold more fully to the faithful of the Church and to the whole world its own inner nature and universal mission. This it intends to do following faithfully the teaching of previous councils.

The present-day conditions of the world add greater urgency to this work of the Church so that all men, joined more closely today by various social, technical and cultural ties, might also attain fuller unity in Christ.

The Mystery of the Church

2. The eternal Father, by a free and hidden plan of His own wisdom and goodness, created the whole world. His plan was to raise men to the participation of the divine life. Fallen in Adam, God the Father did not leave men to themselves, but ceaselessly offered them salvation, in view of Christ, the Redeemer "who is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of every creature" (Col. 1, 15).

All the elect, before time began, the Father "foreknew and predestined to become conformed to the image of His Son, that he should be the firstborn among many brethren" (Rom. 8, 29). He planned to assemble in the holy Church all those who would believe in Christ. Already from the beginning of the world the foreshadowing of the Church took place. It was prepared in a remarkable way throughout the history of the people of Israel and by means of the Old Covenant.

In the present era of time the Church was constituted and by the outpouring of the Spirit, was made manifest. At the end of time it will gloriously achieve completion, when, as is read in the Fathers, all the just, from Adam and "from Abel, the just one to the last of the elect" will be gathered together with the Father in the universal Church.

3. The Son, therefore, came, sent by the Father. It was in Him, before the foundation of the world, that the Father chose us and predestined us to become adopted sons. In Him it pleased the Father to re-establish all things (cf. Eph. 1, 4-5 and 10). To carry out the will of the Father, Christ inaugurated the Kingdom of heaven on earth and revealed to us the mystery of that kingdom. By His obedience He brought about redemption.

The Church or, in other words the kingdom of Christ now present in mystery, grows visibly through the power of God in the world. This inauguration of all things is both symbolized by the Blood and Water which flowed from the open side of the crucified Jesus (cf. Jn. 19, 34) and are foretold in the words of the Lord referring to His death on the cross: "And I will be lifted up from the earth and will draw all things to myself" (Jn. 12, 32).

As often as the sacrifice of the cross in which Christ our Passover was sacrificed (1 Cor. 5, 7) is celebrated on an altar, the work of our redemption is carried on, and in the sacrament of the eucharistic bread, the unity of all believers who form one body in Christ (cf. 1 Cor. 10, 17) is both expressed and brought about. All men are called to this union with Christ, who is the light of the world, from whom we go forth, through whom we live, and toward whom our whole life strains.

4. When the work which the Father gave the Son to do on earth (cf. Jn. 17, 4) was accomplished, the Holy Spirit was sent on the day of Pentecost in order that He might continually sanctify the Church and thus all those who believe would have access through Christ to the Spirit (cf. Eph. 2, 18). He is the Spirit of Life, a fountain of water springing up to life eternal (cf. Jn. 4, 14, 7, 38-39).

To men dead in sin, the Father gives life through Him, until, in Christ, He brings to life their mortal bodies (cf. Rom. 8, 10-11). The Spirit dwells in the Church and in the hearts of the faithful, as in a temple (cf. 1 Cor. 3, 16, 6, 19). In them He prays on their behalf and bears witness in the fact that they are adopted sons (cf. Gal. 4, 6 Rom. 8, 15-16 and 26).

The Church, which the Spirit guides in the way of all truth and which He unites in communion and in works of ministry. He both equips and directs with hierarchical and charismatic gifts and adorns with His gifts (cf. Eph. 4, 11-12, 1 Cor.

12, 4; Gal. 5, 22). By the power of the Gospel He makes the Church keep the freshness of youth. Unintentionally He renews it and leads it to perfect union with its Spouse, the Spirit and the Bride both of Jesus, the Lord, "Come!" (cf. Apoc. 22, 17).

Thus, the Church has been seen as "a people made one with the unity of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit."

5. The mystery of the holy Church to manifest its very foundation for the Lord Jesus set it on its course by preaching the Good News, that is, the coming of the Kingdom of God, which, for centuries, had been promised in the Scriptures: "The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand" (Mk. 1, 15; cf. Mt. 4, 17).

In the world, in the world, and in the presence of Christ, this kingdom was clearly open to the view of men.

The Word of the Lord may be compared to a seed which is sown in a field (Mk. 4, 14); those who hear the Word with faith and become part of the flock of Christ (Lk. 12, 32), have received the Kingdom itself. Then, by its own power the seed sprouts and grows until harvest time (cf. Mk. 4, 26-29). The Miracles of Jesus also confirm that the Kingdom has already arrived on earth: "If I cast out devils by the finger of God then the kingdom of God has come upon you" (Lk. 11, 20; cf. Mt. 12, 28). Before all things, however, the Kingdom is clearly visible in the very Person of Christ, of the Son of God and of the Son of Man, who came "to serve and to give His life as a ransom for many" (Mk. 10, 45).

When Jesus, who had undergone the death of the cross, had risen, He appeared as the one constituted as Lord, Christ and eternal Priest (cf. Act. 2, 26; Hebr. 5, 6; 7, 17-21), and He poured out on His disciples the Spirit promised by the Father (cf. Act. 2, 33). From this source the Church, equipped with the gifts of its Founder and faithfully guarding His precepts of charity, humility and self-sacrifice, receives the mission to proclaim and to spread among all peoples the Kingdom of Christ and of God and to be, on earth, the initial budding forth of that kingdom. While it slowly grows, the Church strains toward the completed Kingdom and, with all its strength, hopes and desires to be united in glory with its King.

6. In the Old Testament the revelation of the Kingdom is conveyed by means of metaphors. In the same way the inner nature of the Church is now made known to us in different images taken either from tending sheep or cultivating the land, from building or even from family life and from husband and wife. The images receive preparatory shaping in the books of the Prophets.

The Church is a SHEEPFOLD whose one necessary door is Christ (Jn. 10, 1-10). It is a flock of which God Himself (cf. Jn. 10, 11) is the shepherd (cf. Is. 40, 11; Ex. 34, 11), and whose sheep, although tended by human shepherds, are nevertheless ceaselessly led and nourished by Christ Himself, the Good Shepherd and Prince of the shepherds, (cf. Jn. 10, 11; 1 Pet. 5, 4), who gave His life for the sheep (cf. Jn. 10, 11-16).

The Church is a piece of land to be cultivated, the TILLAGE of God (1 Cor. 3, 9). On that land the apostles and other workers grow who have been called by the Prophets and in which the reconciliation of Jews and Gentiles has been brought about and will be brought about (Rom. 11, 13-26). That land, like a choice vineyard, has been planted by the heavenly Cultivator (cf. Mt. 21, 33-43; Lk. 20, 9-13). The true vine is Christ who gives life and the power to bear abundant fruit to the branches, that is, to us, who through the Christ remain in Christ without whom "we can do nothing" (Jn. 15, 1-5).

Often the Church has also been called the BUILDING of God (1 Cor. 3, 9). The Lord Himself compared Himself to the stone which the builders rejected, but which was made into the cornerstone (Mt. 21, 42; cf. Act. 4, 11; 1 Pet. 2, 7; Ps. 117, 22). On this foundation the Church is built by the apostles (cf. 1 Cor. 3, 10) and from it the Church receives durability and consolidation. This edifice has many names to describe it: the house of God in which dwells His Family, the household of God in the Spirit (Eph. 2, 19, 22), the dwelling place of God among men (Apoc. 21, 3) and, especially, the holy TEMPLE. This Temple, symbolized in places of worship built out of stone, is praised by the Holy Fathers and, not without reason, is compared to the liturgy to the Holy City, the New Jerusalem (5). As living stones we here on earth are built into it (1 Pet. 2, 5). Prepared like a bride adorned for her husband, John contemplates this holy city coming down out of heaven from God when the world is made new (Apoc. 21, 10).

The Church, further, "that Jerusalem which is above" is also called "our mother" (Gal. 4, 26; cf. Apoc. 12, 17). It is

described as the spotless SPOUSE of the spotless Lamb (Apoc. 19, 7; 21, 2 and 9; 22, 17), whom Christ "loved and for whom He delivered Himself up that He might sanctify her" (Eph. 5, 26), whom He unites to Himself by an unbreakable covenant, and whom He ceaselessly "nourishes and cherishes" (Eph. 5, 26), and whom, once purified, He will to be cleansed and joined to Himself, subject to Him in love and fidelity, and whom, finally, He filled with heavenly gifts for all eternity, in order that we may know the love of God and of Christ for us, a love which surpasses all knowledge (cf. Eph. 3, 19).

The Church, while on earth it journeys in a foreign land away from the Lord (cf. 11 Cor. 5, 6), is like an exile. It seeks and experiences those things which are above, where Christ is seated at the right hand of God, where the life of the Church is hidden with Christ in God until it appears in glory with its Spouse (cf. Col. 3, 1, 4).

7. In the human nature united to Himself the Son of God, by overcoming death through His own death and resurrection, redeemed man and re-molded him into a new creation (cf. Gal. 3, 13; 11 Cor. 5, 17). By communicating His Spirit, Christ made His brothers, called together from all nations, mysteriously the components of His own Body.

In that body the life of Christ is poured into the believers who, through the sacraments, are united in a hidden and real way to Christ who suffered and was glorified. Through baptism we are formed in the likeness of Christ: "For in one Spirit we were all baptized into one body" (1 Cor. 12, 13).

In this sacred rite a oneness with Christ's death and resurrection is both symbolized and brought about. "For we were buried with Him by means of Baptism into death," and "we have been united with Him in the likeness of His death, we shall be so in the likeness of His resurrection also" (Rom. 6, 4-5). Really partaking of the body of the Lord in the breaking of the eucharistic bread, we are taken up into communion with Him and with one another. "Because the bread is one, we though many, are one body, all of us who partake of the one bread" (1 Cor. 10, 17). In this way all of us are made members of His Body (cf. 1 Cor. 12, 27), but severally members one of another" (Rom. 12, 4).

As all the members of the human body, though they are many, form one body, so also are the faithful in Christ (cf. 1 Cor. 12, 12). Also, in the building up of Christ's Body various members and functions have their part to play. There is only one Spirit who, according to His own richness and the needs of the ministries, gives His different gifts for the welfare of the Church (cf. 1 Cor. 12, 1-11).

What has a special place among these gifts is the grace of the apostles to whose authority the Spirit Himself subjected even those who were endowed with charisms (cf. 1 Cor. 14). Giving the body unity through Himself and through His power and inner joining of the members, this same Spirit produces

and urges love among the believers. From all this it follows that if one member endures anything, all the members endure it, and if one member is honored, all the members together rejoice (cf. 1 Cor. 12, 26).

The Head of this Body is Christ. He is the image of the invisible God and in Him all things came into being. He is before all creatures and in Him all things hold together. He is the head of the Body which is the Church. He is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead, that in all things He might have the first place (cf. Col. 1, 15-18). By the greatness of His power He rules the things in heaven and the things on earth, and with His all-surpassing perfection and way of acting He fills the whole body with the riches of His glory (cf. Eph. 1, 19-23) (7).

All the members ought to be molded in the likeness of Him, until Christ be formed in them (cf. Gal. 4, 19). For this reason we, who have been made to conform with Him, who have died with Him and risen with Him, are taken up into the mysteries of His life, until we will reign together with Him (cf. Phil. 3, 21; 11 Tim. 2, 11; Eph. 2, 6; Col. 2, 12 etc.).

On earth, still as pilgrims in a strange land, tracing in trial and in oppression the paths He trod, we are made one with His sufferings like the body in one with the Head, suffering with Him, that with Him we may be glorified (cf. Rom. 8, 17).

From Him "the whole body, supplied and built up by joints and ligaments, attains a growth that is of God" (Col. 2, 19). He continually distributes in His body, that is, in the Church, gifts of ministries in which, by His own power, we serve each other unto salvation so that, carrying out the truth in love, we might through all things grow into Him who is our Head (cf. Eph. 4, 11-16, Gk.).

In order that we might be unceasingly renewed in Him (cf. Eph. 4, 23), He has shared with us His Spirit, who, existing as one and the same being in the Head and in the members, gives life to, unifies and moves through the whole body. This He does in such a way that His work could be compared by the holy Fathers with the function of the principle of life, that is, the soul, which fulfills in the human body.

Christ loves the Church as His bride, having become the model of a man loving his wife as his body; the Church, indeed, is subject to His Head (Eph. 23-24). "Because in Him dwells all the fullness of the Godhead bodily" (Col. 2, 9), He fills the Church, which is His body with His divine gifts (cf. Eph. 1, 22-23) so that it may expand and reach all the fullness of God (cf. Eph. 3, 19).

8. Christ, the one Mediator, established and ceaselessly sustains here on earth His holy Church, the community of faith, hope and charity, as an entity with visible delineation through which He communicated truth and grace to all. But, the society structured with hierarchical organs and the Mystical Body of Christ, are not to be considered as two realities nor are the visible assembly and the spiritual community, no He

earthly Church and the Church enriched with heavenly things; rather they form one complex reality which coalesces from a divine and a human element.

For this reason, by no weak analogy, it is compared to the mystery of the Incarnate Word. As the assumed nature inseparably united to Him, serves the divine Word as a living organ of salvation, so, in a similar way, does the visible social structure of the Church serve the Spirit of Christ who vivifies it, in the building up of the body (cf. Eph. 4, 15).

This is the one Church of Christ which in the Symbol of Faith is professed as one, holy, catholic and apostolic, which our Saviour after His Resurrection, commissioned Peter to shepherd (cf. Jn. 21, 17), (cf. Mt. 28, 18, etc.), which He erected for all ages as "the pillar and mainstay of the truth" (1 Tim. 3, 15). This Church constituted and organized in the world as a society, subsists in the Catholic Church, which is governed by the successor of Peter and by the Bishops in his communion, although many elements of sanctification and of truth are found outside of its visible structure.

These elements, as gifts belonging to the Church of Christ, are forces, impelling toward catholic unity.

Just as Christ carried out the work of redemption in poverty and oppression, so the Church is called to follow the same route that it might communicate the fruits of salvation to men. Christ Jesus, "though He was by nature God... emptied Himself, taking the nature of a slave" (Phil. 2, 6, 7), and "being rich, became poor" (11 Cor. 8, 9) for our sakes. Thus, the Church, although it needs human resources to carry out its mission, is not set up to seek earthly glory, but to proclaim, even by its own example, humility and self-sacrifice.

Christ was sent by the Father "to bring good news to the poor, to heal the contrite of heart" (Lk. 4, 18), "to seek and to save what was lost" (Lk. 19, 10). Similarly, the Church encompasses with love all those who are poor and who suffer the image of its poor and suffering Founder. It does all it can to relieve their need and in them it strives to serve Christ. While Christ, holy, innocent and undefiled (Hebr. 7, 26) knew nothing of sin (11 Cor. 5, 21), but came to expiate only the sins of the people (cf. Hebr. 2, 17), the Church, embracing in its bosom sinners, at the same time holy and always in need of being purified, follows the endless way of penance and renewal.

The Church, "like a stranger in a foreign land, presses forward amid the persecutions of the world and the consolations of God" (14), announcing the cross and death of the Lord until He comes (cf. 1 Pet. 2, 26). By the power of the risen Lord it is given strength that it might, in patience and in love, overcome its sorrows and its challenges, both within itself and from without, and that it might reveal to the world, faithfully though darkly, the mystery of its Lord until, in the end, it will be manifested in full light.

NEXT WEEK — CHAPTER TWO, THE PEOPLE OF GOD.

Inter-American Conference Set For Chicago

Boston — (NC) — The second annual Catholic Inter-American Cooperation Program (CICOP) Conference will be held in Chicago Jan. 27-29, Richard Cardinal Cushing has announced. Cardinal Cushing is chairman of the Latin America Bureau of the National Catholic Welfare Conference.

CICOP was established in 1963 to alert U.S. Catholics to the social, economic and religious problems facing Latin America. It seeks to develop friendship, understanding and concerted efforts for Central and South America.

Albert Gregory Cardinal Meyer of Chicago will be host to the Conference which attracted some 2,000 participants in its meeting at the Edgewater Beach Hotel last year.

It is expected that at least three cardinals and 30 archbishops and bishops will take part, along with American and Latin American priests, Sisters, Brothers and laymen and lay women. Senator Eugene J. McCarthy of Minnesota and R. Sargent Shriver, director of the Peace Corps and President Johnson's Poverty Program, will also deliver addresses.

Mass in Homes

Burlington — (NC) — Bishop Robert F. Joyce has directed that "at least twice each year" in the Burlington diocese Mass be said for sick, invalids or aged "who are housebound in their own homes."

The bishop said the program applies to groups in nursing homes as well as those individually housed.



Atonement at 'Death' Camp

Munich — (RNS) — These nuns will spend the rest of their lives in prayers of atonement for the crimes against humanity perpetrated by the Nazi regime. Carmelites, they are shown in their chapel at the site of the infamous "death" camp maintained by the Nazis at Dachau, Germany. The grounds have been converted into Holy Blood Convent, which was dedicated by Bishop Johannes Neuhäuser. The German prelate was an inmate of Dachau for most of the 12-year regime of Adolf Hitler. Isolated from the world, the nuns will fill their days with hard work, meditation and prayer.