

Brazil Bishops Seek Aid On Social, School Needs

Goiania, Brazil — Ten bishops of the Midwest region of Brazil have taken the first step in a concerted effort to stimulate interest in development in this potentially rich region in which is located the new Brazilian capital, Brasilia. The first step of the 10 bishops is the cooperation in publication of a booklet, "Central-West Brazil" to cite their need of substantial help in finances and personnel to resolve critical problems in their dioceses, and social and educational works in their region.

The publication has been issued in Portuguese, French and German. An English edition will be published in the United States later this year by the Graymoor Press, Garrison, New York.

(Five Sisters of St. Joseph from Rochester are now stationed in Jatal Diocese, Brazil, the first American nuns to work in that area.)

The Central West Region is a unit of the National Conference of Brazilian Bishops, and its geographical limits coincide with the limits of the State of Goias. Goias, almost 1,000 miles in length, touches the primitive Amazon region on the north and the more developed agricultural states on the south. The state includes 413,000 square miles, and at the last census, its population was 1,920,000.

The Goias bishops met in special conferences, held in Rome during the Ecumenical Council, to seek means to solve critical social, economic and pastoral problems, and resolved as a first step to clarify those problems for those who have shown an interest in the area. Under orientation of the bishops, the booklet was prepared with the collaboration of a former minister of education of Goias, and a sociologist.

The publication cites some previously little-known aspects of the region's history since gold lured its first pioneers in 1722. It also cites obstacles which have prevented it from completely emerging from the pioneer stage even today, some 242 years later.

In a preface, it is explained that the purpose of the book is "to increase the understanding and the collaboration of those engaged in the struggle of raising the level of life and culture of peoples who are working to develop themselves and their resources."

"We can only hope for the good will and the comprehension outside and inside our country of all those who wish to come to our assistance in our program to fight underdevelopment," the bishops state in a section which pleads for help in formation of leaders. They outline a plan towards reaching this goal.

DOM BENEDITO COSCIA, Bishop of Jatal, one of the collaborators in the 55-page publication, said in an interview that the interest shown by other bishops attending the recent Council sessions was encouraging. But, he said there has been in the past a lack of concrete information available for groups and individuals outside this area to study the problems and potential of this section of Brazil.

"In many obvious respects, both factors—the problems and the potential—are greater in this region than in some of the older, more populated regions of the country," Bishop Coscia commented.

The booklet observes in a section on the economic potential

of Goias that it is a natural gateway to other vast regions. "The geographical location of Goias insures an important future to this state. This is the nation's point of departure towards the conquest of the vast uninhabited spaces of the Amazon. Without any doubt, it is in these regions that one day Brazil will find its starting point towards progress and well-being of its population... its geographical position endows this region with hope and unnumbered possibilities for the regions of the Northeast and the South."

The designation of the State of Goias as the Central West Region was one of the outcomes of meetings held in Rome by the Brazilian bishops' conference. Goias has previously been linked to the State of Mato Grosso to form a larger ecclesiastical unit. The bishops voted to divide into separate, smaller units to permit greater cooperation on problems in a more concrete manner. Mato Grosso is a larger, more primitive state than Goias.

The book indicates economic, political, social and religious problems the people of Goias have faced in the past, and continue to face. The course of history is traced up to the recent burst of energy given to development of the State by the construction of the new capital city, Brasilia, less than 10 years ago.

Of the work of the early missionaries, the book observes: "The Church was a pioneer with the pioneers, and was during the inhuman period of our colonial history the one and only voice against the ambitions and the ferocious egoism of a period called 'the gold cycle.'"

Problems the Church in Goias suffered in the 1700's were also problems common to Brazil at that time, and leave a distinct influence here:

"The evangelizing action of the first missionaries suffered at the time of the Emperor, above all—in the epoch when the influence of the Marquis of Pombal was dominant... Most of the seminaries (of Brazil) were closed. From this comes one of the great causes of the tremendous scarcity of priests in Brazil today. It is explainable, therefore, that many towns received only occasional visits of the priests for the principal feasts. Even so, the faith was guarded in the souls of the people, raised, however, with sentimental or traditional religiosity. Not rarely, however, fanatical were the habits of the people, developing sometimes customs of great

folklore value, but of little Christian sense."

THE BISHOPS also indicate the economic struggle led by the Portuguese Crown in the 1700's to prevent development of Goias, then a province:

"The crown, in a firm decision to maintain the province isolated, closed the roads and prohibited navigation of the Rivers Tocantins and Araguaia (two principal rivers of Goias). Agriculture and animal husbandry were prohibited."

On the need for forming new leaders, the publication notes:

"The anti-economic and anti-social speculation in Goias are unbelievable. Real estate speculations, luxurious clubs, usury, all of it, shows a rich class without culture, which spends without knowledge—and investing with profit. It is urgent to form new leaders, to form a new dynamic, Christian mentality, and an aggressive social sensibility."

In another section on formation of leaders and training technicians:

"In Goias and everywhere in Brazil, we observe a political, economic and social confusion, in which a dissatisfied and uncertain population is just as easily influenced by an authentic leader as by a popular agitator. It is without any doubt the duty of living and active forces to form our real leaders, if we desire to save contemporary society. The Church would not fulfill its mission if it is not conscious of this fact."

"Our youth is waiting for colleges, teaching agronomy, geology, engineering, veterinary sciences, and all other subjects which help to utilize this latent wealth. We further need specialists on cooperative problems, economists, extension service officers, nurses, doctors, lawyers and sociologists."

Failure to meet the need in this key region could have consequences reaching far beyond the boundaries of Goias, the Bishops believe.

"The apprehension of the Bishops of Goias seems justified if one considers not only the spiritual and religious development of this vast region, but also its social and economic development as one of the key centers of the future of a country, the proportions of which are those of a continent in full development, but stricken by a deep social crisis which is characteristic for such a period of growth," concludes the booklet.

Jatal, Goias, Brazil
Wendell Burns
Papal Volunteer

Nun Postulants to Aid Capital's Public Schools

Washington — (NC)—Twelve public schools in poverty-stricken areas of the nation's capital will soon get 24 teachers' aides—all postulants of the Sisters of Notre Dame de Namur.

"We welcome them and are enthusiastic about their cooperation," said the superintendent of District of Columbia public schools, Dr. Carl F. Hansen.

"We mean it as a Christian gesture of service to the community," said Sister Mary Leo, speaking of the plan and a veteran of community action programs in a large blighted area of northwest Washington, part-time at Notre

The dynamic nun, who teaches part-time at Notre Dame High School here but spends most of her time as director of the Walker-Jones Area Community Action Program, said the postulants will serve in the public schools for five weeks beginning Jan. 26.

"They will be assigned to a public school principal who will send them to assist teachers in the primary grades," said Sister Mary Leo.

"They will be engaged in child-directed activities," she elaborated, "helping in any way they can, such as story-telling, being extra help on the playground and reading with the children."

The project is a follow-up to another which has attracted national attention since its inception more than one year ago. This is Sister Mary Leo's after-school "study hall" for grade school children, most of them from public schools.

Audience to Envoy

Vatican City — (RNS)—A sign of improving relations between the Vatican and the Communist government in Belgrade was seen in a private audience given by Pope Paul VI to Ivo Vojvoda, the Yugoslav Ambassador to Italy.



New Yorker in 'Village of Misery'

Buenos Aires — (RNS) — Thomas Hollywood of Sunnyside, N.Y., Argentina director of Catholics for Latin America (top), is proud of this mud, manure and brick oven he built for a poor grandmother in a slum area of Buenos Aires. Bottom shows him surveying the "villita miseria" (village of misery), on the outskirts of the Argentina city. The village is in a pit where construction companies once excavated sand, and where between 8,000 and 14,000 needy people live. Mr. Hollywood is being cited for his work among the poor of Latin America by the Eloy Alfaro International Foundation of the Republic of Panama. He was scheduled to receive the foundation's award at a dinner in New York on Jan. 15. Founded in 1949 by Panama, the foundation is named for Eloy Alfaro, noted soldier, statesman and martyr of Ecuador. He was that nation's President from 1895-1901 and 1906-1911, and was slain in a revolution in 1912.

Plea Made for Refugees

Washington — (NC)—The assistant executive director of the world wide relief agency of U.S. Catholics suggested to a Senate subcommittee a two-point program for improvement of the U.S. refugee aid policy, particularly in Africa.

Msgr. John F. McCarthy, assistant executive director of Catholic Relief Services—National Catholic Welfare Conference, recommended a speed-up in the time lapse between investigation of a refugee problem and action to solve the problem.

"There should be a source of immediate aid for emergency refugee needs, even on a bilateral basis," Msgr. McCarthy said. "The United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees is not able to act in all refugee situations. His office is limited to situations where action is expressly requested by the government of countries of refuge and approved by the UNHCR executive committee composed of 30 nations."

As an example, the monsignior said multilateral aid has not been made available for Sudanese refugees in Congo Leopoldville or for many other needy refugee groups, but CRS, NCWC is providing U.S. donated food for the refugees and the World Food Program also is making a "fine contribution."

"Secondly, the longer-term resettlement problem must be faced," Msgr. McCarthy told the Senate Judiciary subcommittee investigating refugee problems. "The governments of the young

nations of Africa, although for the most part generous in according refuge to their brothers

from neighboring lands, are unable to provide the technical assistance and financial resources needed to truly integrate the newcomers into the established communities of the country-of-asylum."

'Markings' Said Best in Decade

Minneapolis — (RNS)—"Markings," an unconventional autobiography by the late Dag Hammarskjöld, former secretary general of the United Nations, has been described by a Minneapolis clergyman, as "the most religious and most spiritual book of the last 10 years."

Dr. Arnold H. Lowe, pastor of Westminster Presbyterian Church, said it is the only book published in 1964 that he has read over and over again.

"It has not left my bedside since I first opened it," he told the 23rd annual Book Night audience at the Minneapolis Club where he reviewed books published during the past year.

Dr. Lowe, author of 20 books, who annually reads from 150 to 175 new volumes, said 1964 was "not a particularly profitable year for the average reader."

The enormous number of books about the late President Kennedy was one of the most significant developments on the American book scene last year, he said.

He questioned whether "anywhere, anytime, a man lived so short a life and died under such violent circumstances and left after him a literature as broad and as compassionate as this young man did."

God's World

'Martyrdom'

By REV. LEO J. TRESE

Do you ever suffer for your faith? You may answer, facetiously, "Yes, every time I smell a steak being grilled on a Friday." There would be truth in your answer. Penance is painful.

Virtue can be painful, too. Each time that we overcome a temptation to sin we suffer at least a little. Sometimes the suffering can be quite severe, as when a girl breaks off with the man she loves because she discovers that he has a divorced wife still living.

This hardly would be the type of suffering which Jesus had in mind, however, when He said, "Blessed are they who suffer persecution for justice' sake, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven." Parents view the ordinary sacrifices which they make for their children as a natural expression of love. Similarly we should esteem the ordinary sacrifices entailed by God's commandments as the minimum measure of our love for Him.

Persecution for justice's sake—that is, for virtue's sake—calls for more than the minimum of love. The perfect exemplars of the eighth beatitude are, of course, the martyrs. A martyr proves his love for God by the ultimate test: death rather than sin.

Probably no one who reads these lines will ever be called upon to face such a heroic test of his love. However, there are more modest degrees of martyrdom. Anyone who speaks up in defense of God's rights (in defense of racial justice, for example, or in defense of decency in dress, films and literature, or in condemnation of steady dating by high schoolers) at a time and place where those rights are not popular, is bound to incur some persecution. The persecution may be no more severe than raised eyebrows and chilly looks, but even that can hurt.

SOCIAL PRESSURE, the pressure to make us conform to the mores of the group, can be almost as powerful as an absolute dictator. We have a deep-seated need to be liked and accepted by others. It hurts when, to defend the right and the good, we must alienate those whose good opinion we covet.

This is a type of martyrdom for which young people have more opportunities than do oldersters. Social pressure is seldom so tyrannical and the urge to conform so powerful as during the adolescent years. Youth has such a hunger for peer acceptance, such an anxiety to be one of the crowd, in a harmless form, this urge to conform sends thousands of teenagers screaming after the Beatles. In a less harmless form it sends thousands of college students migrating to the Florida beaches during the Spring holidays, like mating seals, flocking to the Pribilof Islands.

We do have ever so many fine young men and women, but we also have a progressive lessening of sexual restraint among the general population of teenagers and young adults. For many of our youth sexual experience has become the mark of sophistication, and "Everybody does it" the supreme code of morality.

This poses a great challenge to our parents, priests and teachers. Our boys and girls have high ideals and a sincere desire to be virtuous. Outside the shelter of Catholic home and school, however, they are exposed to an almost irresistible pressure to identify with the herd, to

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conform to the rules which the herd imposes. If they do not conform, the penalty sometimes can be a painfully lonely life in high school or college.

We who love them must help our youth to prepare for the test which, sooner or later, almost certainly they will face. We must lead them to such a strong and personal love for Christ that they may be able to withstand disapproval, ridicule, even ostracism for the sake of Him Whom they love.

In the Bible, the seventh chapter of the second Book of Machabees gives us one of history's greatest accounts of youthful heroism and parental nobility. A mother exhorts her seven sons to perseverance as, one by one, they are butchered in her presence for refusing to renounce God.

The mother of the Machabees might well be our patron saint as we try to teach our sons and daughters the meaning of the eighth beatitude: "Blessed are they who suffer persecution for justice' sake, for of such is the kingdom of heaven."

Catholic Univ. In Portugal

Lisbon — (NC) — Portugal's bishops have announced plans to found this nation's first Catholic university.

They said in a joint pastoral letter issued after their meeting here that there is "an imperative need for a Catholic university for the nation's youngsters." They said the university will have "greater freedom, greater dynamism and greater flexibility" than the present state universities.

The letter said that the government will help the bishops in founding the new Catholic university.

Last summer, Manuel Cardinal Goncalves Cerejeira of Lisbon told a meeting studying the foundation of the Catholic university that it would be open to both laymen and the clergy and located in Lisbon instead of the older university town of Coimbra. Earlier, efforts were made to restore a theological faculty at Coimbra University. The faculty was closed following the revolution which made Portugal a republic in 1910.



Inventor of Glass Bells

Dedham, Mass. — (RNS)—An electronic system of glass bells has been installed in St. Susanna Catholic Church in Dedham, Mass. They were invented by Gerhard B. Finkenbeiner, shown here in his Brandeis University laboratories. The four-bell chime is encased in what appears to be radio tubes and housed in a metal cabinet two feet long with a total weight of 40 pounds. Mr. Finkenbeiner says that the electronic system has the sound and clarity of 2,500-pound church bells cast in bronze. The glass device is described as a significant advance over electronically amplified metal vibrators now in use in many churches.

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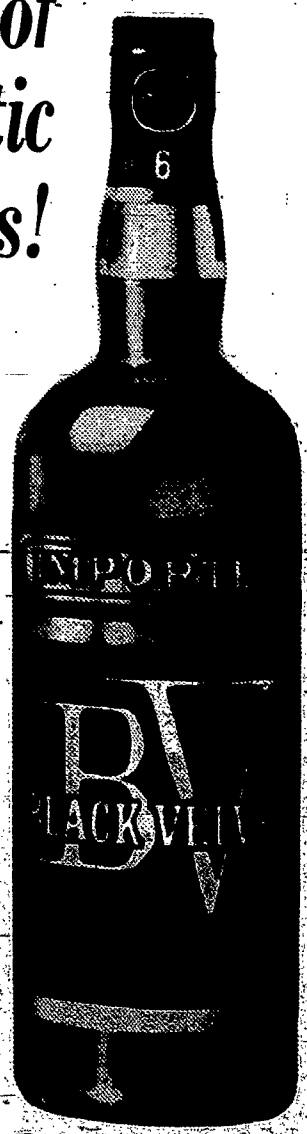
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