



### Parish Opens Medical Clinic

Detroit—(RNS)—Essential medical services are provided to needy persons regardless of religion or color at this clinic operated by the Annunciation Catholic church in a changing neighborhood of Detroit's east side. In this photo Dr. Philip Ferling examines Michael Michael, while nurse Irene Parker and Michael's sister, Constance, look on. The services are given by a volunteer medical and clerical staff. The clinic is part of the parish's Community Center.

### Geneva, Protestant Rome

Geneva—(NC)—During the lifetime of John Calvin, Geneva was often called the "Rome of the Reformation." Here the intellectual giant of the Protestant revolt established a veritable theocracy.

Now Geneva is once again a sort of "Rome" for non-Catholic Christians the world over—no longer as the storm center of bitter religious revolt but as the focal point of worldwide ecumenical dialogue. This focal point is the headquarters of the World Council of Churches.

In February, Rome itself will be represented at Geneva when Augustin Cardinal Bea, S.J., head of the Vatican Secretariat for Promoting Christian Unity, will call at the recently completed WCC headquarters to confer with leading non-Catholic ecumenists, including Calvin's spiritual heir, Pastor Marc Boegner of the French Reformed Church.

The new ecumenical center of the world will find a model of modern efficiency. About 300 persons work in the \$3 million complex, which houses the offices of Dr. W. A. Visser 't Hooft, WCC general secretary since the organization's founding in 1948; the offices of the various departments from theology (Faith and Order) to

publicly. (Information Department and the Ecumenical Press Service), and bureaus for the permanent representatives of some of the more than 200 Protestant, Orthodox, Anglican and Old Catholic churches which form the membership of the council.

The WCC exists, in the words of the organization's Evanston, Ill., Assembly in 1954, as "an instrument at the service of the churches, which enables them to enter into fraternal conversation with each other, to cooperate in various fields, and to render witness together to the world. It is not a new church (even less a super-church) and does not perform ecclesiastical functions."

The common basis to which the member churches of the council subscribe is:

"The World Council of Churches is a fellowship of churches which confess the Lord Jesus Christ as God and Savior according to the Scriptures and therefore seek to fulfill together their common calling to the glory of the one God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit."

The WCC is the spiritual and organizational heir of a world missionary conference of Prot-

### Publishers To Revise Religion Text Books

Chicago—(RNS)—Religion textbooks used in Roman Catholic schools are being revised or rewritten in an effort to erase negative images and distortions relating to Protestants and Jews, according to a nun who conducted a study on textbook bias.

"At least six publishing companies are changing their religion texts in the spirit of the ecumenical movement," Sister Rose Albert, O.P., chairman of the Education Department at Dominican College, Racine, Wis., said in an interview.

The Sister, who conducted her study at St. Louis University from 1957 to 1961, said the six publishers are Benziger Brothers, Chicago; St. Mary College Press, Winona, Minn.; Father Novak Fordham Press, New York; Fides Publishers Assn., Notre Dame, Ind.; Dubuque (Iowa) Priory Press; and Plus XII Religion Center, Monroe, Mich.

Sister Rose Albert, here to attend an interreligious conference on religious education, said an editor of one of the revised textbook series recently told her:

"Some of the things we have told Catholic children about Protestants in the past are in the realm of real fiction."

The nun said some publishers had asked Protestant ministers to read and approve sections in the new texts dealing with the Reformation.

"As a result," she said, "the Reformation is finally being treated with sensibility."

Sister Rose Albert stated that the new texts "do not treat the Jews as harshly" regarding the crucifixion of Christ, and added that most of the new texts were revised or rewritten before the

preliminary vote approving the Jewish declaration at Vatican II.

Her general criterion was the concept of "ecumenism," which she described as "the notion that we're 100 per cent right, brilliant and virtuous and everybody else is 100 per cent wrong, ignorant and wicked."

Textbook references reflecting this attitude were judged negative. "Editors and teachers must take great care," she said, "to avoid statements that would lead young students to question the basic motivations, sincerity and integrity of their neighbors who are of other religious denominations."

The council's very existence, however, provides an opportunity for cooperative effort in specialized areas and, even more important, it provides a continuing stimulus to reflect on the basis of Christian-unity and to envision a framework for eventual Christian reunion.

The reunion of Christendom is far from being "just around the corner." But with the work of the second Vatican Council on the subjects of the Church, ecumenism and religious liberty and with the interest in unity spurred throughout the non-Catholic Christian world through the efforts of the WCC, hopes for mending the divided fabric of Christendom grow stronger.

## Protestants Study Council

Enugu, Nigeria—(NC)—The Vatican Council's failure to act on its proposed declaration on religious freedom before the end of the third session last November was criticized at a Protestant-Orthodox meeting here.

Dr. W. A. Visser 't Hooft, general secretary of the World Council of Churches, told a meeting of the WCC's policy-making central committee that "even though the Vatican has come to decisions which, from an ecumenical point of view, are constructive, it has postponed decisions on other important matters, such as religious liberty, and in other cases has only reaffirmed old positions."

(The Vatican Council presidency ruled that a vote would not be taken as scheduled on Nov. 19 on the proposed statement. It ruled against the vote to provide more time for Fathers to study the document. The ruling was not reversed by Pope Paul despite a petition signed by close to 1,000 Fathers.)

Dr. Visser 't Hooft also told the WCC central committee's first meeting in Africa:

"We cannot and must not underestimate the strength of the movement for true spiritual renewal which is at work in the Roman Catholic Church." But, he added, "we find that this renewal meets with powerful opposition in leading ecclesiastical circles."

THE DUTCH Reformed Church leader suggested four guidelines in evaluating the Vatican's efforts toward renewal:

1. Other churches have by no means solved the problem of tension between the forces of renewal and existing structures.

2. Anxiety about renewal is shared by both Roman Catholics and other Christians and there is a sense of being involved in a common cause.

3. The Second Vatican Council's decree on ecumenism creates a new situation in which the Roman Catholic Church is no longer standing apart but has expressed a desire to work with other churches. This indicates that it recognizes that "Christ is working" in other churches.

"Roman Catholic and non-Roman Catholic churches have exercised a subterranean influence upon each other," he said, "and it is now clear that we are together faced with an obligation to reinterpret the task of the church in an increasingly secularized world."

4. Mere polite and passive co-existence is not enough. There must be an acceptance of responsibility for each other and therefore intensive conversation between all Christians.

One of the main items on the agenda of the central committee meeting here is the question of how far the WCC should go in representing Protestant and Orthodox churches in Christian unity discussions with the Catholic Church.

A translation based on the Latin text of the constitution printed in L'Osservatore Romano, the booklet is available for 45 cents a copy from the office at 1312 Massachusetts Ave. N.W., Washington, D.C. 20005.

Washington—(NC)—The publications office of the National Catholic Welfare Conference here has issued a 45-page booklet containing a translation of the Second Vatican Council's Constitution on the Church.

The Catholic "auditor" is slated also to attend a Jan. 19 faith and order conference sponsored by the Rhode Island council's committee at which the Rev. William Norgren, head of the Faith and Order department of the National Council of Churches, will speak.

Father Reilly confirmed that Bishop McVinney is preparing to name a diocesan commission to handle ecumenical matters at an interreligious gathering with Protestants.

Some delegates seek to channel such discussions mainly through the WCC. Others say each individual church should chart its own ecumenical path.

The failure of Christianity to cope with African customs—including polygamy—was cited at the meeting as a cause for the spread of Islam throughout Africa.

African delegates reported that Islam is winning thousands of converts, while the rate of Christian growth is barely keeping pace with the rise in population.

### Faith, Order Unit Names R. I. Priest

Providence—(RNS)—Planning for a New England Faith and Order Conference and the appointment of a Catholic ecumenical commission for the Diocese of Providence will mark the first few weeks of 1965, a survey of the state's religious expectations for the New Year disclosed here.

In addition, about 70 churches have slated pulpit exchanges for Sunday, Jan. 17, in response to a national suggestion by the Consultation on Church Union that this might be one way of marking the annual church unity octave which opens Jan. 18.

The New England Faith and Order Conference is scheduled for the summer of 1967, but the planning for it will begin on Jan. 15 at a meeting of representatives of the region's six state councils of churches with Roman Catholic and Eastern-Orthodox priests.

The initial planning session will be held in Needham, Mass., according to Dr. Wayne Artis, executive director of the Rhode Island State Council of Churches.

Dr. Artis and Father Daniel P. Reilly, chancellor of the Catholic Diocese of Providence, disclosed that the diocese will have an "auditor" at the initial meeting.

He is Father Lionel A. Blain, member of the faculty of Our Lady of Providence Seminary, diocesan minor seminary in Warwick.

Father Reilly said that Father Blain has been given permission by Bishop Russell J. McVinney of Providence, to attend the Needham meeting and to sit in on the meetings and activities of the Faith and Order committee of the Rhode Island State Council of Churches.

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### Council Decree In Booklet

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