

Scholars Plan Symposium

Chicago (NC) — Internationally known scholars will take part in a symposium on the Bible here June 11 and 12 under the chairmanship of Bishop John J. Wright of Pittsburgh.

The symposium will be sponsored by the Thomas More Association and the library science department of Rosary College, and will be held at the college. Its theme will be "The Word Endures Forever."

Speakers will include Father Barnabas M. Ahern, C.F., editor of "The Bible Today"; Father Roland de Vaux, O.F.S., director of the Ecole Biblique in Jerusalem and current occupant of the Stillman chair of Catholic studies at Harvard University;

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Twelve Years of Research

Bones in Vatican Identified as St. Peter's

Vatican City — (RNS) — Dr. Margherita Guarducci, professor of Greek antiquities and epigraphy at Rome University, presented Pope Paul VI with a book in which she maintains that bones found in the grottoes of St. Peter's Basilica are the remains of the Prince of the Apostles whom Catholics regard as the first Pope.

The volume, based on extensive research and study by the archaeologist and other scholars, is entitled "The Relics of St. Peter Beneath the Altar of the Confession of the Vatican Basilica."

It received extensive coverage by Osservatore Romano, Vatican City daily newspaper, and the Vatican and Italian Radicals. Osservatore took no official position on the book's thesis, but printed a long article by Prof. Filippo Magi, adviser on classical art to Vatican museums.

Dr. Guarducci said that the remains were found in 1953 and research since then convinced her that they are bones of St. Peter. She said the bones consisted of about half of the skeleton and skull fragments of a man of strong physique between 60 and 70 years old.

According to Catholic tradition, St. Peter was crucified head down in Rome during the reign of Emperor Nero, possibly in 67 A.D. In 1950, Pope Pius XII announced that the tomb of St. Peter had been found in a mausoleum under the basilica bearing his name. The papal announcement, in his annual Christmas message, climaxed ten years of excavation work in the basilica's grottoes.

In the article giving details of Dr. Guarducci's book, Osservatore said that the earth in which the bones were found was "identical with the earth found in the original tomb of St. Peter which was empty."

In her book, Dr. Guarducci affirmed that the tomb had been empty and said the saint's bones had been transferred to a secret hiding place during the time of Constantine (about 280 to 397 A.D.).

She said the earth also contained some fragments of purple and gold cloth which, the Vatican daily's article observed, were "evident remains of the precious drape in which Peter's bones were enveloped before finding asylum in the secret place."

Noting that St. Peter was believed to have been martyred

in a circus on the site of the Vatican, Osservatore asked, "Have the relics of St. Peter been found? Today everything is clear. Prof. Guarducci affirms it."

The woman scholar was described by Osservatore as a "scrupulous and untiring scientist." It said "the fruits of her latest work indisputably exceeds in importance her previous contributions in this field."

According to Osservatore's article, the loss of about half of the skeleton may be attributed to the damage caused to the tomb by construction of a well and to considerable infiltration of underground water.

Dr. Guarducci's book contains four reports made by other scientists and archaeologists. These deal with human skeletons, animal bones, stone and earth, and cloth fragments all found beneath the Altar of the Confession.

Germany, a Test Area for Ecumenism

By REINHOLD LEHMANN
Bonn — (NC) — Germany, the homeland of Martin Luther and the incubator of the Reformation, is a major testing ground for growing ecumenism.

It is a country in which much of the pioneering work has been done to pave the way for Christian unity. It is also one where immense population shifts have suddenly brought masses of Protestants and Catholics into close contact for the first time.

The religious wars of the 16th and 17th centuries were settled on the general basis that the religion of the people should be that of the local prince. For that reason virtually all the people of an individual region belonged to the same faith.

With the expulsion of millions of Germans from Soviet-occupied areas in the east and their resettlement in West Germany immediately after World War II, the old denominational borders broke down. Almost every village and town now had sizeable groups of both Catholics and Protestants. Following initial tensions, better relations began to develop. In many areas, the new Catholic congregations were invited to use the local Protestant church for the celebration of Mass. In towns formerly all Catholic, it was often vice versa.

But at the same time, the new contacts resulted in a major increase in mixed marriages, which became more and more of a problem on both sides.

During the war, moreover, many Protestant and Catholic religious leaders came to know and respect each other in the concentration camps and in exile.

Munich have played leading ecumenical roles within the Council.

But there is a difference between speeches made in the council chamber in St. Peter's and those delivered at home. And the people themselves have not been adequately prepared for the ecumenical era.

One problem on both sides is the variety of Protestant denominations. Lutherans of course predominate. But there is a significant Calvinist body, as well as a group of Reformed Christians whose doctrinal stand is an adaptation of the teachings of both Luther and Calvin. There are small pietistic sects besides.

It was this proliferation that led Cardinal Frings to remark in his Christmas homily last year that it would be easier for the Catholic Church to make contact with the Orthodox and Anglican Christians than with the Protestants. His implication here was that despite the fact that the various Protestant churches adhere to the Evangelical Church of Germany,

they generally make their own decisions rather than following those of the overall body.

Even so, however, the Evangelical Church in Germany has recently approved forms for joint Protestant-Catholic prayer services. And Protestant and Catholic experts in various social fields have been meeting and mapping out plans for mutual activity. This past Feb. 19 Bishop Heinrich Janssen of Hildesheim named seven priests and three laymen to an ecumenism — commission — the first such diocesan commission in the country.

But both Protestant and Catholic authorities have ruled out having Masses attended by Protestants. Both fear that this would lead to "spiritual confusion."

Since the third session of the Council last fall, it is no longer a sensation when the local Protestant and Catholic bishops come together to bless a new state building or for some similar function. And both groups are developing closer cooperation in fields relating



Pope Blesses Cancer Society

A small gold "Sword of Hope"—symbol of the American Cancer Society's Crusade against cancer — was recently presented to Pope Paul VI by Francis J. Wilcox, Eau Claire, Wis., chairman of the Society's Board of Directors. Wilcox, a leading Catholic layman and lawyer, brought the Society's greetings to the Pope and explained the efforts of the Society and its two million volunteers to save life and alleviate pain. The Pope expressed interest in and appreciation for the work of cancer control and promised he would pray for its success.

Italy's Bishops Condemn 'Deputy' as 'Unjustified'

Rome — (RNS) — Italy's Catholic hierarchy, in a joint letter read in all churches, strongly denounced as "unjustified" charges made against the late Pope Pius XII in "The Deputy," Rolf Mochhuth's controversial play.

Declaring that "not only Italy but every nation, every race, was reached by his charity," they deplored the "slander and mud" leveled against the Pope in the West German dramatist's work which had portrayed him

Welfare Clients 'Handicapped'

Cleveland — (NC) — The "myth" that welfare recipients are "lazy, immoral and unworthy" was challenged by the secretary of the National Conference of Catholic Charities.

Magr. Raymond J. Gallagher of Washington, D.C., said the nation's 30 million welfare recipients are "among that segment of our population which is ill-housed and inadequately educated — the very old and the very young, the sick and the disabled, emotionally disturbed, mentally retarded, the dependent, the deserted — our brother-citizens who by standards of fair play never had a chance to get in the game."

Magr. Gallagher, speaking at the annual Health and Welfare Institute here, noted that 40 per cent of the recipients of some forms of relief came from families exactly like the ones they have in their turn also created.

"What does the future hold for our brother-citizens in this handicapped position if we maintain a status quo?" he asked.

Declaring that the nation today has the resources to provide "a full life" for all citizens, the monsignor cautioned against "looking for a scapegoat on which to expend hostility, someone to discriminate against, on the pretense of self-preservation."

"We must give and share more generously with all," he stated.

The National Conference of Catholic Charities is the chief coordinating agency for U.S. Catholic charities organizations.

ST. CHARLES BORROMEO. A "Swing-Into-Spring" style show is scheduled for Sunday, Mar. 14 at 3 p.m. in the school hall. Tickets, \$1.00 at the door.

Home Fashion Festival Set

The Ann Mason Home Fashion Festival will be held Tuesday, March 23 at 1 and 7 p.m. in the third floor auditorium of Edwards Lee Carpets will join in the sponsorship of the show.

No tickets are needed but reservations may be made by calling 548-5000, Ext. 355. Mrs. Virginia Kramer will demonstrate coordination of home furnishings and Benita Michaels will show "at-home" wardrobes.

Presbyterian Study — Pittsburgh — (NC) — A program to acquaint Catholics with the creed and worship of Presbyterians will be sponsored here by the Ecumenical Commission of the Diocese of Pittsburgh and the Pittsburgh Area Council of Churches.

Arts Festival — South Orange, N.J. — (NC) — A six-week festival of religion and arts to be held at Seton Hall University here will be co-sponsored by the university and Congregation Shal Jehosua.

Golf Lessons Set At CYO

Semi-private golf lessons are being offered by the C.Y.O. to all interested men and women. Here is a chance to receive expert lessons from Pete Vanderwerker of Sunny Crest Country Club — at a minimum charge. Pete is noted for his modern techniques that produce quick results for beginners as well as the old pros who are looking to knock off a stroke or two from their score.

There will be eight class lessons and eight extra practice sessions of one-half hour each and a maximum of four persons per class.

Women's instructions will be held on Wednesdays starting March 17, and practice sessions on Fridays.

The men's classes will start Tuesday, March 16, with practice sessions on Thursdays.

The fee is \$18 for 16 sessions. You can gather your own four-somes or be placed in ability groups. Classes are open for couples on either evening.

For more information call Mrs. Helen Smith or Gary Breton at the C.Y.O. 454-2030.

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