

What's the Answer in Vietnam?

A Priest Who's Been There Since 1954 Gives His Viewpoint

25 Year Persecution In Baltic Nations

Bishop Kearney asks Catholics of the Rochester Diocese to pray this Sunday, June 13, for the Lithuanian, Latvian and Estonian victims of Communist oppression in the Baltic nations.

Following is the text of his letter to the people:

My dear People,



Marking 25 years of Soviet oppression, the local unit of the Americans concerned about the conditions in their fatherland, the Baltic states, asks for prayers of all our congregations on Sunday, June 13, seeking God's help for their persecuted homeland.

May I ask your prayers for these people behind the Iron Curtain, begging God's help in their efforts for freedom to worship Him in those lands where He was loved and worshipped for centuries before the Soviet occupation.

Your devoted Shepherd in Christ,

James E. Kearney
Bishop of Rochester

Touch-down Not in Doubt

Events occur so rapidly these days that it's increasingly difficult even to be aware of them — much less evaluate them or probe the background from which they spring.

This week we were witness to the spectacular and fortunately successful space-flight of our astronauts, the launching of a Soviet vehicle to the moon — and the worsening war in Vietnam and the stalemate revolution in Santo Domingo — and weddings and anniversaries and graduations at home.

There is the continuing concern for the plight of the people in Rochester's inner-city and the awareness across the country as Klan membership grows that forces are polarizing rather than being channeled together to cope with the civil rights and human rights of so sizeable a portion of our citizens.

Somehow standing behind the moments of elation and the other moments of discouragement is the figure of the genial Pontiff who died two years ago, Pope John XXIII.

His optimism despite his realism tempers both our accomplishments and our failures. He taught us so totally that no matter how great is our achievement, so much more remains to be done, and no matter how miserably we fall, there yet remains hope and strength to try again.

The one great goal of Pope John — the factor which shaped all his actions — one that was quite the same as that of the great Good Shepherd whose Vicar he was — was his all-embracing love for all men and the desire that at long last the Lord's prayer would be attained that there might be "one flock and one shepherd."

He died without seeing this goal attained. Probably all his successors will also have to die still as witnesses to disunity. Pope John, however, put us back on the quest for unity which, like the quest for the Holy Grail in the Middle Ages, gives a higher nobility to those who seek even if they do not find it.

This fresh new spirit of adventure is evident in a 20-page report in The Ecumenical Review magazine of the World Council of Churches on the Vatican Council's decree on ecumenical activity, the pursuit of religious unity. Some of the world's greatest Protestant and Orthodox scholars voice their opinions on the historic document issued by Pope Paul and the world's Catholic bishops.

Lutheran minister Rev. Dr. Oscar Cullmann says it's "not merely a text; it is an act." He is so stirred by the Council's decree he says, "I should like to see this text widely circulated among the laity of our Protestant churches."

Presbyterian minister Rev. Dr. Robert McAfee Brown of Stanford University, also an observer at the Vatican Council, describes it as "a remarkable achievement, far surpassing what even the ecumenical romantics would have anticipated two or three years ago."

Orthodox Professor Paul Evdokimov of Paris simply terms it "revolutionary."

Four other experts comment in similar terms.

They all admit the gaps between the churches are still deep and that compromise is no way to bridge them over but, like Pope John, they are anxious to start the journey whose actual destination is still considerably indistinct as to final details.

The point of all this is simply that Catholics must be the first to welcome rather than fear the directions God's Holy Spirit is guiding His Church. The Church's journey in the final decades of this century, somewhat like the journey of Gemini-4, may have its anxious moments — but to those who have confidence in God and in those He places as Shepherds over the flock, the ultimate touch-down can never be in doubt.

—Father Henry Atwell

(The author of the following question-and-answer report on Vietnam has covered the story of communist infiltration, subversion and terror there since the division of that country in 1954. Back in the United States after six consecutive years in the Far East, he has set forth the answers to the principal questions asked him since his return.)

By FATHER PATRICK O'CONNOR
Society of St. Columban

What's the answer in Vietnam?

Let's first be clear on what the real questions are. They are simple:

• Is the "National Liberation Front" a national communist in origin, direction and purpose?

The answer is yes.

• Are people in South Vietnam entitled to defend themselves against a communist campaign to take over their country?

The answer can only be yes. A corollary to that is the right of others to help them.

• Would it be seriously dangerous for all Southeast Asia and harmful for the interests of mankind, including the U.S., if South Vietnam fell under communist rule?

It would.

• Would religious and spiritual freedoms, in particular, suffer if communist rule were extended in Asia?

They would.

But is everybody in the "National Liberation Front" a communist?

Probably not. Not everybody in Ho Chi Minh's Viet Minh and Lien Viet was communist. But the control was communist. And the purpose was proved, in fact, to be the establishment of a communist government.

How do you know that the National Liberation Front is under communist control?

To anyone who has been in Vietnam through recent years the evidence is overwhelming.

The so-called National Liberation Front for South Vietnam, which wages the war against the Saigon-based Republic of Vietnam, was founded under the patronage of the Lao Dong party, which is the communist party in the north. Its chairman, Nguyen hau Tho, a Hanoi-favored lawyer from the south, has been for years at least a fellow-traveler, the kind that can be more useful for communist purposes than an avowed party member.

The foreign liaison offices of the front are in Peking, Hanoi, Prague, East Berlin, Jakarta, Cairo, Algiers and now (after some cautious delay) Moscow.

I have seen weapons bearing Chinese characters as well as Czech weapons, captured from the front (known as Viet Cong, i.e., Vietnamese communists). In material captured at Do Xa, a logistic base of the Viet Cong in the mountains, I have seen letters written by girls in North Vietnam to their friends among the Viet Cong soldiers.

On Feb. 19 I flew with the first American officer who studied the hull of the camouflaged North Vietnam vessel hit off the shoreline of Phu Yen province in South Vietnam. This boat had brought arms and ammunition. A Hanoi newspaper dated last January was found in the hull.

Last July I interviewed two prisoners, young Viet Cong soldiers, who had come recently from the north. Ordinary villagers, to my certain knowledge, have recognized the distinctive northern accent in Viet Cong soldiers whom they listened to, in Central Vietnam, within recent months.

These are just ruddy items confirming what the International Control Commission declared on June 2, 1962. By a vote of 2 to 1, (India and Canada, with communist-ruled Poland dissenting) the commission found the Hanoi regime guilty

of instigating and maintaining a subversive war against the south. The commission, permanently stationed in Vietnam, spent 11 months investigating the evidence.

Is the North Vietnam regime anti-religious?

It is officially and thoroughly communist. That is, it is based on dialectical materialism, which is atheist. When it tolerates religion for a time, it does so only through expediency.

In its anti-religious program in North Vietnam, it is going fairly slowly, for fear of increasing the misgivings of people in the south and abroad. But it has taken over every Catholic school in the north, with the apparent exception of one seminary in Vinh. Marxism is taught in every school.

The Hanoi government did not permit Catholic bishops in the north to receive even the invitations to attend the Vatican Council. In 1959 it expelled the chargé d'affaires of the apostolic delegation. It has prevented two bishops, named in 1959 and 1960, from receiving consecration.

So repressive is the antireligious policy of the communist party in the north that more than 600,000 Catholics abandoned their homes and belongings to flee south as refugees in 1954-55. Many more who sought to flee were physically prevent-

ed. The Catholic refugees in the south are among the most determined opponents of the Viet Cong.

Maybe the people of South Vietnam want communism?

No majority has ever chosen communism anywhere. The communists themselves dare not present the issue to the people. That is why they try to disguise their party and aims by using noncommunist titles and nationalist slogans. After a communist regime has been established, the people have never been given freedom to vote against it.

The Viet Cong do receive a considerable amount of cooperation in the south, mainly for the powerful, ever-present reason of intimidation. They are absolutely ruthless toward those who show any disagreement with them or who assist the government. Their first and last weapon is terror.

Viet Cong-initiated incidents are tabulated every week in these four categories: terrorism, attacks, sabotage and propaganda. Acts of terrorism always lead in number.

When in a highly developed country with a well-organized police system, extortioners and racketeers can terrorize a sizeable segment of an industry, so that people do their will and are afraid to complain, one must appreciate how thoroughly the

Viet Cong can keep control of country villages.

Another reason: Many, not all, of the Viet Cong are southerners who were in the communist ranks against the French, were taken north and were later sent back to wage war in the south. They have families in the south, from whom they naturally receive food and shelter and from whom other Viet Cong can extort aid.

What of pictures showing Viet Cong prisoners being mistreated?

The population of Vietnam is 90 per cent non-Christian. In a war where they are ambushed and their families massacred by Viet Cong who often wear no distinguishing uniform, the Vietnamese soldiers sometimes do violate the rules of war and humanity. Americans try to have this corrected. They don't always succeed.

There are no foreign photographers present when the Viet Cong torture or kill prisoners, as to my knowledge they do.

The Viet Cong have no regard for the civilian population who may be in their way. In bombing the U.S. embassy they killed 19 Vietnamese civilians and 2 Americans.

Were not nationwide elections agreed on for 1956?

No. The agreement signed by Gen. Deltiel for the Franco-

Vietnamese High Command and by the communist "People's Army" representatives at Geneva in 1954, provided for a cease-fire and for administration of the two zones, north and south, by the respective sides, "pending elections" for which no date was set.

A final declaration of the conference, signed by nobody and specifically rejected by the State (now Republic) of Vietnam, did envisage nationwide elections in 1956. Since the north had a majority of the population and the international commission had shown its liability to ensure observance of vital clauses of the cease-fire, it was clear that fair and free nationwide elections could not have been held in 1956 or since.

Now what is the solution?

That is primarily a matter for military, political and economic specialists. Certainly surrender of South Vietnam would solve no problem for men who cherish freedom and justice. There is, strictly speaking, no need for a conference. It has been held already, in 1954.

The communists signed a cease-fire agreement with provisions that they have grossly violated. They might now be persuaded that these violations are too costly and that observance of the 1954 agreement might be more to their advantage than their present belligerency.

Liturgy Weeks in Three Cities

By REV. ROBERT W. HOVDA

More North American Catholics than ever before will have an opportunity this summer to participate in a Liturgical Week, a four-day lecture-study-practice session on the Council's reform of public worship, in three locations spanning the continent.

Liturgical Weeks will be held in Baltimore's Civic Center, June 21-24; in Portland's (Ore.) Memorial Coliseum, Aug. 16-19; and in Chicago's Conrad Hilton Hotel, Aug. 30-Sept. 2.

Conducted by the Liturgical Conference, a Catholic association which for 25 years has been a publications and meeting forum in which Christians could discuss and promote the renewal of public worship, this year's three national Weeks are a first.

In previous years, the Conference has conducted one national Week each year. For

many years these were small, though influential, meetings. Since Pius XII's liturgical reforms, however, and especially since Pope John called a council which made public worship its first business, the Liturgical Week has become one of the largest annual gatherings of Catholics in this country.

The theme of this summer's Weeks, "Jesus Christ Reforms His Church," was chosen in the light of the council's teaching in its constitutions on the sacred liturgy and on the Church.

General sessions each morning and evening will develop this theme, with two major addresses in each session. Introductory sessions for newcomers to the problems of public worship will be held each afternoon, at the same time as ten study group meetings for specialized interests. The program and schedule are the same in Baltimore, Portland and Chicago.

Highlight of each of the four days is the celebration of Mass in the main assembly hall, providing both a demonstration and an experience of what the talk and discussion during the rest of the day is about.

Since the present stage of Catholic worship reform has authorized celebration and the reception of Holy Communion under both kinds, the daily Mass at all three Weeks will feature the consecration of twelve priests with the presiding bishop or priest, as well as Communion under both kinds for selected religious and married couples who are observing anniversaries.

Music for the eucharistic celebrations has been selected to illustrate what can be done in terms both of congregational singing and expert choral contribution. Each Week begins with Mass at 8 p.m. on Monday, has a Mass celebration at 11:30 a.m. on Tuesday and Wednesday, and closes with Mass at noon on Thursday.

Among the major speakers of the Weeks will be Bishop James P. Shannon, auxiliary of St. Paul, at Portland; Bishop Ernest L. Unterkoefler of Charleston, at Baltimore; Bishop Charles A. Buswell of Pueblo, at Chicago.

Addressing general sessions in all three locations will be Rev. Gerard S. Sloyan, past president of the Liturgical Conference, author of many volumes on theology, liturgy, catechetics; Mr. William Stringfellow, lawyer and theologian, author of "My People Is The Enemy"; Rev. Frank Norris, S.S., author of "God's Own People"; Rev. John Harmon, priest of the Episcopal Church, expert in ecumenical and urban problems; Mr. Robert Rambusch, artist and consultant in church building, and many others.

Recent progress in ecumenical relations has also been reflected at the gatherings. For several years, the Liturgical Week committees have invited Orthodox, Anglican and Protestant representation, and the headquarters building or auditorium in each case has offered a hospitality room to encourage fraternizing. Each year the number of clergy and laity of other confessions in attendance at the Weeks has grown. This year two of the general session speakers are Episcopalian, a Lutheran and a Methodist will address the study group on parish

life in Baltimore and Chicago respectively.

The importance of study weeks of this kind is becoming increasingly evident to American Catholics as they find themselves in the early stages of reform in public worship, changes for which many have not been prepared. Surveys in many parts of the country have shown an enthusiastic response to this reform. They have also indicated, if less conclusively, that hesitation and worry about the "changes" are caused frequently by lack of information about the meaning and the spirit of the renewal.

Pastors are sometimes in the same position as their congregations. They are prepared, of course, to accept developments in the celebration of Mass and other sacraments as they are handed down by authority. But even a brief acquaintance with the council's constitution on the sacred liturgy has convinced this conciliar age that current revisions are not principally a matter of law and of authority but a matter of spiritual vitality and growth and perception.

Dioceses around the country have responded to this need for education by sponsoring lectures, conferences, training sessions. So far, however, it seems to be agreed that these efforts are not sufficient to answer the vast need. The Liturgical Conference, in conducting the three four-day sessions this summer in widely-separated areas of the country, hopes not just to fill the need but to stimulate more sectional and local activity in this aspect of Christian education and formation.

Forms for advance registration for any one of the Weeks may be obtained from the Liturgical Conference, 2900 Newton St., N.E., Washington, D.C. 20018. Information about hotels and about special housing for sisters and seminarians will be sent to those who use the advance registration forms. Those planning to attend the Chicago Week have been urged by Conference officials to register early, because of space limitations at the Conrad Hilton where all sessions will be held.

(Next week Father Hovda will conclude this two-part series with an analysis of the relationship between liturgical reform and life in the modern world, as this will be probed in the talks and discussions of the 1965 Liturgical Weeks.)



Text and Symbol, Mass of Trinity Sunday

How Long Must Women Stay Silent in Church?

By GARY McMEON

France's Reformed Church has decided, after a discussion of many years which culminated in a remarkable debate at its recent synod, to admit women as pastors at a level with men. Since 1949, it permitted the consecration of unmarried women in exceptional cases as pastors.

This action raises to 48 the members of the World Council of Churches who admit women to the full ministry. Nine other Churches allow a temporary or limited ministry to women, while 21 lack a definite stand, and 50 do not authorize the ordination of women.

The most important of the member Churches which ordain only men are the Orthodox and the Anglican. One woman was ordained an Anglican priest in China, but she was later asked not to exercise her ministry.

The Episcopal Church of the United States last year decided that deaconesses are "ordained" by the bishop, not simply named. These deaconesses teach catechism and do social work. Following the decision, Episcopal Bishop James A. Pike, of California, announced his intention of ordaining a deaconess to distribute the Commu-

nication and administer the sacrament of the sick, but widespread protests caused him not to execute his plan.

St. Paul's views on women figured prominently in the debate at the synod of the French Reformed Church. Deep differences of opinion remained right up to the end, reflected in a vote of 51 in favor, 33 against, and 3 void. Charity and good humor, nevertheless, managed to survive the confrontations, giving to the entire proceedings an air of Christian dignity.

The main issue of biblical interpretation was whether St. Paul's instruction that women be silent in the church was intended merely to regulate a concrete situation in terms appropriate to woman's status in the society of the time, or whether it represented a command intended to bind for all times and places.

"We can establish a parallel between this case and that of slavery," said Professor Mehl, presenting one viewpoint. "St. Paul never went into the basic issue of slavery, and neither did he attack the problem of the status of women. Let us, therefore, not draw legalistic arguments from his letters."

Professor Ellul expressed the other

opinion. "On the contrary," he said, "in the cities of the Greek world, women had a very wide liberty and spoke frequently in the assemblies. Paul consequently rules from the viewpoint of the faith on something that was sociologically permissible at that time."

In addition to the theological issue, the ecumenical effect of the proposal was fully debated. The synod was held at Nantes, the city famous for the edict which in 1595 authorized French Protestants to practice their religion freely. To commemorate that event, the Catholic bishop had called on his people to welcome the delegates with Christian cordiality, and the delegates in the same spirit showed their desire not to raise new barriers arbitrarily.

Pastor Romane Musculus raised the issue in pertinent terms. "We have reproached Rome," he said, "with having defined the doctrine of the Assumption, in spite of the silence of scripture, thus raising a new obstacle to unity. Let us not open ourselves to a similar complaint."

The synod, however, found this argument unconvincing. Pastor Hebert Roux, an observer at the Vatican Council who was actually opposed for theological rea-

sons to the proposal, denied its validity. He said that the difference between them and Rome concerned the nature of the ministry, and that a solution of that problem would still automatically solve the other.

Although the tradition in the Catholic and in the Orthodox Church against conferring any of the holy orders on women is extremely strong, not a little discussion of the subject appeared in Catholic publications in Europe in recent years, and some writers suggest that the issue is not absolutely closed. At the moment, however, the ambition of the suffragan within the Church is to share on a level of equality with men as readers at Mass under the new liturgy.

For those who had the privilege of being present at the awards banquet of the World Congress of the Catholic Press in New York recently, their case has acquired a new status. After Barbara Ward's electrifying appeal regarding the world's hungry, people wondering how soon we could hope to get women into the pulpit. For my own part, I must without hesitation state that in all my life I never heard a woman so marvelous.

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