

20th Century Mission—Rebuilding Lapsed Faith in Latin America

"How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of him, that bringeth good tidings, and that preacheth peace." Isaiah, 52-7

The twentieth century is going to be remembered for a lot of things, and not the least among them is the tremendous interest which various religious groups have had in spreading their beliefs and doctrines and in increasing their membership on a worldwide basis.

This is all the more striking, since it takes place in an age which has practically dedicated itself to the advancement of science and technological skills — to the point where material well-being has become the measure of progress, success, and social status. Paradoxically, this same materialistic progress has been an impetus to the intensification of religious activity because, while it has brought convenience, comfort, and leisure to millions who never had them before, it has not satisfied the hunger for real happiness that gnaws at every human heart.

Man is body and soul, and the spiritual soul still seeks something which no amount of material improvement can give it.

In modern times, the meaning of a mission has been largely misunderstood even by missionaries themselves. Unfortunately, various mission magazines have helped to foster the sometimes false and almost always incomplete notions of missions especially in foreign lands. Scintillating tales of exotic jungles, and im-

pressive but all-too-ancient churches have become symbols of missionary endeavor. Obviously these things do exist, but they are only a part of the picture, and in our times less important a part. If anything, they merely prove that much of mankind is still in need and there is still foundation work to be done.

What they really do emphasize more than anything else — though perhaps unconsciously — is this century's shift in mission mentality. The stress is now on poverty, hunger, homelessness — the physical things. This is understandable in an age which is concerned with underdeveloped countries and grave economic problems. What has happened is that things which were formerly part of the "romantic" approach to the missions and used to appeal to people's generosity and arouse their interest in missionary work, have suddenly become sore spots on a world conscience. What was once kindness and sympathy is now social justice.

There was a time, and it was a rather long time, when a missionary meant a man who went out into some uncivilized area, usually alone and armed with only a cross, to preach to the pagan people and, hopefully, to baptize them.

His life was expected to be difficult and dreary, and often the rewards of his labors were pitifully small. Or else it was the opposite. He was a Patrick or a Boniface or a Xavier converting whole nations and lead-

This is the text of Bishop Kearney's talk at the departure ceremony for four Sisters of Mercy who will launch a mission project in Santiago, Chile. The ceremony was held at Sacred Heart Cathedral Saturday evening, August 21.

ing behind a perpetual spiritual heritage. But neither of these concepts is true of the ordinary modern missionary. His work may be far less "colorful," but in an area of an exploding population, it is far more vital. The very immensity of the task, together with the trends of modern living, makes the modern mission a much more difficult thing. It also explains why the modern mission must be clearly understood if it is to be successful.

We must get away from the "romantic" attitude of the missions and see how the Church can respond to the felt needs of the people it wants to bring and to keep in its fold. In the modern world, this is going to mean operating a great deal in the material framework. The Church must somehow successfully solve the gigantic task of helping man to use mammon and still serve God, and to render to both Caesar and to God what is due them.

Among the aspects of modern thinking on the missions is the question of what exactly is meant by a mission. Historically, the word has always meant a sending of a person for a great religious purpose. In this sense Abraham was sent to establish the nation and race of

the-Messias-and-his-precursor; Christ was sent as the Savior of the world; he in turn sent his apostles to preach the message of salvation.

They were all missionaries in this sense, and today a mission is still a sending of men and women to extend the Kingdom of Christ. No matter what a mission may mean in a narrower or more particular sense, a mission is first and foremost a spiritual embassy. In past centuries we have tended to limit this activity (by definition) to those who follow a false, non-Christian religion or who are without any religion at all. The "pagan" has been thought of as the object of missionary endeavor.

In recent times we have begun to realize that rebuilding a lax or lapsed faith and sustaining a spiritual life are no less missionary tasks than bringing a person into this life through baptism. We have come to recognize the fact that it is not only the place but the reason that gives a mission its meaning.

A further broadening of the meaning of a modern mission, already hinted at, lies in the role of the missionary and the work of his apostolate. Baptism

into the Catholic faith is the essential end of missionary activity, but the work goes far beyond that. In countries which are nominally Catholic or where the faith has been rooted for a long time, it is often the task of the clergy and religious to lead men to a sincere and open profession of Christianity.

Ten days after his coronation, Pope John XXIII, speaking to the assembled bishops of South America, said: "The actual practice of the Christian faith in private life as well as in family and social life does not always correspond to the tenacity, sincerity, and vivacity of the faith that is rooted in the peoples of Latin America." Rebuilding a lost faith may be a task that takes more time and strength than planting it. Certainly, maintaining and strengthening it is equally as important.

Not only must the modern missionary work against the materialistic forces which the world has amassed and encouraged in recent times, but he must face another problem which the missionaries of the past knew nothing of. In the days of Toribio, Francis Solano, Peter Claver, Juan Masias and the other outstanding missionaries who labored in Latin America, there was only one faith to spread.

If the Church can keep pace with the exploding population of Latin America, within a relatively short time approximately 40 per cent of the world's Catholics will be centered in Central and South America,

and Mexico. Traditionalist thinkers will find this fact most unbelievable. They have taken for granted, as have most of us really, that Latin America has been, is, and will always be Catholic. Even where Catholicism exists, it is often only a nominal thing. The Church has been extremely weak for over a century, and is only now beginning to regain her strength.

The realization of the tremendous importance of Latin America to the Church has urged the Holy See to appeal for help and has caused a kind of missionary renaissance, with the revitalization of the Church as the immediate objective. Many mission-sending societies and congregations are stretching themselves on the home front in order to release personnel for the Latin American missions. This is one of the reasons for an optimistic outcome to the struggle to strengthen and multiply the Church throughout this area. However, numbers alone are not sufficient. In the end it may not be how many apostles are working, but how well they work.

However much we may want the Gospel to speak for itself, or believe that the person of Christ is intrinsically magnetic, the fact remains that the missionary is the apostolic agent who, in his own person and through his own methods, will largely be responsible for the acceptance or rejection of the faith he represents.

Mission

Auxiliary Bishop Lawrence B. Casey will offer a Ma Thanksgiving Friday, Sept. 5:30 p.m., at Sacred Heart Cathedral to mark the anniversary of the founding of the Congregation of Mission Helpers of the Sacred Heart.

The eight Mission Helpers from Ithaca and Fairport, representing all the Mission Helpers who have worked in Diocese over the past 15 years will participate in the Ma Thanksgiving. The ladies have shared so closely in work of their apostolic Christian education and their efforts are invited to these Sisters in this celebration.

From the four charter members who formed the society the Mission Helpers have grown to a 236 member body, thirty-two missions spread the United States, Puerto Rico and Venezuela.

Born a decade before turn of the century, the society led by Mary Cun

St. Mary's Ho

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This will be Sister Margaret third assignment as Administrator in hospitals in Troy, (4 years) and Boston, Ma (years).

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Laymen's Book Voices Hopes for Council

COURIER-JOURNAL
Friday, August 27, 1965

New York — (RNS) — A provocative look at one of the most important items on the agenda for the fourth session of the Vatican Council II, opening Sept. 14, is taken in a new book published here by P. J. Kennedy & sons.

Entitled "Eyes on the Modern World" and edited by John G. Boody, Jr., editor of the Pittsburgh Courier, the book brings together the thoughts of seven prominent Catholic writers and one Protestant on selected units of Schema 13.

The book addresses itself to a question as to the Catholic Church's traditional attitude towards the world, man's social relationships, his changing world, the Church in community, marriage and the family, war and peace, and the Church and the world family.

In the forward, Mr. Deedy explains that the book "is intended less to 'counsel the Council' than to present the opinions and hopes of representative members of the laity" on the Council document which aims to speak to the laity on the level of their anxieties, problems and aspirations.

The Catholic lay writers, in addition to Mr. Deedy, are Richard Horchler, national program director of the National Conference of Christians and Jews who will write special articles from Rome on Vatican II's fourth session for Religious News Service; Michael Novak, author and lay theologian, now with the faculty at Stamford University; Donald Quinn, editorial section editor of the St. Louis Review, weekly paper of the Archdiocese of St. Louis; Sidney Cornelli Callahan, author of "The Illusion of Eve" and wife of Daniel Callahan of Commonweal magazine; Adolph Schalk, American, free-lance writer living in Europe; and James Douglass, assistant professor of theology at Bellarmine College, Louisville, Ky.

They are joined by Claude D. Nelson, special correspondent in Rome for RNS during the three Council sessions to date, who will serve in the same capacity for the fourth session. Dr. Nelson brings a Protestant's evaluation to the schema.

The essayists use as their starting point the draft of Schema 13 which was introduced at the Council's third session

and take into consideration 1964 Council interventions on Schema 13. Many of their conclusions are controversial and, according to the book's forward, may prove "dismantling" with sections of the schema finally voted by the Council Fathers. "But," writes Mr. Deedy, "all is advanced in a spirit of love for the One True God and concern for the world that is His."

Mr. Horchler, in the book's opening essay, argues that "if the 'aggiornamento' is to succeed, then of course the Roman Catholic Church must come to terms with the modern world." This does not mean, he explains, "a blind 'tearing of the machinery' or the imposition of 'the efficiency of this or that ecclesiastical process, but the most radical, revolutionary change in the Church's fundamental conception of herself and her mission."

He charges that "unconscious and uncritical culture-identification has brought Christianity as a whole to its status today as preeminently the religion of the white man or of the West."

"It has brought Roman Catholicism to its present struggle to escape from the bonds of 'Romanity' and American Protestantism to its recent traumatic discovery that it is not synonymous with the American way of life," he continues.

Mr. Horchler comments that "if the Church is to get its hands dirty doing work in the world, it will have to learn that life in the world involves doubt, contingency and failure . . . The Church, chiefly the clergy, must learn the habit of listening to the secular world and respecting the world's wisdom and the grace of God at work in it. The hierarchical Church will have to put away its authoritarian cast of mind if it is to be accepted fraternally in a secular world that feels self-sufficient and quite independent of religion."

Mr. Novak notes that "for nearly four centuries the Roman Catholic Church has not been at the center of human history," but he credits Schema 13's tone as showing "a Church anxious again to renew its pilgrimage with men through history."

Mr. Novak sees Schema 13 "exercising the platonic religious spirit from her heritage." He writes: "For centuries she (the Church) has condemned platonic heresies: Gnosticism, Manichaeism, Jansenism. Theologically discredited, however, these heresies have thrived culturally, in the attitudes of Catholic peoples. The new Schema 13 at last comes to grips with these cultural heresies. Instead of asking men to flee from their bodies or to flee from the concerns of earth, it is asking them to find God through their earthly tasks, in the joy of their complete and full human life."

At the same time Mr. Novak singles out as a "major undeveloped point in the draft the distinction between the role of priest and that of the layman vis-a-vis the Gospels." He says that mere "division of labor" between clergy and laymen does not describe the reality.

"Both pastor and layman are subject to the same Spirit of Christ," he explains. "Both receive whatever authority they have from the presence of the Holy Spirit in their minds and hearts. What distinguishes them is that only the priest wears the stole, only he makes the institutional decisions between alternative interpretations of the meaning of the Gospels.

"Laymen, too, may be a source of Christian doctrine, and the harbingers of doctrinal development. But it is not they who have the gift of the Holy Spirit for pronouncing officially whether this, or that, is to be accepted as the official teaching of the Church," Mr. Novak concludes.

Mr. Quinn writes on such aspects of the schema as charity, poverty and economic conditions generally. He finds the schema essentially Western in its tone, even too European, and expresses the hope that "the worldwide makeup of the Council's commissions and the full assemblage in St. Peter's (Basilica) will impress on Vatican II the obvious necessity to have, above all, a world-wide view for this document."

Mr. Quinn speculates that "rather than framing definite answers, this document from Vatican Council II may have to

be considered satisfactory by merely communicating the obligations of Christians and other men to the world."

"Whatever from it takes," he continues, "the document cannot be static presentation of tired ideas and cannot stubbornly hold on to outworn concepts which most of the world has already put aside. This document, when it is finally promulgated, needs to be as dynamic as the world it talks to, because the ground on which we tread is a Holy Land."

Mr. Deedy urges in his essay a more effective Church witness in community through a better use of the laity, including the laity in America.

He declares that the notable exceptions of social action and race relations groups, "the charge can be leveled that as they presently exist the so-called Catholic Action groups in the United States are more an encumbrance than a resource for the realization of witness in the modern world which Schema 13 seeks."

Mr. Deedy states that "it is long since time to acknowledge that the lay strength of the Church is not bound up with the men and women who usher at the Mass and mend the altar linens, not with the faithful attendees at the Holy Name smokers and Monday night whist parties, not with cafeteria volunteers and hospital aides, good and valuable though these people may be, but rather with men and women in community who may never go near Church except on Sunday, but who have a brain that thinks and a head that can store and apply the Church's social doctrine. It is the latter that our lay organizations must reach and mobilize as witnesses."

As a means toward this end in the United States, Mr. Deedy asked of ecclesiastical authority "confidence equal to the hope" that brought into existence the National Council of Catholic Men and the National Council of Catholic Women. He writes that they deserve "more of an opportunity to synchronize and upgrade lay involvement in social, cultural and civic movements than some in authority appear willing to impart to them."

Mr. Deedy reflects critically on the policy in many dioceses to retain the Holy Name Society as the implementing force for lay Catholic Action. He labels the Holy Name Society "archaic" so far as present-day challenges are concerned and says that it would perhaps be better to consign the society to the pages of history.

In her essay, Mrs. Callahan, mother of six children, calls for a "more bold and less ambiguous" text on marriage and the family.

She urges a new look at the theology of marriage and family planning, and says that "once the birth control crisis is over, enormous amounts of intellectual and emotional energy can be freed to develop new dimensions of understanding of the dignity of marriage and the family."

"May the Spirit move the Church most swiftly," she writes.

Mrs. Callahan reviews third session debate on the theology of marriage and, "while granting the persuasiveness of the liberal case," she says that "one can also sympathize with the conservatives and some of the values they wish to retain." She holds that "a synthesis is badly needed: a solution which will keep the best of tradition, yet incorporate new insights.

Mrs. Callahan feels that the Church "should refine" traditional teaching "and lift the ban on those artificial mechanical methods of birth control that preserve symbolic unity."

She adds that "this change can be made while still preserving all the essential values of Christian marriage and family life."

"Mr. Schalk writes on the 'family of nations' and says 'it seems . . . that first and foremost the Church must become more of a family herself.'"

"Nothing is more alien to the modern world and nothing will frustrate the Church's efforts at aggiornamento more than a rigid adherence to her feudal structure," he continues. "The court atmosphere, the throne, crown and scepter symbolism should all be seriously examined."

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- ### Bishop Kearney's Appointments
- September
- 1 Wednesday—New York City—Newman Club Jubilee Convocation—7:00 p.m.
 - 5 Sunday—St. Joseph's Hospital, Elmira—Nurses' Commencement Mass and Graduation—12 noon and 3:00 p.m.
 - 8 Wednesday—St. Mary's School of Nursing—Mass of the Holy Ghost—5:30 a.m.
 - 10 Friday—Aquinas Institute—Mass of the Holy Ghost—9:00 a.m.
 - 12 Sunday—St. Joseph Church—Knitting Society Centenary Mass—3:30 p.m.
 - 13 Monday—Nazareth College—Mass of the Holy Ghost for Upperclassmen—10:30 a.m.
 - 14 Tuesday—St. Joseph Church—Lawyers' Red Mass—9:00 a.m.
 - 16 Wednesday—Nazareth Academy—Mass of the Holy Ghost—9:00 a.m.
 - 18 Thursday—Nazareth College—Mass of the Holy Ghost for Upperclassmen—10:30 a.m.
 - 19 Friday—Cardinal Mooney High School—Mass of the Holy Ghost—9:00 a.m.
 - 20 Saturday—St. Bernard's Seminary—Ordinations—8:30 a.m.
 - 21 Sunday—Church of Christ the King—Preside and preach at Silver Jubilee Mass of Rev. William J. Schifferli—12:15 p.m.
Holy Sepulchre Cemetery—Blessing of Graves—4:00 p.m.
 - 22 Monday—St. Mary's Church—McQuaid High School Mass of the Holy Ghost—9:00 a.m.
 - 25 Saturday—Mercy Motherhouse—Preside and preach at Feast Day Mass—10:00 a.m.
 - 26 Sunday—St. Bernard's Seminary—Ordinations—8:30 a.m.
 - 27 Monday—St. Agnes High School—Mass of the Holy Ghost—9:00 a.m.
 - 28 Tuesday—Academy of the Sacred Heart—Mass of the Holy Ghost—9:00 a.m.
 - 30 Thursday—Columbus Civic Center—CJO Campaign Dinner—6:30 p.m.

GO AND AGREE WITH HIM

Text and Symbol, 12th Sunday after Pentecost

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Arab Christians Have Big Role in Dialogue

BY GARY MacEON

Christians of the Near East find themselves these days in a role to which they are little accustomed. Cut off from their fellow Christians for 13 centuries, except for short intervals, condemned to the inferior status of "dhimmi" (protected conquered peoples by their Moslem masters), they suddenly have become a focus of attention.

They furnished the main contacts in the delicate negotiations which led to the meeting of Pope Paul and Orthodox Patriarch Athenagoras in the Holy Land, and indeed only their presence made possible the encounter in the holy places which they have tended for Christians.

As Arabs, they form the logical and, humnly speaking, the only possible spokesmen for Catholicism in the dialogue with Islam proposed by the new Vatican Secretariat for relations with non-Christians. Meanwhile, they are experiencing a type of pressure with which they are unfamiliar, as Arab governments manipulate them like pawns in their efforts to block the Vatican Council statement on the Jews.

It is a big role for a tiny Christian remnant living in and near the cradle of Christianity. The total number is not insignificant, six or possibly more millions in Turkey, Lebanon, Syria, Jordan and Egypt. But they are deeply divided among themselves. There are the two main divisions of Orthodox and Catholic, each divided into many rites and jurisdictions.

The Catholics have an additional subdivision in the Latin rite, further removed in many ways from the Eastern rite Catholics than they are from their Orthodox brothers. The Latins are few in numbers but they wield influence beyond their numbers. They have never fully shaken off the stigma of having arrived with the crusaders who destroyed the Christian East of which they were the uninvited protectors.

As one can see from many of the actions of Egypt's Nasser, all the Arabs suffer from a minority psychosis, a trait fully understandable in the light of their relations with the great European powers in the nineteenth century and first half of the twentieth. As a minority within a minority, the Arab Christians bear a double load of history, more than a three-

sand years of struggles, vexations, rivalries and compromises.

Ironically enough, what looked like a major advantage for the Christians at the time has proved a doubtful benefit in the nineteenth century, the European powers established schools as part of their presence. Whether under Christian auspices or "public," these schools were a projection of the culture of the occupying power. Even though open to all, they were frequented mainly by the children of Christians.

The better the education, the more it cut the recipients off from their Arab culture. They were good to work for their foreign masters or to emigrate, as did the forebearers of the "Turks" who today figure so prominently in commerce in Latin America.

As Western influences declined in recent decades, so has opportunity for these westernized Arabs. The rising nationalisms closely identified with a reawakened Islam class them along with the neo-colonial elements. If professedly secular states cannot directly discriminate on the basis of religion, they can here find an excuse

to achieve the same end. Jobs are closed to them. Education, particularly a Christian education, becomes difficult for their children. No wonder that the level of emigration shot up since World War II, particularly from Egypt after the Suez debacle.

One aspect of the minority complex is a tremendous concentration of authority in the community which is simultaneously socio-civil and religious. This system becomes progressively less viable with the modernization of life. It creates the danger of abandonment of religious practice unless the clergy learn to give the young more freedom, more responsibility, a wider field of action.

Not less urgent is a growth of Christian ecumenism. Beginning with the holy places where armed Muslims still keep the peace between those who claim to be Christ's followers, "God" will always be divided until the day of the Resurrection. Such is the searing challenge of the Modern to the Christian. To accept the challenge and prove it false must be our first step towards a Christian-Moslem dialogue.