

# Churches Long Active in Aiding World's Refugees



Text and Symbol, 19th Sunday after Pentecost

## Five Centuries In Five Years

The Vatican Council begins a week's recess today. Council officials have a mass of rewriting to do between today and the Council's final series of meetings which resume Monday, October 25.

The rewriting is the result of over a thousand suggestions made by bishops during the past four years of the Council.

Eleven schemata — somewhat comparable to bills in Congress — have been discussed and debated by the world's Catholic bishops. Their comment, criticisms and suggestions of the proposed documents must now be incorporated in the final versions which then need to be voted as approved.

Five additional draft decrees were revised and passed in previous Council sessions.

All sixteen cover a vast range of Church activity — ranging from a revision of the Church's ritual ways of worship to the intricate moral problems posed by weapons of massive destruction, the population explosion and the dawn era of cybernetics.

Some Council commentators have said the Council has taken the Catholic Church out of the Middle Ages and put it into the heart of the next century — a jump of five centuries in less than five years.

Many of the changes will take decades to accomplish, such as the education of the clergy, the development of new missionary techniques, greater collaboration with other religious groups, projects to aid people in developing nations... the list is almost endless.

The Council is expected to have its impact also on parish organizations.

The days of Catholic "beer and pretzel organizations" are over, according to James J. Norris, a U.S. layman who is an auditor at the Council.

"I even think," he said, "the days of all organizations as we knew them in the past are finished."

Norris, executive director of Catholic Relief Services and first American layman ever to address an ecumenical Council, was quoted in the Oct. 17 issue of Our Sunday Visitor, national Catholic newspaper.

Interviewed by Father Vincent A. Yzermans, head of the U.S. Catholic Bureau of Information and OSV correspondent at the Council, Norris said "the Catholic layman today must be involved not only in his parish but also in his community."

- The layman must also, he added, "come to understand more deeply that his community is a world community."
- Included in the report were the comments of Martin H. Work, another Council lay auditor who is executive director of the National Council of Catholic Men.
- Observing that laymen want to work with and for the Church, Work said that the laity is "bothered about Church structures." He offered this list of specific recommendations toward producing lay activity in the Church.
1. More clergy support and encouragement for Catholic lay people's projects.
  2. Release from excessive clerical direction or blockage.
  3. Increase of spiritual guidance and motivation from the priest.
  4. Greater communication with the clergy and the bishop.
  5. The opportunity to express the apostolate of public opinion.
  6. A "hearing" and proper action on that hearing — "or at least an intelligent response."
  7. General recognition on the part of the clergy that the layman has a legitimate interest in the Church.
  8. Less clerical and technical Church documents.
- "In a word," Work concluded, the layman wants "a document from this Council that will form a magna carta for his role in the Church of the future."

(By Religious News Service)

A new, liberal immigration law signed by President Johnson has cast new attention on the persistent global tragedy that finds millions of persons uprooted from their homes and thrown into positions of hunger and need.

Supported generally by church groups, the legislation will eliminate the national origins quota system in determining those eligible to enter the country. And while limiting the maximum entry total to a maximum of 170,000 immigrants in one year, the law has been hailed as a significant step toward removing discriminatory obstacles in the path of persons seeking homes.

Churchmen, over the years, have urged governments to accelerate their efforts to aid displaced persons, refugees and those desiring to migrate.

Particularly recognized has been the important role of the United Nations in seeking solutions to refugee problems, a program which has had the active participation and support of religious and other voluntary groups. This was seen in Rome when Pope Paul VI addressed leaders of the UN Commission for Refugees and praised the agency's "Christian and humanitarian" work.

At the same time, Pope Paul was clear in his expression of "deep grief" that situations of mass human displacement continue. "You have been able to preserve the lives of millions of unfortunate human beings over the ten years of your existence as a public body," the Pope said, "but the work 'go forward' with the cooperation and assistance of religious and voluntary groups who have as their goal the restoration of self-sufficiency to as many as masses of homeless men, women and children."

As world refugee problems reach their zenith at the end of World War II, Protestant, Catholic and Jewish groups were unstinting in their efforts to resettle and bring material relief to uprooted millions. Today, it is realistically recognized that with the easing of conditions of need in some countries, a world fraught with tension is destined to continue to present new refugee problems in new areas.

Currently, conflicts in Vietnam and Pakistan-India have drawn attention to pressing refugee situations in those areas, and religious groups are in the forefront of programs to provide aid.

This Summer, Msgr. John F. McCarthy, an official of Catholic Relief Services, appeared before a U.S. Senate subcommittee and noted that there were more than 300,000 refugees in South Vietnam. Urging governmental help for voluntary agencies to alleviate the suffering of the war victims, the monsignor said: "It is possible to reach these people with food supplies and clothing through the U.S. Army Special Forces Advisory Group. Troops are present in 168 districts and their officers have requested Catholic Relief Services to cooperate in a joint effort to bring aid to these people. Catholic Relief Services has Buddhist and Ministry of Social Welfare support for such an undertaking."

Governmental assistance has been provided and numerous church-related groups are deeply involved in the expanding refugee aid effort—among them Church World Service of the National Council of Churches, the American Friends Service Committee (Quaker) and the Australian Council of Churches.

Already serious conditions in Pakistan and India, it is feared, can be heightened by present hostilities. The Rev. Addison J. Eastman, missions director in the Asia department of the National Council of Churches, noted the certainty of "heavy human suffering" and expressed hope that "as in 1947, during the partition of India and Pakistan, Christians in both countries will again be ministers of reconciliation and healing." He cited the danger of "communal riots between Muslims and Hindus" and also saw "Chinese

Communist efforts in Pakistan apparently contributing to fanning the flames of a religious war."

One of the most extensive projects to aid refugees and meet other emergency needs is centered in Africa—a \$10 million, five-year "Ecumenical Program for Emergency Action in Africa" launched by the World Council of Churches. Dr. Z. K. Matthews, WCC Africa secretary who has surveyed the continent, reported that there now are 500,000 refugees in several countries.

Support for the emergency effort has been found in several countries. In the U.S., the National Council called on denominations to place an "urgent" priority on the program and among pledges has been one for \$400,000 from the National Lutheran Council, which hopes to increase that total to \$1 million over the five years.

Around the globe, interdenominational and inter-agency cooperation is highlighted in several refugee programs. Among them is the Committee on Tibetan Refugees of the International Council of Voluntary

Agencies, formed with 74 voluntary groups including the WCC and other Protestant and Catholic organizations. The committee is working for rehabilitation of some 65,000 Tibetan refugees in India, Nepal and Europe.

In Munich, Germany, an inter-religious commission has been established to assist some 60,000 Orthodox emigrants and refugees. Also, this Spring a large group of Greek refugees from Iron Curtain countries was flown to Massachusetts by Baptists there who earlier sponsored the resettlement of many Roman Catholic refugees from Cuba. The current project was hailed by Archbishop Iakovos, Primate of the Greek Orthodox Archdiocese of North and South America, as a "gesture of Christian love."

Cuban refugees who swarmed into the Miami, Fla., area with the rise of the Castro regime also found Protestant, Catholic and Jewish groups promptly ready with material aid and resettlement assistance. Playing prominent roles in that program were Catholic Relief Services, Church World Service, the

Miami Lutheran Refugee Service and the United HIAS Service, an agency of the Hebrew Immigrant Aid Society.

The United States Committee for Refugees, a private nonsectarian coordinating organization has been in the forefront of the campaign to keep world concern focused on continuing refugee situations. As countries like West Germany improve their economies and provide homes and jobs for formerly displaced persons, the committee has noted, there still exist dire conditions such as those in India and Pakistan and that of the Palestine Arab refugees, who number some 660,000 in Jordan, 280,000 in the Gaza strip and 280,000 in Lebanon and Syria.

A refugee, the U.S. Committee has defined, remains a refugee "as long as the fundamental needs of himself and his family are unmet" or if forced migration or his loss of citizenship means "continuing deprivation of a minimally decent life."

For the Churches, the obligation to work not only toward

alleviation of these basic needs but to speak out against the conditions that have forced expulsion of people from their homes has been clearly stated. Such was the theme of statements issued simultaneously by leading Catholic and Protestant churchmen in Germany this year on the 20th anniversary of the start of expulsions of German nationals from former Eastern areas of Germany.

Catholic Bishop Heinrich M. Janssen of Hildesheim, the German hierarchy's Commissioner for Expellee Affairs, cited in a pastoral letter, the command to Christians "never to keep silent about wrong and evil" and to "build bridges among people so as to remove injustice from the world and create reconciliation and peace."

The German Catholic Refugee Council stressed in its statement that in addition to the loss of homes by some 18 million in Germany, many other millions in other parts of the world had also lost their freedom and homes through violations of human rights and that Christians must work for "a reinstatement of right."

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## Ecumenical Aspect in Council's Bible View

By CLAUD D. NELSON

Vatican City — (RNS) — The Constitution on Divine Revelation, approved by overwhelming votes in the second and third weeks of this fourth session of Vatican II, has attracted far too little attention here at the American bishops' press panel. It is ranked responsibly alongside De Ecclesia, the Constitution on the Church, for its fundamental importance for Catholic study, teaching, preaching and publication; its ecumenical significance is scarcely less impressive.

The new text was brought to the attention of the American bishops' press panel by Father Francis G. McCool, S.J., on the invitation of the panel's directors. The reporters present addressed no questions to him, but he later acceded to my request for an interview.

With an M.A. in Semitic languages from Johns Hopkins University, Father McCool studied at the Pontifical Biblical Institute in Rome, taught at Woodstock, the Jesuit college in Maryland, for a time, and has for several years lectured at the Pontifical Biblical Institute in Rome on the introduction to the New Testament. He is a regular member of the press panel, as in previous

years. While this report reflects, I believe, the general purport of our conversation, only the reporter should be held responsible for its contents.

The importance of the Constitution stands out when one compares it with what the Council refused to approve in the first session, when Pope John's vote checked out the two-thirds necessary to send the text, De Fontibus Revelationis (On the sources of revelation), back to the commission for revision. From a Reformation point of view, the text was as bad as the title in assuming that tradition was a necessary and separate, almost independent source, not merely a supplementary channel, of revelation.

There were rumors of improvement during the first intersession, but nothing was presented to the second session; the text now voted was approved in principle during the third session. It carries a bit further the encouragement given to biblicalists and theologians by Pius XII's 1943 Divino Afflante Spiritu — a document that Ernesto Cardinal Ruffini is said to have contradicted in an article in Osservatore Romano.

Opposition to Pope Pius' en-

cyclical is sometimes associated with the far-reaching condemnation of Modernism and all its works — some of which contained real promise for what is now called aggiornamento — by St. Pius X, early in the century in the encyclical Pascendi.

The conservative point of view has also found support emanating from the Lateran University, while the Pontifical Biblical Institute has headed off more Pius XII's Divino Afflante Spiritu. The Commission, in June, 1964, issued an "Instruction Concerning the Historical Truth of the Gospels," which Pope Paul had approved in April.

This included both permission and caution for the use of form criticism, distinguished inerrancy from historicity, outlined the three stages in the development of the Christian Tradition, and warned against over-emphasis on the adjective "creative" as applied to the Christian community's role in the third stage. It was rather "formative." It also affirmed that variation in the order of events chronicled by the Gospel writers does not affect their authentic portrayal of Gospel truth.

Scripture and Tradition make up one Holy deposit of

the word of God." (Constitution, Ch. 2, Para. 10). While teaching is ancillary to the deposit, it is clear that "Tradition, Holy Scripture and the Magisterium of the Church are, in the wise designs of God, so intimately associated that one cannot stand without the others, and that each in its own way contributes effectually to the salvation of souls."

The writers wrote under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit. The Scriptures can be understood in terms of the meaning they had for writers and hearers in the time and circumstances of writing. "The words of God expressed in human language are in every way proportioned to human speech" (Para. 13). Thus both faith and intelligence are required to make Bible study edifying, salvific.

The Old Testament gives "an insight into God and man and into the ways that the just and merciful God acts toward men." "The New Testament lies hidden in the Old, and the Old is fully unfolded in the New." (Ch. 4)

"The sacred authors wrote the four Gospels in this way: they selected certain things from what they had heard, and set them down by word of mouth or in writing; they explained some things having regard for the conditions of the churches; and again they kept the form of heralding a message. Thus at all times they conveyed sincerely to us the truth about Jesus." (Ch. 5)

Chapter 6 of the Constitution treats of Scripture in the life of the Church, and emphasizes its importance for theologians, preachers, and all the faithful. Recommending accurate translations, it continues, "If, with the approval of ecclesiastical authority, these translations happen to be carried out in collaboration with our separated brethren, then they may be used by all Christians." Thus the common Bible project is given encouragement.

One can understand from the Instruction and the Constitution that tradition is not merely a set of glosses or obiter dicta, but the process of the divine handing down of the truth of revelation in terms susceptible of human comprehension. The Incarnation and Holy Scripture are parts of revelation, the total heritage of the Christian Church. More and more, under the gently implied but unmistakable encouragement of the Constitution, the theologians working together ecumenically, and teachers who accept their findings, will make it clear that the heritage is one, for the whole of the Christian community. Only then can it exert its full potential in the world.



## A Child's Awe at Glimpse of Pope

Pomezia, Italy—(RNS)—Photo captures the inner feelings of a little girl as she and her mother watch Pope Paul VI during his visit to 3,000 Catholic gypsies camped at a seminary near Rome. The Pope visiting the camp on his 68th birthday celebrated a Mass despite a heavy rain and gave first Holy Communion to 25 gypsy children.

## Christians Blamed for Atheism Gains

By GARY MacEON

Rome — "When Vatican I proclaimed papal infallibility, the workers of Europe were too weak to stand up and cheer," says Father Arthur McCormack. "With that historic experience, Vatican II has even less excuse. If it fails to show today's dispossessed masses its concern and meaning for them."

Father McCormack, member of the English mission society of Millhill, is an expert on problems of population and world development. Co-editor of "World Justice" (Louvain), he is closely associated with Cardinal Suenens in seeking to make the document on the Church in the Modern World as useful and relevant as possible for those to whom it is addressed.

They will have to settle for much less than perfection. The debates on the revised version have revealed gaps which all agree cannot be filled in the time available. In addition, deep divisions of viewpoint remain on how to deal with many basic issues, and the current Council mood is to find vague formulas to mask over such disagreements.

A glaring example is what to do about atheism.

The Council discussion and the parallel talks and writings outside the aula have revealed an amazing study in recent years of this phenomenon, in search of a pastoral approach. Practically every part of the world is involved and concerned, with the curious exception of the United States.

Apparently, the conclusion reached by Will Herberg ten or more years ago remains valid. Our pluralism is governed by rigid conventions. The only socially approved categories are Catholicism, Protestantism and Judaism. Specifically, agnosticism and atheism are still out.

In consequence, the U.S. bishops took too significant part in the discussions. But just about every other region was well represented. What was new in the exposition was the search for the positive elements in contemporary atheism, or at least the reasons why those who propagate it regard it as necessary for human progress.

"Let us talk about atheism within the mentality of those who are atheists," said Cardinal Seper, of Zagreb, Yugoslavia. "It is a fact that many of them regard their atheism as an advance... Christians are far too often supporters of a system that is gone, and are themselves too often the cause of atheism. Many Christians are op-

posed to the progress of the world, in spite of the fact that it is God's express will that there should be more justice on earth."

Cardinal Koening of Vienna agreed. "Historically speaking, atheism spread because of the defects of Christians themselves. Many of them did not and do not have a right understanding of God and an exact view of man. Possible cures for atheism are intense cooperation to encourage Christian unity, efforts by the Church to promote social justice for all people without discrimination, and a struggle against religious ignorance. Priests and people must share the lives of the faithful. Such are the true arms of the Christian."

Even stronger was the statement at a lecture in Rome of Father Paul Gauthier, head of a community of worker priests in Nazareth, the man who first suggested to Pope Paul that he should visit the Holy Land. "Atheism may well be a road that must be taken," he said, "as a purification of false religions, to reach the true faith. The masses most frequently reject their religions because they see them as tied to the political, economic and social systems that oppress them."

As against such new approaches, there

was the outright insistence of Cardinal Florit of Florence that what the Church must stress is man's dehumanization by the atheism which is an integral part of dialectical materialism. He was echoed by Cardinals Ruffini of Palermo and Siri of Genoa, who refuse to approve any admission of inadequacy by the Church in the execution of her mission.

Perhaps a middle way can be detected in the proposal of the Jesuit General, Father Peter Arrupe, a proposal whose positive merits were overshadowed by his unfortunate and inadmissible comment that organized atheism holds almost complete sway in international organizations, financial circles and the world press.

Father Arrupe recognized the central character of the threat of atheism. He identified the problem as not primarily philosophical but sociological. He proposed a shock program of training of militant Christians (expressing himself in traditional Jesuit terms) to permeate the society in which atheism thrives and give it Christian dimensions.

Cardinal Koening might not like the military approach, but in essence Father Arrupe is supporting his contention that priests and people must share the lives and experience of the faithful.

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