

Latin American Faith Like an Ailing Giant

The Catholic faith is an ailing giant in Latin America.

That was the diagnosis reported at a meeting in Chicago this past week.

Only hearts with strong faith came from the meeting undaunted by the massive needs of the Church "south of the border."

But a remedy is needed — promptly and also massively.

One of the nearly 3000 who attended the meeting was Monsignor John F. Duffy, diocesan director of the Propagation of the Faith Society. The meeting

was the third annual session of the Catholic Inter-American Cooperation Program (CICOP).

The strengths and the untapped potential of Latin America were described but so also were there warnings of numerous grave obstacles ranging from the growth of spiritism to the misunderstanding of the concept of Christian community.

CICOP is the educational arm of the U.S. bishops' growing program of cooperation with Latin American Catholics. The annual CICOP conference is designed to expose North Americans to the reality of church and social life south of the border.

As Bishop Marcos G. McGrath of Santiago de Veraguas, Panama, CICOP program director, said: "Friendship and intelli-

gent mutual assistance presupposes knowledge."

"Without such knowledge, we cannot expect anything except sporadic contacts and assistance — and certainly not a truly lasting friendship nor farsighted, long-term collaboration," he declared.

The conference drew a predominantly clerical and nun audience, most involved in assisting Latin American aid programs or in teaching about that region. There were also several hundred lay men and women as well as representatives from U.S. business firms in Latin America, and Protestant observers.

Latin America's rapid population growth, its widespread poverty — and the relationship of these two to the Church's teach-

ing on birth control was discussed at one session by Father Felipe Pardini, S.J., of the social sciences department of Mexico City's Universidad Iberoamericana.

Father Pardini said his observations show that "a number of honest and happy couples find it impossible to cope with their socio-economic situation and to obey the so-called common doctrine of the Church."

He called resolution of this difficultly an "anguishing problem" for the Church and a challenge to the Christian scholar.

"The reflection of this problem in the priest's conscience has led to opinion discrepancies which form the habit of those who search until they find a benevolent confessor," he said.

"The challenge of the sex problem consists in the need of a revision of the moral theology of sex," he said. "In social anthropology it is well known and the general public is familiar with societies whose sexual conduct differs radically from ours without a depraving result."

A need to develop a consciousness of Christian community in Latin America was stressed in another session by Father Leo B. Mahon, a Chicago priest who is director of the pastoral institute of Panama City, Panama.

Father Mahon argued that renewal of the Latin Church is an inadequate descriptive term "for I submit that one does not renew something that does not exist and it is my personal conviction that the Church, except in rare places, does not exist in Latin America."

The Church does exist, he said, "in its essential nature in as much as we have all the necessary structure — bishops, priests, nuns and faithful."

But in what he called its right sense, the Church is not present. He defined the Church as "a people marching with all other people but in the name of the Lord, united in His spirit in order to save and redeem the world . . . a saving people, the very conscious minority within a nation and in the world."

He prefers to speak, he said, of "the conversion" of the Latin American Church, rather than its "renewal."

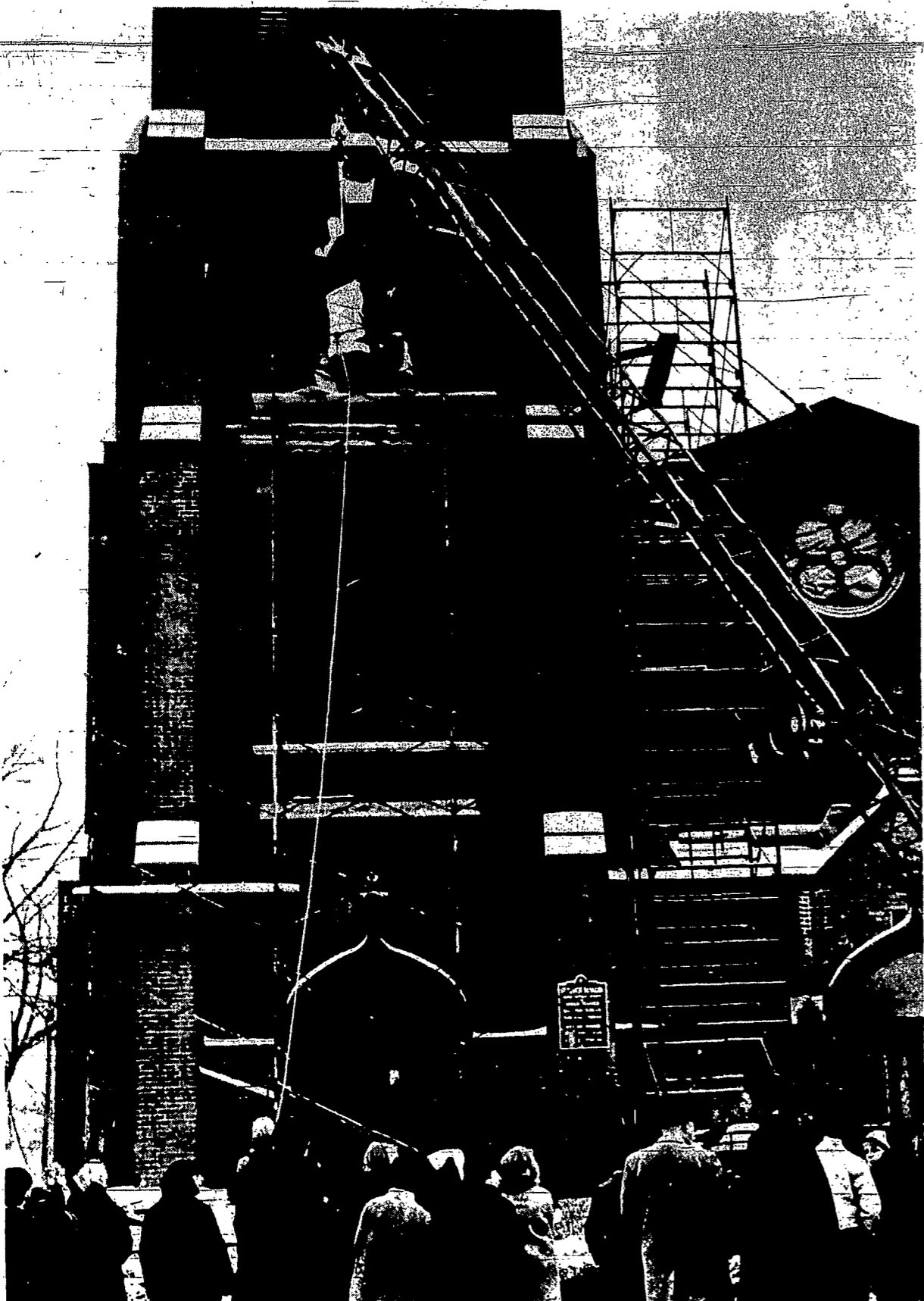
Father Mahon asserted he was not pessimistic.

"I love and respect the people of Latin America. They appear to me like a huge Jerusalem, awaiting the sign of the Spirit. When and if it comes, I would venture to say they will become in reality what they are now in name — a Christian people — the sign of Christ in the world," he said.

The growth of spiritism, a belief in perceptible communication with spirits, was discussed at another session by Father Bonaventura Kocpenburg, O.F.M., editor of Voces in Petropolis, Brazil.

He said that about 30% of Brazil's population is afflicted with spiritism, a total of 20 million.

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Sidewalk supervisors guide St. Francis deSales to niche in Geneva church tower.

Geneva

A Saint for Exchange Street

St. Francis de Sales now presides over Geneva's bustling Exchange Street.

A statue of the saint stands in a niche that was once a window . . . until a fire gutted the church last spring.

A sizable audience of clergy, members of the teaching staff interested parishioners, and passersby were on hand for the arrival of the 1100-pound statue made by Daprato Company of New York and Chicago. The firm is outstanding in the field of church statuary.

According to the pastor, Monsignor Edward R. Ball, it was decided not to replace the window but to set the statue in its place.

Soon after its arrival work-

men busied themselves removing the protective wrappings from the statue preparatory to hoisting it into its place.

S. J. Malo and Sons donated a 70-foot crane for the purpose of raising the large figure to the niche. Slowly and carefully, the cement figure of the saint was raised higher and higher until it reached the tower. The task took about two hours to complete.

Rebuilding of St. Francis de Sales Church following last spring's disastrous fire is nearing completion. The fire occurred just prior to Holy Week last year.

The present church building which is about 101 years old is facing its third remodeling in recent times. Just prior to the centennial celebration of the Church in November, 1935,

the building was renovated; and once again about seven years ago under the leadership of Monsignor Ball, it was completely redecorated.

Monsignor Ball said today that the church altar will be replaced within a few weeks. Statues of the Cross are also expected to arrive from Europe by the end of February.

The Stations, hand-carved in Italy, were described as "masterpieces" by the pastor.

Another addition in the remodeling program will be a beautiful scene of the Resurrection which will be painted back of the Altar of Repose. Work will be done by Daprato Com-



Catholic missionaries around the world use every means available to tell "the good news" of the Gospel to the still millions of people who haven't yet heard it. Steve McQueen, U.S. film star, in photo above, shows Maryknoll Fathers Robert Strotman and Robert Crawford in Taiwan techniques for good motion pictures. The three are aboard a launch used in the picture "The Sand Pebbles."

Mass Slated This Sunday For Newsmen

The annual Press Mass for newspaper, radio and television personnel of the Rochester area and their families will be celebrated Sunday, Jan. 30 at 10:20 a.m. at Our Lady of Victory Church (the Little French Church) 10 Pleasant St.

The Rev. Edward M. Callens, S.S.C.C., pastor, will celebrate the Mass and deliver the sermon.

Each year this Mass is said on the Sunday closest to the feast of St. Francis de Sales, patron saint of newspapermen.

Following Mass, coffee and sweet rolls will be served in the school basement.

Students Flee N. Vietnam, Claim Religion Doomed

Saigon — (NC) — Three graduate students from North Vietnam who fled to West Germany declared emphatically here that the Hanoi communist regime seeks to exterminate all religion. None of the three has any religious affiliation.

At a press conference Columban Father Patrick O'Connor asked them, "How much freedom of religion exists in North Vietnam for Christians, Buddhists and others?"

Nguyen thanh Hung, who is studying music in Bonn, said: "The North Vietnam authorities have recourse to every measure to exterminate religion in the long run. They spread the teaching that religions are nothing else but superstition. Secondly they organize so many meetings that workers and farmers cannot have time to go to church or the pagoda."

New Mass OK'd For Jubilee

Vatican City — (NC) — The Congregation of Rites has approved a new votive Mass intended for special ceremonies during the post-conciliar jubilee which lasts until May 29.

The prayers to be used in the Mass in connection with solemn cathedral functions or other special functions such as pilgrimages to churches designated for jubilee indulgences will be published in pamphlet form soon by the Vatican Polyglot Press. It will include suggested Gregorian chants selected for their simplicity to encourage entire communities to sing them, rather than special choirs.

Pickets Protest Priest at Abbey

London — (NC) — An appearance by a Catholic priest in the pulpit of Westminster Abbey drew a demonstration from about 50 Protestants and led to a scuffle inside the edifice.

The speaker was Father Thomas Corbishley, S.J., former Jesuit in London, who was discussing Christian unity as part of a week's unity observance centering at the 900-year-old church.

The demonstrators were described as mainly from Northern Ireland. They waved placards reading "Protestants Awake to the Danger of Unity" and "Betrayal of the Reformation." One of them, Matthew Arnold Peckings, general director of the National Union of Protestants, went inside to argue with Father Corbishley and was hustled out by abbey officials as he shouted: I stand for the faith of our Protestant Queen!

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To Heaven from Rochester

A priest who trudged the streets of downtown Rochester way soon be declared a saint in heaven.

The complicated machinery of canonization was put into motion this week in Rome.

Cardinal Lawrence Shehan of Baltimore made the official appeal to the Vatican's Congregation of Rites to begin the canonization process.

If the Vatican agency gives its assent, then Blessed John Nepomucene Neumann will be the first man who was an American citizen to become a saint.

As a young immigrant from Bohemia, now Czechoslovakia, Neumann was ordained a priest in New York City in the early summer of 1836. He headed for his first assignment on the Niagara frontier and stopped off en route at Rochester where he preached his first sermon, heard confessions for the first time and performed his first baptism ceremony.

He returned on many occasions later in life and was instrumental in bringing the Redemptorist Fathers to Roches-

ter to found St. Joseph's Church.

The petition for the canonization of Blessed John was supported by statements from Josef Cardinal Beran of Prague, now living in Rome, and 1,350 exiled Czech priests. It was also backed by Father William Gaudreau, C.S.S.R., superior general of the Redemptorist Fathers, to whom Blessed John belonged.

A pioneer of the Catholic school system in the U.S., Blessed John was born in Franticek in Bohemia, then a part of the Austrian Empire, in 1811. Going to the U.S., he served as a missionary in New York, Pennsylvania, Maryland and Virginia. He became bishop of Philadelphia in 1852 and died in that city in 1860. He was beatified by Pope John XXIII in 1963.

As required by canonization procedure, certified testimony on two miracles attributed to Blessed John's intercession were submitted with the petition. One described the cure of young Michael Flanagan of lung cancer and osteomyelitis,



BLESSED JOHN NEUMANN

the other that of Alice Pittett who had suffered from Hodgkins disease. Both lived in the Philadelphia archdiocese.

In the petition, Cardinal Shehan noted that since Blessed John's beatification, devotion to him "has spread far and wide throughout the U.S. The

Mass and divine office in his honor have been introduced into many dioceses. His feast is celebrated with great gatherings of people. Many pictures and relics have been distributed among the faithful and his virtues and holiness of life have clearly summoned the admiration of priests, Religious and laity alike.

"From various places news has been received concerning new favors and prodigies attributed to the beatus' intervention, and large numbers come singly or in groups in pilgrimage to his tomb."

The tomb is located in the Redemptorist church of St. Peter in Philadelphia.

Cardinal Beran said he was "certain that the prayers of our illustrious fellow citizen continue ceaselessly from heaven for our devoted people who struggle, today more than ever, to maintain intact their age-old traditions of faith and filial attachment to the Church of Rome. But for this struggle they need to draw closer to their heroes, to emulate their examples of fidelity to their own cause."

VP Lauds Churchmen For Fight on Poverty

Washington — (RNS) — Quoting from the Old and New Testaments, Vice President Humphrey praised a coalition of the nation's religious leaders whose aim is to fight the nation's poverty. He saw in it a parallel to their efforts for important civil rights legislation over the past two years.

During a press conference with some of the co-chairmen of the newly formed Inter-Religious Committee Against Poverty (IRCAP), the Vice President said their action and statement of intentions is "a manifestation of the most fundamental beliefs of our three faiths."

After quoting passages from Ezekiel and the second chapter of James, he said, "The preface of the economic Opportunity Act was written many hundreds — and thousands of years ago."

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