



Harry Gunther, left, leads his wife and eight of their nine children, in a family songfest.

Man Without a Song

Springtime for a Musician

Plainfield, N.J. — (CPF) — For Harry Gunther, a Dutch-born choirmaster and organist, the new liturgy was a personal heartbreak. A man who had lived with and loved Gregorian Chant for most of his 45 years, he was — as the vernacular liturgy loomed imminent — like a man without a country, or worse yet for a dedicated musician, a man without a song.

"What can you do? Gregorian and English just don't fit," he told his pastor at St. Bernard's Church here not long ago.

What Mr. Gunther did was to stop complaining and start looking for a way to make them fit. The result is a new Mass that is appropriately entitled: "Verna Canto" — "verna" for vernacular and for Springtime (the Church's and, indeed, Harry Gunther's).

Just published by the Gregorian Institute of America, the "Verna Canto" is a chant similar to Gregorian, but written to fit the rhythms of the English language, just as the original Gregorian was written to fit the rhythms of the Latin language.

The Gregorian Institute's president, Dr. Clifford Bennett, has called Gunther's work "a

revolutionary, new, exciting development in liturgical music" and the Rev. John Scher, S.S., long in charge of Church music at Catholic University, has greeted it as "the shot in the arm I've been waiting for for 30 years."

More Catholics will become familiar with "Verna Canto" this month when the Catholic Book Publishing Co. brings out a companion volume to its widely used "Parish Mass Book," with Verna Canto Proper for all Sunday Masses and those of major feasts.

What put Gunther back in tune after the initial letdown over the new liturgy was the Vatican Council's constitution on the liturgy, which said that Gregorian should retain "pride of place" and that musicians should apply themselves to the task of producing new music for congregational worship. And when his pastor, Monsignor Charles B. Murphy, sent him on a round of liturgical meetings, Gunther returned enthused and inspired.

Already, Gunther has been invited to give a course in Verna Canto this summer at the Pius X Institute of Liturgical Music at Manhattanville College in Purchase, N.Y., and he has been asked to adapt his work to the Spanish language for use in Latin America.

What's more, he has composed the Verna Canto with an ear toward simplicity, the result being that even pupils in the second and third grades of St. Bernard's School sing the entire Ordinary of the Mass with ease.

The sound of music from young people has always been close to Harry Gunther, whose own family of nine children is a fairly good copy of the famed Trapp Family Singers. So is their story.

A choirmaster and organist in Holland for 26 years, Gunther was all set to move his family in 1959 from their Dutch home to Puerto Rico, where he was to head a music-printing firm. He had already gone on ahead, only to learn — as his family in Holland was ready to embark — that the firm had just been liquidated.

"I took the first plane to New York," he recalls, where he had only one friend: a piano tuner at the Metropolitan Opera House. Shortly, a Fairview, N.J., priest helped him find a house and furniture in time for the family's arrival. Learning that three of Gunther's daughters were about to record for a Dutch company when they left Holland, the priest invited them to sing at a Christmas concert at Seton Hall University.

And as the familiar show-business story goes, "in the audience that night" was Monsignor Murphy, who had neither an organist nor a choir at St. Bernard's. Could the Gunthers come singing for Christmas Mass?

"Could we sing? We sang at Midnight Mass, and at the 8, 9, 10, 11 and 12 o'clock Masses," Gunther remembers. Before long, he was leading a successful 35-voice choir, his wife Cornelia and several of their daughters among them.

Prophetically, one of the first tasks he set about was the promotion of congregational singing, after discovering that "the people in the church know little more than 'Holy God, We Praise Thy Name.'" It was Gregorian he wanted to lead them to.

"We will choose some easy Gregorian Masses and use the school children to lead the others," he said in his first year at St. Bernard's. "Gregorian belongs in church. Its atmosphere is the most devotional in the world."

His attitude toward inspiring the congregation to learn and appreciate Gregorian was, at that time, "there is a way." With the liturgical renewal, and his fear that Gregorian and English would not work together, he inspired himself and found a way — the Verna Canto.

(Catholic Press Features)

U.N. Welcomes Peace Efforts

United Nations — (RNS) — U.N. Secretary General U Thant expressed his enthusiastic support here for the concerted efforts of Protestant, Catholic and Jewish leaders on behalf of peace in Southeast Asia, including Vietnam.

Representative of the newly formed National Inter-Religious Conference on Peace called upon the U.N. leader to invite him to address their opening

meeting to be held in Washington, D.C., March 15.

The delegation included Catholic Bishop John J. Wright of Pittsburgh; Rabbi Morris N. Eisendrath, president of the Union of American Hebrew Congregations; Methodist Bishop John Wesley Lord of Washington; and Dr. Dana Greeley, president of the Unitarian Universalist Association, Boston, Mass.



To The Victors -- The Spoils!

St. John Fisher College debaters display awards won recently at the 15th annual LeMoyné College Debate Tournament in Syracuse. Left to right: J. Lloyd Lill, Jr., faculty moderator; James Austin; Michael Beyma, president of the Fisher Forum debate society; David Wolf; and James Hall. Beyma holds the Cloud Wampen Award given for first place in the journey. The smaller trophy was won by Beyma and Wolf as the Best Affirmative team in the debate.

Here Are The Statistics on The Council

Vatican City — (NC) — The Second Vatican Council has been summed up statistically by Vatican Radio:

There were 168 general meetings and 10 plenary ones. The first session had 36 general meetings, the second 43, the third 48, and the last 41.

During the general meetings there were 147 introductions of reports read, and 2,212 speeches. There were also 4,361 written interventions.

Average daily attendance of bishops was 2,200. The peak of 2,392 was reached on Dec. 6.

Other statistics reported by the station: 242 council Fathers died during the period of the sessions, including 12 cardinals. The number of officially designated experts was 400, of whom 235 were diocesan priests, 45 were Jesuits, 42 Dominicans, and 13 Franciscans.



AT SCIENCE HONOR SOCIETY induction are: standing: Joseph McGuire, Richard Wahl, C.S.B., Bradley Chase, Dr. Edward Stauber, faculty moderator, Dennis Ringelski, C.S.B., John McKeon, John Boscoe, C.S.B.; seated: Frederick Curran, Louis Bleck, president, William Schafer, and Thomas Kluch, secretary.

Honor Group Inducts 17

Seventeen new members were elected to the St. John Fisher College chapter of Delta Epsilon Sigma, National Catholic Honor Society, and inducted into the organization at a dinner meeting held last week at the University Club. Principal speaker at the initiation was Dean Kenneth E. Clark of the University of Rochester.

Faculty members selected are Dr. Jean Bartlett, Mrs. Teresa Harvey, Dr. Julian Granberry, Mr. Richard Pegis, and Father Leo A. Hetzler, C.S.B.

New student members are seniors Robert LaPaca, Lawrence Jost and James Kolb, and juniors Douglas Mosey, Paul Merkel, David Larimer, Liberator Monaco, Mark Dentinger, Vincent Palese, Louis Attinasi, and Albert Gentle.

Seton Groups In Action

43RD BRANCH will meet at 12:30 p.m. on Thursday, March 24 at the home of Mrs. Leo Neary of Dove St.

**GOD LOVE YOU**  
Most Reverend  
**Fulton J. Sheen**

In our press we hear mostly about the evil in the world. Breaking a commandment is a surer way to become newsworthy than practicing heroic virtue. And there is so much goodness in the world! Take the case of a sister who recently visited our office. Deeply grieved at the number of people that she saw dying of starvation in India, she decided to begin a religious community based on absolute poverty. She began with a fourth vow to spend oneself completely on one's neighbor. Two astounding things happened. First, she already has 260 members in her community and secondly, she has made 16,000 converts. Yes, 16,000 in 14 years! She and the other sisters gather those dying of starvation, most of them from the gutters, and do what they can to help them or ease their last moments.

How concerned is the United States about vocations and converts? We have so very few. Yet this sister has both in abundance! Our converts in the United States average two and one-half per year, per priest! Yet this sister averages about seven a day. Our religious orders place expensive advertisements in magazines and newspapers and pray daily to stimulate vocations. Yet young women, anxious to embrace poverty as a mission, flock to this sister without any publicity. Why? Because the Lord blesses the poor in spirit.

Sharing! Sacrificing! Loving the poor! These are the virtues that God blesses. Oh yes, we add up our daily Masses and Communions, but is the only sacrifice we offer that of Christ on the altar? And is our Communion never with Christ in the poor, the afflicted, the leprosy, the starving, the ignorant, our neighbors? These should be our devotions, our prayerbooks, our novenas, our pities. With these we practice our faith — not in Christ alone, but in Christ in them! Our Lord Himself said that we should leave our gift at the altar and go to the brother with whom we have had a difficulty.

May we plead here particularly with religious houses, convents and monasteries to share their wealth with the poor, to live out the vow of poverty. May we plead with priests to share their blessings with their needy brother priests and bishops in Africa, Asia and Latin America, to increase our vocations in this country. May we plead with the laity in making your will, not to leave your money to already rich institutions, leave it to the poor for Christ is in them. May we plead with all readers of this column to remember that when you give to the Holy Father's Society for the Propagation of the Faith you are giving to help the poor of the entire world, not just one area or one country, and that all your alms are spent on the poor of the world within the year they are received. God Love You!

THERE IS FAMINE IN INDIA! GOD LOVE YOU to Mrs. C. G. "Since our personal finances at present will not allow us to send much of a contribution, please accept these pieces of jewelry. I'd much rather be storing up treasure in heaven and trust that this jewelry may help win jewels for His kingdom." ... to Anon. for \$1,000 "This is a my gift to God, sent in adoration, in thanksgiving, reparation and supplication. Use as you know best. My name will be my secret with God."

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Cut out this column, pin your sacrifice to it and mail it to Most Rev. Fulton J. Sheen, National Director of the Society for the Propagation of the Faith, 366 Fifth Avenue, New York, N.Y. 10001, or to your Diocesan Director, Rev. John F. Duffy, 50 Chestnut Street, Rochester, New York 14604.

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