

'Year of the Bible' Draws Churches toward Unity

(By Religious News Service)

By designating 1966 as "The Year of the Bible," the American Bible Society has done more than call attention to its current celebrations marking the 150th anniversary of the organization and its fast-expanding global program of Scripture translation and distribution.

The label placed on the year also highlights a rapidly growing emphasis on the Bible as a keystone of the ecumenical movement.

As the American Bible Society and kindred groups around the world—traditionally Protestant-oriented—accelerate efforts to increase Scripture distribution, it can be seen that strong impetus toward their goals has been born in a development within the Roman Catholic Church.

Today, more than ever before, numerous leading churchmen have noted, the Bible's perhaps obvious—but in many ways overlooked—position as an area of "common ground" for inter-religious dialogue and understanding is increasingly being recognized. And, in considerable measure, this new recognition can be attributed to the declaration on divine revelation passed by the Second Vatican Council.

In the minds of many experts, notably Passionist Father Barnabas Ahern, a permanent consultant to the Pontifical Biblical Commission in Rome, the divine revelation document "removes forever the wall of separation which has kept Catholics and Protestants apart" in their reading of the Bible. Addressing an international conference on "Theological Issues of Vatican II" at the University of Notre Dame, Father Ahern stressed that the document returns the Bible to Catholics and strengthens ecumenicity by endorsing collaboration between Catholics and non-Catholics in translating the Scriptures.

Among the many other Christian spokesmen who have stressed the significance of the document is Paulist Father John B. Sheerin, editor of the *Faithful's* national magazine, *Catholic World*. In a talk before the Lutheran Society, Inc. in New York, he observed that many theologians feel that "because of its ecumenical implications, this document may prove to be the most significant of all Council texts."

"The Constitution on Divine Revelation," Father Sheerin

Delete God, Prayer OK, Says Judge

Chicago — (NC) — A federal judge ruled here that a traditional thanksgiving verse from which the word "God" has been deleted does not constitute a prayer when said by children attending a public school kindergarten.

The ruling followed a complaint by Mr. and Mrs. Lyle Despain of DeKalb, Ill., who held that the religious freedom of their five-year-old daughter was being violated when she was asked to join her classmates in the following recitation:

"We thank you for the flowers so sweet.
We thank you for the food we eat.
We thank you for the birds that sing.
We thank you for everything."

The Despains said the verse was a prayer from which the word "God" had been deleted.

But Judge Edwin A. Robson said there was no indication that the children "took a devotional attitude" towards the verse.

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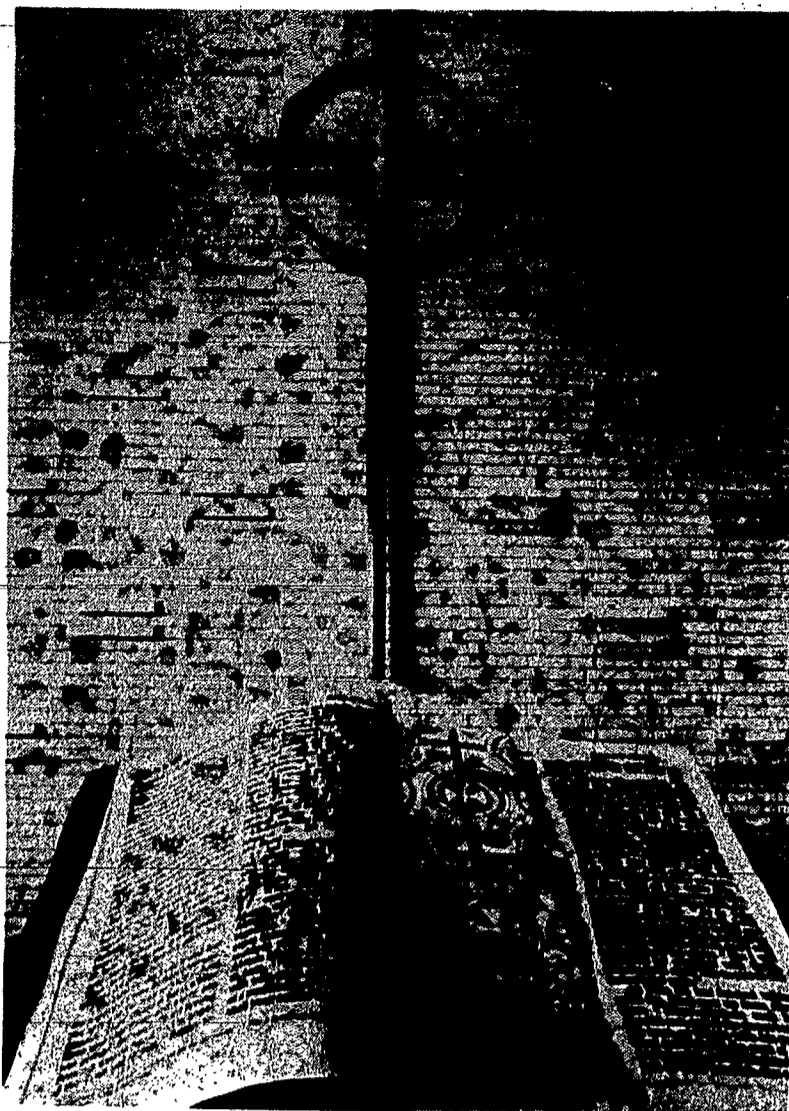
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Matthew Arnold, 19th century English poet and essayist, said there is "one English book and only one, where... perfect plainness of speech is allied with perfect nobleness; and that book is the Bible."

ly related and not opposed will do much to heighten the already notable degree of interreligious Biblical scholarship and have a strong positive effect on all Scriptural translation and distribution efforts.

A key passage in the 10,000-word divine revelation document, in fact, specifies that when opportunities arise and Church authorities approve Bible translations produced in cooperation with other Christians can be used by all.

The consequences, therefore, for the "Common Bible" movement are highly encouraging. It would seem that the near future will find developments paralleling such important occurrences as the publication in both England and the United States of Catholic editions of the New Testament in the Protestant-produced Revised Standard Version of the Bible. While intended for personal use and study and not liturgical worship, the publishing event has been widely heralded as an ecumenical milestone and work reportedly is underway on Catholic editions of the RSV Old Testament.

Cardinal Cushing of Boston recently approved the existing RSV Bible for the private use of Catholics.

Is There Room in Church for Pacifists?

Providence — (RNS)—While nations are obliged to defend themselves against unjust attack, there is place in the world for "legitimate Catholic pacifism," a priest active in peace and racial justice movements told the Catholic Theological Society of America here.

Speaking at the society's annual meeting, Father Peter J. Riga of Notre Dame, Ind., examined the general attitude of the Church towards war and peace.

"As a Christian," he said, "one cannot stand aside and still reflect love while his neighbor is pummeled, robbed and murdered. Man must always do what is in his power to ward off injustice."

Father Riga said the Christian must work with his whole soul for peace and the conditions that make it possible — our ideal — and yet in a world which is imperfect, filled with ambiguities and with evil men on both sides of the Iron Curtain.

Thus, it seems, we must reject pacifism as an absolute principle for the Christian in his conduct of international affairs for two reasons: the first is that no government is responsible to an existing nation could adopt such a policy and secondly, because pacifism cannot deter nuclear attack or defend a people from invasion or political oppression."

However, he continued, "there is room in the Church for certain heroic and gifted men and women who are chosen by the Holy Spirit to bear special witness to non-violence."

"These people are, as it were, reminders of the peace Christ wishes to pervade the community of man — in much the same way religious, by their vows, serve as reminders of the kingdom which is imperfectly present even here below, but whose full efflorescence will come only with the final establishment of Christ's kingdom."

"The vocation of the Catholic pacifist," he said, "is not, and as long as we remain in this imperfect world, it will not be — the vocation of the majority of Christians. But there are a few chosen by the Spirit, from the community and for the community, to bear this special witness. The final peace and non-violence of Christ's kingdom will always remain an ideal for all Christians to pursue, even if they are morally certain that it can never be fully achieved here below."

"Those who bear witness to this may be bishops, priests, or laymen. We need these people in our midst to remind us always of our ideal of peace and non-violence, to remind us that men's ways are not God's ways and that God is not the God of war but of peace and brotherhood."

Continuing, Father Riga said, "It is futile to think that the Catholic pacifist — chosen by the Spirit for this vocation of intense suffering and even rejection on the part of these, alas, Christians who confuse God with their nationalistic aspirations — will be able by his efforts to banish war forever. There is no assurance whatsoever from divine revelation that war will disappear."

Existing "charitable" activities will be transformed as fully as possible into social works designed to help all who need help over the whole range of their needs, and in the form of a service to the competent public organizations. Catholic opinion will be channeled into encouraging and helping the civil authorities to bring the laws, structures, and social institutions into conformity with social justice.

High priority will be given to the commitment to the impoverished two-thirds of mankind which is implicit in the Council's declaration of the collegial responsibility of bishops. And finally, Father Devoto has undertaken to spend more time with his people and to do the things which he finds they want him to do.

It is an impressive program, but it has touched me particularly deeply because of an experience I have just had.

Thus stimulated by new inter-religious cooperation, the overall move to place greater number of Bibles in the hands of people around the world can only go forward.

In the opinion of Dr. Olivier Beguin of London, general secretary of the United Bible Societies, a "new age" of cooperation among both religious groups and between Western countries and younger nations in the area of Bible translation, printing and distribution is at hand.

"The wider circulation of the Word of God," Dr. Beguin told the American Bible Society Advisory Council last Fall, "is no longer the monopoly—though indispensable at the time—of the Western Church's Word, but only be received by men of the new age if it comes to them through the words and ministry of those who are rooted in the same culture, have suffered the same humiliations and fought the same battles." He stressed the rapid creation in many countries of national preparatory groups to take charge of Bible translation and distribution.

This year marks the end of a drive launched by the United Bible Societies to bring its total worldwide distribution of Bibles and Scripture portions to 150 million copies annually, with the American society responsible for half of that total.

In addition, the American society has launched a campaign to enlist 10 million new Bible readers in the current year, approved its largest budget in history—\$6,045,000—and pledged to the responsive Roman Catholics for help in Bible translation and distribution.

While the U.S. Supreme Court decision banning optional Bible readings in public schools initially was viewed with alarm by some, others have declared that the ruling ultimately will stimulate use of Scriptures. In this regard, the American Bible Society has called on Churches of the nation to get behind a campaign to place Protestant, Catholic and Jewish versions of the Bible in public libraries and public school libraries.

Dr. James Z. Nettinga, director of the 150th anniversary observance of the ABS, calling attention to the Supreme Court's ruling that Scriptures can be studied for their literary and historic qualities, commented that "may very well be the greatest boon to the cause of the Bible since the organization of the American Bible Society."

"Why?" he said. "For one thing—Bible talk today is in it is being discussed in the best—and worst—of circles. Secondly, it is making those of us who are interested in the Bible as the foundation of our faith consider new avenues for action in distributing the Scriptures."

Among numerous Bible translation programs currently underway, significant Protestant, Catholic and Jewish projects have been described in recent months.

In Jerusalem, under the direction of Dr. Amos Zvi Ehrman of the Hebrew University, a revolutionary publication venture which will unlock the wisdom of the Talmud for both Jew and non-Jew is going forward. Often called the Library of Jewish Life, the Talmud for generations has been available only to scholars skilled in Hebrew and Aramaic and steeped in Jewish history and tradition. Now a new annotated English translation is being produced under the auspices of the United Synagogue of America, the agency of more than 500 Conservative congregations.

Pope Paul VI last December announced the appointment of a special commission for the revision of the Vulgate, the Latin office version of the Bible in common use in the Catholic Church. The commission is headed by Augustin Cardinal Bea, head of the Vatican Secretariat for Promoting Christian Unity, and includes 11 priests and religious and recognized Biblical authorities — from various countries.

In Cambridge, England, a 10-year project to produce an authoritative up-to-date version of the Greek New Testament, incorporating previously unpublished information, is being completed by four international Biblical scholars, two from the U.S. and others from Germany and Scotland. Launched by Dr. Eugene A. Nida, American office Secretary of the Secretariat, the project is aimed at providing the best possible Greek Testament, especially for Bible translators at work putting Scripture into over 600 different languages.

A key factor in the entire burgeoning Bible movement today, leading churchmen have noted, is recognition that increased individual use of Scriptures is a crucial first step toward solution of the world problems.

Presiding Bishop John E. Hines of the Episcopal Church spoke to this point. "We are living in the most exciting, unprecedented, fascinating age the world has ever known," he said, "but also the most dangerous age. Some churchmen cry out that the church should leave the social problems of the world to the politicians. . . . But the Church of the Bible is more concerned with the problems of the world than any man could possibly be. The Bible helps us to understand this."

If the home has failed, then the task of the church and society is made entirely more difficult if not impossible. . . . The Bible teaches more about human nature than any person could learn by living in the teeming millions of the city of New York."



People of God

Mrs. Norman Smith, a convert from the Christian Science Church and a former chairman of a literature committee, developed an effective plan for sharing Catholic literature with her neighbors. Acting upon the conviction that most antipathy toward Catholicism is based upon misunderstanding, she and a group of friends started a Catholic Literature Committee in their Carmel, California, parish. The committee began its work by distributing the best of Catholic literature in approved areas of hotels, transportation center and other places of public gatherings, winning widespread popular approval.

A Thermometer For the Soul?

Six hundred women doctors from 33 nations met for their 10th international congress this week in Rochester. Their presence and the continued discussion about Medicare and Medicaid—all tend to focus attention on the vast changes accomplished in the practice of medicine in the past century.

Dr. Paul Dudley White, famed Boston heart specialist, recently stated that our way of life has changed more in the past 80 years than in all the millions of years prior to this time.

With such massive change, however, have come new problems.

Progress in science has been, of course, phenomenal but people are not healed by science alone.

Paul Tournier, a Swiss physician, in his book, "Fatigue in Modern Society," indicates the need for doctors to provide their patients with more than medicine.

"The personal influence and contact of the physician with his patient also have their effect in the healing process," says Dr. Tournier. "This is because men constantly compromise their health through their indiscretions of life, their lack of discipline, their conflicts, their errors of hygiene. Many illnesses occur neither abruptly nor by chance, but have been prepared through years of a comportment contrary to the laws of life."

"An illness must always be the occasion for a taking stock of oneself," continues Dr. Tournier, "for a growing awareness of unresolved problems, and for a revision of the values which few men will undertake in full health. There are resolutions to make, passions to subdue, an attitude in face of existence to change. Thus the physician, without neglecting any of his technical treatments, also has a pedagogical task: he must re-educate his patients, helping them to reform their lives."

That a time of illness can be a time of spiritual catharsis is vividly exemplified in the case of a medieval soldier-saint and of a modern scholar-plate—St. Ignatius Loyola and Anglican Bishop John A. T. Robinson. Wounded in battle, Ignatius, during his long convalescence conceived his idea of a spiritual army, what we call today the Jesuits, and Robinson, recovering from surgery, reconsidered his thoughts on theology and wrote what is still the best selling book "Honest to God."

Dr. Tournier concludes therefore, "Thus the physician's task is twofold: on the one side, it is scientific and technical, on the other, it is pedagogical, psychological, ethical, even spiritual. For our attitude in life is always a religious one, whether one is a believer or not; as we are toward God, so also are we toward our neighbor, toward the world, toward ourselves and life. It is in this second aspect of the physician's mission that his faith plays an eminent role."

"As medicine makes progress, the physician will be proportionately more burdened with his technical task. But he will also need proportionately to be reminded that the healing of his patient does not depend solely on his treatments, but also on the solution of the patient's life-problems."

Pope Paul in his talk closing the Vatican Council and the Council's own statement on the Church in the Modern World pledged the Church and its resources to both a dialogue and a service to the world. Would it perhaps be possible for Catholic doctors and priests to probe together for effective ways to serve the medical profession in this increasingly spiritual aspect of its exercise? Such a service, it would seem, would transcend present chaplain chores, but that service, if it is provided competently and before other guides step in to fill the need, will enable countless patients to discover in their illness an experience of God which can transform their lives.

—Father Henry A. Atwell

If Celibacy, Why Not Also Poverty for Priests?

By GARY MACOIN

Just as the Council was about to end, a group of bishops last December 7 distributed a document which they symbolically dubbed Schema 14 as representing a logical continuation and result of the Church's encounter with today's world in Schema 13. The number and names of those who sponsored the document, and who informed the press of their intention to put its principles into practice in their own lives, was not disclosed. This was characteristic of the entire press attitude to the Council. It was ruthless in exposing improper attempts at secrecy but it was equally sensitively respectful of confidences.

The importance of the "Church of the Poor" group among the Council Fathers, however, makes it legitimate to infer that the sponsors were both numerous and illustrious.

One bishop has now gone on record publicly as a signatory. He is Father Alberto Devoto, bishop of Goya, Argentina. I call him "Father," because such is his request. "We refuse to be called in speech or writing by names or titles which suggest a high position or power (Eminence, Excellency, Monsignor). We prefer to be called by the evangelical name of Father." Such is No. 5 of the thirteen

commitments undertaken by the group of bishops.

In the letter to the people of his diocese, Father Devoto said that he was one of a group of twenty bishops who joined in subscribing to the thirteen commitments, "the fruit of a long period of reflection and discussion during the Council," at a consecrated Mass in the Roman catacombs.

No. 5 is far from being the most revolutionary of the commitments.

Father Devoto, as he has told his people, will live like one of them, eat the same food, use the same means of transport, have the same kind of home. No more expensive clothing, no flamboyant colors or precious ornaments. No more ownership of movable or immovable property, no more bank accounts. If the needs of the diocese require any ownership, it will be in the name of the diocese, or of a social or charitable institute. And, "to the greatest possible extent, financial and material administration will be entrusted to a committee of laymen, chosen because they combine professional competence with an apostolic dedication."

Personal poverty is to be completed by social poverty and a primary commit-

ment to the poor. Levels of solemnity of baptisms and weddings based on ability to pay are out. So are banquets that even seem to give preference to the rich and powerful, and plaques or other honor to record the gifts which the faithful will be urged to regard as "a normal participation in worship, the apostolate and social action."

Existing "charitable" activities will be transformed as fully as possible into social works designed to help all who need help over the whole range of their needs, and in the form of a service to the competent public organizations. Catholic opinion will be channeled into encouraging and helping the civil authorities to bring the laws, structures, and social institutions into conformity with social justice.

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It is an impressive program, but it has touched me particularly deeply because of an experience I have just had.

In a period of two weeks I have been interviewed about the meaning of the Vatican Council on twelve radio and television shows, many of them national distributed. The interviewers, Catholic, Protestant and Jewish, are people who hold their jobs because they know what Americans are thinking, what are the kind of questions to which they would like to have answers.

An inevitable question was clerical celibacy, sometimes against the superficial background of the contemporary fixation on sex. But as soon as I sketched the historical development of celibacy, as one of the three basic constituents of the monastic life, which in the Latin Church was applied to all priests, a deeper current of thought emerged.

I can formulate fairly a whole series of convergent reactions, as follows: reactions which I regard as a fair expression of American opinion. "The institutional Church insists on two of the evangelical counsels, celibacy and obedience, for all its priests. From where, we say, the third would seem at least equally pertinent."

My reply? "No comment." What do you think?

'Good'

Rochester has been aware of its mission to Brazil these last few years with the return of several Sisters from the Sisters Joseph mission in Mate...

Sister Margaret Adelaide, administrator of St. Joseph's Hospital in Elmira, and Mary Patrice, one of the newly appointed Regional Superiors for the Community, spent two weeks there with the Sisters and reported they were in good health and spirits. Their work continues very strenuous but they stand in acceptance and standing are proportionate.

In March, 1965, the Sisters of St. Joseph of Rochester of this, their first foreign mission band: Sisters Alma Hayes, Michael Popowich, Adelaide La Regis, Sarkis, and Annmaria. The two newest members, Sisters Joanne McKoy and Loyola Schmitz, finished orientation courses and the others in December.

The Sisters' ever-increasing familiarity with language customs adds immeasurable work, which includes the tion of the three groups (ly equivalent to our elem...

Father M For Cong

Father Robert A. Christi Church, has been the Catholic Relief Society of Congo, Mon John F. McCarthy, CRS ant., executive director nounced this week.

Catholic Relief Services seas-aid agency of Am Catholics, conducts food, ing and medicine distribution programs for the needy in than 80 countries through Asia, Africa and Latin Am...

An estimated 40 million erty-afflicted persons helped annually by CRS programs, completely w regard to race, religion, color.

Father Meng is now the person from the Rochester serving with Catholic Services in Africa. The two are Monsignor Wils Kaiser, CRS Sub-Saharan regional director, station Nairobi, Kenya, and Ms. Harding Foley, nutrition consultant for the CRS Health gram for the Pre-School in Africa. Miss Foley signed to the Nairobi, Kenya, office.

Father Meng completed intensive three-week orientation course at Catholic Relief Services headquarters here and depart this week for K (formerly Leopoldville) Congo, where he will i...



William J. O'Bryen FitzGerald, guest of St. Mary Our Mother signed by those at

Tribute

The Board of Governors the Catholic Family Serv Chemung County, with t operation of the Ladi Charity and the staff fan the Agency, held three eve tribute to Miss Mary E. Gerald, Executive Direct the Catholic Family S since it was founded by 1 January, 1930.

Miss FitzGerald resign June 30. Her resignation termed "a commencement cause she will begin new ices in other field immed

Tribute began with an House in the Agency Offi 374 West Church St. from to five p.m. on Wedn June 29. Representatives public and private Service, Board Members, Lad Charity to the number o hundred, forty, attended. George P. Generas and Paul M. Stone, Past Pres of the Ladies of Charity sided.

The second event, also to the public, was a Ma fered in her parish church St. Mary Our Mother in I heads by the pastor, I Bartholomew J. O'Brien, homily was given by Mon

Widowed Par Schedule Picnic

Family picnic of the Ca Widowed Parent Club will place July 17 at Hamlin I West Bluff area (last pi area) at 12:30 p.m.

Members are requeste provide lunches for their families.