

A Look Into Brazil, Chile Missions

By MONSIGNOR JOHN F. DUFFY

It seemed strangely different to see the sun in the northern skies and to find the Southern Cross, and not the Big Dipper, in the heavens at night. But these were only a few of the differences confronting a visitor to the Missions in South America.

About three o'clock in the afternoon of Ascension Thursday, the Panagra Jet began its descent through the foothills of the Andes Mountains, as it approached Santiago, the Capital of Chile. Leaving John F. Kennedy Airport in New York about midnight on Wednesday, Flight Number 81 had flown all night and through the morning and had covered over five thousand miles. The long trip was interrupted by stops at Miami, Panama City, Guayaquil in Ecuador, and Lima in Peru.

And now the destination was but moments away. The big flaps on the trailing edge of the wings were way down, and the plane was slowing down rapidly.

In a few moments the jet had taxied to a stop in front of the terminal building, and the passengers began pouring out into the afternoon sunlight. Upon stepping out of the plane one became very conscious of Fall weather.

The day was clear, the sun shining brightly, but the air had that cool feeling of November. Actually, it was Fall for the people living south of the Equator. And later one was to see even more evidence of Fall in viewing the leaves falling from the trees.

So often the arrivals of international air flights are greeted by large crowds of people at the airports. Our flight was no

Monsignor John F. Duffy, diocesan director of the Society for the Propagation of the Faith, recently returned from a visit to missions staffed by nuns from the Diocese of Rochester — to Brazil where there are Sisters of St. Joseph, and to Chile where there are Sisters of Mercy. This is his report on his trip.

different. And so, not seeing the Sisters of Mercy or the Irish Columban Fathers in this large crowd behind the fence, one felt a little bit alone and lost in this strange and different land. All around you, there were babbling voices and shouts. But the words were Spanish, a tongue strange to our ears.

With the officials of the Immigration Service, the Customs, and the Public Health behind us, we soon found ourselves outside the gates in a swirling, joyful crowd of Chileans. And

it took but a moment for the four Rochester Sisters of Mercy to find us. Right behind the Sisters were Columban Father Kevin O'Boyle, pastor of San Luis parish, and Father James Weckesser, a Maryknoll Father from St. Augustine's parish in Rochester. Father Weckesser's present assignment is at a parish very near the parish of San Luis.

That night we offered Mass in the still incomplete Church of San Luis. A string of four naked light bulbs served as the temporary lighting arrange-

ment for the people who had come to fulfill their Ascension Thursday Mass obligation. In the upper sections of the walls there were as yet open spaces where the windows were to be inserted. As a result, the cool night air came drifting in and reminded one that it was definitely Fall.

In these simple surroundings with the church a new, yet bleak-appearing building, one felt very close to the Chilean people and their problems. Typical of the group, one layman, short, stocky, middle-aged, as-

sisted in the liturgy by standing before a microphone and leading the people in the hymns and in the dialogue recitation of the Gloria and Credo.

Sermon time in the Mass brought Father Michael, one of the two assistant pastors, to the microphone for what seemed to be a very forceful sermon. Given with great feeling and animation, the sermon had meaning for the congregation. But for us with no knowledge of Spanish it fell on deaf ears.

Later that evening, with Fathers Kevin, Michael and Joseph, we went to the convent for dinner. It was really the first chance we had to talk with all the Sisters. And they were most anxious to hear the news of the Diocese.

They were quite up on the news of the installation of Bishop Casey, but still had many questions to ask. For both the

Sisters of Mercy, and later the Sisters of St. Joseph in Brazil, the appointment of Father John S. Hayes, as rector of the Sacred Heart Cathedral, was the big news. But the names of the two Diocesan priests who were to serve in Latin American Missions, we were unable to give. For the news had not been released as yet in Rochester, and it was not until our return on Memorial Day that we learned whom Bishop Kearney had chosen.

Friday, Saturday and Sunday seemed to pass quickly with so much to see, to hear and to learn. Walking around the parish of San Luis with the Sisters, riding with Father Kevin and Father Jim Weckesser, we began to see more vividly the scope of the work confronting the priests and Sisters in this parish on the outskirts of Chile's Capital.

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Church Changes Favored 3 to 1 In Courier Poll

The "new liturgy" is favored more than 3 to 1 in replies to last week's Courier quiz on changes called for by the Vatican Council.

The top-sided margin is due chiefly to a virtual unanimous approval on the part of clergy who answered. Laymen gave only a slight edge in favor of the changes.

A total of 156 replies, however, is hardly sufficient to indicate an accurate cross-section of opinion.

A questionnaire was mailed to 167 pastors and chaplains of Newman clubs, hospitals, prisons and other institutions. To date, 64 have replied.

Ninety-two lay people clipped out the quiz in last week's Courier and mailed in their comments.

The quiz is reprinted in this issue on page two for those who missed it last week.

Thus far, 44 lay people said they thought the "new liturgy" strengthened their devotion at Mass, 18 said it left them about the same as before and 30 said it weakened their devotion.

The clergy replies indicated that 51 thought the "new liturgy" strengthened the devotion of most of their parishioners, 13 thought it left it about the same. None thought it weakened the devotion.

Most of those opposed to the changes voiced a preference for the "quiet" or "peace" of the pre-Council way of attending Mass and said they particularly didn't like congregational singing. One added the comment, "If you ever heard me sing, you'd know why."

One who voiced enthusiastic approval of the changes objected to the reluctance of "conservatives" to accept them. "In the past, if I disagreed with such people, their first remark was, 'Well, the Church says . . .'. What has happened to this attitude now?"

A pastor of a rural church summarized his attitude on the changes, "I'll go along with the Church, as I have for the last 37 years."

Replies to questions on ecumenical activity and other changes in the Church tended to follow the attitude indicated about liturgy changes. Those who favored the one, usually favored the others also, and vice versa.

A more detailed report will be published in subsequent issues of the Courier as a more representative total of replies can be tabulated.

Theology 'Gap' Follows Council

Hartford — (RNS) — A Catholic priest declared here that unless "professional theologians" take their rightful place as exponents of the authentic mind of the Church in the post-conciliar era others "with no theological qualifications will fill the vacuum by default."

Father Richard P. McBrien, opening a series of articles for The Catholic Transcript, news-weekly of the Hartford archdiocese, warned that there is a "wide gap" between the theological advancement of the Vatican Council and the "theological understanding of many Catholic people — clergy included."

A priest of the Hartford archdiocese, he is a member of the

faculty of Pope John XXIII Seminary for Delayed Vocations in Weston, Mass.

He admitted that some authoritative efforts to close the "theological gap" have been successful.

"But others," he stated, "with far less competence (indeed, with no discernible competence at all in the area of theology), have not hesitated to write on issues of theological import, and with disheartening results."

"But the temptation for the professional theologian," the priest added, "is to scoff at such efforts and dismiss them from mind as quickly as possible."

"If the theologian is to be the servant of the Church," Father McBrien added, "then he must be willing to make his findings — or better still his tentative reflections — available to others within the same Christian community."

"Falling this responsibility, others with no theological qualifications will fill the vacuum by default. And the theologian has no one to blame but himself."

Father McBrien, a native of Hartford, was ordained in 1962. After parish duties in West Haven, he undertook graduate studies in theology at the Gregorian University, Rome, where he received a doctorate in sacred theology in 1965. He is the author of The Church in the Thought of Bishop John Robinson, to be published in London by the SMC Press and in Philadelphia by Westminster Press this Fall.

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Two Priests on Way to Bolivia Assignment

Two priests of the Rochester Diocese are now on their way to bolster the sagging faith of Latin America.

They are recruits in a growing army of U.S. priests, nuns and lay people whose victory in their mission will spell survival in the Catholic Church for literally millions of souls.

Father Peter A. Deckman and Father Thomas M. O'Brien received their mission Rosaries from Bishop Kearney at a departure ceremony in St. Thomas More Church, Brighton, last Friday evening.

They are already in Cuernavaca, Mexico, learning the language and the customs of the people in Bolivia where they will work with U.S. Maryknoll missionaries.

The two are the first priests of the Rochester Diocese to be assigned to foreign mission work. They were among close to 50 priests who volunteered for the task following an appeal from Bishop Kearney earlier this year.

At the departure rite, Bishop Kearney said missionaries are usually given a "mission cross" but he preferred to give them a mission Rosary in keeping with "the angel's words to St. Joseph, to 'take the Child and His Mother . . .'"

It is "particularly appropriate," the Bishop said, "for young American priests to take our Lady and her Child as the special contribution of American Catholicism to their mission parish." He pointed out that the United States is dedicated to the Immaculate Conception of the Blessed Virgin Mary and her national shrine is one of the principal landmarks of the nation's capital city.

The Bishop led the congregation at the departure ceremony in this prayer for missionaries:

O Almighty God, Lord of the harvest of souls, we pray thee to guide and bless all those who go forth to preach the Gospel of salvation in distant lands. Pour out thy Holy Spirit upon them to strengthen their weakness, to comfort them in their trials, to direct them in all their efforts, and open all hearts to receive the message delivered by them. Give unto them the spirit of power and love, and of sound mind, that in all their work they may set forth Thy glory and move forward the salvation of souls, that all men may become Thine inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the world Thy possession, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

The St. Thomas More parish choir directed by Marie Keeler Burbank then sang "Lovely Appearance," a hymn honoring all apostles, from Gounod's "The Redemption, Benedictus and the 'Miserere'" or a departure blessing completed the Friday evening ceremony.



Father Thomas O'Brien and Father Peter Deckman wear Mission Rosaries given them by Bishop Kearney at their departure to Bolivia mission. Also taking part in rite at St. Thomas More Church Friday evening was Monsignor John F. Duffy.



'Along ways of peace and prosperity may the almighty and merciful Lord lead them' — says the Church's prayer for missionaries. Bishop Kearney bestowed a Mission Rosary on two young priests, first from Rochester Diocese to be assigned to a foreign mission parish.

Decision Awaited On Birth Control

Vatican City — (RNS) — When Pope Paul VI issues his final decision on the birth control problem "it is bound to be prudent and something deeply thought out. It will appear sensational only to people who have not thought enough about the problem."

This comment came from Father Henry de Riedmatten, O.P., secretary-general of the papal Commission to Study the Problems of Population, the Family and Birth. He spoke out shortly after the commission had submitted to the Pope a 600-page report of its conclusions based upon long discussions among clerical and lay experts on the medical, sociological, historical and theological aspects of birth control.

Father de Riedmatten was interviewed over Italian radio and television networks after having been received in private audience by Pope Paul.

Making his first public statement since the papal commission finished its work, the Swiss-born Dominican, while skiffing the crucial question of artificial contraception, said the Catholic church "admits birth control (in the sense of family planning) for the good reason

that to bring children into the world is a moral act, and to do a moral act means to be responsible for what one does."

"Birth control," he said, "does not mean, 'once and for all — we shall have so many children.' It does not mean there is an ideal number for a family. It just means that couples faced with the duties of conception must act with a sense of responsibility."

The priest said the theologians had always been "at the center of the papal commission's work" and were its expert advisers.

However, he added, great weight had also been given to the arguments of scientists. In addition, the commission took into account pressures on it from various governments and the United Nations and its Food and Agriculture Organization which provided useful material based on research.

"Whatever the (final) answer of the Church on the birth control issue, one will not be able to say it was not informed about the problem," Father de Riedmatten commented.

Meanwhile, the Italian Radio reported that on July 4, Il Regno, a religious magazine published in Bologna by the priests of the Sacred Heart had revealed that more than 500 Catholic lay intellectuals from 17 countries, including the United States, had sent an appeal to the Pope asking him to delay any decisions regarding the Church's teaching on birth control.

In their petition — submitted also to the papal commission — the intellectuals warned against precipitating "decisions which could in a short time be overtaken by new discoveries in the medical and scientific field."

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Clear Away Slums -- A Job for Jews and Catholics

Washington — (NC) — Msgr. John Tracy Ellis urged here that American Catholics and Jews work together to aid the current residents of urban slums in which their own forebears suffered.

"Probably no two distinct groups in this Republic have had as long, and often as sad, experience in the vast human jungles that for more than a century have constituted the urban slums of this country, as have the Catholics and the Jews," said Msgr. Ellis, profes-

sor of church history at the University of San Francisco.

"What better background, therefore, could one ask to enable you Jews and Catholics to unite our energies against the present poverty, illiteracy and spiraling crime in those pockets of American urban life

where once your forebears and ours struggled through their pioneer years in this land?" he asked in an address (June 25) to the National Community Relations Advisory Council, a national Jewish organization meeting here.

In the face of the "patent and pitiful need" of urban slum dwellers, Msgr. Ellis said, Catholics and Jews should drop mutual prejudices and suspicions and mobilize their new wealth and social status in a cooperative program of aid.

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