

Priest Reports on Visit Behind Iron Curtain



People of God

Patrick A. Scanlan, managing editor of the "Brooklyn Tablet" since the World War I days of 1917, has had a unique career in Catholic journalism. A vigorous anti-communist and an articulate spokesman for conservative causes, the editor has opened the pages of his paper to a readers' forum for the expression of other viewpoints. He was born in Philadelphia in 1894, educated at the Jesuit operated St. Joseph's College there, and honored with doctorates from several institutions of higher learning.

On a Journey That's Zig-zag

Newsmen in Italy are having a hey-day quoting "usually reliable" Vatican sources for clues to Pope Paul's thoughts on the birth control decision he's expected to announce this autumn.

The Vatican newspaper L'Osservatore Romano, without specifying names, said some newspapers had "vulgarized" the "grave problems" the Pope now had under study.

The "usually reliable" Vatican sources said the protest was aimed at a Milan newspaper which ran a series of articles by an unidentified theologian who predicted the Pope would allow Catholics to use a contraceptive pill for two years following birth of a child.

The Vatican paper advised newsmen to halt their "journalistic agitation" and await the papal decision.

Pope Paul set up a commission of experts close to two years ago to advise him on the subject and thereafter last year a-d-d-e-d several bishops, including Cardinal Alfredo Ottaviani, to the commission.

The commission recently presented the Pope with two reports, one representing the views of a majority of the advisers and another the opinions of the minority. In accepting the reports he told the commission that he would study them during the summer and remarked, "It is easier to study than to decide."

He added that while "we cannot remain silent," it was "a great problem to speak out, and in this decision we stand alone."

The Pope reportedly finds it difficult to make up his mind, because of scientific and medical issues involved and because of the fact that the Church in its long history has never before confronted a problem of similar import.

Lack of a scientific consensus among the commission's medical experts has prevented the Pope from having a basis on which to justify his decision some held. It is said the Pope desires more information of a scientific and medical nature and may appeal to a restricted study group of theologians and experts during his stay at the papal villa in Castel Gandolfo outside Rome.

The majority commission report, presented by Julius Cardinal Doepfner of Germany, was more or less favorable to birth control. The minority report was submitted by Alfred Cardinal Ottaviani, president of the commission — it was largely opposed to any change in the Church's stand on artificial birth control.

It is these two reports and the conflicting conclusions set forth in them that constitute the dramatic problem the Pope faces this summer.

One priest who is following with special interest developments toward the papal decision is Father Charles E. Curran, a Rochesterian who teaches moral theology at the Catholic University of America in Washington. He was once a pupil of Redemptorist Father Bernard Haering, considered by many to be the Catholic Church's top moral expert today. Father Haering, chosen a year ago to give a week's retreat conferences to Pope Paul, is the author of many books on moral questions and is a member of the faculty of the Alphonsianum, a school of advanced study in Rome.

Father Curran explained this week that the Church is constantly faced with the task of expressing infallible truth in fallible human terminology. The Vatican Council, he said, defined the Church as a pilgrim Church — still on its way to perfection and the journey is not always forward and upward. "Sometimes it's this way," and he gestured in an up-and-down, zig-zag fashion.

That is similar to what Jesuit Father Daniel J. O'Hanlon says in the Doubleday paperback Image Book "Current Trends in Theology." "The first of the traits which even a casual observer cannot help noticing in Catholic theology today is a sense of movement..."

Some Catholics, long used to traveling in Peter's barque across still waters, are getting a bit sea-sick from much of the present turbulence. Others have a strong confidence that the Church and its members will emerge from this time of transition with a far firmer faith and realistic moral code than we had prior to this era.

—Father Henry A. Ansell

Dinner that first night in Moscow was most rewarding. A student of 23, from electronic communications, at the University, joined me. He spoke some English and seemed quite intelligent. I was curious, and asked this time why he chose to sit with me. He answered that I looked like a delegate to the Congress then in session; he said I looked Russian. We talked Religion, politics, diplomacy, economics, and other things — all very gemutlich, friendly. He asked me to state my objections to their system, and he would try to respond. He was very methodical. My points were three:

1) atheism — He said they didn't need God. He smiled when I said I firmly believed in God. No one, not even their cosmologists ever saw God. He was amazed when I told him our astronauts did, then explained how they saw God's work in the laws of space and radiation, etc. I talked of the fundamental argument from design. The world always was, he said, and always will be. He seemed uneasy, and asked to change the topic. "We each have our opinions—next point?"

2) one-party system—I said they had no choice, no free vote if they didn't like the way the government acted. He said everybody was satisfied with the government; "things are better now than they used to be; the one party gives me all I want." Besides, the American Revolution was 190 years ago, ours only 40, and look how far we've come in that short time—not far behind America, in production, etc."

3) Little freedom of competition, and private ownership. About Vietnam he thought we were meddling. I tried to show him how we wanted the people there to elect their own way, not have Communism forced on them — in Berlin and Germany too.

He mused how well we could talk together, and never met again. I corrected him that I hoped I'd meet him again in the next world. He said "Nyet, nyet, you'll be up there, I'll be down the other place—ha!" We spent a quick 2 1/2 hours chatting, eating, drinking, and smoking his Russian cigarettes. I had sheshlik, caviar (which he taught me I must eat black on white bread) vodka.

He was drinking a cognac, and we poured our vials into each other's glasses (many Russians chase it with a carbonated fruit drink), and drank to everything, even to God. He invited me to continue our talk in an evening walk about the city, but I had some writing to do, and was tired, (and a little heady); so to my deluxe suite about 12:45 for the first night's sleep in Moscow. I did, and well.

I got up about 8 a.m., Thursday, March 31, had a conversation in the hotel, went to the Service Bureau to see if my airline reservations had been confirmed. It was, but in a later flight, and a different airline, the East German Intairflug whereas I had hoped and was scheduled to fly the Russian Aeroflot.

I objected (had been advised in such circumstances to be polite but firm). I took it to the "chief," as he was called, in the office. He was kind, and had the girl check. To my satisfaction she explained how the Russian and East German lines alternated monthly on Berlin flights; and I was to fly on the first of the month. A schedule check on my own later made me again doubt this reason.

This was the morning we were to tour the Kremlin, no need for a car—a short walk, my woman guide said, and it was—At first, the main gate, through the Kremlin Wall, is the Spasskaya (Savior's) Tower. There used to be a huge picture of the Savior on the tower; now the vacant place is symbolic of a Godless land. This entrance was open this week only to official Communist Congress traffic, and limousines were going in and out. The soldier-guard was firm.

The walk was quite a distance

Father William Amann of Our Lady of Mercy parish, Greece, took a springtime tour into Iron Curtain countries, including close to a week in Moscow. This is the third in a series of articles reporting his trip.

round to the next gate that was open, halfway around the Kremlin. I didn't think it was the distance so much as the time; I was unhappy and even much happier once we got inside the walls because all we could see that day was the Armoury. Maybe I was too strong with the poor tourist guide: "All this here for the people to see, and the people can't." Her only response was "I don't know, I don't know." I was disappointed—the Armoury proved to be interesting, however,—displays of Czar's sleighs, carriages, arms, icons, crowns, robes, etc.

The subway (Metro) is a big Moscow boast. For only a few kopeks, more than 3 million ride it daily for miles. But their stations are their real pride, we rode to several, spic and span, and ornately decorated with mosaics, chandeliers, sculpture, etc., and of course no advertising, except the propaganda of national figures and ideas in painting and sculpture.

I asked in the afternoon to go to the U.S.S.R. Exhibit of Agriculture, Industrial and Eco-

nomics; I said she told me about living space. (It is most difficult in Russia to get invited to someone's home.) Her answer was that things are improving, and no doubt they are — but the accent is still on heavy industry, not on consumer goods. Shoes cost about \$20 to \$30, which means 2 or 3 days' pay for the average Russian.

Things simmered down at the Tretykov amid the serenity of the realistic painters. Particularly, I told her I wanted to see the Vladimir Madonna icon, which had been such an integral part of Russian history and warfare, and which was the prototype of many subsequent Madonnas.

A few years ago, the devotion to her spread among the Socialists in the U.S., for the conversion of Russia; I prayed there in Moscow before it, for just that, and for all who had devotion to her.



St. Louis Church is solitary outpost of Catholic faith in Moscow. Father William Amann of Rochester found a devout congregation there for Mass.

nomics Achievement — a kind of permanent world's fair of the Soviet world (the 15 republics that make up the U.S.S.R.) in showcase supposedly of achievement, but more realistically of what is hoped for or all. I had read that this was where they like to take tourists first to show off and a lot of time would be wasted there, so was quite surprised to find my guide not too eager about going there.

I was in particular to see the Space Exhibit Building. There we saw spudniks, cosmonauts' capsules, and the prize exhibit at the moment: a full size model of Lane IX, with guide explaining man's proposed first soft landing on the moon.

On the way to the Tretykov Art Gallery (perhaps Moscow's most famous), my patience was tried again with the guide. I had made up my mind to listen to all of the propaganda, not argue, or object, but this time it was too much; how much better their system was—how they're improving, hope to outstrip the U.S. in everything, how the percentage of increase in production was higher than any other country. I answered that we didn't need such increase as they did. She countered with Johnson's description of the poverty in the U.S.

I tried to explain there were pockets of it, but I told her that the U.S. never saw the mass poverty I see walking the streets of Moscow, how shabbily so many people are dressed, their crowded living conditions. She asked when I saw living

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pillar-of-the-theater. I had time to cross Red Square, to go inside the candy-colored St. Basil's Cathedral I thought. The sign said open till 5:30 p.m. but already at 5:05 the peasant-looking lady gatekeeper was closing. Others were quite resigned, but I tried to show the American way to complain, using the sign and the clock on the Spasskaya Tower across the Red Square. She was adamant. I decided I'd have to come tomorrow.

It was good to have Alexandra from Intourist with me at the Bolshoi. She spoke fair English (by chance a girl from Pakistan was on my left and spoke even better English). Alexandra worked for the Ministry of Culture, and her job was to arrange the travel of international artists in Russia. I guess she found me as interesting as I found her to talk with. She asked a lot of questions about America.

This was to be "freedom day," Friday, April 1, the day I'd get back to the free West. Already the depression was growing, and I was getting anxious to be away from this opposite world. But I had much to do this last morning. I had heard that there was still a Catholic church open for worship in Moscow at Malaya Lubyanka Ul. 12. (They keep one

Masses. Weekday Masses at 8:30, and on Friday also at 18:00; Vespers on Saturday at 18:00; Confessions before and after Mass.

I had just missed Mass, but again, what a thrill to enter the church to the strains of the Latin "Tantum Ergo," and find myself kneeling before the Blessed Sacrament here in Moscow, two blocks from the infamous Lubyanka Prison.

I had a great desire, to receive Holy Communion here, to beg, Christ in that union to spare this great land and its people. The day was Friday, First Friday. The church was nearly filled — about 200 old women and four men, including me. Their devotion was obviously intense.

After Benediction, the priest, maybe seventy years old, assisted, by an elderly man, vested in a surplice directly over his suit, approached the side altar of St. Louis the King, and took a relic (I suppose of St. Louis) down the aisles. All left their pews and knelt in the aisle to kiss the relic. I joined them.

After the blessing, I went through the sanctuary to the sacristy. The priest spoke a little German. I told him that I was an American tourist and asked to receive Communion. I wanted to tell him I too was a priest. One must be careful of such conversation, not only for my own safety but for fear of compromising him. He seemed happy to hear I was an American, and would gladly give me Communion but he had promised to hear some confessions first. "Zehn Minuten — ten minutes," he said. Several old women went to confession in a very open confessional. And I waited, studying the church, its icons, statues, and prayed the Rosary to Our Lady of Russia, again, for this great land, its people and leaders. How wonderful to be in the Divine Presence in this church in the heart of Moscow.

After about thirty-five minutes the priest came out of the confessional, beckoned me to the communion railing, and with me came nearly all the women in church to receive too. I said the Confiteor in Latin, and what joy to receive our Lord in His lone outpost in Moscow. Later I went into the sacristy again to thank the priest and say good-bye, telling him I was leaving for America. He embraced me, "check-kissed," and said he would remember me at Mass that evening.

Then I asked him in Latin, to kind of intimate my priesthood, "Esne solus sacerdos in Moscow—Are you the only priest in Moscow?" He answered quickly, "Est Alter in American embassy, duo, two." I had heard that before, an American priest in the embassy to serve the Americans there.

Then I offered him a little donation—"For the church," I said. I offered him a five ruble bill (about six dollars).

"Nyet, nyet," he excitedly said. "Das Kommittee, an das Kommittee," and he pointed to a suited man sitting at a table a few feet from him in the sacristy. He meant I had to give it to him, which I did, then bade au wiedersehen — do svechadnya.

I paid a quick visit to the multi-turreted St. Basil's, being able to get in this time, and was quite disappointed. This basilica, beautiful on the outside, seemed like a cluster of unkept dungeons, once chapels, inside. Icons were still visible, and altars, but the walls defaced by initials and carvings the "superstitions of old."

My transfer to the airport was to leave the Metropole about 11:30. I pocked my bag with essential clothes, Russian things, then left 2 bagsful in the washroom. As I left, the cleaning woman seemed to be waiting in the hall, perhaps just to claim anything I'd left. I made it easy for her, invited her in, gave her the clothes. "Ah, spasibo, ah, spasibo — Thank you," she exclaimed elated.

NEXT WEEK Back to the West

church of each faith open so that they can say people are free to go to church if they want to, although youngsters are forbidden to, and of course no religious education is allowed).

I wanted to see St. Louis Church. How great to visit Christ in the Blessed Sacrament reigning in the heart of Communism's bastion!

I took a cab the short distance. In half Russian-German, he asked "Sportshal?" It was some kind of gymnasium or physical culture building. I tried to get across to him that I was looking for a church here; he was surprised—"Nyet, kein Kirche!" "A church, St. Louis, where people still come to worship, a Catholic church."

He was more surprised at the word "Catholische," and to make sure he understood, he questioned me a quick sign of the cross. "Yes," I said. Nyet, nyet, no church — no Gott. "No church where people worship!" "No church in Moscow, in Russia."

I didn't want to believe him so I thought I'd get out and look around. He turned the cab and sped away; and right there, where he turned, was an open square and the good-sized church of St. Louis. He must have known it was there; he couldn't miss it.

It was quite a thrill for me to read on the door in four languages: Church Open Weekdays 7 and 10; Sundays and Holy days 7 and 14; 3 Sunday

A little of an art gallery goes a long way with me, but I admit I was fascinated by the realism of the paintings there, some I had read about once, "The Apparition of Christ to the People," by Ivanov; "Iran the Terrible and His Son, Ivan, Nov. 16, 1581," by Repin; "Morning in a Pine Wood," by Shishkin.

It wasn't hard to discern the party line even in the guide's description of some of these. The galleries and museums are always full of school children, appreciative children, on guided tours, a real tribute to the high culture of the Soviets.

At the end of my tour, I offered the guide a "Geschenk," a present. Russians aren't supposed to accept tips, and in general, don't — but presents, cosmetics, tobacco, etc., o.k. I tried to offer her a new Kennedy half dollar. "Och no!" She asked its value. "Och, so, too much!" Her eyes darted, and again to the driver, as I tried to explain it not as money but as a famous coin, a present — "No, its not that I don't have regard for President Kennedy, but it's too much. That you like Moscow is enough present..."

I got a copy of Pravda, Izvestia, and the English Moscow News—all full of Party Congress accounts and speeches, and invectives against "Johnson's dirty war in Vietnam."

Back at the Service Bureau, Olga told me that her sister, Alexandra, would be happy to accompany me to the Bolshoi, and would meet me at the first

Keep the Women in Their Place

By GARY MacEOIN

The late John LaFarge, S.J., was a man of disarming approach. Back in the 1930s, few Catholic pastors would allow a Negro to enter their church, and still fewer would consider making the first approach to a Negro who lived in their parish. In the Fall of 1934, ten thousand Catholic priests got a short letter signed by a few priest friends of Father LaFarge. It was headed: "Keep the Negro in his place!"

Father LaFarge had figured out that the heading would catch many who would basket the letter if they suspected what the conclusion was going to be, namely, that the place of the Negro was in the Catholic Church.

My weekend scramble to catch up with my reading has enriched me with four contributions to an issue which has today emotional overtones in the Church as sharp as those produced by a discussion of the Negro's place in 1934. It is the issue of women's place in the Church. I am distressed that all four authors are women.

The age of chivalry is surely dead, if there is no man prepared to break through the crust of custom and attempt to evaluate the arguments for and against the retention of the traditional anti-feminism of our Church's organization and practice

So mounting my Rozinante, I report that my good friend, Dr. Mary Daly, is still urging from Fribourg, Switzerland (at this time in the National Catholic Reporter), that there is no theological bar to the ordination of women; that there is no objective basis for the widespread belief that women are less intelligent or less virtuous than men, that the ecclesiastical mind has not even caught up with the Council's declaration that women are equal adult members of the people of God.

With something more of Father LaFarge's subtlety, a Catholic woman doctor in Uganda describes in Heider Correspondence the things that women dedicated to Christian service in that country as doctors, nurses, teachers, social workers (both religious and lay) could do for the Church, if they were ordained as deaconesses, to administer Holy Communion, conduct services, teach from the pulpit.

Having trapped the unwary reader by pointing out, for example, that women handled the Blessed Sacrament in the first centuries of the Church, she gives the old one-two with even more of a punch than Mary Daly packs. "The status of women in the Catholic Church is closely analogous to that of the colored people in South Africa and other places; in the one case too much pigment denies them

human liberty and the dignity of a human individual, in the other too little male hormone denies them the same rights and hinders their service for society and the Church." I wish I could give you her name, but she lives in Uganda, and having been there, I can appreciate her insistence on anonymity.

From England comes Sister Mary Cuthbert to complain in the Amplefort Journal that women, if they had been given a chance at the Council, could have performed a more useful role than simply that of reminding the Fathers that they form half the human race. But Sister Mary Cuthbert is patient, long patient. She anticipates—and seems prepared to endure—several generations before the Latin mentality which sees little function for women in the Church beyond that of "silent witness," is superseded. In the meantime, she doesn't think it worth while even talking about ordination of women. Nobody is going to listen.

Then just as the suspicion may be developing that women are as fixated on this subject as men seem to be, let me make a switch. My last witness, Ida Friederike Gorges, a German author and theologian, has no time for her feminist colleagues. Writing in a German Catholic weekly in which one might expect fighting sentiments (Der christliche Sonntag),

she plumps instead, if not for a man's world, at least for a man's sanctuary. "Apart from dogma and theology, human nature itself shows that men are better suited to this office" of the priesthood.

Perhaps it is because I'm still riding my beloved Rozinante, but I must confess that none of her arguments, from dogma, from theology (whatever she means by the distinctions) or from human nature convince me. But that's what she says in her view, there is lots for women to do in the Church as it is.

With that argument I have no argument, as far as it goes. Yet I feel more impressed by Mary Daly's very modest assertion—to get away for a moment from such serious matters as the possibility of ordination of women—that while the fact of reaffirmation by the post conciliar commission of the ancient prohibition of women serving Mass is trivial, the psychological significance is tremendous. "It reveals a pattern of attitudes and images which still persist, which can be expected to persist in the Church of the future, unless women themselves break their silence."

My only comment is to repeat what I said earlier: Why must women break their silence? Is there no chivalry left, no man to speak for and with them?

Three couples Above, Fr. M. Theodore's p

Married couple liturgy. Joe T

The Legion

Apos

By GERARA M

(Editor's Note: to the request of I read the Courier-Journal of the Legion of St. Rochester Diocese 1966), and asked detailed picture of a group, we arranged group members for formal series-on the first group! The first is below)

Its time for the story is about a grown men. They want they lack a plan a tion.

Here comes a m in a white hat. He in the difficulties are come now; the mill their plan and reg leader is making every man. They've won. Wow.

The plot is an o fact is, this fiction basis for emotional cause the plot is real life. Let's lo examples:

Jerusalem

— Its Jerusalem, Jesus Christ is g twelve apostles. Listen to them. Mo make the social re

Look at Jesus. Li He's a leader — greatest leader of just might make that unlikely crew.

The goals are q of the bringing of God to the world; of the Church; the souls.

The regulations Thou shall love G love thy neighbor.

At Nazare

Sixty-

Sixty-five studen ceive degrees at graduation "exercis aret College today, gust 5 at 4 p.m. in auditorium;

Candidates for be presented by Sierine, Dean of the degrees will be of Sister Helen Danie Commencement spe the Honorable Joh

Sisters Mary Aic Aquilina Dalton, B ack, Brenda Dewey, gan, Clare Ehma Brown, Mary Greg Mary Faith Fran Mary Finks, Mary Foutre.

Bachelor of Scien tion:

Sisters' Gil m a Hortense" Chaapel, Bredman, Josette dred Coughlin, M Lenhard, Patricia Hna Silwa, Ram Regis Sarkis, Win and Thelma Stone

Bachelor of Scie Sisters' M. Ant Bernadette Mary D Carl MacIvlin, C