

# Vatican Council Xeroxed

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many are aware that assembling all these items was able to start off and proceed at a brisk pace, at least in terms of its material organization, thanks to this intensive work by machines and individuals, mostly anonymous and often performed under all but favorable conditions of number, time and space.

A year has lapsed, and now that those heavily charged days have become a memory, it is fitting to recognize how much the Council owes to its organizational services, especially the data processing department and its Xerox machines. I cannot even imagine what would have happened if they had not existed or if they had stopped working even for a few days.

The use of Xerox machines in the Second Vatican Council has not stopped short with the end of this great event, however. Indeed, while during the conciliar proceedings Xerox copying was a practical but provisional measure to cope with the needs of the moment, with the closing of the Council and the preparation of the "Conciliar Archives," Xerox machines have stepped into a task of paramount, unrivalled importance in collecting and preserving the enormous mass of documentation.

## Report Began A Year Ago

This story has been a year in the making.

James C. O'Neill, Rome correspondent for the National Catholic News Service wrote an article a year ago, February, about the massive task of compiling the record of the Vatican Council. In the second-last paragraph of a four page report, he said Vatican officials were using two Xerox machines to speed their task.

The man in charge of the project, O'Neill said, was Monsignor Emilio Governatori, official keeper of the Council's archives.

We asked Gerard A. Mulligan of the Xerox News Bureau, Rochester if he could get some pictures of the Vatican's Xerox machines for us. He passed the request on to Xerox offices in Italy and this week received this article from Monsignor Governatori and the picture above.

The universal nature and the importance of this Council, its repercussions on doctrines and on the life of the Church, are such that the mass of documents involved had naturally to be collected and put in order according to new criteria which, with due regard to the informing principle of the old archives, jealously guarding the originals, could at the same time permit easy consultation of such important references to a wide range of scholars.

The idea thus emerged of a "Consulting Archive," open to experts for purposes of consultation from a faultlessly faithful photographic copy, without endangering the physical integrity and confidential nature of the originals.

It is important to remark that 90 per cent of the documents in our conciliar Archives, are like many other modern records, letters and typescript, often from carbon copies which will, in a few decades, have undergone wear and tear to the point of becoming illegible; a fact stated categorically at a recent high-level international Conference on Archives.

In typescript, especially in carbon copies, the text is applied to the paper surface without any process of permeation as is the case with handwriting in ink or with Xerox copies, where the graphite ink permeates into the paper completely with a molecular breakdown process. Well produced Xerox copies are unlikely to permit erasures even with the hardest rubbers.

With the advent of the typewriter, ink has gone out of fashion for writing documents, although it enabled keeping old archives for centuries. Nothing remains, therefore, but to adopt new methods of preserving documents if we wish our new, up-to-date archives to survive through future centuries.

The originals are collected, arranged in large tomes which are then, supplemented frequently with annotations, chronological tables, etc., reproduced in a certain number of copies, attractively but sturdily bound, to form the backbone of the new "Archives."

A copy of each volume is kept without binding, so that it can be used for further reproduction if necessary.

Thus we have what is, in its way, a printing house, producing documents having not only

the advantage of being cheap, but of providing entirely faithful copies of the original text.

The Archives of the Vatican Second Council, already in an advanced stage of organization, contains valuable works — several hundred large size volumes are ranged on its shelves and include — magnetic tape recordings of the Council Sessions, transcribed and typed; the manuscripts of the bishops' addresses in St. Peter's; votes and suggestions presented in writing by the bishops concerning the various proposals; the 538 voting sessions of the Council, each with a list of over 2,000 voters; the 16 drafts of Constitutions or Decrees with all the preparatory files, tables, miscellaneous schedules; the records of the liturgies celebrated in St. Peter's; the folders, circulars, non-official drafts circulated clandestinely in the audience without permission of the President's Council, and of which the document officers were able to obtain a copy; the signatures of the bishops as affixed to approved documents — all on Xerox copies.

One or two copies are also made of less important documents, or of those not suitable for binding, so that the original can be properly preserved. Often the original is written or typed, none too clearly; on flimsy paper that would become irretrievably damaged with handling.

It is too early to strike a balance of this immense and complicated venture, for it is still in progress. However, Xerox copying has undoubtedly opened up entirely new horizons for the keeping of Archives, and offers scholars a treasurehouse of knowledge, once the privilege of a lucky few but now within the reach of all.

There are no limits to the use of Xerox copying machines in keeping Archives. The Rank Xerox machine in particular, remarkably designed, of sturdy construction and capable of reproducing even pages of bound books at high operating speed, has proved, for us at least, the ideal machine for this purpose.

A well planned installation of these machines at all the big Archives or Libraries could be of inestimable service to education, permitting an interchange of Xerox copies reproducing the Archive records, and above all, permitting the consultation of many documents which are today available only in theory.

The Vatican II Archives are probably among the first to adopt this new criteria for the collection and consultation of records.

Born out of an urge to renewal, in a new age, with new spiritual and social needs, the Council has found in modern techniques the fertile soil for its birth, life and survival through the centuries in its wholly intact documentary records, offering a genuine source of profound teaching and of life to the future generations.



## Altar 'Boy' Team

Cleveland — (RNS) — John J. Lusoski, 35, who serves Sunday Mass at St. Ladislav church in Cleveland, gives his son, John, 8, a few tips on duties of an acolyte. Father and son have served Mass together at church. Mr. Lusoski has been a server for 26 years.

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## Golden Rose for Brazil

Vatican City — (RNS) — Pope Paul VI blesses the Golden Rose before sending it to the Marian shrine of Our Lady of Aparecida in Brazil, that country's patron saint. The rose is traditionally blessed by the pontiff on Laetare Sunday, fourth Sunday in Lent, and is given in token of appreciation for services of loyalty to cities, countries, and basilicas and other sanctuaries. Last year the rose was presented to the Our Lady of Guadalupe shrine in Mexico City.

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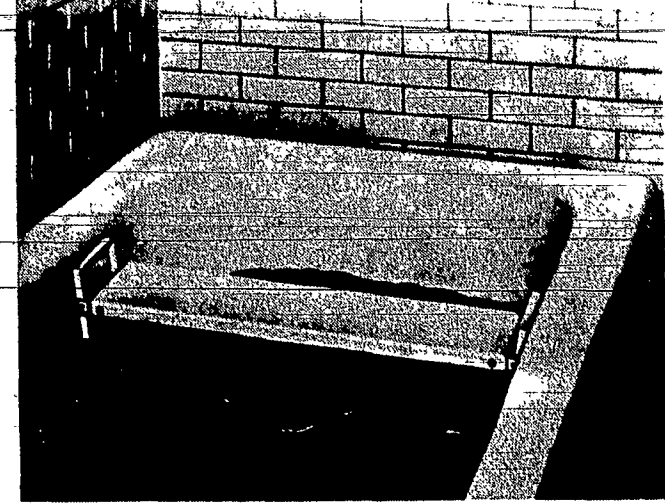
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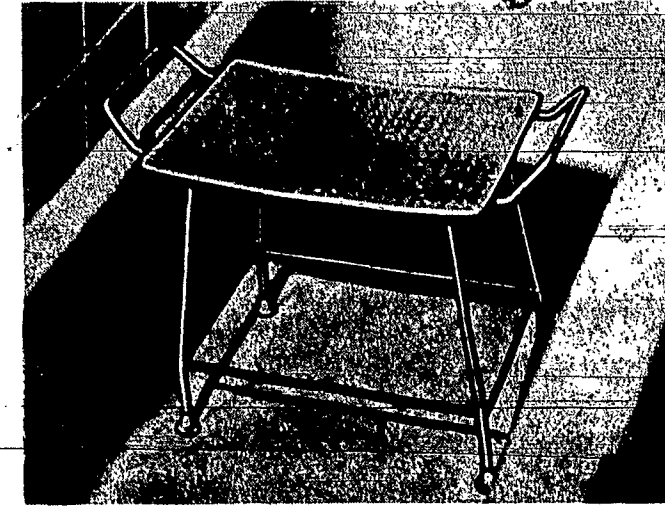
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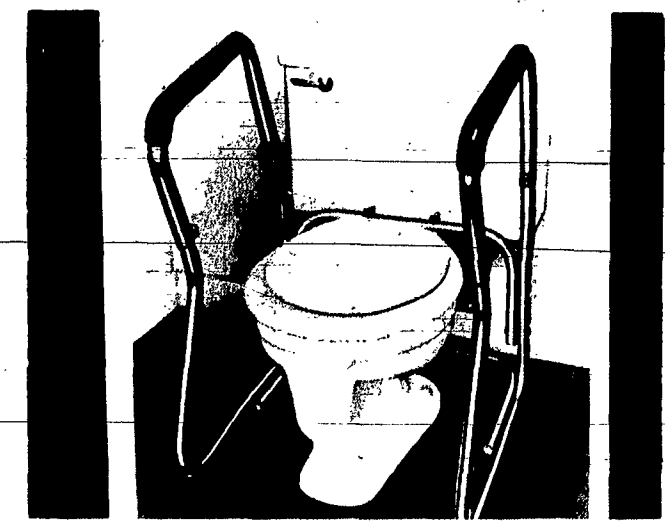
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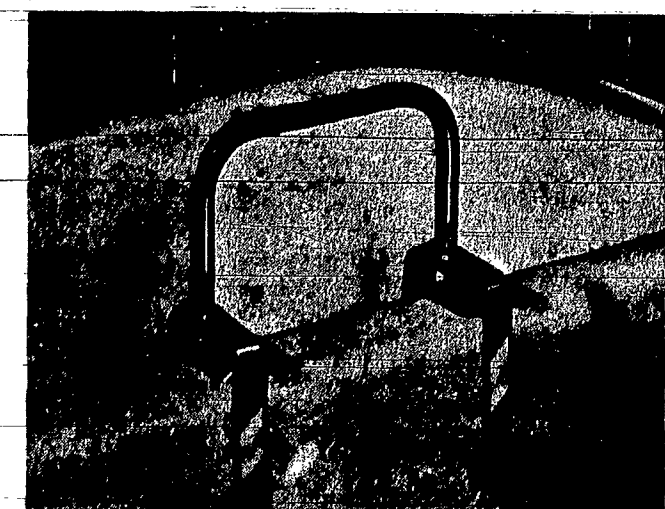
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