

Nun Gives Communion

Portezuelo, Chile — (RNS) — Parishioners at a Maryknoll parish here recently received Communion for the first time from a nun. She was Sister Mary Grace, a member of the Baptistines of White Plains, N.Y., head of the convent here.

Sister Mary Grace said she received permission to distribute the Eucharist from the local bishop whenever there was a prolonged absence of parish priests. The occasion occurred when Maryknoll missionaries who staff the parish went on a week-long retreat.

The nun, who has been in South America nearly 25 years, said she "nearly fainted" when she first received the permission. But then, she said, she thought the priests would never leave.

Pope Paul VI authorized mother superiors of religious communities to distribute Communion to their nuns last October. The local bishop has extended the permission to allow nuns to distribute the Eucharist to the laity. The pontiff's action was prompted by episcopal requests from missionary countries, especially Brazil and Chile.

In Venezuela

You Have to Try Harder

Caracas — (RNS) — The Vatican, which might be forgiven if it regarded the information as confidential, has announced that if you can get past the switchboard operator Pope Paul's extension is 3101. But here in Venezuela only prayer and persistence will connect you via phone with thousands of priests and ministers.

Some clergymen will bet you can get through to Pope Paul easier than reach, by phone, a well-known clergyman who may have lived in a Venezuelan community for years. Here's why:

According to the Venezuelan subsidiary of International Telephone & Telegraph Company, the church is a "business"—and as a result of an aberrant indexing policy one meets only with frustration in looking up the number of a church institution in the phone book.

DIRECT ENTRIES under the name of the institution or organization are not permitted by Venezuelan Telephone Co. So, if one wishes to look up the Anglican Parish of Saint Mary, he won't find it under A for Anglican, P for parish, S for

saint or M for Mary, but under C for church.

Of course, if you want to find the number of the Roman Catholic Church of Saint-Vincent de Paul, don't waste your time trying R. C. S or V. The natural place to look is under P, of course, but not for Paul, but for Parish.

Before you can use the Venezuelan phone book to find the numbers of religious institutions with any facility, you have to be a theologian and canon lawyer rolled into one. You have to know that the Church of the Salesian Fathers attached to their San Juan Bosco School is listed under S because it is a "sanctuary."

You also have to know that the Evangelical parish is listed under C because it is a "chapel."

Finding a religious congregation is even more upsetting. It helps to begin by discarding all logical possibilities. For example, don't try the Jesuits under J, Maryknoll under M, or the Franciscans under F.

You must first determine if the congregation is male or female, and what the titles of

the members, Father, Mother, Brother, Sister, etc. Then proceed to try under P. M., B. S. If it's not there you have probably guessed the wrong sex or, what could be worse, the wrong title.

For the sake of argument, let's say that you are still sane after a hopeless search for the Rev. So and so's number. You suddenly recall that he teaches in a school. "Why didn't I think of that before?" It will be easy now. Let's see, St. John's School. I'll find that in "Jiffy." Oh, yeah!

Patience now. Is St. John's school a kindergarten, a trade school, a high school, a grade school, a university or what? You have to know that before you start to look, because you will never find it without knowing the category under which it is listed.

The Venezuelan Telephone Co. explains all this by saying that its code does not permit a religious organization to be entered under the key word, but under the category, because it is considered a "firm," or business.

Unfortunately there is noth-

Catholic, Episcopalian School Under Study

Atlantic City — (NC) — Catholics and Episcopalians in West Memphis, Ark., are exploring the possibility of co-sponsoring a private junior high school which would offer religious education for both faiths and relieve the teacher shortage faced by Catholic and Episcopalian schools in the city.

The committee foresees religion being taught in the school on an elective basis by representatives of the faiths of the pupils.

Father Beck said that the proposal seemed to be suitable to the particular situation in West Memphis, but added that it would not necessarily be feasible elsewhere.

"Every situation would have to be considered separately," he said.

He said that the study, which was originated by the lay school boards of St. Michael's Catholic parish and Holy Cross Episcopalian parish, has been given the approval of both Catholic Bishop Albert Fletcher and Episcopal Bishop Robert Brown of Little Rock.

ed that the school cannot obtain a sufficient number of nuns to staff it and although lay teachers have proved most acceptable the cost of salaries is becoming prohibitive.

The school proposal is still in the "exploratory stage," Father William A. Beck, superintendent of schools for the diocese of Little Rock, stressed, but he expressed hope that it might prove the answer to "keeping religion in the schools" in West Memphis.

Father Beck commented on the proposal from Atlantic City where he is attending the National Catholic Educational Association convention.

St. Michael's church currently operates an eight-grade school but is facing a teacher shortage. Father Beck explained that the school cannot obtain a sufficient number of nuns to staff it and although lay teachers have proved most acceptable the cost of salaries is becoming prohibitive.

In the future, only Ash Wednesday and Good Friday will be days of fast and abstinence and Catholics will be obliged to abstain from meat only on the Fridays of Lent.

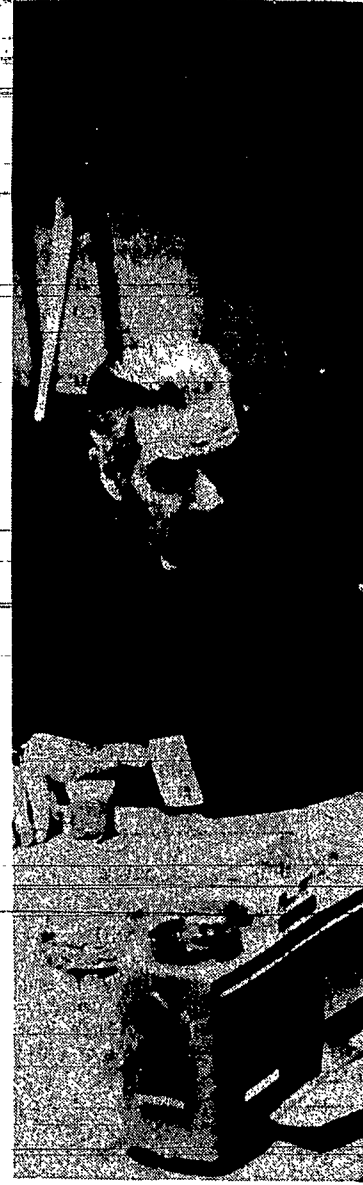
Ecumenism Waste of Time

London — (NC) — Sir Arnold Lunn, a Catholic lecturer and author, has described the ecumenical movement as "a waste of time" in new chapters released for addition to a book he wrote three years ago with Anglican Garth Lean.

According to the authors' views, ecumenism is a lost cause due to the reluctance of different churches to surrender their own prerogatives. But the two nevertheless insist that churches should work together for the common good of Christianity.

Lunn and Lean in their book, "The New Morality," believe that Christian faith and morals are under an attack planned by proponents of the new morality. However, they say, "there is no reason for despair. The advance of atheism can be reversed and the decline of Christianity can be arrested."

Bell Tower Saved — A common bell tower will mark the entrances to new Catholic and Reformed churches being built here, although the congregations who share the entrance will enter into separate churches for services.



Bishop Discovers

Boston — (RNS) — Bishop's second annual meeting of the Episcopal Association in Boston Daughters of Charity. The vices to the poor outside of the rich areas of the world.

Fatima

Fatima — (NC) — A crusade for peace has been urged in preparation for the 50th anniversary of the apparitions at Fatima by Pope's delegate to the celebrations on Oct. 13.

The delegate, Cardinal Jose Nunes of the Roman Curia, the central administrative offices, that not only Portugal but the world will celebrate the jubilee. "We are living in grave times, quarrels and hatred among nations and races are to be seen on a daily basis."

Great Council Likely for

Oberlin, Ohio — (NC) — 55-year-old German theologian, event which can be expected in Council II is a "great council" of all Christian churches with the goal of unity.

Father Haering, a Council expert is a visiting professor at Yale University divinity school. He gave a three-day lecture series recently at Oberlin College here.

In an interview and in his talks, he said, when Pope John XXIII called the Vatican Council, he saw it in the larger and deeper context of something that would evolve into dialogue and eventually reunion with separated Christians.

But even before dialogue could come, Pope John saw the renewal and reform of the Church had to come first, Father Haering continued.

One reason he believes such an inter-faith Council will be held, he said, is that, contrary to what many traditionalists seem to believe, Vatican Council II "is still going on" in the

To Visit Sweden

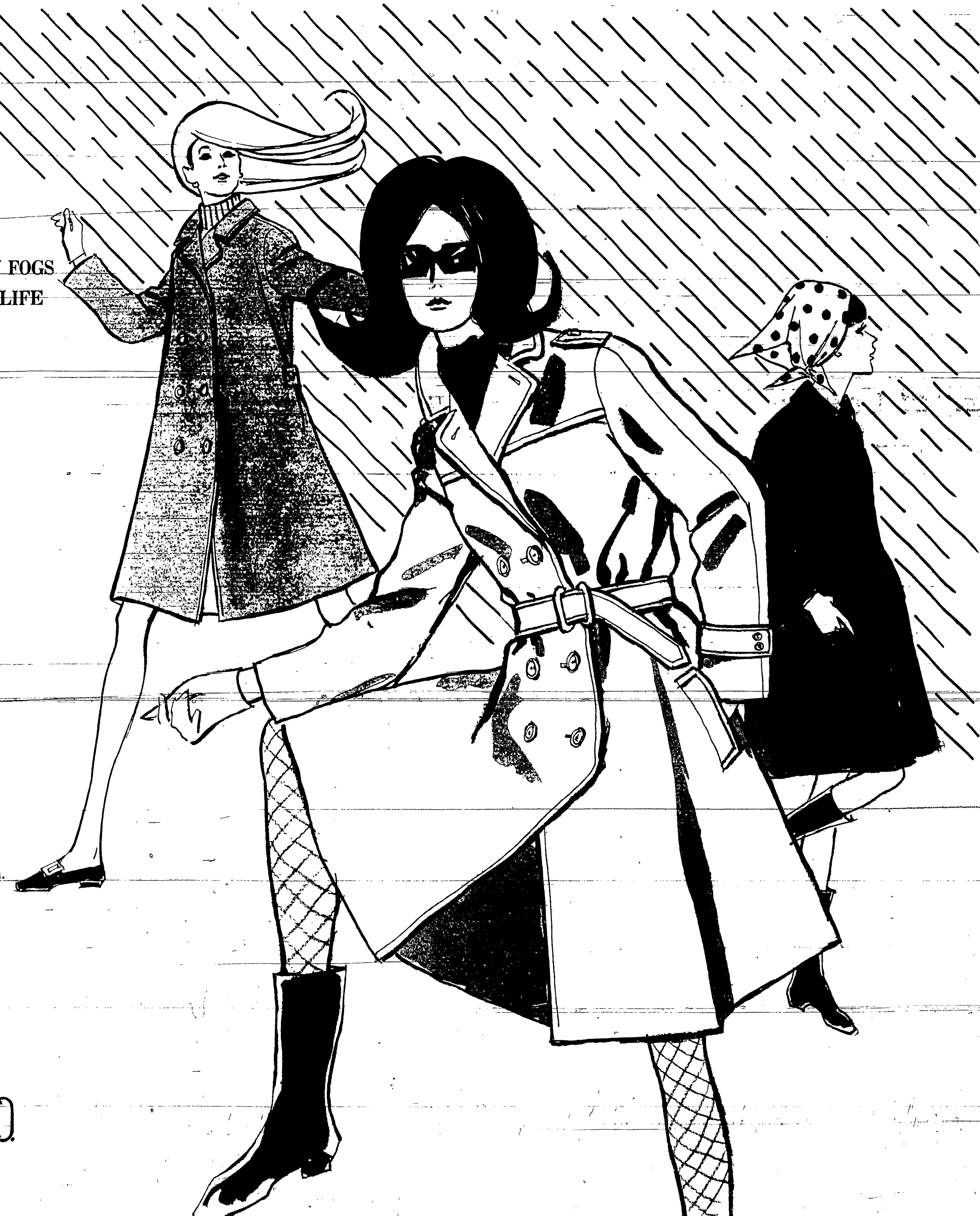
Stockholm — (NC) — Bishop Jan Willebrands, secretary of the Vatican Secretariat for Christian Unity, has been invited by the Swedish Lutheran Olaus Petri Foundation to give a series of lectures on ecumenism at Uppsala University this fall.

The Olaus Petri Foundation is named for a Swedish reformer who died in 1552. It was founded in Uppsala in 1908.

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