

Sees Hope For Unity

Philadelphia (NC) — A world Methodist leader said here that Roman Catholic and major Protestant churches are bound to achieve some form of unity.

Bishop Fred Pierce Corson of Philadelphia, past president of the World Methodist Council, said at a news conference here (July 3) that "ecumenism is already a fact and its practice a reality. No pope has received as many representatives of all faiths as (has) Pope Paul VI."

Bishop Corson, who recently returned from the Vatican where he was the guest of John Cardinal Krol of Philadelphia at the consistory at which he was raised to the cardinalate, said that "one great church" is not a matter of principle but of utility — a common association of Christians who will accord one another and possibly recognize the Pope as a chief spokesman.

The Methodist leader said the Catholic Church in the U.S. holds the key to the future of the ecumenical movement, while the addition of 27 younger more vigorous cardinals in Rome will have a liberalizing effect on the viewpoint of the Roman curia — the Church's central administrative body.

In answer to a question Bishop Corson said he does not believe that the question of celibacy is a major factor in any supposed "retrenchment" in the ecumenical movement.

Dallas Bishop Replaces Another Paulist Priest

Dallas (NC) — In the latest development in a parish dispute between Bishop Thomas K. Gorman of Dallas-Ft. Worth and Paulist priests working in the diocese, the bishop has replaced the Paulist Newman chaplain at Southern Methodist University.

In response, laymen already protesting steps taken by the bishop against the Paulists have also protested the replacement of Paulist Father Joseph Drew with Father Joseph Schumacher, a diocesan priest.

According to David Lajole, a lay leader in the Paulist-Bohannon, Texas, parish, Father Lajole said, "But it seems to us, Lajole added, that SMU Newman work is more important than a part-time job." The new chaplain has also been assigned to administer a downtown chapel and direct all diocesan Newman work.

Both Father Schumacher and Father Drew have been praised by lay leaders. Father Schumacher, a former director of information and chancellor in

Phony Priest Absconds With The Collection

Auray, France (RNS) — A Frenchman who paraded as a priest and traveled around Britain pocketing church collections has finally been caught and is being held by his own audacity.

Identified as Jean Daniel Vize, 25, the cassocked thief had been able to fool many Catholics because of his past studies in theology.

At Sainte Anne d'Auray, he "celebrated" Mass before a community of nuns. He then went to Plouharnel where he told the parish priest he had come from Belleville to prepare for establishment of a holiday camp. The priest gave him room and board and, remarking about his learned conversation, asked him to help him in his ministry the following Sunday.

That same night, Vize went to a neighboring village and presented himself as the new parish priest. He, of course, "offered" Mass, and in his sermon attacked the depravity of the present younger generation. He did not forget to pocket the collection—all of 3.70 francs (about 70 cents).

But next day, the villagers informed the pastor of Plouharnel of the visit of the "new vicar" and of the rather "unorthodox" way he had of celebrating Mass. The priest alerted the local gendarmes, who arrested Vize on the highway as he was hitch-hiking towards the village of Fauzet.

It was discovered that Vize had been convicted three times for similar offenses.

Ecumenical Commercials

New York (RNS) — Religion has been getting the "soft sell" treatment in a series of television spot announcements under joint sponsorship of Roman Catholic and Protestant groups.

The TV messages, called "televangelists," are produced by the Hour of St. Francis Productions in Los Angeles. They have been filmed in color and are available in both 30-second and 60-second versions.

'Erosion' of Faith Weakens Mission Efforts

Notre Dame (RNS) — Protestant Churches are increasingly offering their followers a "consumer religion" and the Catholic Church is moving in the same direction, a New York psychoanalyst told Christian theologians here.

Dr. Ernest Van Den Haag addressed the second annual National Faith and Order Colloquium. His charges drew no serious objections from some 100 Protestant, Roman Catholic, and Orthodox churchmen gathered on the University of Notre Dame campus. The Protestant

group included Pentecostal ministers. Dr. Van Den Haag warned that "Christianity is no longer in danger from any other religions, but from indifference to all." He said Christianity in this country is in danger of turning into a secular pseudo-religion which is not really Christianity at all.

"If religion is to be no more than a vague traditional sanction for an essential secular morality which aims at the maximization of collective and individual welfare," he declared, "then the social role of religion has become positive at least well adjusted — but it has ceased to be the Christian religion. It does not transcend our temporal life, or preach redemption from it, and salvation by Divine Grace."

He pointed to education, technology, science, urbanization, and industrialization as contributing to the secularization of Christianity through a "steady erosion of tradition, of faith and revelation."

There is a movement toward an increasing belief in the infinite perfectability of man and the sufficiency of his reason," he added.

All this, said Dr. Van Den Haag, is done "in the name of God's relevance to contemporary man. Yet a truly religious man could never worry about God's relevance to man — he could only wonder whether men are willing to lead lives relevant to God, lives that may lead to salvation."

The colloquium here was concerned with the role of evangelism in pluralistic American society.

It opened with a charge by Dr. James I. McCord, president of Princeton Theological Seminary, that the ecumenical movement has reached a "critical phase" in which it must go beyond dialogue.

He suggested that the ecumenical movement has been merged into "an establishment bent on maintaining an institutional status quo while engaging in almost endless dialogue that has to date produced negligible concrete results."

Dr. McCord called for a "massive theological reconstruction" of the understanding of unity, involving not just the main Protestant, Catholic and Orthodox bodies, but those of the conservative Evangelicals and Pentecostal denominations.

Another speaker, the Rev. Robert T. Handy of Union Theological Seminary, New York, declared that "evangelism can hardly avoid being competitive in a religiously pluralistic society."

He said evangelism seeks to bring witness to one God, "yet when we get down to cases, we finally seek to enlist the convert into one particular church. Despite much discussion of the coming great church and the quickening of expectation, the ecumenical movement so far has not replaced the denominational system as a way of organizing the church."

Michael Novak, mentioning the Wanderer Forum by name was of the opinion that "the more voices the better" in the lay movement in the Church and said he liked to read conservative publications because "when you see it in print you see how ridiculous it is."

Father McCarthy, on the other hand, did not mention the NAL but was of the opinion that there is "no communication" at all with radical-liberals and anyway, between Adam and Eve the first dialogue resulted in Adam's fall because he "made the mistake of listening to the advice" of Eve, "the first pluralist and the first liberal."

To go from one meeting to the other it was necessary to cross the water that separated them and the Twin Cities. To listen to one after the other made the Mississippi look more like the Styx every day.

Perhaps the best advice heard was that given at the Wanderer Forum by Msgr. Vincent Lloyd-Russell of San Juan Capistrano, Calif. After expressing his appreciation that "My Lord" James Cardinal McIntyre of Los Angeles sent him to the meeting, and reporting that there are ghosts as well as swallows in Capistrano, the Monsignor discussed "Alice in Wonderland" and the danger of "losing your feet on the ground."

Then borrowing a quote from the book, he urged forum attendees the next time they rode on a bus to approach the conductor and say, "I thought I saw a hippopotamus."

He gave no reason for this advice but at the time it seemed relatively clear.

There was also one point of agreement. Speakers at both meetings repeatedly lauded and necessarily quoted the documents of Vatican Council II. One NAL delegate said he wanted to "back the bishops up to a corner and ask, 'do you agree with the documents of Vatican II or not?'"

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Catholics Display Divergent Views

This is a roundup of the meetings of the National Association of Catholic Laymen in St. Paul and the Third National Wanderer Forum in Minneapolis, both held early this summer.

Wanderer newspaper, here in Minneapolis.

They might have been Cain and Abel, with each viewing the other as Cain.

The NAL members meeting at the College of St. Catherine in St. Paul were obviously experiencing some growing pains but appeared confident that they could help move the Church into the "secular city."

The participants in the Wanderer Forum were obviously celebrating a 100th birthday but appeared afraid that the Church may have already taken a lease on the "profane world."

The tone of the meetings may have been set the evening—Friday, June 23—when the NAL members gulped down ham sandwiches and consumed coffee out of plastic cups during workshop sessions and the Wanderer Forum participants sat down to a formal fish dinner complete with a long head table and longer speeches.

Later in the weekend the act of eating could have been grasped at for "something in common."

By Saturday, the NAL principal speaker, Michael Novak of Stanford University, was stating that the disadvantages of mandatory clerical celibacy far outweigh the advantages. He was also maintaining that birth control became a "dead issue" when the Pope called for a study on the matter.

Controversy has been surrounding the Paulists in Dallas for several weeks, since it became known that the bishop had asked the priests to leave the diocese. Basing his request on the assertion that the Paulists had failed to support Newman centers as required by canon law, he asked that the Paulists leave the diocese.

Father John Fitzgerald, Paulist superior general, rejected the bishop's claim that a contract had been violated.

Redemptorist At Temple

Philadelphia (RNS) — One of the world's leading Roman Catholic moral theologians, Father Bernard Haering, C.S.S.R., has been appointed adjunct professor of religion for the 1967 Fall semester in Temple University's department of religion.

Father Haering is the author of 11 books, notably a three-volume work on The Law of Christ, and has contributed more than 300 articles to some 50 periodicals and journals.

He was personal retreat master for Pope Paul VI, served as an expert at Vatican Council II, and was secretary of the papal commission on birth control.

On Sunday morning, June 25, the dialogue sermon given at a Mass celebrated for the NAL, participants by Father Aelred Rogers, O.S.B., editor of Worship magazine, was interrupted by a member calling attention to the meeting's close time schedule.

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