

# Rome Synod Continues Council

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(Continued from Page 1)

Synod assuredly will not there-  
by be a rubber-stamp affair. Pope Paul isn't a facade build-  
er. He certainly made his mind  
clear enough in giving the  
bishops' assembly the name  
Synod, traditionally equivalent  
to the word Council itself.

And the idea of a Synod, like  
so much else that's rated new,  
is actually a return to an earlier  
form of church government, a

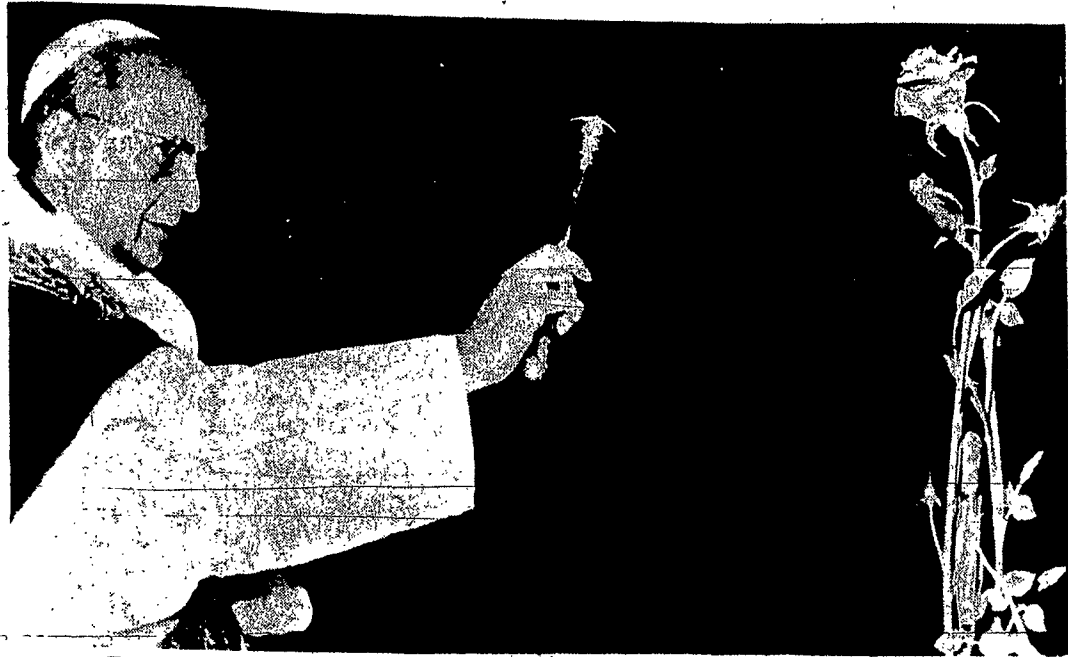
system generally in use from  
the second to the tenth cen-  
tury. It simply means decisions  
are to be made ordinarily at  
the local level rather than dic-  
tated from a central headquar-  
ters.

The Synod concept doesn't  
thereby destroy unity but al-  
lows for legitimate variations  
necessary at different times and  
in different places. What works  
best in Bombay might not be  
effective in Boston and organ  
music, though acceptable in  
America, is hardly feasible in  
Africa where the pipes are  
quite likely to serve as bats  
nests—or get rusty within a  
month.

In telling the bishops about  
the Synod, Pope Paul also ex-  
plained why he hadn't spoken  
out on subjects then up for dis-  
cussion at the Council — "Our  
silence," he told them, "is a  
sign of our unwillingness to  
compromise by any words of  
ours your freedom of opinion."

This papal respect for "free-  
dom of opinion" will undoubt-  
edly unlock the Synod's agenda  
to a far wider range of topics  
for the "renewal and life" not  
just of the Catholic Church, but  
as Pope Paul hopes, "for all  
humanity."

—Father Henry A. Atwell



## Golden Rose Blessed for Brazil

Vatican City — (RNS) — Pope Paul VI blesses the Golden Rose which he sent to the shrine of Our Lady of Aparecida in Brazil. The spray of roses decorated with gems was brought to the Marian shrine by Amleto Cardinal Cicognani, Vatican Secretary of State. The ornament is given in token of appreciation for services or loyalty to cities, countries or sovereigns, as well as to shrines, basilicas and other sanctuaries. In 1966 it was presented to the shrine at Guadalupe, in Mexico, and in 1965 to Our Lady of Fatima in Portugal.

## Laymen in the Church

### More Than Advisory

Chicago — (RNS) — A nationwide organization of Roman Catholic laymen has called for "democratization" of their Church to allow all Catholics to help select their pastors, bishops and other leaders.

The National Association of Laymen (NAL), whose executive board met here, recommended that a "legislative apparatus" be developed in the Church.

Such machinery should not be merely advisory, it held, but "should allow general participation by Catholics in decisions of Church policy. It should be established in such a way that all members of the Church may play an essential role in the selection of their pastors, bishops and other major ecclesiastical officials."

The appeal for "democratization" featured a position paper on diocesan and parish administration, one of six statements made public at the end of a three-day meeting.

Fourteen members of the NAL executive board met in the suburban Evanston, Ill., home of Donald Heynman, a board member and president of the Chicago Conference of Laymen, an affiliated group.

Board members ended their session at a Mass offered in the Chapel of the International Catholic Auxiliaries, a volunteer mission organization for Catholic women with headquarters in Evanston. Serving as celebrant was Father John Hill

of Presentation Parish in Chicago, former president of the Association of Chicago Priests.

The NAL board also called on the Church in America to encourage "an attitude and atmosphere of openness and free dialogue" within the Church.

A statement on communication was another of the six papers which, it was stressed, dealt with matters of "grave concern confronting the institutional Church and its members today."

OTHER POSITION statements were on Christian unity, marriage and family life, parish life, and education.

A paper on diocesan and parish administration concluded with this defense of its position:

"The democratization of the Church in the sense that we have indicated will not eliminate authority but it will change its form.

"There is no reason to believe that it will adversely affect the efficient exercise of authority.

"On the other hand, there is every reason to believe that the increased involvement of all Catholics in the life of their Church, which will follow upon this democratization, will intensify the community among the people of God and raise the level of their capacity to extend the presence of the Church in the world."

In its statement on marriage, the NAL urged a "realistic ap-

proach" to the birth control controversy.

Without directly calling for Church approval of birth control, the laymen's unit implied that such action was needed "to put the ideas of sexuality, marital love and responsible parenthood in proper balance."

The Catholic Church does not permit its members to use contraceptives.

The NAL statement said parental responsibility "demands that married couples, aware of the teaching of the Church, prayerfully and conscientiously consider in their own situation the optimum number of children and the proper means of regulating births."

It also suggested that "parish councils, consisting of priests, and laymen" should be established immediately to further the democratization of the Church.

"These councils should have a share in all decisions that affect parish life," it said.

The group also recommended that "each diocese and parish issue complete, annual financial statements" and that church investments be made known to the public.

Dennis Landis of Bloomington, Minn., president of the NAL, announced two new affiliates to the organization: The Community of John XXIII, an experimental parish in Oklahoma City, and the Northwestern Louisiana Association of Laymen in Shreveport.

Paul Sprehe, chairman of the Community of John XXIII, attended the meeting. Other affiliated groups besides the Chicago Conference of Laymen, are the Cleveland Conference of Laymen; the Association of Christians for Church Renewal in St. Paul-Minneapolis; The Long Island Association of Laymen; The Northern Illinois Conference of Laymen in Aurora; The Parish Advisory Council in Richardson, Texas, and a group in Fort Dodge, Iowa.

The NAL, which reports a total membership of about 8,000 Catholic laymen, was founded last June in St. Paul to promote church renewal.

The Council surprised Rynne, as it did most everybody else, in achieving far more than most anybody had expected.

The Council's success, therefore, leaves the Synod door open to possible surprises too.

Rynne quotes "a high Vatican official" as saying that "not even the Pope knew exactly how the Synod would go."

Its agenda at the moment lists five topics — dangers to faith, liturgy, mixed marriages, seminaries and a possible new canon law.

Bishop Ladislaus Rubin, the secretary general of the Synod, at a recent press conference, said "the threat of atheism . . . this terrible evil of our times" would be the Synod's chief topic.

He blamed "a group of Protestant theologians of North America" for their "affinities" to atheism, a reference apparently to "secular city" and "death of God" spokesmen.

The prelate also said the present "ferment" within the Catholic Church needed to be "guided along the right road."

Pope Paul has appointed Cardinal Michael Browne, an 80-year old, six-foot Irish Dominican, to give the Synod's opening address titled "Present Day Dangers to the Faith."

During the 1965 Council debate on religious liberty, Cardinal Browne said freedom for "another religion" in a Catholic country was "a violation of public morality." He earlier had emphatically warned the bishops against adopting a statement on their collegiality with the Pope — "Cavete, patres, cavete!" he told them.

The bishops, however, disregarded his advice and voted overwhelmingly in favor of the religious liberty and the collegiality documents, the latter which paved the way for this year's Synod.

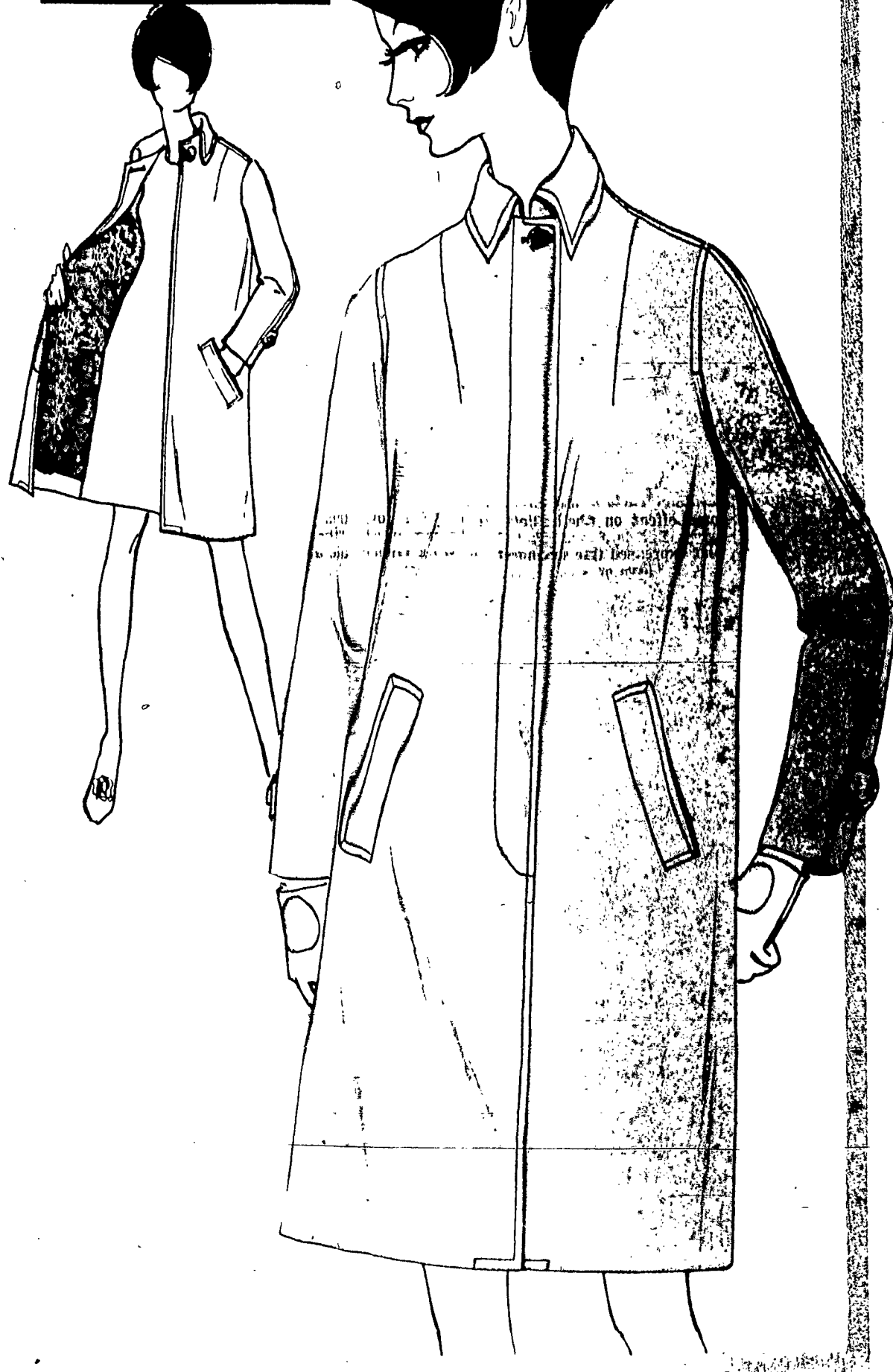
The Synod will include close to 200 members, most of them bishops elected by their associates in the hierarchy and some, like Bishop Sheen, appointed by the Pope. This will be a far more manageable number than the 2000 of Council days. The

## Back to School

Philadelphia—(NC)—A study program in theology and Sacred Scripture for Philadelphia archdiocesan priests will begin Oct. 10 under sponsorship of the Archdiocesan Council of Priests at St. Charles Borromeo Seminary.



Father Francis X. Murphy and Father Frederick McManus listen intently to Pope Paul at opening of 1965 session of the Vatican Council.



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## Israel Reports Progress In 3-Faith Jerusalem

United Nations — (RNS) — Israel's Ministry for Religious Affairs has been active and partly successful in attempting to pave the way toward a harmonious co-existence among the three major faiths in Jerusalem, the United Nations has been informed by the Israeli government.

Documents supplied to U Thant's special envoy in Jerusalem, Ambassador Ernesto A. Thalman of Switzerland who prepared a report on Jerusalem for the U.N. Emergency General Assembly, indicate the following:

There is a department for Moslem and Druze affairs which is in contact with Moslem authorities in the old city of Jerusalem, formerly held by Jordan. Its activities cover the Shari'a Court of Appeals, the Shari'a Kadi, the school for the training of religious leaders and the administrators of Moslem religious sites.

The Ministry for Religious Affairs has allotted sums requested by Moslem leaders to pay the salaries of employees. The head of the Israeli agency has met with the Moslem Kadi to discuss various problems concerned with the Shari'a Courts. Arrangements have been made to continue with repair work at the al-Aksa Mosque.

In response to requests of the Kadis, and in consultation with them, an agreement has been reached concerning visits to Moslem Holy Places.

According to the Israeli government, there is also a Department of Christian Affairs in the Ministry which reported the following activities in the past three months:

Immediately after the cessation of fighting, contact with church leaders residing in East Jerusalem was resumed. Most of the Jerusalem patriarchs and bishops have remained in con-

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## No More Collections!

Montreal — (RNS) — A suburban Roman Catholic church has abolished the practice of Sunday collections and has instead instituted annual donations through a series of post-dated checks.