

Canada Bishops OK Priest Unit

Ottawa — (RNS) — The formation of a grassroots Association of Priests across Canada has been backed by the Canadian bishops.

Bishop Alexander Carter of Sault Ste. Marie, new president of the Canadian Catholic Conference, told a press conference at the conclusion of the bishops' fall meeting that the bishops had given "enthusiastic approval" to the priests' formal study of the problems they face in the post-conciliar Church.

The association was started during the theological congress in Toronto in August. Twenty-five priests gathered to discuss better communication between themselves and the Canadian Catholic Conference, the association of Canada's 102 bishops.

The priests who assembled have been ordained an average of 10 to 15 years.

Problems discussed, a spokesman said, were of the type recently highlighted in an article in America magazine by a diocesan priest writing under the pen name of Patrick Sanford. The America article voiced five major complaints of priests underlying the surface problems receiving so much attention today:

1. Priests feel they were caught in a "squeeze play" at Vatican II, which reinforced the position of the bishops and elevated the position of the laity.
2. Many priests are undergoing a "crisis of identity" — "What exactly is the role of the priest in the modern world?"
3. Professionally, priests feel a crisis of confidence, laid to the growing amount of new theological, scriptural and pastoral knowledge that they say, has thrown much of their past studies out of date.
4. The growing emphasis on subjectivism in belief and moral action is felt by many priests to be cutting the ground out from under the parish priest's preaching authority. "How can he be expected to hold the line on faith and morals in a pagan society when his own voice

seems to count for nothing?" the America article asked.

5. The conflicting theological opinions among priests themselves have a serious, disquieting effect.

At the conclusion of their first meeting, the Canadian priests invited Bishop Carter to a second session. After listening to a wide-ranging discussion of these problems, Bishop Carter gave the priests his personal backing and agreed to bring the report of their new association to the general assembly of bishops.

The priests, meanwhile, elected three regional leaders: William Father Ora McManus, 37, professor of philosophy at St. Joseph's Seminary, London, Ont.; returned from the Catholic University of America, Washington, D.C., after obtaining his doctorate in philosophy; Central Father Marcel Gervais, 40, Peter's Seminary, London, Ont.; Eastern Father Donald Campbell, 42, principal of Xavier Junior College, Sydney, N.S.

Each of the three regional groupings will hold seminars this fall to which more priests will be invited.

Bishop Carter told the press conference that it would be "wrong and useless" to deny that the problems faced by priests in the post-conciliar Church are serious. The dimensions of these problems reach into psychological, sociological and deeply spiritual areas, he said.

The bishops have not done a statistical study of how many priests have left their ministry, the bishop added, although his brother, Bishop Emmett Carter of London, Ont., indicated, by a reference to his own diocese (two priests of 250 have left), that the number is not as large as suggested by the popular press.

In an interview, Bishop Alexander Carter said one of the results of the new association would be to "help, strengthen and confirm one another in their priesthood."

Bishop Alexander Carter was asked to distinguish between the new national association and the senate of priests which is being formed in each diocese. The diocesan senates are concerned with the relationships between the priests of a diocese and their own bishop, he said, but a national association can indirectly influence a bishop who may not see an existing problem among his priests. Outside help for the priests is important, he said, especially in small ones, could be helped "a great deal" by being supported by a national association.

Although a national association of priests is a fine thing in theory, Bishop Carter added, "they are going to find some difficulty in reality because national associations in Canada are a gigantic undertaking. We forget how big our country is until we start something like this. I wish them luck."

Servants of God Still in Business

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He reminded the delegation, made up of Father Raymond Kenny and three lay members, that current Church directives ruled out both inter-Communion and Mass being celebrated in a Protestant church.

"We discussed these matters carefully and found that we were in agreement on them," he stated later.

At his suggestion, the Servant of God group has moved its Sunday afternoon Mass into Immaculate Conception Church. The group was previously using a room in the school of the same parish for its meetings and also for its community Mass.

There was a general reaction of pleased relief as the little group gathered in the Plymouth Avenue South church last Sunday for Mass. The meeting of their envoys with Monsignor had worked out satisfactorily for all concerned.



Father Raymond Kenny gathers his Servants of God around altar for Sunday Mass at Immaculate Conception Church, Rochester.

For his part, Monsignor Hickey said that he was impressed with the spirit of the delegation.

"They seem to be Catholics concerned for a fuller liturgical life and anxious to be apostolic," he added, "we don't want to discourage people with such goals."

Background of Group

The group evolved from several study groups moderated by Father Kenny while he was a professor at St. Andrew's Seminary. He taught there for 19 years before being appointed to his present post, assistant pastor of St. James' Church in Irondequoit.

Father Kenny described the aspirations of the group as:

- participation in a smaller community Mass, with a maximum of participation. The group is also expanding in some liturgical experimentation within the guidelines of established directives," he added.
- experience of working together as a community as they undertake some apostolic commitments. They are surveying

several possible areas of action, have not settled on specific programs yet.

Many young Catholic adults have experienced a rich liturgical life in their years at Catholic campuses or in Newman groups at secular colleges. Father Kenny went on, "They know what is possible, but often don't find anything like it in their present parishes," he said.

The Servant of God community had previously sought canonical status in June as a non-territorial parish. While Bishop Sheen vetoed the request, he did not ask the group to disband. They have continued to meet, since July, on a weekly basis for discussion of possible group projects and for a community Mass.

Roots of a Rhubarb

Relatively unknown to most local Catholics, the Servant of God title made the news after its Oct. 1 ecumenical program with Christ Claret Presbyterian Church.

Even before that day, the event drew notice when it was announced that the afternoon

service, a Catholic Mass originally scheduled for the Presbyterian church, would be moved to the Immaculate Heart of Mary Chapel near Pittsford. The move came after the Pastoral Office reminded the Catholic group that even the most recent decrees from Rome were not allowing a Mass in a Protestant church.

(A spokesman for the diocesan Ecumenical Commission told the Courier-Journal that the basis for this was that it would only cause confusion to hold a Mass in a church building which symbolized a "quite different understanding" of the Eucharist than that held by Catholics.)

The Mass was re-set for the little chapel and the ecumenical venture took place. Newspaper accounts the next day, however, raised eyebrows with an account of inter-Communion participation at both the morning and afternoon services.

As far as Father Kenny was concerned, he felt he "had made it quite clear," that he was not encouraging the inter-Communion notion. When the chapelful of worshippers came

forward at Communion time, however, he did not feel it appropriate to ask who was which — Catholic or Protestant.

Aims of the Group

Herman Walz, Jr., Rochester lawyer, who heads the group's board of directors, went into the group's objectives for the Courier-Journal this week. He summed them up as "an attempt to integrate our liturgical life and our formal Christian activities with our life in the world."

Furthermore, members of the group are trying to develop a "sense of community," which they have found hard to reach in ordinary parishes, he stated.

The Servant of God community does not consider itself an exclusive group, the attorney stressed. "We welcome anybody who is interested, and hope to expand in time."

Social action will be a focal point of the newly-organized group, which has 45-50 members at present. Many individuals in the group are already involved in some such action — inner city, race relations, etc. Through reports at their meetings, they keep each other informed of new avenues of social apostolate, and hope that the group as a whole can find some large scale project to work on.

(At a meeting slated for last Wednesday night, Oct. 11, the group was to hear Dr. William T. Bluhm suggest ideas for a group project in Rochester.)

Down on Farm Quite Like City

Columbus — (RNS) — Churchmen should not become over-concerned about whether they are ministering in rural or urban settings, because the difference between rural and urban is not that great, a government leader told 1,800 Protestant and Catholics here.

Addressing a national consultation on the church's ministry to non-metropolitan America, Dr. Paul A. Miller, assistant secretary of the Department of Health, Education and Welfare in Washington, said, "Man is no longer rural or urban by virtue of where he lives. He is a member of an independent community."

"What must be faced is the dilemma of whether the church is relevant or irrelevant to the needs of a public which is at once beyond its specific geographic location."

"The real needs of the rural family and the urban family are similar, although there is a difference of degree and the organization by which needs are met."

While urban man and perhaps the church are less concerned about the more formal aspect of religion, observed Dr. Miller, neither has discovered "the process of community interaction which replaces formal institutionalization in the new society."

Dr. Miller, a former president of West Virginia University and former provost of Michigan State University, noted that an accelerating scientific revolution has gone beyond technology, to encompass economic, social and human changes. Poverty and crime and ignorance, he said, serve as stark reminders of the inability of modern social institutions to change rapidly enough to meet needs.

He urged the churchmen to have a "new conception of community, combining both large centers and satellite subcenters, each and all capable of helping people discover the larger arena of decision-making."

"Community action," he declared, "takes the mission of

the church outside the rigidity of an edifice."

He also called for a new outlook on the total community, seeing it as other than people and real estate, and giving priority to the development of intercultural relationships.

"It is a mystery of the century," he commented, "why we have not yet seen or believed that world community is viable only as it is practiced in our intercultural situations at home."

Before the four-day conference had ended, most of the churchmen from the 15 sponsoring communions had met either in denominational meetings or planned follow-up sessions upon return to their home states.

The cooperating communions were the American Baptist Convention, the Christian Churches (Disciples of Christ), the Church of God (Anderson, Ind.), the Church of the Brethren, Evangelical United Brethren Church, The Methodist Church, the Presbyterian Church in the U.S. (Southern), the United Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A.

Also, the Roman Catholic Diocese of Columbus; the Center for Applied Research of the Apostolate (CARA) of the U.S. Catholic Conference; the American Lutheran Church, the Lutheran Church in America, the Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod, the Episcopal Church, the Reformed Church in America, the United Church of Christ, the National and Ohio Councils of Churches.

Proposed Constitution — It's Good

(Continued from Page 1)

tion of the constitutional provision exempting charitable, religious or educational organizations from real property tax when they use their property for charitable, religious or educational purposes.

The convention agreed:

- **Voluntarism:** The committee urged the state to foster and encourage the voluntary efforts of people and groups to meet human needs.
- **Human rights:** The committee urged a strong bill of rights with firm guarantees of freedom from any kind of discrimination.
- **Collective bargaining:** The committee urged collective bargaining be included as a basic right.

Article 1, section 10, obligates the state to secure the right of collective bargaining.

Expect More Rite Changes

St. Louis — (RNS) — Once the Canon in the Roman Catholic Mass is said in English it will point up "more than ever before" the need for a total restructuring of the rite, a liturgical scholar said here.

Father Thomas Ambrogio, S.J., a theologian from Woodstock (Md.) College and a member of the board of directors of the Liturgical Conference was among the participants in the national-level Lutheran-Roman Catholic dialogue held here.

In an interview with the St. Louis Review, archdiocesan newspaper, Father Ambrogio outlined reforms in the liturgy which eventually will follow the introduction of an all-English Mass. The Canon — the last remaining part of the Mass to be said in English — will be said in English in the U.S. beginning Oct. 22.

Father Ambrogio speculated that "just the fact of hearing the words of institution (of the Eucharist) is going to make a revolutionary change in the consciousness of Catholics about what the Mass is."

He said the English Canon will show clearly that the Mass is first and foremost a memorial of the Lord's Supper, and that "it will also make clear rather quickly how dense that Sign has become because of all the historical additions."

The Canon is essentially a prayer of thanksgiving, praise and joy, Father Ambrogio said. In its current form, however, most emphasis is on petitions for grace, acceptance of gifts, and salvation.

U.S. Monk Now Primate

Vatican City — (RNS) — Archbishop Rembert Weakland O.S.B., former Archbishop of St. Vincent Archabbey, Latrobe, Pa., has been elected Abbot Primate of the Benedictine Order.

Archabbott Weakland is best known as an expert on the liturgy and particularly on liturgical music. He holds degrees in Music from the Juillard School and Columbia University, New York, and has served for several years as the chairman of the Music Advisory Board of the U.S. Bishops' Commission on the Liturgical Apostolate. In 1965-6, he was the president of the Church Music Association of America.

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Shortage of Priests Discussed

Providence — (RNS) current shortage of priests can be attributed to the fact that many priests just do not know v priest is or should be," Cardinal Cushing of said here.

Addressing the final New England Conference of the National, the cardinal said priest must be identifiable man of God."

"I think people are speaking to them calmly, gently, of God and His in their lives. I see t as most satisfying a lenging. I see it as the work which can att most talented young n

Cardinal Cushing c possible cause of the shortage the "growin ment emerging amo people that it is possi simplify more for t outside of the traditio hood."

"The attractive of said, "that are made t ing young men even a high school are a cri tor in influencing aspire to lucrative c world. The more idea attracted to tempora teer programs of servi than commit themse permanent way of t they do not understa prelate fully."

Another factor, he s use of priests in Chur which can be filled n adequately by laymen

"In some of these p is important to have he said. "In many o the sooner that comp men can share this pr responsibility, the mo pastoral work. One o difficulties is that th tions and organizati often become financ because of the willin priests to work in high-paying positions low salaries."

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