



Brazil, Catholic De-Christianized

By OTTO ENGEL

Rio de Janeiro—(NC)—Brazil is the largest Catholic country in the world. At least, that is what statistics say. But translated into concrete terms, what does it mean?

It means that the country was discovered and colonized by Catholics. It means that there are a lot of big churches all over the country. It means that the 85 per cent of Brazil's 87 million people who claim to be Catholics are baptized, married and buried with appropriate church ceremonies.

But statistics also show that no more than 10 per cent of Brazil's Catholics regularly go to church, that vocations to the priesthood and religious life are dropping, and that the social implications of being a Christian are totally ignored.

Faced with this rapid de-Christianization of a society traditionally Catholic, Brazil's bishops moved to turn the tide. In 1955, under the direction of the dynamic and controversial then-auxiliary bishop of Rio de Janeiro, Bishop Helder Pessoa Camara, the bishops scheduled a Eucharistic congress to open a five-year plan of pastoral renewal.

Rising on the impetus of the congress' success, Bishop Helder Camara forged a strengthened Brazilian bishops' conference. Then, working with Bishop Manuel Larrain of Chile, he helped to form CELAM, the Latin American bishops Council.

Faced with the results of three years' research into the Brazilian Church, Pope John XXIII in 1958 asked the nation's bishops to outline an emergency pastoral program to "save what could be saved and reform the rest." The plan called for across-the-board renewal—in the parishes, in Catholic schools, in pastoral methods and within the priesthood itself.

After two years, the emergency plan seemed to have some effect. At least, it provided a breathing spell that enabled Church leaders to make plans for a new five-year program. Coinciding with the deliberations of the Second Vatican Council, the new program devoted itself to one overall theme: making Catholics aware of what it means to be Christians.

First steps in this program called for transforming the Church's immovable capital—real estate, mainly—into capital that could be invested in the interests of the poor; for redistributing the nation's priests and Religious so they could work more effectively; for utilizing the talents and good will of the laity; and, most important in the mind of the average Brazilian, for implementing widespread social reforms.

One of the most important aims of the five-year plan is the completion of a series of 19 sociological studies outlining the real situation of Brazilian Catholicism. Ranging from the impact of moral teaching on the people to the impact of religion on tourist attractions, the investigations are expected to produce a complete picture of a complex problem, an accurate outline of an institution that is at once a spiritual force, a source of social economic and political influence, and a major portion of a nation's history.

When the results are in, new plans will be made and new steps taken to bring Brazilian Catholicism more in line with the demands of day-to-day life. But it won't be easy. Divided like most Latin American nations into the underprivileged and the overprivileged, many of

Brazil's people are not going to leap for reform, especially social reform. A hard core of conservatism continues to resist Church renewal, both inside and outside the sanctuary, as well as government reform measures.

But at least the first steps have been taken. The Church is renewing itself, reorganizing itself.

Kings Prep Slates Open House Nov. 19

King's Preparatory, 1180 Buffalo Road, is having an open house for 8th grade students and their parents on Sunday, Nov. 19, from 2 to 5 p.m.

The purpose of this open house is to familiarize people with King's Preparatory and to interest prospective students. No formal program is planned although many of the students and faculty will be present.

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Fund Raising -- Ghanaian Style

You just can't escape fund-raising—even in Ghana. Such is the report from Rochester-born Maryknoll Father Charles Erb. For Father Erb's mission community of Yendi, located on the eastern coast of this west African country, has decided to mark the Holy Year of Faith by erecting two new chapels, one dedicated to St. Paul and the other to St. Peter. The committee appointed to see the campaign through has put together a bulletin board with the two runners, St. Peter and St. Paul racing toward their targets of \$2,000 each. If any stateside friends of Father Erb wish to help the two runners out, Father Erb announces that Ghana banks gladly accept checks, money orders and cash.

Famous French Satire At Nazareth College

The Foreign Language Department of Nazareth College and the Foreign and Comparative Literature Department of the University of Rochester are jointly sponsoring "Turcaret," an 18th Century French satire by Lesage at the Nazareth College Arts Center, Tuesday, Nov. 21 at 8:15 p.m.

This year marks the tenth American tour for Le Treteau de Paris under the direction of Jean de Rigault and the twelfth French play brought to this country for American audiences under the auspices of the French government.

Turcaret is a fitting production for French and English speaking audiences alike. In an exquisite 18th century drawing room setting of tapestries and crystal chandeliers, it depicts a classic comedy of manners with all the familiar stock characters of the comedia dell'arte and it is the first social comedy in French theater in the manner of Moliere. Lavishly costumed, and stylishly directed by Guy Rotore, an interpreter is not needed to enjoy a spectacularly theatrical evening.

The company will appear here for only one performance as part of a forty city tour of Eastern and Midwestern communities. "Turcaret" offers an unusual opportunity for theatergoers to see a seldom performed, but well-known piece of French literature performed with the usual polish of the famous Le Treteau de Paris.

Tickets may be obtained at the Arts Center Box Office, open Monday through Friday, 9 a.m. to 5 p.m., telephone 588-2420. Mail orders are now being accepted. The box office will be open at 7 p.m.



Members of the famous French Company, Le Treteau de Paris, in scene from "Turcaret."

Rosary Hill Alumnae

The Rochester Chapter of the Rosary Hill College Alumnae Association will have a general meeting and flower demonstration by Perry Flower Shops, Inc. on Wednesday, Nov. 15, at 8 p.m. The meeting will be held at the home of Mary Rita Quinn, 5 Brook Hollow in Pittsford.

New Scroll Discovery

Jerusalem—(RNS)—The discovery of another ancient scroll from the Dead Sea area was announced here at the meeting of the Israel Exploration Society.

Professor Yigale Yadin said that it was the longest document to come from the region of the Qumran community, first discovered in 1947. Stored in caves, the library of the monastic group is considered one of the most significant archaeological finds of the 20th Century. The new parchment manuscript, tentatively called the "Temple Scroll," is approximately

16 feet long, and about three and one-half feet longer than the scroll of the book of Isaiah, Dr. Yadin said.

Details of the acquisition were not disclosed, nor was its exact place of discovery reported. Dr. Yadin noted that it had been kept "illegally" for a long time under poor conditions which had caused further deterioration.

According to some reports, the scroll was in the hands of a Bethlehem merchant at the time the Israeli-Arab war occurred in June, and the document was obtained when Israel captured the town.

The "Temple Scroll," Dr. Yadin said, dates from the Herodian period, beginning in 55 B.C. and continuing to 93 A.D., and he added that there is no doubt that it came from Qumran.

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