

# Much in Common With Saint Luke

Jacksonville, Fla. — (CPF)— Biblical novels, Dr. Slaughter relied on Scriptural and archeological research to help "flesh out" characters that are only sparingly described in the Bible.

Thus knowing that Luke was a physician and probably Greek, "I was able to follow him in the story through the education of a young Greek physician about 35 A.D. This included a period of residence at one of the great Temples of Asklepios and a description of the medical regimen practiced there. . . . Since Roman military medicine was highly developed in this period, Luke also served in the story as a military surgeon with an army in Galatia, in addition to travelling with Paul."

Slaughter's technique of combining historical research about a period of history with what one critic called "a very fertile imagination" to create episodes and dialogue for Biblical characters has been attacked, of course. "In such an important matter as religion, one becomes uneasy at such free use of imagination," said one priest-reviewer put it.

But if nothing else, his supporters argue, he provides in his novels the kind of place descriptions, color, atmosphere and background that make a reading of the Old and New Testaments much more inviting and much more profitable. And as a Sioux City, Iowa, book-reviewer observed in assessing "God's Warrior," Dr. Slaughter "assembles in one story much that heretofore has been available only to the serious student of Biblical times."

"God's Warrior" was the second novel in a new "Pathway of Faith Series" launched by Slaughter's publisher, Doubleday. The first was "Constantine: The Miracle of the Flaming Cross," which dramatized the development of Christianity from an outlawed religion to one supported by the state.

The novels in the series, according to Slaughter, will be dramatized biographies of particular central characters ("Herod is certainly one of the great tragic and capable figures, both in secular and religious history," he offered as an example in the prospectus), but through all of them will run a basic underlying theme: namely, that the hand of God works in human affairs through men and women who are both strong and weak, gentle and cruel, pious and depraved, tolerant and intolerant. (Catholic Press Features)

# Bishop Raps Rio Army For 'Reign of Terror'

Rio De Janeiro — Jittery security officers in Rio are finding "subversive" material in textbooks written by a Jesuit priest and in literature distributed by Catholic groups.

Bishop Waldive Catelanos de Novalis says that the military "have established a regime of terror in the state of Rio by persecuting Catholic organizations and individuals."

He reported that his residence, in Resende, 90 miles west of this city, had been searched after the arrest of four boys who lived there. The boys have been jailed for more than a month, he said, for distributing Catholic Action pamphlets urging higher wages for workers.

A French Jesuit, Father Guy Thibault, and two members of the Catholic Youth Organization also were arrested, outside a Resende church. They were handing out leaflets which, authorities said, described the government as "a dictatorship at the service of American imperialism."

The high school textbooks, written by Father Fernando Bastos D'Avila, S.J., under government commission, were with-

**Bishops' Land to Poor**

Quito — (RNS) — The Roman Catholic Episcopal Conference of Ecuador voted to distribute 49,000 hectares (about 20,000 acres) of land to agricultural workers and expressed a hope that rich landowners will do the same.

More than 1,240 families will benefit from the bishops' land redistribution.



FRANK G. SLAUGHTER

# Judaism in Russia: 'Slow Strangulation'

Notre Dame, Ind.—An American authority on Soviet Jewry has presented a detailed report on "the slow strangulation of Jewish spiritual and cultural life in the Soviet Union" in a special issue of Ave Maria, a national Catholic weekly published here.

His account is one of four articles in the magazine's December 9 issue reviewing the condition of religion in the USSR today, 50 years after the Bolshevik revolution.

In two other related articles, a Soviet sociologist and an American journalist concur that the practice of religion, while still lingering in some segments of the population, is gradually giving way to a rising atheism among the young. A fourth report sets forth the impressions of a recent visitor to Moscow on the everyday life of the typical Russian.

In a substantive piece entitled "Don't Forget Us!—The Three Million Jews of Russia," Rabbi Israel Miller describes as "tragic" the status of Jews being the Iron Curtain today. Rabbi Miller, chairman of the American Jewish Conference on Soviet Jewry and immediate past-president of the Rabbinical Council of America, details the numerous handicaps facing those in Russia who wish to preserve their identity as Jews.

The primary difference between being a Jew in the Soviet Union and in any other country, Rabbi Miller reports, is that Soviet Jewry has a fixed legal status as a national group and a religious faith. He says: "Every Russian urban resident above the age of 16 must have an internal passport upon which is listed his nationality. This document is the major means of identification in the USSR in obtaining housing or a job, and it makes it comparatively simple to discriminate against the bearer because of his nationality." Rabbi Miller gives several examples of Russian prejudice against Jews, including instances of students being delayed in enrolling in the universities because of their nationality.

Though the Soviet Constitution and laws encourage all nationalities groups to perpetuate themselves, Rabbi Miller lists several obvious contradictions of this maxim as applied to Jews. While several national groups, including the Crimean Tatars, have demanded and been granted permission to teach their ancient languages and other cultural heritages, the Jews have consistently been denied this freedom. "The Jews of this maxim as applied to schools, no publishing house, no book-distribution agency, no newspaper, none of the instruments or instrumentalities necessary for cultural survival," he says.

Rabbi Miller continues: "In the Soviet Union today, there is no school or class in any language which would enable a Jew to learn something of Jewish history or even the martyrdom of Soviet Jews during the Nazi holocaust.

Of all religious groups in the USSR, Jews suffer the most chronic shortage of facilities for worship. Even if only half the Russian Jewish population would ever attend services, there would still be only one synagogue for every 22,000 Jews. In contrast, the Russian Orthodox Church has one church for every 1,800 adherents and the Baptists one for every 1,000.

The plight of Soviet Jewry has become the rage of 16 recently, the rabbi continues, "by the severance of diplomatic relations between the USSR and Israel and the massive and vicious anti-Israel propaganda campaign, with anti-Semitic overtones, unleashed by the Soviet regime."

# Dr. Rock Warns Students Against Pre-Marital Sex

Notre Dame, Ind. — (RNS) — The developer of the oral contraceptive urged a student audience at the University of Notre Dame to practice pre-marital continence.

Dr. John Rock spoke before an overflow student audience—most unmarried, most under 25. He called sex "the wellspring of human welfare" and cautioned,

# Mass. Clergy Alarmed At Drug Increase

Winchester, Mass.—(RNS)— Expressing alarm at the "frighting" growth of the use of narcotics among youth in this affluent suburban Boston community, two Catholic priests and five Protestant clergymen have called on parents and police to join in combatting the menace.

The clergymen, members of the year-old Winchester Ecumenical Association, quoted Police Chief Joseph J. Derro as saying drug usage has increased sharply during the last year.

Winchester, one of Massachusetts' fastest growing suburban towns, has many high income families.

They presented statistics showing that Winchester has had 28 teenage runaways during the year, 21 of whom were involved with drugs.

The smoking of marijuana is the town's major problem, the clergymen stated.

The Rev. Larry Keeter, pastor of the Second Congregational Church, said "This drug problem is closer to us than we can imagine."

Msgr. Joseph W. Lyons, pastor of St. Eulalia's Roman Catholic Church, said he has ordered sermons on the drug problem at all Masses in his church. "Drugs are all too available within a few miles of our town," said Msgr. Lyons. Many of the young people are using marijuana, he said.

"Parents should get their heads out of the sand," was the comment of the Rev. Everett L. Waters of First Baptist Church. "We have a problem which a year ago nobody here believed could exist."

His 40-minute speech won an enthusiastic ovation from the students.

# RACC Enters Low-Middle Housing Field

Rochester — (RNS) — Rochester Area Council of Churches became the first religious group here to enter the low-middle income housing field with the purchase of the Lexington Court Apartments.

It is a partially completed project begun last year by the builder. Sale of the property was made possible by \$1,739,000 in funds from the Federal Housing Administration.

The project will be operated by the Rochester Area Council of Churches Housing Development Fund, a non-profit corporation responsible to the Council's Board of Directors.

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**Bishops, L**

**Discu**

Washington — (N members of the hi informal, but "ver very friendly," ex with representative tional Association and at the end bot pressed satisfacto communication achi

The bishops agre spent an evening who are deeply c the Church, and the bers gained added the complexity of and the role of th this time of transi

The two groups dinner at which Joseph T. McGu Francisco was hos bishop is episcopa the Department of rations of the U Catholic Conferenc

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**Taize C**

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Chicago — (RNS) can pre-sociolog the life style of t monastic commu holds "no real an tion mission."

Father Sigmun writing in the D ary issue of The C Catholic bi-month by the Thomas i tion, also said ti ecumenical comm offer a "model on lic religious corn reform themselves

Father Dragas with the Nationa search Center at of Chicago, lived chier" from the ers Chicago comm the past year.

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