

# Climate Uncertain For Holy Land Pilgrims

By Fr. Kevin Mooney, O.F.M. (NC News Service)

**Jerusalem, Israel**—In spite of threats by Arab terrorist groups, the Franciscan custody of the Holy Land still encourages pilgrims to come to the holy places under Israeli control.

The Arab guerrilla organization, Al Fatah, issued a warning in early December that foreigners were risking their lives if they visited holy places in Israeli-occupied Jordan.

The organization's statement, published in Beirut, Lebanon, newspapers, said that Al Fatah would attempt to spare the holy places from damage, but warned that "the safety of individuals will not be secure."

The Franciscan custody of the Holy Land, which has the task of preserving the faith and guarding the holy places, regards the threats as propaganda. No special difficulty for pilgrims to the holy places is anticipated. Various border incidents do not affect visits to holy places around Jerusalem, Bethlehem and Nazareth. Incidents always seem more serious abroad, especially since people do not distinguish between Suez and Jerusalem, or the Syrian border and Bethlehem, which are far apart. Even across the River Jordan, incidents are in more remote places north of Jericho. When danger exists, the public is forbidden access to the river.

The Franciscans, in a current

publication, ask all parties for a show of "Oriental hospitality" during the season, and the government of Israel has invited Arab Christians to visit occupied Bethlehem.

Jordan's own Christian leaders, however, have asked their people to stay away, and to forego holiday festivities.

Catholic bishops of the Latin and Melkite rites joined the patriarchs of Jordan's several other sects in this statement, issued at Amman:

"The difficult circumstances

## Vigil Mass Is Right For Dec. 24

**Vatican City**—(NC)—The Congregation of Rites has published a notice that on Sunday, Dec. 24, the Mass to be celebrated is that of the vigil of Christmas rather than that of the fourth Sunday of Advent.

This provision is a standard one. However, the congregation also ruled that in those places where by apostolic indult attendance at the Saturday evening Mass of Dec. 23, can fulfill the Sunday Mass obligation, the Mass to be celebrated is that of the fourth Sunday of Advent and not of the vigil of Christmas.

in which our dear Jordanian homeland finds itself and the painful condition of our brother refugees make it appropriate for us to cancel festivities and social ceremonies on the occasion of Christmas, the New Year and the Epiphany, and to be content with religious services and prayers in churches.

"We recommend to all our sons that during this religious season they do not visit the Holy Places which are still under occupation."

Though fewer than before, pilgrims still arrive and no trouble has been encountered since June. The diminution of tourist traffic is a hardship for local inhabitants, who would be happy to see an increase in business.

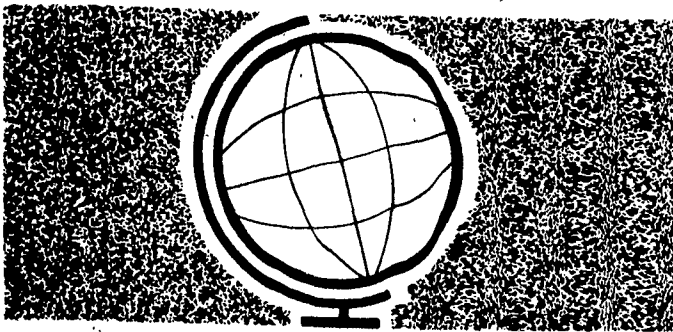
For Christmas at Bethlehem, detailed plans have been made to carry out fully the customary ceremonies.

Latin-rite Patriarch Alberto Gori, O.F.M., of Jerusalem makes a solemn entry in the early afternoon of Christmas eve, the procession and escort starting from the citadel at the Jaffa Gate in Jerusalem at 12:30 p.m. At the tomb of Rachel, he is welcomed by the municipal authorities of Bethlehem and the neighboring villages, who join the procession. At Manger Square he is met by all the leading officials and notables and the Latin-rite clergy. The procession goes through the basilica to the Latin-rite church of St. Catherine for solemn

Vespers. At night, Matins are sung at 1:30, followed by a Pontifical Mass at midnight.

Afterwards there is a procession to the Grotto of the Nativity with a figure of the Christ Child for ceremonies there. The consular corps and

officials attend the Mass. Full radio and TV coverage is given. The people gathered in Manger Square can view ceremonies in Church on a large TV screen outside.



## Around The World

### From Army Major To Auxiliary Bishop

**Birmingham, England**—(RNS)—A former British Army major, Canon-Anthony J. Emery, is to become Birmingham's second Roman Catholic auxiliary bishop.

Canon Emery, who is 49, began his career as an accountant. On the outbreak of World War II in 1939 he joined the Royal Army Service Corps, which handles supplies and transport, and rose to the rank of major. On demobilization he entered the priesthood and was ordained in 1953. In 1962 he was appointed chairman of the Birmingham Diocesan Schools Commission.

### French Writer To Become Priest

**Lyons, France**—(NC)—Joseph Folliet, vice president of the Social Weeks of France and director of the magazine Social News, will be ordained a priest here next March 19.

Folliet, 64, a bachelor, is a writer and a professor of theology at the Catholic University of Lyons. He has a doctorate in philosophy.

### Adventist Charged With Proselytizing

**Tripoli, Greece**—(RNS)—A Seventh-day Adventist has appeared a four-month prison sentence on charges that he was trying to convert people in the town square. Christos Arvanitis, 46, was accused of distributing Adventist literature and reading aloud from his material.

The Adventists strongly denied the charges and claimed he was arrested for just conversing with friends. Greek law in this predominantly Orthodox nation forbids public proselytizing.

### Mother Tries To Prevent Baptism

**Thessalonika, Greece**—(RNS)—Two Jehovah's Witnesses, both women, were arrested here for trying to prevent the Greek Orthodox baptism of a child of one of the women.

The baptism was being conducted with approval of the child's father, a Greek Orthodox. Police said the mother, Maria Xanthopulu, with help from a companion, tried to prevent the rites by shouting and creating a disturbance.

### Cut Inner-City in on Funds, C.I.C. Asks

**Boston**—(NC)—The Catholic Interracial Council of Boston has asked that \$2 million of a \$50 million archdiocesan fund drive be allocated for projects in the inner city.

The fund drive is being conducted by Richard Cardinal Cushing who has said he wishes to raise the \$50 million by August of 1970 when he will be 75 so that he may pay all archdiocesan debts and retire.

### Fight Schools for Using English

**New Delhi**—(NC)—A "war" on missionary schools, which allegedly perpetuate the use of the English language in India, was announced here by a Hindu Sena, a two-week-old organization campaigning for recognition of Hindi as the country's sole official language.

The Sena was formed in Lucknow simultaneously with the introduction in the national parliament here of a government bill making English a second official language as long as non-Hindi states want it.

### Dutch Churchmen See Ecumenical Gap

**Utrecht, The Netherlands**—(NC)—A growing "ecumenical gap" at the level of the people in the pews is bothering the specialists who are working toward Christian reunion in the Netherlands.

While major strides are being made in ecumenism among Catholic and Protestant leaders, it is sensed that much of the discussion goes over the heads of the faithful. When the time comes for group action, a response will be difficult, it is feared.

This concern was a principal conclusion of a two-day study conference here that drew about 200 Catholics and Protestants in the top echelon of the ecumenical movement.

### Charity Scanned For Fraud

**Toronto, Ont.**—(RNS)—An international charitable operation is under investigation by the Toronto police fraud squad. One report said 68 per cent of all collections were committed to fund-raising expenses.

World Heritage Organization claims it has already shipped 80 tons of books to children in underdeveloped nations and will spend another \$240,000 worth to the Bahamas. However, Bahamian Education Minister Arthur Hanna said he has never heard of the organization.



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