

Praises Unity Strides

Vatican City — (RNS) — Augustin Cardinal Bea, head of the Vatican Secretariat for Christian Unity, hailed the progress being made in the ecumenical movement in a special Vatican Radio broadcast for the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity (Jan. 18-25).

He lauded clergy and laity who have participated in the every day work for Christian unity and in the theological liturgical conversations.

After noting that the obstacles to unity are "still numerous and great," Cardinal Bea stated:

"If all the members of the church without distinction would work towards this unity by means of prayer and an authentic Christian life, then certainly we can move towards the great aim of unity.

"We would be helped to prepare for that hour which is known only to God — when all those who have been baptized in the unity of the one faith and the one charity would give testimony to Christ till the world believes that the Father has sent Him."

Cardinal Bea said that the most important development in the ecumenical movement in 1967 was the exchange of visits between Pope Paul VI and Patriarch Athenagoras of Istanbul, spiritual leader of Eastern Orthodoxy.

Cardinal Bea observed that the Pope "in his decision to go personally to Istanbul performed an act which is of historical importance because from the 7th Century no Pope had paid a visit to an Ecumenical Patriarch of Constantinople (Istanbul)."

Patriarch Athenagoras' return visit, said Cardinal Bea, was "unique in history because since the foundation of the Patriarchate of Constantinople nobody with the title of that See ever paid an official and personal visit to the Bishop of Rome."

Cardinal Bea also pointed to the talks representatives of the Catholic Church have had with delegates from the Russian Orthodox Church, World Council of Churches, World Methodist Council, Lutheran World Federation and the Anglican Communion.

Philippine Cooperative Proves Helpful To Farmer

Hinoba-an, Philippines — (NC) — "Local farmers now have a real hope that they can be self-supporting," said Columban Father Robert Burke, describing a cooperative he has started here.

The 44-year-old missionary from Chicago is pastor of Hinoba-an, a farming community of 16,000 people on Negros island.

Together with his assistant, Columban Father John Clifford, also of Chicago, Father Burke organized a small cooperative of 44 men. With help from the Agricultural Development Foundation (ADF), established by Cardinal Rufino Santos of Manila, the farmers here have been able to increase the productivity of their land.

The island of Negros is one of the key agricultural areas of the Philippines. But lack of proper implements and unproductive farming methods have left most small landowners and tenant farmers with "burnt" soil that was improperly fertilized, insufficient pest control and generally worn out land.

"Through the cooperative, we have been able to bring in experts who have shown farmers how to use seeds, fertilizers and pesticides more effectively," Father Burke reported.

"It is five months since we

started. We have been able to get low-interest credit, better seeds and more effective fertilizers and pesticides. One of our major problems is that we are nearly cut-off from the rest of the island. The island of Negros is divided by a rugged mountain chain. At the southern end of the island the mountains come down almost to the sea. Hinoba-an is there between the mountains and the sea. By making use of a cooperative storage barn, the farmers have been able to transport their rice more economically in larger loads."

In reply to Father Burke's request, the ADF sent two technical experts to Hinoba-an. They introduced the local farmers to new methods of farming, storage, transportation and marketing. "The results are already evident," Father Burke said. "The new seed has a four month growth cycle as compared to the six month growth cycle of the seed previously used."

"With soil analysis, improved irrigation methods, better timing of planting periods and with full utilization of the land, we think that the farmers of Hinoba-an can produce three times more rice as well as an additional crop of corn."



Navy's Top Chaplain in War Zone

Da Nang, So. Vietnam — Chaplain (Rear Adm.) James W. Kelly, chief of U.S. Navy chaplains, preaches to Marines at Camp Books Chapel near Da Nang, South Vietnam. The Baptist clergyman, who visited servicemen in Vietnam during the Christmas holidays, said in Washington that he found morale among the fighting men to be "high, stable and consistent." He observed that reports GPs are using marijuana were "grossly exaggerated." Servicemen in Vietnam, he said, believe that U.S. protests against the Vietnamese war stem from ignorance and misinformation and give comfort to the enemy.

Church Organizing Co-Ops in San Salvador

San Salvador, El Salvador — (NC) — Following statements that the Church must make a contribution to the development of this country, Archbishop Luis Chavez y Gonzalez of San Salvador has listed the accomplishments in his archdiocese.

Some 7,200 farm families, 120 taxi drivers, 76 bus owners and about 50 truck owners have been organized by archdiocesan cooperatives, he reported.

"When we started in 1963, we had only 98 families and some \$500," Archbishop Chavez wrote in a pastoral letter.

In a statement published in August, 1966, the archbishop

had discussed in detail the social and economic conditions of the majority of his people. After open criticism of management practices and the indifference of the rich, Archbishop Chavez stated that the Church could not postpone action in development work. Last May, he devoted another pastoral letter to protesting against the wretched conditions in which many families live in this city and said that low wages and lack of skills were the main reasons for these conditions.

The new cooperatives have been organized by the Archdiocesan Social Secretariat, under the direction of several trained priests.

First Communion, Then Confession

Berlin — (NC) — The German bishops have decided to permit children to receive their first Communion at the age of seven but have deferred first confession to two years later.

Up to the present time the minimum age for first Communion has been nine years in Germany, with confession preceding the initial reception of the sacrament.

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Tanzania Catholics

Number 2.2 Million

Dar es Salaam, Tanzania — (NC) — Tanzania Catholics numbered 2,228,622 at the end of June, 1967, according to statistics based on official reports of bishops in the 23 ecclesiastical divisions of the country.

The statistics included the following:

— African priests, 401, African brothers, 75, African Sisters, 1,408.

— Foreign Religious, stationed in Tanzania, 876 priests, 324 Brothers, 829 Sisters.

— Over 325,000 pupils in 2,000 Church-operated schools, one-third of them non-Catholic.

India State Bans Conversion Efforts

New Delhi — (RNS) — The legislature of the central Indian state of Orissa has approved a law imposing penalties of up to a year in prison or \$1,000 fine for missionaries convicted of converting minors, women or untouchables.

The penalties can be doubled, according to the law, for attempts to win converts by "force, fraud or exploitation of poverty."

During discussion of the bill in the state assembly, some speakers charged that Christian missionaries were "exploiting hunger" in various parts of India to win converts.

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Ask freeze on School Tuition

Madrid — (NC) — Spain's Federation of Teachers in Religious Orders has asked its members to freeze tuition rates in their schools for at least one year because of the hardships imposed on families by the devaluation of the peseta.

A sharp increase in the cost of living since 1966, aggravated this November by the government's devaluation of the peseta, led to the request to be effective in all of the 1,400 high schools and 3,000 grammar schools run in this country by Religious orders.

Non-Catholic Leaders at Consecration

Paris — (RNS) — Representatives of the French Protestant, Greek Orthodox, Jewish and Muslim communities, as well as government officials, attended the consecration of two Auxiliary Bishops for the Roman Catholic Archdiocese of Paris. Consecrated in Notre Dame Cathedral were Bishop Daniel Pezeril who will serve as Robert Frossard and Bishop Pierre Cardinal Veillot, Archbishop of Paris.

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