

The Apostolic Delegate: Man on the Move

WASHINGTON — (NC) — Travel, whether it be across the city or across the country, is a top essential in the duties of the Apostolic Delegate in the United States.

That's the view of Archbishop Luigi Raimondi, currently Pope Paul VI's personal representative in this country. Just returned from plane trips to California and Alaska, where he officiated at consecrations of bishops, and planning a trip to Rochester on March 14 for consecration of new Auxiliary Bishops John McCafferty and Dennis Hickey, he discussed his duties.

He views his travels in line with his duty to represent the Pope in his universal ministry.

"The work of an Apostolic Delegate is by no means purely administrative," Archbishop Raimondi said in discussing his visits to many parts of the country since his appointment by Pope Paul on June 30, 1967. During the previous 10 years he was Apostolic Delegate in Mexico.

During an interview in the apostolic delegation, a large and solid structure on Massachusetts Avenue's "embassy row" in the capital, the soft-spoken prelate acknowledged long hours at his desk.

"The office of the Apostolic Delegate has a great deal of correspondence with bishops and with organizations,

with Catholics and non-Catholics," he said.

"There is extensive communication with the congregations, the hierarchy, the conference of bishops, the conference of Religious and others. We are constantly in touch with them," he said.

"But," he added, raising both hands in a relaxed gesture, "I also have been visiting extensively for the purpose of the consecration of bishops, their installation and for anniversaries of dioceses or persons."

Archbishop Raimondi's own devotion to the Holy See represents a lifetime of dedicated service. He is in his mid-50s, a man whose personal strength and sense of dignity are softened by a ready smile. He has been in the diplomatic service of the Holy See since 1938.

That was the year he became secretary of the apostolic nunciature in Guatemala, where he remained until he took up his first Washington post as auditor at the apostolic delegation here in 1942.

He left Washington in 1949 to become counselor and charge d'affaires at the internunciature in New Delhi. In 1953 he was appointed Apostolic Nuncio in Haiti and Apostolic Delegate for the English and French territories of the Caribbean. And in 1957 he went to Mexico.

The archbishop was born in Acquafredda, Italy, on Oct. 25, 1912. Ordained to the priesthood June 6, 1936, he was consecrated a bishop on Jan.



Archbishop Raimondi
Apostolic Delegate
to the United States
Principal Consecrator of
Our New Auxiliary Bishops

31, 1954, and is titular archbishop of Tarsus. He holds doctorates in theology and canon law.

"The life of the Church today," Archbishop Raimondi stated, "is oriented toward the fulfillment of the duties of today — duties that are influenced by the historic content of the present circumstances.

"Problems do not have easy answers today," he continued. "There is an effort, a search, in fact a soul-searching on the part of the people of God. The answers are not always clear, but each person is contributing in his own way, advancing one idea or another.

"I think the trend is toward finding precisely the response required by the appeal the Vatican Council directed to the Church, an appeal calling upon the Church to fulfill its task in relation to the world in which we live and to respond to the yearnings and needs of the present," he said.

In reply to another question Archbishop Raimondi described the work of the apostolic delegation. It is here that the delegate lives, along with seven of the priests who assist him, in quarters on the third floor. Two other priests who work at the delegation live at the Dominican House of Studies, across town near the campus of the Catholic University of America.

(Continued on Page 11B)

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(Continued from Page 10B)

Most of the priests at the delegation are in the regular service of the Holy See, and are transferred from country to country as needs change.

"These priests are chosen and trained in ways quite similar to the diplomatic service of nations," Archbishop Raimondi explained, "but they are not to be equated with diplomats because the mission is completely different.

"The matters all of us deal with are religious, ecclesiastical, although there are certain forms that coincide with the procedure of diplomats," he said.

"There is some contact with governments," the Apostolic Delegate said,

"and this contact is along diplomatic lines. But the content is always religious in nature.

"The Delegate is a man representing the Church, representing the Holy

Let Sinners Remember Then God Will Forget

"And for those who have in any grievous way sinned or neglected God, I recommend such persons never to forget they have sinned; if they do not forget it, God is His mercy will forget it.

I recommend them every day, morning and evening, to fall on their knees, and say, 'Lord, forgive me my past sins.' I recommend them to pray to God to visit their sins in this world rather than in the next. I recommend them to go over their dreadful sins in their minds, and to confess them to God again and again with great shame and to entreat His pardon.

I recommend them to look on all pain and sorrow which comes on them as a punishment for what they once were; and to take it patiently on that account, made joyfully, as giving them a hope that God is punishing them here instead of hereafter." (Cardinal Newman)

Consecration Choir

The combined choirs of Sacred Heart Cathedral and Holy Rosary joined seminarians from Becket Hall and St. Bernard's and Eastman School of Music brass and percussion units provided music for the Consecration ceremonies. Donald Meminger, choir director of Holy Rosary, directed and the choir presented his setting of Psalm 132. William Ferris, director of music at Cathedral played the organ and presented an original Te Deum for the occasion.

See as a spiritual institution. Although he is associated with diplomats, he is distinguished from them," he said.

Does the apostolic delegation in Washington enjoy the extraterritorial status according embassies?

"It is recognized as an official agency," Archbishop Raimondi said, "similar in certain respects to the International Red Cross or the Organization of American States. In a strictly legal sense it does not have extraterritorial status, but in a practical sense it does have a certain special status."

Asked about the movement toward racial equality in the United States, Archbishop Raimondi said he was not prepared to discuss specific issues. But, he said, "the principles of the Church

are being carried out by the bishops of the United States.

"These principles," he said, "are to promote justice and equality. This is the duty of the Church as such and of Catholics as citizens and responsible members of the civil community."

Archbishop Raimondi said he views the Church as a vigorous force in the guidance of individual Christians, in the formation of conscience.

"The Church is speaking today," he said. "It is speaking through the Holy Father, through the bishops, through all those who have the role of guiding. The main and most delicate aspect of the work of the Church is to create sensitivity and consciousness and disposition of the mind and heart of the faithful in the service of God."

Archbishop Of New York Present

New York's Archbishop Terence J. Cooke, who attended the installation of Rochester's new auxiliaries, has pledged "my life, my love, my service," to his people.

At a press conference following his appointment last week, the successor to Francis Cardinal Spellman said also that he faced his new duties "with the deepest feelings of humility."

Of the late cardinal, he remarked,

"He would wish us to move forward courageously in meeting the challenge of our time."

"I cannot imagine," he said, "being all things to all men" as he was, but he was a kind father and he will pray for me."

Queried as to where he stands on Vietnam, Archbishop Cooke replied, "I stand with the Holy Father. We pray that God will send us peace."



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