

AROUND THE COUNTRY

Diocesan Income Pledged to Poor

Baton Rouge, La. — (NC) — Bishop Robert E. Tracy of Baton Rouge has announced that the diocese will spend 10 per cent of its income on new programs to aid the poor.

It is estimated that the funds will amount to about \$40,000 annually, and the bishop stressed that the expenditures will be made in addition to all existing diocesan programs for the poor.

The new programs will be administered through a new Diocesan Social Action Office and policy, the bishop said, will be formulated by a board composed of priests, Religious, and laity.

Arbitration Sought in Teacher Strike

South Holland, Ill. — (NC) — Officials of Chicago archdiocesan schools have asked striking lay teachers and the Seton High School administration here to meet for talks on binding arbitration.

Father Thaddeus O'Brien, O.Carm., associate archdiocesan superintendent of schools, wrote the two groups that the "matter is at an impasse."

The school is privately owned by the Sisters of Charity. The teachers went on strike after the school administration refused to recognize the Elizabeth Seton chapter, Archdiocesan Teachers' Federation, as bargaining agent. Elizabeth Seton is staffed by 21 Sisters and 31 lay teachers, 21 of whom are members of the federation.

Christ's Life Story Told in Opera

New York — (RNS) — An opera based on the life of Jesus was presented, after 18 years of preparation, on the stage of the Metropolitan Opera House.

The premiere was sponsored by the American Bible Society, the New York Bible Society and Christian Arts, Inc., a non-profit organization founded by Mr. Hines "to put Christianity back into the arts, and the arts back into Christianity."

The work is based on material from the Gospel of John. It is in four acts, which include scenes dealing with John the Baptist, the Woman at the Well, Mary Magdalene, Judas, the resurrection of Lazarus, the betrayal and the Last Supper.

Family Prayer Campaign Launched



Milwaukee — (RNS) — Father Patrick C. Peyton of Albany, N.Y., founder of the famous Family Rosary Crusade (above, right) launched a family prayer campaign in Milwaukee on Easter Sunday at the invitation of Archbishop William E. Cousins (left). In announcing the campaign, both said that it was expected to reach into every Catholic home of the 10-county Milwaukee archdiocese, and that non-Catholics have been asked to share in it. The prayer campaign was scheduled to end at an outdoor, interdenominational family rally at State Fair Park, Sunday, May 12.

Denver Antipoverty Program Launched

Denver — (NC) — Archbishop James V. Casey has launched a 3-year, \$1-million antipoverty program for the Denver Archdiocese.

In a pastoral letter, Archbishop Casey said that after the assassination of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., he had received a huge volume of mail, "and the gist of it was 'let's do something!'"

The anti-poverty program will attempt to raise \$333,000 a year for the next three years, "mainly through the resources of the archdiocesan development fund. These monies will be expended exclusively for the poor and needy without any regard for race or creed," the archbishop wrote. He pointed out a pressing need for adequate housing, job training and quality education for the poor.

'Break Barriers' Drive Begun

New York — (RNS) — Five thousand interreligious and interracial dialogue groups in communities and colleges across the country are proposed by the Young Women's Christian Association.

Mrs. Robert W. Claytor of Grand Rapids, Mich., president of the YWCA, said that local Ys in 450 communities and student members on 500 campuses already are at work in formation of the dialogue groups.

Participants in the dialogue will be asked to wear symbolic buttons with the slogan, "Break Barriers."

Parish Social Justice Groups Proposed

Jackson, Miss. — (RNS) — Bishop Joseph Brunini of Natchez-Jackson has called on all 98 parishes within his diocese to establish special committees to work for social justice and social peace.

He asked the special parish committees "to work in an ecumenical spirit with religious people of all denominations and all races in bringing about true social justice and peace in Mississippi."

"Christians must recognize that there is only one race — the human race — all redeemed by the blood shed on Calvary's heights and given hope through Christ's Resurrection," he said.

'Operation Connection' Head Chosen

New York — (RNS) — Bishop Paul Moore, Jr., suffragan of the Washington Episcopal diocese, has been named director of Operation Connection.

The interreligious program seeks to mobilize white affluence to help build political and economic power among the country's black and white poor. It will seek \$10 million to carry out pilot programs in five cities.

Vice-chairmen of the executive committee are Rabbi Abraham J. Heschel of Jewish Theological Seminary, New York, and Catholic Bishop John J. Wright of Pittsburgh.

Many East Christians Under Red Rule

Jerusalem—Approximately 85 per cent of Eastern-rite Christians are ruled by a Communist regime, according to a survey made by Father Ignatius Dick of the Catholic Melkite-rite, a professor at St. Anne's seminary here.

Father Dick's report disclosed that 148 million Eastern-rite Christians live under Communist rule. Of these Eastern-rite Christians under Communist rule, mainly Orthodox and Catholic, but including some Nestorians and Monophysites, 6 million are Catholics. These Eastern-rite Catholics, however, "are being constrained to enter the Orthodox Church," Father Dick said.

He added that Communist regimes are more tolerant toward Orthodox and even Latin-rite Catholics than toward Byzantine-rite Catholics.

In Islamic territories of the Middle East, Father Dick reported, there are 5 million Eastern-rite Christians, of whom 1,146,000 are Catholic.

"Christians (Orthodox and Catholics)," he said, "now make up a feeble minority, as they are only 5 per cent of the total population."

The Melkite-rite scholar's research indicated that the Christian community is practically extinct in Afghanistan and Arabia. In Iran, Christians account for 0.76 per cent of the population and in Turkey for only 0.8 per cent.

Lebanon is the only country in the Middle East where Christians form a slight majority, Father Dick said, because of the large community of Maronite-rite Catholics.

Almost 5 million Eastern-rite Christians are dispersed through western Europe and North and South America.

The Jerusalem seminary professor's report showed that Eastern-rite Catholics comprise 10.5 million people.

"They come from a background of old-Christological heresies or from Byzantine Orthodoxy," Father Dick noted. "At different times they entered into communion with Rome, but preserved, for the most part, their liturgical and disciplinary traditions."

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