

AROUND THE WORLD



Venezuelan Marry-Go-Round

Catholic priests in Caracas patiently await completion of civil ceremonies before setting out on the herculean task of marrying 500 couples who had lived for several years in concubinage. Many of the couples had several children. Involved in the marriages were some 2,070 illegitimate children. (Religious News Service).

Churches Seek Israeli Recognition

Jerusalem — (NC) — Six Protestant churches with a membership of approximately 1,000 have applied jointly to the Israeli government for official recognition as religious communities.

Representatives of the six denominations have been told by the minister for religious affairs, Dr. Zerach Warhaftig, that he will come to a decision within a few months.

Israel is a Jewish state because Judaism is the religion of the majority of its inhabitants, but there is no state religion. All recognized religions have equal status, rights and privileges.

The groups applying for recognition are: the Southern Baptist Convention; the Lutheran (Norwegian) church; the Church of the Nazarene; the Pentecostal Fellowship (British); the Christian Mission Alliance, and the Mennonites. The largest Protestant community in Israel, the Anglican, was not among the petitioners.

'Beat' Mass Draws Fire in Rome

Rome — (NC) — A major Rome daily newspaper has called for a "clear statement" by Rome's vicariate on the so-called "beat Mass," which has been banned in the Milan archdiocese.

The paper, Messaggero, has been protesting guitar Masses in Rome at the Church of St. Alessio for some time. The Rome Vicariate has stated publicly that it is taking the matter under study and that it should not be the subject of rancor in the press.

The Rome daily said that the vicariate commission met May 2 but reached no decisions. "What is the result?" asked Messaggero. "Beat Masses everywhere: at Rome, at Assisi, at Milan and Chieti, etc." A clear statement from the Roman vicariate, "is necessary and even indispensable."

Abandon Privileges, Bishops Urged

La Paz, Bolivia — (NC) — A group of 80 Bolivian priests, in a letter to their bishops, have urged that the Church abandon all economic and legal privileges granted by the state, including bishops' salaries. Catholic schools should be open to all regardless of economic position, and the Church's building programs, should be reexamined, they added.

The letter, published recently, sought to focus attention on the obstacles facing priests in their ministry.

Among the government privileges they oppose, the priests listed exemption from custom duties and the subsidy granted to bishops.

"A Church of the poor should not enjoy privilege," the priests asserted.

They proposed that schools run by Religious publish a yearly financial report, and that the practice be extended to chancery offices on diocesan funds.

Lutheran Bishops Oppose Remarriage

Oslo — (RNS) — Seven of the nine bishops of the Norwegian Lutheran Church have urged their clergy not to officiate at marriages when one of the parties is a divorced person whose former partner is still living. They based their directive on the findings of a commission which had examined the problem.

A minority opinion among commission experts maintained that to permit divorced persons to be remarried in church was a logical position, since "the Lutheran Church does not agree with the Catholic teaching regarding the indissolubility of marriage."

British Catholics Forming Talent Pool

London — (RNS) — Catholic laymen will preach, for the first time, at all Masses in England and Wales on Pentecost Sunday, June 2, to help launch a drive aimed at involving the laity more deeply in the management of the Church.

The drive is officially termed the New Pentecost Movement. Details were given at a press conference here by John Cardinal Heenan of Westminster, who said: "Ever since I can remember, the laity have said they could run the parish much better than the priest."

Cardinal Heenan explained that every Catholic in England and Wales will receive a card on which he will write a talent or skill which he can give to the Church. The cards will form an index of the lay resources in each parish.

The Primate also said that from the days of the Apostles priests "spent so much time running soup kitchens that they scarcely had time to preach the word of God. If a priest is going to do spiritual work and he is to prepare a sermon, it is a great pity that he should have to organize bazaars."

Venezuela Seeks U.S. Priests

Barquisimeto, Venezuela — (NC) — The U.S. Bishops' Committee for Latin America has been asked to send priests to help in a new mission program in Venezuela's hinterlands.

The plea came from Archbishop Crispulo Benitez Fonturvel of Barquisimeto, who is chairman of the Great Plains-Mission, established by the Venezuelan Bishops' Conference. He sent a survey report on each diocese in the mission area, listing its problems and resources. He also invited U.S. bishops to come to Venezuela and make a final investigation and choice of site before committing and sending their priests.

Spanish Bishop Denies 'Political Aspirations'

By MANUEL MIRA

Madrid, Spain — (NC) — Archbishop Casimiro Morcillo Gonzalez, marking 25 years as a bishop, publicly denied any political connections with the government after some 60 priests of his archdiocese asked the prelate to resign from the Spanish parliament.

"None of the five bishops in the Cortes has any political aspirations. But they do not resign because they feel it is their duty to uphold Spanish Law," he declared.

He said at an interview that his presence in the Spanish parliament or Cortes, and his place in the three-member Regency Council are determined by the constitution. As archbishop of Madrid, he and four other bishops represent the Church in the Cortes; he is also charged with co-

He Serves in Parliament 'To Uphold Spanish Law'

ruling the country should the head of state become incapacitated.

"Spanish law, to which no objection has come from the Holy See, provides for the presence of a few bishops in the Cortes and other state bodies, not to submit themselves to political action, but to safeguard the respect for natural law and the principles of the Gospel," Archbishop Morcillo told the press.

Besides presiding over an archdiocese of 3.4 million Catholics and 329 parishes, Archbishop Morcillo is vice president of the Spanish Bishops' Conference, and heads the Bishops' Committee for the Lay Apostolate.

He continued: "Church-state relations in any country of the world should be cordial ones, and this the Church tries to insure on her part, as she has to discharge her mission among men who happen to be at the same time members of the civil society. Thus the Church maintains relations even with countries that made official profession of atheism."

The prelate also commented on two top issues, the crisis of the lay apostolate—worsened by recent mass resignations of its leaders—and the militant social action of many priests.

"Our young clergy has many good things: a tremendous dedication, a determination for renewal, a deep sense of communion in the Church, and a sincere poverty in their lives," the archbishop stated. But he expressed reservations on protest marches by priests.

"Priests must spread the Gospel, indeed, but not in a tumultuous way. If they take to the streets, it must be for liturgical or apostolic demonstrations."

The countrywide controversy on the role of priests working for social justice is a good thing, he said. "I believe we are witnessing the birth of a living faith, of the true desire that our Church life change for the better. Indifference would be many times worse."

Speaking in the cathedral at a Mass marking the silver jubilee of his consecration, the archbishop told the workers that he knew their "sufferings and hopes."

"I know you distrust us bishops," he said, "because of apparent signs of

our detachment from you and your problems. But I want you to know by this public statement that, within the bounds of respect due to constitutional authority, we will do all that is humanly possible to fulfill your legitimate aspirations."

Addressing high-ranking government officials, the archbishop defended the cause of the workers as "non-Communist."

"I plead with you to give careful attention to the frictions manifest in several sectors of our national society. These are tensions of impatience, and what is right and just in them must be promptly regarded by you as evidence of suffering among the people.

"They need—and I am speaking for them—they need homes, jobs, decent wages; they need schools, and help in keeping their children there; they need avenues by which they can freely march in the defense of their rights, in the presentation of their needs and wishes, in their efforts to participate in the economy of the nation and its political life."

"They need freedom without fear or risk, in order to voice their aspirations," he added. "The working classes reject communism with the same determination they reject capitalism. For this reason, I am asking your generous understanding of the Catholic workers' position; in their apostolate they are trying to improve conditions within the framework of social justice and peace, so as to spare their co-workers the temptation of embracing Communist, totalitarian movements."

Czech Bishop Gives Views On Priorities

Prague — (NC) — Structural reorganization, not the filling of vacant sees, is the Church's important task in Czechoslovakia, according to a prelate who was removed from his diocese by this country's communist government in the 1950s.

Bishop Stephan Trochta, S.D.B., of Litomerec expressed his views in Kato Hicke Novira. The publication, formerly published by the pro-government Peace Priests movement, has been restored to Church control following the recent shakeup in the Czechoslovak Communist party which led to a lessening of Church-State antagonism.

Bishop Trochta said he does not consider the reinstatement of bishops as a top priority problem in ending the Church-State conflict in Czechoslovakia.

He said that the Czechoslovakian government as well as the Holy See needs time to study the general situation. He added that the present government, which is taking a more tolerant position regarding the Catholic Church, must first solve many other important problems.

He said that the reorganization of Church structures in the new climate is the most important task of the Church at this time.

Bishop Trochta spent several years in the Dachau nazi concentration camp during World War II and was liberated by U.S. troops shortly before the end of the war.

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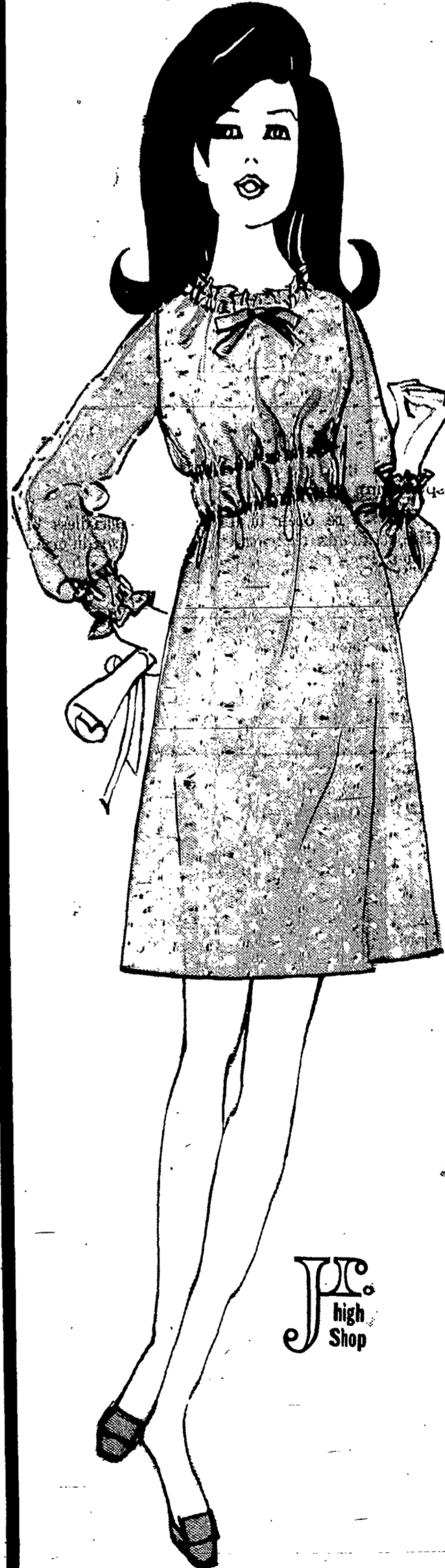
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AROUND



A rarity in U.S. Catholicism and his two sons are on Belmont Abbey in Belmont widower, and his sons, -

Don't Knock U

Cleveland — (NC) — U.S. city advised young realize they can rise as hi

Cleveland's Mayor C spite grave racial problem nity for blacks and white

"Don't knock it and the Interracial Scholars-

The mayor named a positions in America. He Marshall in the U.S. Sup that "you'd think there E

Mayor Stokes said Luther King are more all which he could not accom memory.

Ecumenical

Houston — (RNS) — A be undertaken here by Roman Catholic Diocese

To be called Oxford nanced by Federal Hou stered by a board of sponsoring dioceses.

It will be open to FHA standards on incor occupancy is next Janu

Priest He

Minneapolis — (RNE tion has elected its first

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The association, ur Catholic members. Now priests. Most of the Prc tions in the city hold m

Hartford S

Hartford, Conn. — effect at Catholic region according to Msgr. Jame for the Archdiocese of H

The four communis Hartford and Manchester range from \$235 to \$260

The tuition increas- vide \$105,000 for the th —and all of it will be sp

West Coast Fr

Oakland, Calif. — (R the West Coast, in the sp will now concentrate the any way afflicted."

The Order of Friars- and retreat houses in sev assignments for work in inner-city and campus m

In June, the religio- in Stockton, Calif. It has Washington. Negotiation the Franciscans to inne

Father Alan McCoy — "At the present tir dioceses to take on pro- mobile religious commu. as soon as the work is fin areas of work."

YMCA and C

Omaha, Neb. — (RNS tion and the Catholic Y program of cooperation =

The program was a representatives of both =

"In the spirit of ec executive of the Metro will now support each individual members and cooperation base on the broad base for ecumenic

Auxiliary Bishop De pressed by the new spir- a "genuine advance in E