

AROUND THE COUNTRY



Ship Named for Chaplain

Sister Rose Marie, M.M., attends the commissioning of the USS O'Callahan, an escort ship named for her brother, Chaplain Joseph T. O'Callahan. Participating in the ceremony with her at the Boston Naval Shipyard are Rear Admiral Roy S. Benson of the First Naval District and Richard Cardinal Cushing of Boston. Father O'Callahan, a Jesuit, was awarded the Congressional Medal of Honor for heroism during World War II. (RNS Photo).

Catholic U. Former Dean Dies

Washington (NC)— Requiem Mass was offered July 18 for Father Nicholas A. Weber, 91 author, scholar, and the first dean of the college of arts and sciences of the Catholic University of America. He died July 15 in a Baltimore hospital after a brief illness.

Father Weber, who retired from teaching in 1950 had been custodian of archives at the Marist College here.

Born in Krautergersheim, near Strasbourg, France, he was ordained in the Marist order at Catholic University in 1901.

He contributed over 100 scholarly articles to the Catholic Encyclopedia, as well as other publications.

At Catholic University, he was dean of the school of philosophy from 1925 to 1930, then of the college of arts and sciences for four years. He also taught at the Marist College and at Trinity, and was provincial of the Marists in this area from 1938 to 1947.

Retreats Termed Indispensable

Washington (NC)— A basic purpose of the retreat movement is to foster "thinking in the heart," Bishop John J. Wright of Pittsburgh told the National Catholic Laymen's Retreat Conference.

The movement has an "indispensable function in the Church during this era of reform and renewal," he said, and the retreat house provides "the climate essential to spiritual survival in a culture preoccupied with action and results."

Diocese To Expand Services

Camden, N.J. (NC)— The Camden diocese has purchased a four-building complex for use as a Catholic Community Center.

The property includes a former synagogue, a classroom building, two residences and an auditorium.

Parishes in the neighborhood will continue their present programs, Bishop George H. Guilfoyle explained, while the center will offer social, welfare and educational services as well as religious services to the people of the surrounding area.

Religion in the Soviet Union

Archbishop Seeks Reinstatement

By Religious News Service

New York — Documentation of the attempt of an Orthodox archbishop in the Soviet Union to be reinstated in a Church post after a two-year forced "retirement" was revealed in correspondence published here. The prelate had protested Communist interference in church affairs.

The situation involves Archbishop Ermogen of the Russian Orthodox Church who was relieved of his duties at Kalunga and Borovsk, an archdiocese south of Moscow, in 1965. He was assigned by the Holy Synod of the Church to reside "in retirement" at the Zhirovitsky Monastery at Uspensky.

Two unpublished letters from the archbishop to Patriarch Alexei and a reply to one letter from the administrator of the Moscow Patriarchate were included in the July issue of Religion in Communist Dominated Areas (RCDA), issued by the National Council of Churches.

The resolution of the Holy Synod retiring Archbishop Ermogen and a letter from the prelate, which was printed in Parish, also were reproduced in RCDA.

Archbishop Ermogen charged, in the first of the letters written two years after he was released from his duties at Kalunga, that the real reason he was forced to retire was "a demand of V. A. Koroyedov, chairman of the Council on Religious Affairs under the Council of Ministries, USSR."

The Holy Synod resolution stated that the archbishop was "permitted" to be retired at the monastery since there were no "appropriate" vacancies among the archbishops.

The archbishop contended that in the two-year span there had been vacancies and that his canonical rights were being ignored.

A reply (dated Dec. 22, 1967) written by the administrator of the Patriarchate said: "Several sees have been vacated during these two years, but there were candidates for these sees more suitable than the Most Rev. Ermogen, with whom complications invariably arise in the sees which he in turn occupied, Tashkent, Omsk, Kalunga, and we were obliged each time to take upon ourselves the burden of solving them and of caring for his transfer to a new see."

The archbishop sent a lengthy letter defending his activities in the dioceses named. It was written Feb. 20, 1968, again addressed to Patriarch Alexei. He claimed that the "complications" he had were always in relation to deputies of the Council on

Religious Affairs who ignored the law (involving church and state).

After centuries of being an adjunct of the Russian czars, the church was separated from the state in 1917 following the successful revolution. In 1943, the ancient Patriarchate of Moscow was restored and diocesan administration was restored to some extent.

(Though separate in theory from the government, the Russian Church is answerable to the Council on Religious Affairs which has a deputy in each region.)

In his first letter, Archbishop Ermogen reminded Patriarch Alexei that the Soviet Constitution separated the church from the state, but said that such was not the actual case.

Archbishop Ermogen admitted that he had indeed crossed swords with at least two deputies, in Tashkent and Kalunga. He indicated that the latter incident involved a deputy who liked to appoint parish priests without consulting the bishop. He wrote:

"It sometimes happens that complete absence of 'complications' is evidence of indifference to the offending cause or lack of principles. I bring in here a conversation which I had with a permanent member of the Synod, the late Metropolitan Pfitrim of Krutitsk and Kalunga.

"Meeting me once at the Patriarchate and learning that I was having complications in Tashkent with the deputy... he gave me this advice: 'To avoid all complications act thus — when a priest or a monk is of a Church council course in lieu to him, then send him to the deputy, requesting that after seeing the latter he return to you. When he then reports to you, you telephone the deputy and ask what he said to the visitor. And whatever the deputy said, you say the same.'"

Super Efficiency Snags Salesman

Uppsala, Sweden (RNS) — The efficiency with which the World Council of Churches Assembly was organized was typified by the experience of a Japanese on his arrival at the Stockholm airport.

He was greeted by an Assembly steward, his bags were placed in a bus and he was told to have some coffee while the driver waited for a full load.

In due course, he got on the bus and was brought to Uppsala for the WCC Assembly.

When he got out of the bus, it was discovered he didn't want to be there. He had come to Sweden to sell vacuum cleaners.

Anti-Jewry Charges Rebutted

By Religious News Service

Moscow — Soviet Union press and radio have devoted considerable news space and time to claim that Jews do not suffer from discrimination.

The statements were made in reaction to two developments: comments published in the United States following the visit there of Yehuda Leib Levin, chief rabbi of Moscow; and the holding of a Latin American Conference on the Situation of Jews in the Soviet Union in Santiago, Chile.

On his return here from his American visit, Rabbi Levin said that he and cantor David Siskin of the Leninsky Choral Synagogue who accompanied him had been very well received and had been able to tell many people about the life of Soviet Jews. Many Americans, he said, were misinformed or deceived by anti-Soviet propaganda.

Commenting on the Latin American meeting, at which it was charged that Jews do not enjoy the rights given to other minorities in the Soviet Union, Soviet Radio said that "unquestionably" it reflected the efforts of Zionists to discredit Soviet support for the Arab people's struggles against Israeli aggression."

The broadcast said the Santiago conference also had the "camouflaged aim" of distracting Latin American attention from the riots and assassinations taking place in the U.S.

"The United States is regarded by world opinion as a racist country and that is why it would like to spread the false idea that in socialist countries, too, all is not well as far as national and religious minorities are concerned," the broadcast said. "To this end, they turn to Zionist organizations which make a to-do about non-existent discrimination against Soviet Jews."

Russian media are also publishing a reply by Menahem Mekhaylovich, chairman of the Board of the Central Synagogue in Moscow, to American charges of discrimination in the USSR. Mekhaylovich was quoted as saying that Jews have struggled for their present status, including church-state separation and the elimination of separate Jewish schools and other institutions.

"Religion has become a personal, private affair," he said, "and religious education is therefore no longer within the competence of the state."

"Most Soviet people are no longer religious—not because of administrative measures but because of the materialistic concepts prevailing in this country."

Bishop Plans

Consecration in Boyhood Church

Brooklyn (NC)— Bishop-designate Francis J. Mugavero disclosed he will be consecrated Sept. 12 as spiritual head of the Brooklyn diocese and will offer his first pontifical Mass in his boyhood church in the midst of the Bedford-Stuyvesant ghetto district.

Msgr. Mugavero announced (July 17) that Archbishop Luigi Raimondi, Apostolic Delegate in the United States, will officiate as consecrator at the Sept. 12 ceremony in Our Lady of Perpetual Help Church here.

He said he will offer his first pontifical Mass, probably Sept. 15, in his boyhood parish church, St. Ambrose's.

The bishop-designate will succeed Archbishop Bryan J. McEntegart, 75, as spiritual head of the nation's largest Catholic diocese, which has a Catholic population of more than 1,575,000.

Archbishop McEntegart requested retirement because of age and impaired health.

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