

Rhythm Clinics Urged for Philippines

By MARIO GATBONTON
NC News Service

Manila—A Filipino member of the papal advisory commission on birth control believes that Pope Paul VI's encyclical *Humanae Vitae* came "a little too late."

Dr. Mercedes B. Concepcion, director of the Population Institute of the University of the Philippines, said that Pope Paul's encyclical on birth control "would have been more forceful if it had been issued shortly after the papal commission had submitted its report."

Dr. Concepcion, an expert on population, believes strongly that the Church should launch an all-out drive to establish rhythm clinics throughout the Philippines.

Dr. Concepcion was one of five women in the 76-member Papal Commission for the Study of the Family, Natality and Population. There were three married women recruited by the Pope for the commission, together with their husbands, for their work in family guidance clinics. Dr. Concepcion and one other member are unmarried.

The commission was instituted by Pope John XXIII as an advisory body in 1963. When it was enlarged by Pope Paul in 1965, Dr. Concepcion was invited as an expert in demography.

In discussing the population explosion in the Philippines, Dr. Concepcion pointed out the following:

"On July 1, 1967, the Philippines contained an estimated 34.5 million people; a million more than a year earlier. By July 1, 1968, the population was nearing the 36 million mark.

"During 1967, approximately a million and a half babies were born and about half a million died. The difference represents an addition of 2,700 or so people daily.

"Early marriage of Filipino women (median age or 19.3 years) combined with a lengthening expectation of life and a low rate of childlessness have contributed to the high Philippine birth rate. Most recent estimates place it at 45.5 births per thousand persons.

"Filipino wives surviving through their reproductive ages, 15-44 years, produce an average of 6.5 children. Meanwhile, death rates have decreased from pre-World War II levels to the present estimated level of 12 per thousand.

"With an estimated 3.4 per cent yearly increase, the population is expected to double in about 20 years."

Dr. Concepcion believes that the Philippine population will eventually taper off and fertility will show a decline.

Sunday Youth Mass Group Organizing

Sacred Heart Cathedral proposes to have a Mass every Sunday at 5 p.m. "especially designed by and for young people of the area."

Barbara Hall, president of the parish Youth Mass Group, has called a meeting for 7:30 p.m. Tuesday, Oct. 1, in the rectory hall, of all interested — musicians, artists, readers, sewers, singers, servers and others."

Refreshments will be served, so those planning to attend are asked to notify the rectory, 254-3221.

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similar to that of mortality—but not in the next decade or two. The next decade will be the most critical in the life of the republic, she said.

Dr. Concepcion wants the Church in the Philippines to get involved. "The 1970s will be with us in two years," she pointed out. "There should be long-range and short term solutions. The Church should take a positive step and launch an all-out drive for rhythm. It is time to act, and not just preach that it is noble sacrifice to yield to authority."

Bishop Consider Fertility Study

Washington —(NC)—The Administrative Committee of the National Conference of Catholic Bishops has unanimously approved in principle a proposal to establish an independent, non-profit corporation to sponsor scientific research on fertility.

Rhythm research would be specified as the first and immediate, but not the sole, objective of the foundation.

Founding of the corporation was proposed by Patrick Cardinal O'Boyle at a meeting of the NCCB Administrative Committee here. He said its purpose would be "to sponsor or contract for research aimed at helping to make traditional Judaeo-Christian morality concerning sex and innocent life more liveable for contemporary believers."

The cardinal said the corporation itself would do no research or teaching.

No Loyalty Test, Jesuit Declares

New York —(RNS)—A leading American theologian has warned that it would be "a serious mistake" to use Pope Paul's encyclical banning birth control "as a kind of Catholic loyalty test."

The warning came from Father Avery Dulles, S.J., professor of fundamental theology at Woodstock College, Md. Writing in the Sept. 17 issue of *America*, the Jesuit issue some recently published reflections of Karl Rahner, whom he described as "probably the most prestigious Catholic theologian of our day."

He referred to the "American tradition of freedom and pluralism."

"As is clearly proved by the statements recently issued by the hierarchies of several European nations," he said, "the American bishops need not exact wooden conformity on the part of every Catholic regardless of his conscientious convictions."

Father Dulles went on to warn that a repressive course of action would "discourage young people and intellectuals, upon whom the future of our Church so greatly depends."

Repression of dissent, he added, would be more harmful to the mutual trust and cordiality established in recent years between the hierarchy and the theologians.

Father Dulles said, "There is every reason to think that freedom and moderation, rather

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than force and intimidation, will eventually prevail."

Ecumenism Hurt, Says WCC Aide

Rome —(RNS)—An official of the World Council of Churches said here that Pope Paul's encyclical banning birth control presents a serious obstacle to the ecumenical movement.

Dr. Albert van den Heuvel, director of the WCC communications department, told a press conference that "the majority of Protestant and Anglican Church leaders and theologians were either puzzled, disappointed or very contrary" with the papal statement.

"The big words of the Vatican Council," he said, "were dialogue, collegiality, ecumenical movement, pastoral approach, openness to the rest of the world. None of these five points played a role in the teaching of *Humanae Vitae*, the papal encyclical banning artificial contraception."

Dr. van den Heuvel cited the confused and diverse reactions of national Catholic hierarchies as evidence that collegiality or dialogue with the bishops was lacking in the final preparation and issuance of the encyclical.

He pointed out that the Orthodox were highly favorable to the Pope's affirmation of the traditional ban on contraceptives as were a small number of Protestants and Anglicans.

'Not Last Word', Archbishop Says

Santa Fe, N.M. —(NC)—Pope Paul's encyclical on birth control "is not the last word on the subject, but rather a solemn reaffirmation of the teaching of previous

Popes, especially that of Pius XI and Pius XII," according to Archbishop James P. Davis of Santa Fe.

Archbishop Davis commented briefly on the encyclical in a column in *Renewal*, the archdiocesan newspaper. The column was his first.

The archbishop said that the "document requires study, and the most respectful attention of anyone concerned with the delicate and difficult subject matter."

Austrian Bishops Stress Conscience

Vienna—The Catholic bishops of Austria said in a joint statement that married Catholics who were limiting the number of their children "for ethical reasons" dictated by their own conscience would be admitted to Holy Communion without having to confess their practice of birth control as a sin.

The statement, doctrinal comment on Pope Paul's recent encyclical on birth control ("Of Human Life"), was elaborated in a special conference held by the Austrian hierarchy in Graz Friday and Saturday.

Church sources here said that the statement was a compromise between Franz Cardinal Konig, Archbishop of Vienna and president of the Austrian Bishop's Conference who is a leading liberal, and some conservatives in the episcopacy.

On the whole, the bishop's statement follows the line taken earlier by the Belgian and West German hierarchies in emphasizing the role of individual conscience in any decision on birth control.

The Austrian bishops stressed in their declaration that individual conscience must be well enlightened by faith and church doctrine.

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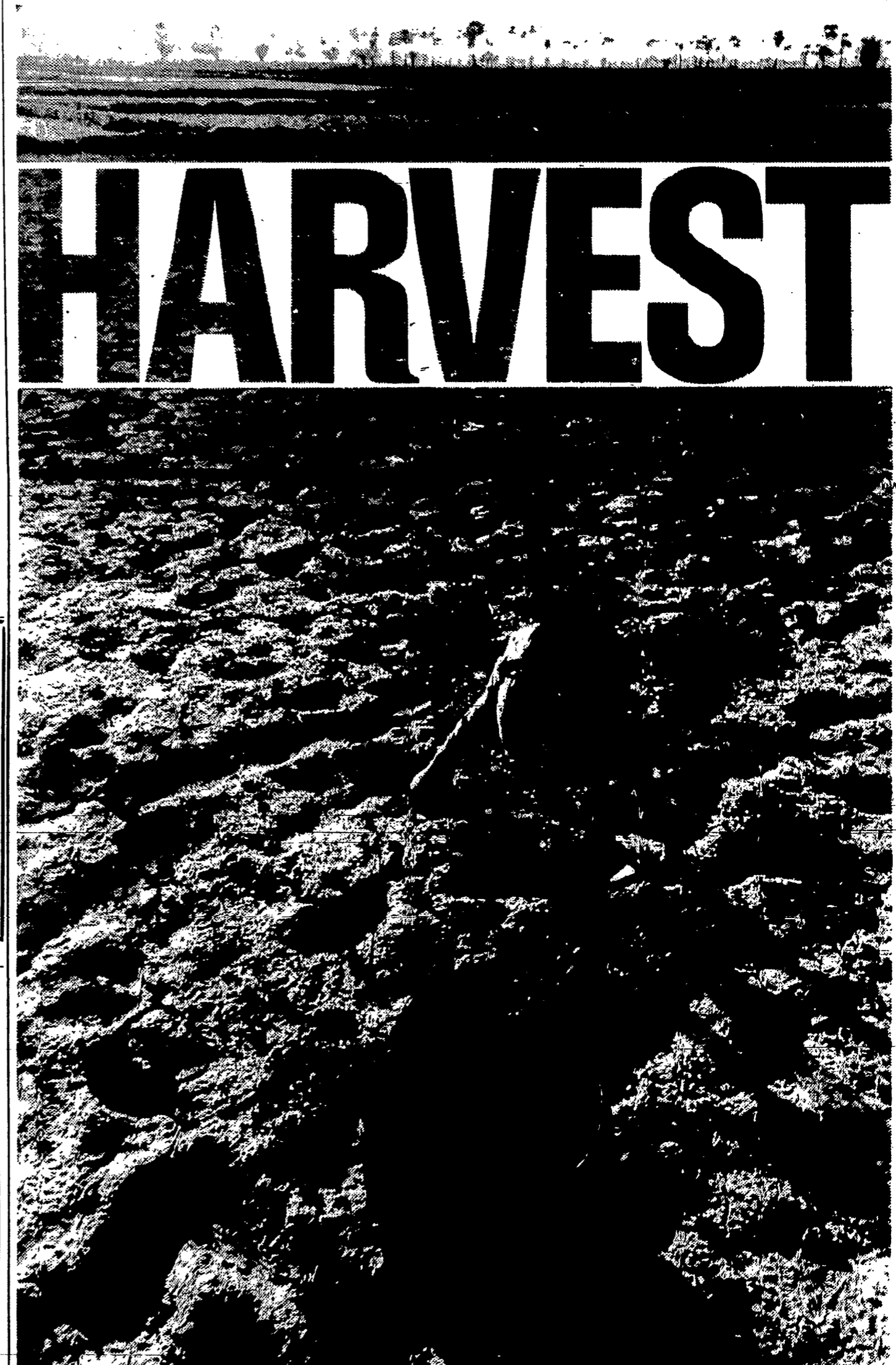
Pakistan Bishop Educated in US

Vatican City —(NC)—A 38-year-old Pakistan priest educated in the United States has been named the new bishop of Chittagong, Pakistan.

He is Father Joachin Rozario of the Congregation of the Holy Cross, a native of Solepur. He was sent by his order to Notre Dame and Catholic University and was ordained in 1962.

Methodists Opt for Birth Control

Helsinki, Finland —(NC)—At the conclusion of its annual meeting the executive committee of the World Council of Methodist Churches issued a communique urging acceptance of contraceptives as a valid method of family planning.



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