

Guide Issued For Dialogue With Atheists

Vatican City — (RNS)—The Catholic Church this week issued an unprecedented call for all Catholics and members of all other faiths to join in dialogue with atheists.

The appeal was issued in a document prepared by the Vatican's Secretariat for Non-Believers headed by Francis Cardinal Koenig. The department was established by Pope Paul VI in April, 1965.

The 5,700-word policy-making statement, called "Dialogue With Non-Believers," was not intended to convert people but to express brotherly-love and meet the needs of mankind, the Vatican spokesman said.

It embodies broad suggestions for individuals and national groups engaged in an exchange of ideas with those who reject a supernatural creed or any purely religious values.

The secretariat believes that the dialogue with non-believers can throw light on important world religious problems, such as the cause for the loss of faith in the young and religious indifference in general.

Contrary to widespread belief, the secretariat does not envisage only or even mainly dialogue with Communists, at least not with Communists in Eastern Europe.

The commission has long debated whether it should be a study center or simply act as a coordinating agency inspiring and suggesting initiatives by national groups. The secretariat in fact is now preparing a joint project with specialists of the University of California at Berkeley, on the cultural-sociological aspects of unbelief. In general, however, the secretariat has encouraged the formation of national groups which can deal with the problem of unbelief as it really exists in the local climate.

Among the national secretariats is that now functioning in the United States. A four-day conference is planned for September 1969 at Notre Dame University on the theme, "Contemporary Religious Unbelief." A planning session was held in June at Pittsburgh under the leadership of Bishop John J. Wright, who is not only a member of the secretariat but also chairman of the American bishops' program for study and dialogue on problems of unbelief.

Consultors for the secretariat and members of the American commission are the following: Father Norris Clark, S.J., Fordham University, N.Y.; Father Avery Dulles, S.J., Woodstock College, Md.; Father Daniel O'Hanlon, S.J., Alma College, California; Father Ernan McMullen, Notre Dame University; Father Patrick Reid, O.P., Providence (R.I.) College; and Father Richard Butler, O.P. of the Newman Foundation, Chicago. Father Butler is the secretary of the U.S. national commission.



Medieval Pictures on Unicef Cards

A special series of Christmas cards with religious motifs drawn from medieval prayer book illustrations will be offered this year by UNICEF, the United Nations Children's Fund, to raise funds for starvation-relief in Biafra. Five different scenes will be available in the series, all presenting full-color reproductions of illustrations from richly ornamented 15th Century manuscripts. The two scenes shown above, a Nativity (at right) and the angel announcing Christ's birth to the shepherds (left) are taken from the 15th Century Franco-Flemish "Hours of the Virgin." (RNS)

What GIs Want Most (Besides Being Home)

Saigon — (NC) — "What would you like for Christmas?" This year as usual the United Service Organization (USO) asked this question.

As usual, the answers contained the perennial requests for soap, shaving equipment, shampoo, toothpaste, chewing gum, sewing kits, wash and dry hand towels, first-aid kits.

According to the survey, the soldiers would like to get such things as

paperback books, ballpoint pens, crossword puzzles, playing cards, medical scrub brushes, small paint brushes, foot spray, key chains, small mirrors, foam insoles, small transistor radios, heavy-duty work socks.

Every year new items appear on the "want list." This year they include assorted greeting cards, instant breakfast drinks, canned foods, meats and fruits.

For others, desirable items include

Christmas decorations and Christmas trees and stockings, wallet-size calendars, nine-volt radio batteries, miniature chess and checker sets, pre-recorded musical tapes, and poster-type pictures of stateside landscapes.

Model kits of trains, cars, ships and airplanes are popular in the military hospitals for convalescing men. Other items requested are flower and vegetable seeds, pocket dictionaries and self-sealing envelopes.

German Bishops Stress Human Rights

Fulda, Germany — (NC) — German bishops issued a statement on human rights that stressed the solidarity of the Church with the poor, the oppressed and the persecuted at the end of their fall meeting here.

The bishops urged the German government to speak out on behalf of human rights in Vietnam, in the secessionist state of Biafra, where thousands are reported to be starving, and in the southern Sudan,

where thousands of black African Christians have been massacred and sent into exile by government troops from the Sudan's Islamic north.

The bishops also thanked the government for the humanitarian aid it has already given to Biafra. The government was also asked to continue its peace policies despite the recent events in Czechoslovakia, which the government there was

forced to cut back its liberalization efforts after troops from the Soviet Union and other Warsaw Pact countries occupied the country.

Julius Cardinal Doepfner of Munich, president of the German Bishops' Conference, said that many Catholics had lost an understanding of ecclesiastical authority, but he also pointed out that much of the harsh criticism of the Church often included statements that expressed "love" for it.

Canadian Bishops Take Soft Stand On Encyclical

Winnipeg, Man., Canada — (NC) — The Canadian Bishops' statement on the papal encyclical forbidding birth control has assured this nation that "Catholics should not be considered shut off from the body of the faithful" for opposing the encyclical "since they are not denying any point of divine and Catholic faith nor rejecting the teaching authority of the Church."

A spokesman for the 70 Bishops, Bishop Alexander Carter, president of the National Bishops' Conference meeting here, said that basically what the Bishops meant was: "We are giving you assurance, when you have done everything within your power to respond to this teaching of the Pope, when you have made your choice between God and your conscience, you must not consider yourself in a state of sin or that you have cut yourself off from the Church."

Bishop Carter told the press, following announcement of the bishops' statement: "We accept the basic statements of the Pope. But we went into concrete pastoral consequences which the Pope had no intention of doing and couldn't do in a letter addressed to the entire world."

The bishops quoted Vatican II's documents to show that a man is bound to follow his conscience faithfully but they said "this does not exempt a man from the responsibility of forming his conscience according to truly Christian values and principles. . . . It likewise implies sound personal motivation free from selfishness and undue external pressure."

The statement said "It is a fact that a certain number of Catholics, although admittedly subject to the teaching of the encyclical, find it either extremely difficult or even impossible to make their own all elements of this doctrine."

Although the Bishops uphold the right of dissent which in effect will permit Catholics who follow their conscience in the use of contraceptives to receive Holy Communion, they were not indicating indiscriminate use of contraception.

"Since they are not denying any point of divine and Catholic faith nor rejecting the teaching authority of the Church, these Catholics should not be considered, or consider themselves, shut off from the body of the faithful."

But they should remember that

their good faith will be dependent on a sincere self-examination to determine the true motives and grounds for such suspension of assent and on continued effort to understand and deepen their knowledge of the teaching of the Church."

The statement also pointed out that confessors or counsellors "must show sympathetic understanding and reverence for the sincere good faith of those who fail in their effort to accept some point of the encyclical."

"In accord with accepted principles of moral theology, if these persons have tried sincerely but without success to pursue a line of conduct in keeping with given directives, they may be safely assured that whoever honestly chooses that course which seems right to him does so in good conscience."

In other actions during the week-long meeting the bishops:

— Approved the permanent diocesan for Canada, subject to the approval of the Holy See;

— Reorganized the Canadian Catholic Conference into four departments: teaching of the faith; social relations with the clergy, religious and laity; and missions and ecumenism;

— Raised the question of a Canadian pastoral council of laity, priests and religious and said they will study it;

— Asked their conference's social action and social welfare department to initiate a meeting of similar services of all churches to seek common action on poverty at home and abroad.

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Bps. Sh To Con At East

Bishop James E. Kearney will be principal celebrant of a Mass Thanksgiving with Bishop Fulton Sheen, Auxiliary Bishops Dennis W. Hickey and John E. McCafferty, episcopal vicars and members of the Priest Council, to be celebrated at the Eastman Theater on Sunday, Oct. 13, at 5:30 p.m.

The Mass will observe the Centennial of the Diocese and the 60th anniversary of Bishop Kearney's ordination to the priesthood.

The Mass will be that of St. John Fisher, patron saint of the Diocese. Hymns were selected by Father Charles McCarthy, pastor of St. Andrew's who will also direct the singing. The sermon will be preached by Rt. Rev. Msgr. James C. McAniff, pastor of St. Mary's, Rochester, who was chancellor and vicar general under Bishop Kearney.

The public is invited to the Mass. Groups and organizations wishing to be represented in the procession, are to be seated in special sections for the Mass, may make reservations with Father Richard R. Brickler at Holy Family Church rectory, Ames Street 328-9110.

All high schools and colleges will be sending representative groups to be seated in special sections, and various non-parochial organizations will be present in the line of march.

Father Michael F. Conboy is chairman of the arrangements for the Mass. The co-chairmen of ushers are Douglas Walker and Raymond Blin under the direction of Father Daniel J. Wheeland. Father Robert O'Neil will serve as director of Deacons; and Father William J. Flynn will be chairman of traffic. The chairman of altar decorations is Father Albe H. Cason, assisted by Sister Mar Brigid and Sister Kathleen Flaherty of the Sisters of Mercy. The chairman of ceremonies is Father Lawrence Brown; and the eucumenical chairman is Rt. Rev. Msgr. Charles V. Boyl. Father Richard Brickler serves as chairman of non-parochial societies and the procession will be directed by Father Eugene P. Sweeney.



Episc

Roman Catholic Archbishop ceremony which elevated D. case of West Texas. Shown vice-chairman of the House tor; Bishop Everett H. Jones; M. Lewis of the Armed Forces; and Archbishop



Natives Re

The U.S. and Micronesian flags at the nine residents of Bikini the first time since it became Official of the U.S. and the the flags go up to mark the re has been adjudged as

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