



Five heroes of the Vietnam War were honored at the White House where President Johnson presented the Congressional Medal of Honor to each. Left to right, they are Spec. 4th Gary G. Wetzel of Oak Creek, Wis.; Spec. 5th Dwight H. Johnson of Detroit; Sgt. Sammy L. Davis of Martinsville, Ind.; the President; Capt. James A. Taylor of Arcata, Fla.; and Chaplain (Capt.) Angelo J. Liteky of Jacksonville, Fla. (RNS)

Priest Receives Medal of Honor

Washington — (NC) — A missionary priest, dedicated in peacetime to work among Negroes in the South, is the second military chaplain in the nation's history to be awarded the highest decoration for heroism — the Congressional Medal of Honor.

Fittingly, the honor came to Father (Capt.) Angelo J. Liteky, 37, M.S.S.T., here in his native city — at a ceremony at the White House.

Father Liteky, who previously was decorated with the Distinguished Service Cross, was one of five heroes to receive medals of Honor from President Johnson. The others were Capt. James A. Taylor, 30, Arcata, Calif.; Spec. 4 Gary G. Wetzel, 21, Oak Creek, Wis.; Spec. 5 Dwight H. Johnson, Detroit, and Sgt. Sammy L. Davis, 22, Martinsville, Ind.

Father Liteky, who joined the Army chaplain corps in 1966, is the first chaplain to receive the Medal of Honor for heroism in the Vietnam war.

The distinction of becoming the first chaplain awarded the Medal of Honor went to the late Father Joseph T. O'Callahan, S.J., a Navy chaplain in World War II.

Father Liteky was serving with a light infantry company Dec. 6, 1967 on a reconnaissance mission when it was ambushed near Phuoc Lac by a battalion of Viet Cong and North Vietnamese. Disregarding heavy enemy fire, the priest walked among his men encouraging them, ministering to the wounded, giving the last rites to the dying.

During the engagement, he rescued 20 wounded soldiers from the battlefield. A fellow chaplain reported some of the rescued wounded pleaded with officers not to let Father Liteky continue his rescue missions. The chaplain said: "They felt he was pressing his luck, that no man should survive and continually go back into that hell fire without being hit. We felt that day that Father Liteky could walk on water."

His outstanding heroism in that engagement won him the Distinguished Service Cross. A later review of the same action merited him the highest award — the Medal of Honor.

Father Liteky is the son of the late Charles Liteky, who was retired from the Navy. His mother, Mrs. Gertrude Liteky now resides in Jacksonville, Fla. His brother, Patrick, is serving with the Army in Europe.

A high school football star in Jacksonville, Father Liteky attended the University of Florida. He was ordained to the priesthood in 1960 in Winchester, Va. He spent his early priesthood as spiritual director of a lay Catholic group, conducting conferences and retreats in the East and New England.

In 1963 he became pastor of Colonial Beach, Va., a mission parish which extended over more than 2,000 square miles. He joined the Army chaplain corps in September 1966, and went to Vietnam in February 1967.

Hanoi Visit Once Considered by Pope

Vatican City — (NC) — Pope Paul VI has intimated in a letter to the archbishop of Hanoi that he would like to have visited North Vietnam in connection with a religious anniversary if the war situation did not exist.

Pope Paul's desire was contained in a personally written letter to Archbishop Joseph Marie Trinh nhu Khue of Hanoi on the occasion of the first centenary of the consecration of Western Tonkin, now North Vietnam, to the Blessed Virgin Mary.

In writing to the archbishop Pope Paul said: "This anniversary offers us the happy occasion for expressing to you, as well as to all our beloved sons — bishops, priests and faithful — of North Vietnam, the feelings we have for you. It is often very difficult for us to express them to you."

"Had circumstances been more favorable, rest assured that we would have very willingly come among you to encourage you in your hard trials and to make you feel with what spirit we share them. We wish at least by this message to be in some way present at your side, believing that we must above all give the assistance of our ministry to those who are in tribulation."

The centenary recalls the act of consecration made by Msgr. Paul Puginier, a Frenchman who was appointed vicar apostolic for Western Tonkin at the age of 33 and who consecrated his vicariate apostolic to the Blessed Virgin on Nov. 21, 1868.

Pope Paul said the occasion of the centenary "seems to us, in the midst of past and present sufferings, a source of hope and of supernatural joy for everyone. In fact, it constitutes an appeal, and an invitation, to anticipate help and aid from the most Holy Virgin."

Assuring the North Vietnamese of his awareness of their attachment to Our Lady, the Pope said:

"Thus with great hope we invoke upon you on the occasion of the centenary the most special protection of the Virgin Mary. May it enable you above all, through her powerful intercession, to preserve intact the precious deposit of Catholic faith which in the past sustained your fathers in their trials and which thus will make your souls strong and serene in the midst of present difficulties and also constant in their faithfulness to God and to His Church."

Pope, U Thant Exchange Notes on 'Day of Peace'

United Nations — (RNS) — Pope Paul VI has informed Secretary General U Thant that he again intends to observe New Year's Day as the "World Day of Peace."

The United Nations leader, in replying to the papal message, said that the assumption that the path to peace and the path to human rights are convergent and that there can be no real peace in the world without universal respect for human freedom and dignity, "is at the core of the philosophy of the United Nations."

The text of letters exchanged by Amleto Cardinal Cicognani, Vatican Secretary of State, and U Thant were cleared here.

Cardinal Cicognani wrote that Pope Paul VI has chosen "Recognition of Human Rights, the Path to Peace" as the theme for the day of peace.

He suggested that Jan. 1, 1969 should also serve to commemorate the 20th anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. The actual anniversary date is Dec. 10. Cardinal Cicognani wrote that Pope Paul was highly appreciative of U Thant's "unceasing efforts to secure and maintain peace in the world" and that he would be grateful for the secretary general's collaboration in insuring worldwide observance of the "World Day of Peace" proclaimed by the pontiff.

In his reply, U Thant said it was a cause of further satisfaction for him to note that the papal theme chosen for the second observance of this day associates the objective of peace to that of the recognition of human rights.

He was particularly appreciative, he said, that these basic concepts are promoted "under the high auspices of His Holiness and with the weight of his moral and spiritual authority."

Cardinal Warns:

Don't Demythologize Faith

(NC News Service)

Vatican City — The time has come to demythologize the demythologizers according to Pericle Cardinal Felici, president of the Pontifical Commission for Interpretation of the Decrees of the Second Vatican Council.

"We must also be wary of those who speak out of turn of the rights of the rank and file, which they sometimes euphemistically call the people of God. (sic) We must be wary of those who, with the council as a pretext, carry out a monologue on the dialogue."

Cardinal Felici was writing in the Vatican City daily, L'Osservatore Romano (Nov. 12), on "The Demythologization of the Superior," a phrase he took from a report of a convention on seminary life.

While admitting a valid demythologization of myth-encrusted verities, Cardinal Felici warned against demythologizing the deposit of the faith.

"They began with demythologiz-

World Synod Topics Listed

Vatican City — (RNS) — The 1969 meeting of the Roman Catholic Church's international Synod of Bishops will have as its first task a complete review of the work of the first (1967) synod, according to a letter sent to episcopal conferences throughout the world by Bishop Ladislav Rubin, permanent secretary of the synod.

Bishop Rubin's letter said that the request for participation by expert theologians, often expressed during the first synod, will be met during the second meeting of the bishops. He asked for suggestions on theologians who should be chosen to work on the preparatory commissions.

Subjects on the synod agenda will include new rules for mixed marriages and new norms for Catholic education in various countries.

Cardinal Leger To Ordain Deacons

Douala, Cameroun — (RNS) — Paul-Emile Cardinal Leger, former Archbishop of Montreal who is now a missionary in Cameroun, will ordain seven married men to the diaconate here on Dec. 18.

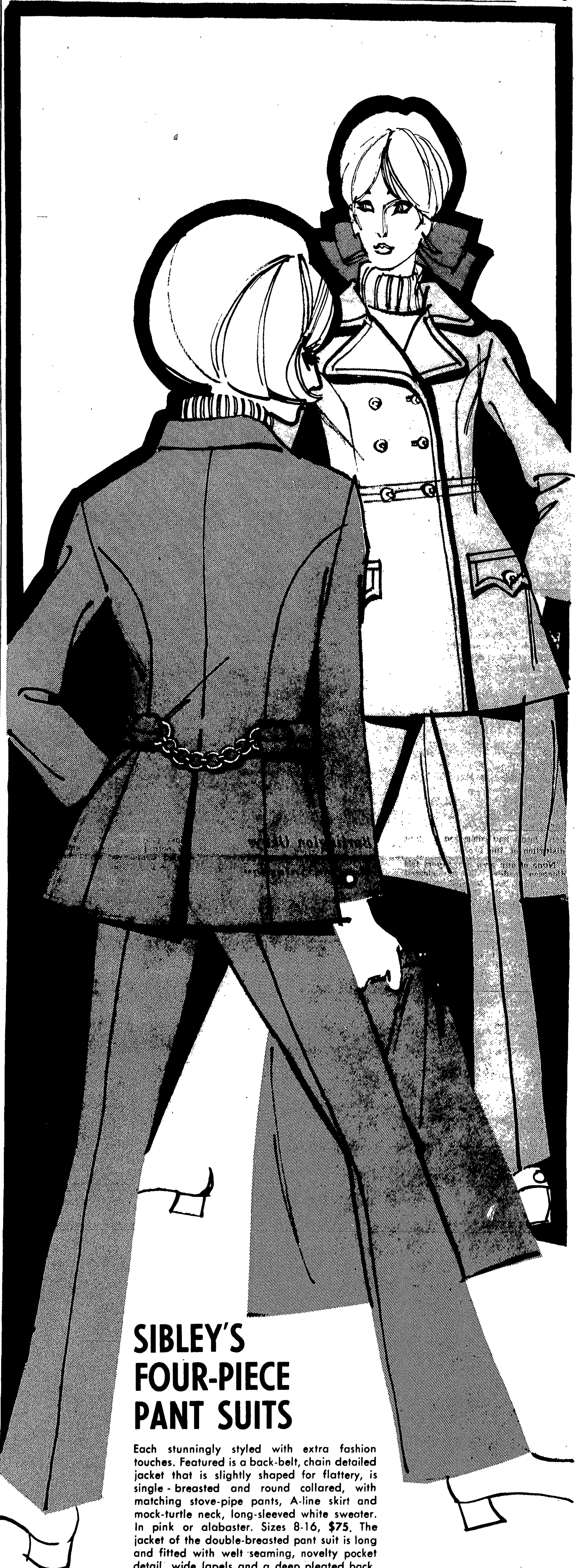
Bishop Thomas Mongo of Douala, in announcing the event, said that it would be the first ordination of deacons in Africa. He asked all priests to help prepare the laity for the innovation.

The Douala diocese, with more than 177,000 Catholics, has approximately 100 priests.

Dr. Haroutunian Dies, Theology Professor

Chicago — (RNS) — Dr. Joseph Haroutunian, professor of systematic theology at the University of Chicago Divinity School, died of a heart attack here on Nov. 16. He was 64.

A clergyman of the United Presbyterian Church, Dr. Haroutunian was born in Turkey. He studied at the American University in Beirut, Lebanon before coming to the U.S. in 1923.



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COURIER-JOURNAL

Vol. 80 No. 5 — November 29, 1968
Published Weekly by the Rochester Catholic Press Association. SUBSCRIPTION RATES: Single Copy 15¢; 1 year Subscription in U.S., \$4.00; Canada and South America, \$6.00; other foreign countries, \$7.50. Main Office, 25 Sco Street, Rochester, N.Y. 14602. Second Class Postage Paid at Rochester, N.Y.