

Centennial Concert Fine Music

By FR. BENEDICT EHMANN
Pastor, St. Michael's Church

As entertainment, the Centennial Concert last Tuesday succeeded admirably. The capacity audience in the Nazareth Arts Center was in a fine mood, responding enthusiastically to the wide-ranging styles of music which it was hearing, all performed well, some of it superbly.

It was truly an evening of fine music-making. This is what an audience has a right to expect from a concert. It comes for diversion and enjoyment.

But the Centennial Concert had a further purpose, to celebrate the beginning of a new century with an instructive showcase of church music from the past into the future. The program reached back 12 centuries to the first art-music of the Church, the Gregorian chant,

continued through Renaissance polyphony to modern classical and folk Mass music, and then opened the door to what may be the prospect of future liturgical music in jazz idiom.

Church music never has been static in any age, not at least until our present century before Vatican II. A cultural dynamic always has operated in the development of music or the liturgy. This is always accompanied by a cultural shock and lag, action and counteraction, all of it conditioned by taste and temperament. Slowly there comes a convergence, a synthesis, and a new form has evolved.

The Centennial Concert moved from the conventional non-irritant plainchant and polyphony to current styles of liturgical music, with the folk-Mass music of Ray Ropp, the classic con-

temporary music of Anton Heiller, and, perhaps most controversial of all, the jazz Gloria of Chuck Mangione.

All of this was vastly entertaining. But there was a problem for many of the audience who did not find some of it convincing as Mangione music.

A Heller Gloria, beautifully sung by Don Meminger's Holy Rosary Choir, is a fine piece of modern music, and not extreme. This choir also performed some good arrangements from three folk Masses by Ray Ropp, and sang them with precision and character.

Chuck Mangione's Gloria, with his own chorus and orchestra performing splendidly under his spirited direction, sings the sacred words in jazz idiom.

For some persons this is a cultural shock; such jazz as they

know they associate with dance bands and night clubs. For other people this "Gloria" is welcome as a good emergence of jazz and the sacred. Perhaps the rhythm is too driving, and the orchestra too loud, for liturgical use. This is a matter of taste.

But by some strange alchemy, there seems to be here a successful blending and convergence, showing the direction in which church music of the future is moving.

Joe Mooney's "Act of Contrition," arranged for chorus and orchestra by Gap Mangione, is a hauntingly beautiful musical prayer which could be sung in church just as it is. The jazz rhythms and harmonic coloration are much more subtle and subdued than in his brother Chuck Mangione's "Gloria." It is as if here jazz was offering its service as "the handmaiden of the Lord."

The second portion of the Centennial celebration was given to Dr. Wayne Barlow's new cantata, "Wait for the Promise of the Father," which was commissioned by the Diocese for this observance. The choirs of St. Bernard's Seminary and Nazareth College sang it eloquently under Dr. David Fetler's direction.

The tenor part of the Evangelist was sung by Gene Tucker, and the baritone part of St. Peter by William Read with a fervent and most appealing expression.

Dr. Barlow's new work reminds us that we have passed from the musical world of Brahms and Tchaikowski and Richard Strauss into the vastly different world of Stravinsky and Schoenberg and Benjamin Britten.

It is new music rhetoric, often atonal and enharmonic and dissonant. Yet all its elements cohere and project a tonal image of majestic beauty, faithful in spirit to the Scripture it interprets.

It was a grand climax to a memorable evening. The Diocesan Centennial celebration was fittingly closed with this handsome musical offering.

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First Lady at Xavier U.

Mrs. Lyndon B. Johnson addresses a student convocation at Xavier University in New Orleans. Seated at right is university president Norman Francis and, to the left of Mrs. Johnson, Sister Loyola, director of the Xavier-based Teacher Corps and VISTA workers. (RNS)

Yale Fellowship Honors Jesuit

New Haven, Conn. (RNS) — A memorial fellowship program from Thomas J. Watson, Jr., chairman of International Business Machines Corporation and a friend and admirer of the late Father John Courtney Murray, S.J., has been established at Yale University where the Jesuit theologian was once a visiting professor of theology, '51-'52.

The program was made possible through a \$140,000 gift from Thomas J. Watson, Jr., chairman of International Business Machines Corporation and a friend and admirer of the late Father John Courtney Murray, S.J., has been established at Yale University where the Jesuit theologian was once a visiting professor of theology, '51-'52.

Recipients of fellowships, according to the terms of the program, will be free of normal academic and job responsibilities to travel and study anywhere in the world up to one year.

"The Murray Fellowships," the prospectus states, "are conceived of as support for the development of potential rather than as a prize or reward for past performance." The student's intended use of the fellowship "should give convincing promise of developing his capacity to contribute to the improvement of man and his condition."

Nazareth College and the Blackfriars, planning "Royal Hunt of the Sun" for next May, invite everyone interested in any aspect of the theater to take part in the production. Those who missed recent tryouts may make special arrangements with Joseph Baranowski, 586-2483, or William White, 586-8008.

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Fr. Lucker to Head U.S. C. C. Christian Formation Department

WASHINGTON (NC) — Father Raymond A. Lucker, a priest of the archdiocese of St. Paul and Minneapolis, has been named the first director of the Department of Christian Formation of the United States Catholic Conference.

Father Lucker has been superintendent of schools and director of the Confraternity of Christian Doctrine in his archdiocese. In his new post he will be the top executive officer in the department which already has functioning divisions for elementary and secondary schools, the Confraternity of Christian Doctrine, the Newman Apostolate, and youth activities. To be added are divisions of religious education, higher education (which will include Newman work), and continuing (adult) education.

The department functions under the Departmental Committee on Christian Formation, of which Bishop Ernest J. Primeau of Manchester, N.H., is episcopal chairman. The membership of the committee includes bishops, priests, religious and laity.

This department is concerned with the Christian formation (education and training) of young people and adults in parish life and in schools, colleges and universities. Its task is to provide leadership and program assistance to dioceses, institutions, and individuals in order to achieve this end.

To fulfill its mission, the department will have the responsibility of preparing and sponsoring the publication of educational materials, conducting and stimulating research and experiments related to the staffing and financing of church-related education, and developing and maintaining liaison with

government and groups interested in Christian education. Father Lucker was born in 1927 and was ordained for the archdiocese of St. Paul on June 7, 1952. He holds a master's degree from St. Paul Seminary, and a licentiate and doctorate in theology from the University of St. Thomas in Rome. He is currently completing his thesis for a doctorate at the University of Minnesota.

He has been active in the field of catechetics.

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