

CHILE:

'Pomp,' Wealth Downgraded

Santiago, Chile — (NC) — The Church's efforts in Chile to shift the emphasis in its financing procedures from fees and stipends as sources of income to direct, regular contributions by the faithful are making progress.

Some dioceses are showing substantial increases in income as a result of the drive for greater participation by the faithful in providing church operating funds.

In Santiago, the amount collected this year was 65 per cent greater than the previous year. The national office in charge of the new system, operating from the chancery building here, said that more people, about 23 per cent, are contributing.

Raul Cardinal Silva Henríquez of Santiago said he hopes to sell all church income - producing properties once the Catholics in the area can cover the total operating budget. The 1968 budget amounts to about \$337,500. The church properties are mostly buildings the archdiocese rents out. Farm lands held in the past were distributed to small farmers in 1962.

In most of Latin America,

Sunday collections are small. State subsidies and fees for religious services have spread the belief among average Catholics that they have little obligation to support their Church.

The success of the new system, however, is attributed by Church officials to a change in the substance and the image of ecclesiastical "wealth and pomp." It started in Chile in 1963 when Bishop Manuel Larrain of Talca gave the church lands to the tenant farmers. Soon this example and his renunciation of pomp were followed elsewhere in Chile and other countries of Latin America. Several bishops have moved from impressive structures they inherited as episcopal residences to modest homes in average neighborhoods.

Also spurring the new attitude of the ordinary Catholic is the publication of periodical accounts on Church income and expenses. When the Santiago archdiocese published its first account, the Chilean Senate ordered 20 copies, and several dailies commented on the figures, showing surprise at the meager resources. Now the dioceses of Talca, Valparaiso and Concepcion publish annual financial reports.

In all of them, and in Santiago, laymen have been called upon to participate in the administration of church finances. The Santiago office is encouraging the parishes to do likewise, in order "to free the priest from economic concerns and shift the responsibility of supporting the Christian community to the faithful."

GUATEMALA:

Bishop Tells of 'Great Task'

Guatemala City — (NC) — Guatemalan Catholics were urged to use zeal and imagination in efforts to correct the country's social inequities by Archbishop Mario Casariego, C.R.S., of Guatemala City, victim of a kidnapping earlier this year.

In a pastoral letter on "The Christian of Today," Archbishop Casariego told his priests and faithful that a "great task is awaiting them in their 'vocation as Christians' to contribute to a kingdom of peace, justice and charity in Guatemala."

Archbishop Casariego was kidnapped on March 16 in this violence-ridden city by rightist terrorists who held him at Quezaltenango. He and his chauffeur were set free four days later, following the arrest of the kidnapers in an

intense search by police and the army.

The pastoral letter quoted heavily from Second Vatican Council documents.

With an eye to the difficult task of the Church in a society torn by two extremist groups and social injustice, the archbishop said that the action of Catholic priests and laymen must be guided by the teaching authority of the Church, and yet be free from "clericalism."

Lay people "can contribute with great efficacy to the Christian involvement in the temporal world," he said.

He also counseled against "letting the just concern of the Christian for the world

become an obsession to the point of diminishing Christian spirituality."

"Overemphasis on material issues... is a deformed approach to Christian living" he said. "It leads to a quest for social and economic reforms without the foundations of sanctity, God's grace and the spiritual good of the people."

This temptation, the pastoral declared, is particularly harmful in the case "of priests who all over the world are being shaken by such overemphasis on material things, when they feel that the priesthood has placed them outside the mainstream of social change."

Church in Latin America

URUGUAY:

Social Action on Increase

Montevideo, Uruguay — Spurred by the worsening socio-economic conditions in Uruguay, the Church is becoming more deeply involved in development work through the efforts of 8,000 Catholics participating in social action groups.

These efforts started a year ago after Archbishop Carlos Partelli, apostolic administrator of Montevideo, issued a letter denouncing the steady deterioration of living conditions among the poor because of "a system incompatible with Christian tenets."

About 450 delegates from parishes throughout greater Montevideo met here in the first week in December to review the findings of these Catholic social action groups on underdevelopment and human problems in agriculture, industry, foreign trade,

inflation and political unrest.

They issued a series of recommendations stressing the need for greater participation of the people in civic affairs, pressure for social and tax reforms, and greater productivity.

Catholic lawyers, economists and social scientists, as well as other lay leaders, had a major share in the effort. Protestant and Jewish groups also participated.

The session dealing with the state of the nation heard an outline from Auxiliary Bishop Andres Rubio of Montevideo on a 1969 Church renewal program geared to the civic and social action of Catholics.

The supply of foreign aid coming through such agencies as CARE and U.S. Cath-

olic Relief Services (CRS) is being increased and reoriented. A recent agreement between the government and CRS calls for total exemption of taxes and duties for all donations brought by the agency into Uruguay and insures government cooperation in warehousing and distribution.

This CRS operation began in 1959 during emergency relief in the aftermath of severe floods. Since that time a committee attached to the ministry of health has coordinated the flow of food, medical supplies and clothing.

One of the first groups to benefit from the aid is the Northern Uruguay Missionary Organization, which concentrates on development of the poorer sections of the country.

The missionaries have succeeded in bringing modern techniques to farming and cattle raising in the area.

Communities there have also been spurred to build schools and roads, to start cooperative efforts in marketing their agricultural products, and to open health centers.

Catholic involvement is further highlighted by the growing efforts to provide housing for low-income groups. Former Catholic Action leader Horacio Terra Aroca, an architect, for several years has headed the National Institute of Housing (NIH), which is now building 2,300 low-cost homes in this city and in 25 other population centers, with the cooperation of "neighborhood crews" of prospective owners.

World Lutherans To Meet In Brazil

Porto Alegre, Brazil — (NC) — The Catholic Church in Brazil welcomes the Lutheran World Federation's fifth assembly, to be held here in 1970, Archbishop Alfredo Scherer of Porto Alegre told Dr. Andre Appel, general secretary of the Lutheran organization.

HOLIDAYS IN PUERTO RICO

San Juan, P.R. — (N.C. — A Puerto Rican attorney proposed here that Thanksgiving Day be transferred to the Day of Discovery of Puerto Rico, thus separating it from the history and culture of the United States. He also asked that the day be observed as a full holiday.

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