

Divine Word Province Acts To Support Black Struggle

Midwestern members of the Society of the Divine Word have pledged themselves to a broad program of participation in the black community's struggle for full human dignity.

At a Northern Province chapter meeting, delegates sanctioned practical business measures as well as changes in their schools, churches and missions that are to be effected through a committee on Commitment to the Black Community. Involved are Divine Word men working in the dioceses of Chicago, Dubuque, Milwaukee, St. Louis, Marquette, Mich., and Toledo.

A Negro member, Father Lawrence Thornton of Chicago, wrote the program and was named chairman of the new committee.

(St. Michael's, Concord, is a Divine Word installation of the Eastern Province, which so far has not undertaken a "black commitment" program. The seminary has three black students, but no black priests or brothers.)

"Special encouragement shall be given," the statement said, "to black students and confreres still in formation to remain black in their thinking."

In practical operations, members pledged "wherever possible (to) support black businesses, buy black products, use black labor and deposit in black banks."

In parish life, they said they would develop "liturgical forms more meaningful and relevant to the black community" and open their centers and facilities for civil affairs and cultural programs.

INTERRACIAL SCENE

Negro to Deliver Benediction

Louisville, Ky.—(RNS)—A Negro bishop here has agreed to deliver the benediction at the inauguration of Richard M. Nixon.

Bishop C. Ewbank Tucker said that he accepted the invitation which was extended by Sen. Everett M. Dirksen (R, Ill.). The 73-year-old churchman is the presiding bishop of the Fifth District of the African Methodist Episcopal Zion Church.

Calgary Diocese OKs Project

Calgary, Alberta.—(RNS)—A proposed \$2 million, low-cost housing program has been approved by the Catholic Diocese of Calgary and is being considered by Anglican, Baptist, Lutheran, Presbyterian, United Church of Canada and Jewish officials.

If the plan meets general approval, a corporation will be formed to meet the needs of families with incomes of \$4,500 to \$7,000 who cannot qualify for conventional mortgages. Both sale and rental units will probably be included in the program, with mortgage interest rates held to a minimum.

Meanwhile, Bishop Paul J. O'Byrne of Calgary has made a \$5,000 deposit for an option on 28.9 acres valued at about \$80,000, for the program.

Afro-American history will be given "its full emphasis" in their high schools, and seminary libraries will be stocked with literature in the field. Negro priests who want pastoral work will be relieved of teaching duties, and the

society will do "all in its power" to provide black pastors for black parishes in the province.

A spokesman said the order had 106 Negro members—58 priests, 19 brothers and 29 seminarians.

Bishop Whealon New Archbishop Of Hartford See

Washington, (NC)—Bishop John Francis Whealon, 47, of Erie, Pa., has been appointed by Pope Paul VI as archbishop of Hartford, Conn.

Announcement of the Pope's action was made here by Archbishop Laszlo Raimondi, Apostolic Delegate in the United States.

Bishop Whealon, who has headed the Erie diocese since March 7, 1967, succeeds Archbishop Henry Joseph O'Brien, 72, whose resignation as head of the Hartford archdiocese was announced by Pope Paul on Nov. 30. At the time Pope Paul requested Archbishop O'Brien to serve as apostolic administrator of the archdiocese until his successor took office.

Archbishop-designate Whealon was born in Barboursville, Ohio, on Jan. 15, 1921. He made his studies for the priesthood at St. Mary's Seminary, Cleveland, and was ordained to the priesthood on May 26, 1945.

Canisius to Initiate Religion Program

Buffalo.—(RNS)—Canisius College, a Jesuit school here, will offer a graduate school program of studies in religious education leading to a master of arts degree.

The new program will be "ecumenical in character" and will stress theological content rather than pedagogical methodology, Father James M. Demake, president, announced.

Seminars "of high quality" and lectures by "outstanding theologians" are also planned by the Center for Religious Studies which will house the new program, Father Demake said. A 19-member council made up of lay and clerical members drawn from leaders of all faiths will serve as a central advisory board.

New Director Named For Christophers

New York.—(NC)—After 23 years as director of the Christophers, Father James Keller, M.M., announced his retirement. Father Richard Armstrong, M.M., who joined the Christophers staff in 1940 and has served as assistant director, will succeed Father Keller.

Father Keller, 68, cited age and health factors as reasons for the move. He said he will remain at Christopher headquarters here and devote himself to research, writing and serving as special consultant.

Father Armstrong came to the Christophers after completing studies at the Graduate School of Journalism at Columbia University. He was ordained at Marjonnell, N.Y., in 1959.

As director, Father Keller has since 1945 edited Christopher News notes, a seven-times-a-year pamphlet sent free to more than one million persons. Other



FATHER ARMSTRONG

duties included a weekly TV program carried by 230 stations, a daily column in 72 newspapers, and supervision of courses and seminars at the Christopher Center in Midtown Manhattan.

The Christopher motto is "Better to light one candle than to curse the darkness."

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Easier Divorce Near in Britain

London.—(NC)—Easier divorce moved predictably nearer for Britain when the House of Commons accepted in principle a controversial bill allowing the dissolution of marriage on the simple basis of "irretrievable breakdown."

The Commons gave the Divorce Reform Bill a second reading—approval in principle—by 122 votes to 106, after a long debate.

The total membership of the House is 630. More than half the members were absent when this decision seriously affecting the social and moral character of the nation was taken. Many obviously stayed away deliberately because they did not wish to be involved in a non-political but vote-losing issue.

Divorce is at present granted in the British courts when one party is proved guilty of a serious offense such as adultery, cruelty or desertion, or when the marriage has not been consummated.

The new bill would permit divorce by mutual consent if a couple have lived apart for two years, and without mutual consent if one of the parties seeks it after a separation of five years. It contains arguably fair financial conditions and provides for a "kiss-and-make-up" period of not more than 12 months. The absolute breakdown of marriage—sometimes called incompatibility—is the only essential criterion.

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