

Priests Making Dent in Bolivia

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don't have money yet for machinery. Some 40 workers are employed in the "co-op" — a success, the money will be returned to the priests for other similar uses. The workers are producing approximately 18,000 hand-made bricks per week and are finding a ready market for them.

The project had guidance from Army people in finding land with the right soil for making bricks, help from a professional engineer in installing ovens and true democracy as the members of the co-op chose their own staff and superintendent. The factory is 1½ hour bus ride across La Paz from the parish area where the worker-owners live.

"It's hardly a 'factory' — just an open-sided structure consisting of a big tin roof on poles — but all the better people of La Paz have heard of us," Father Deckman said. "The main road to the golf course goes right by the factory."

"At the moment we have no intention to move the people into new business ventures to fight unemployment. But the wives of the brick makers are talking about opening a chicken-farm on a back corner of the same land."

The people are increasingly grateful, Father continued, for the medical clinic the priests helped to establish in a hut next to the rectory. There is no hospital in the area, and

previously there had been none but ineffective "witch-doctors."

The parochial clinic now is staffed by two doctors, a nurse, a woman dentist and a woman social worker — all full time. They treat about 15 patients daily, and business is growing. Patients pay an average of 16 cents per visit, and also pay for medicines — the latter being a prime need at the clinic.

The rectory "staff" also includes a cook, a laundress, two maintenance men and two "boys" (22 and 15 years old). Most of the clinic and rectory staff have the majority of their meals at the rectory. Just normal "upkeep," Father noted, costs about \$600 per month.

Squalor is common among the peasants, Father pointed out; hygiene is practically unknown; disease, particularly tuberculosis, is rampant, and half the children die before the age of five. Primitive abortion operations.

The priests' average daily activity? "Not quite like that of the priests in our diocesan parishes," Father Deckman submitted. "We don't keep statistics on 'converts'; we don't make hospital visits — no hospital; we don't make too many 'home' visits." — In some instances, he indicated, it might seem like an intrusion or invasion.

"We walk the streets, visit the shops, make suggestions. We try to

get the people to agree to meet together to discuss some of their problems and needs. We listen, mostly, trying to unify the neighborhood by being a catalyst to sweeten the divisiveness of all groups."

Father Deckman stressed that one of their principal aims is to endeavor to "replace ourselves."

"We are trying to work with younger adults, and with the youth, to train them as catechists. In the long run they will be much more effective, so far as religion is concerned, than 'foreign' priests."

Frustrations beset the priests, Father admitted, — but he indicated that their work is made lighter by the thought that they have the prayers and good will of many friends in their home diocese.

Papal Authority To Be Topic of Bishops' Synod

Vatican City — (RNS) — The next Synod of Bishops, scheduled to begin here Oct. 11, will give its consideration "above all to the authority of the Pope which remains unquestioned for the whole Church," L'Osservatore Romano, Vatican City daily newspaper, said here.

L'Osservatore said that the synod, which is expected to last for about two weeks, will have about 130 bishops participating, compared to nearly 200 at the 1967 synod.

The delegates will be ex officio or selected by the Pope, not elected by the various bishops' conferences as they were for the last synod.

Among those participating will be 13 representatives of the Eastern rites, 15 curial cardinals, 3 heads of religious orders and at least 95 heads of episcopal conferences.

The general topic of discussion will be suitable forms "for ensuring better cooperation between individual conferences and the Holy See."

Among the questions before the synod, it said, will be "the authority of the episcopal conferences in religion both to the authority of the Pope and that of individual bishops."

Unity Week in Britain Sets Many Precedents

London — (RNS) — Archbishop Michael Ramsey of Canterbury and John Cardinal Heenan of Westminster opened a precedent-setting Week of Prayer for Christian Unity here.

The Anglican churchman became the first Archbishop of Canterbury ever to preach at the City Temple, historic Nonconformist shrine in Central London. Cardinal Heenan preached at Hinde Street Methodist church in London.

On Jan. 21, the Rev. Gordon Wakefield returned the Catholic visit and became the first Methodist clergyman to preach in the (Catholic) Westminster Cathedral.

On Jan. 23, Cardinal Heenan preached for the first time at Evening Service in the Anglican shrine of St. Paul's Cathedral.

Another significant ecumenical event was the arrival of Leo Joseph Cardinal Suenens of Malines-Brussels for a five-day visit. He planned to visit Archbishop Ramsey, preach in Westminster Cathedral, and lecture at Oxford University.

In many other parts of Britain, Anglican and Roman Catholic bishops and prominent churchmen exchanged pulpits and took part in various ecumenical and united services.

In west England, Catholic Bishop Joseph E. Rudderham of Clifton, who caused a sensation last year by barring his priests from preaching in Anglican churches, was slated to lead prayers and give the blessing at an ecumenical service in Victoria Methodist church, Clifton. Anglican Bishop Oliver Tomkins of Bristol and Free Church leaders also were to take part.

Nixon, Agnew Join In Capital Prayers

Washington, D.C. — (RNS) — President Richard M. Nixon and Vice-President Spiro T. Agnew joined with 800 persons at the State Department Auditorium in prayers for the nation in the first ecumenical service ever held in conjunction with a Presidential inauguration. The prayer service, lasting 25 minutes, preceded the inauguration at the Capital.

Pope, WCC Official Meet in Vatican

Geneva — (RNS) — Dr. Eugene Carson Blake, general secretary of the World Council of Churches, and Pope Paul VI met informally in the Vatican to discuss "Roman Catholic membership" in the WCC Faith and Order Commission and the "crisis of authority" in the Catholic Church.

Both church leaders were in agreement on the value of cooperation between the Vatican and the World Council.

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