



**Massachusetts Church Burns**

The flaming tower of St. Augustine's Roman Catholic church in Millville, Mass., is about to collapse into the body of the church at a pre-dawn fire which destroyed the 92-year-old wooden structure. All the sacred vessels and vestments in the church were consumed in the flames. A 26-year-old man from nearby Woonsocket, R.I., who had been married in the church two months previously, was arrested by police and charged with arson in the fire. (RNS)

**Buffalo Doctor's Solution:  
Make Abortion Unnecessary**

The answer to the problem of abortion does not lie in making it legal or semi-legal but in trying to make it unnecessary, according to Dr. Armand DiFrancesco, Buffalo psychiatrist.

Dr. DiFrancesco was one of the speakers for the Right to Life Committee of the Rochester area who testified before State legislators at a public hearing in Rochester on the question of liberalizing the current abortion law.

"Rather than making any alteration in the law," said Dr. DiFrancesco, "the problem of abortion should be attacked as far as possible where it begins—at conception. We must aim at greater sexual responsibility and the cultivation of information through improved education. If abortion is made readily available, legal and illegal abortions will increase. The indications will become more liberal as more women demand ready access to this solution of their problems."

"All considerations in medicine are ultimately moral and it is not healthy for a society to live from a personal code more than from the code of morality, upon which are based the laws of the land. The medical profession has always been dedicated to the preservation of life, which is sacred."

Laws are created because of a concern for the common welfare of so-

ciety as a whole and not to solve the problem of any individual, Dr. DiFrancesco pointed out.

"Granting some the right to abortion and denying it to others may and does lead to abuses and irregularities," he declared. "Ladere has made the statement that 'abortion is the inalienable right of all women.' A physician then is denied the right to determine for himself whether an abortion is indicated or not."

"It should also be known that Dr. Christopher Teitz, director of research for the National Committee on Maternal Health, admits that the technique of abortion, even in the hands of a skilled surgeon, is unsatisfactory and is a potentially dangerous operation."

Trying to frame the law so as to provide psychiatric indications for abortion presents great problems for the psychiatrist, Dr. DiFrancesco stated.

"It is a fact," he emphasized "that psychiatric symptoms associated with pregnancy often have a tendency to subside after the first three months. Hence, if an abortion is demanded within the first trimester, it does not allow the psychiatrist sufficient time to determine whether a person's symptoms will subside or for a satisfactory workup. Moreover, abortion does not necessarily diminish emotional suffering for it may cause emotional suffering."

There also is a suspicion, the doctor pointed out, that so-called psychiatric grounds clauses in liberalized abortion laws are being abused to justify an abortion for the middle and upper class woman who does not want another child.

Dr. DiFrancesco quoted figures for New York City where from 1943 to 1947 only 8.6 percent of therapeutic abortions were for psychiatric reasons. But from 1951 through 1957, 45 percent of the abortions were for these reasons.

"Interruptions of pregnancy because of some physical disease have declined tremendously with the advance of medicine and therapeutics," he pointed out. "As a result more and more psychiatrists are being asked to grant psychiatric justification for therapeutic abortion on the grounds that continuing pregnancy would harm, aggravate or precipitate a nervous breakdown."

"From my own clinical experience, good psychiatric care during pregnancy can prevent mental illness from developing or from being aggravated," he added.

"The great strides and advances in psychiatric treatment have made it possible to do this, so that it is scarcely justifiable to perform a therapeutic abortion on psychiatric grounds simply because they do not want to have a child. The reasons are social and economic."

**FRANCE**

**'Clergy Question' Top Problem, Bishop Says**

(NC News Service)  
Paris — A recent statement of the permanent council of the French bishops has made "the clergy question" the No. 1 problem facing the Church in France.

Because of its terseness, the bishops' statement is difficult to interpret, but its most important element is the initiation of research on the clergy question in preparation for the two sessions of the plenary assembly of the bishops in May and October.

In the course of the research to be undertaken, the problem of relationship of the priesthood to the bishops' jurisdiction is certainly going to be raised, just as the bishops raised the question of their relationship to the Pope's jurisdiction during the Second Vatican Council.

Is not the priest to a greater degree "nothing without the bishop" than the bishop is "nothing without

the Pope?" There are not many answers to that question in Scripture, and it seems that the question must be asked very seriously from now on among French theologians.

The bishops of France have different views on the celibacy issue. Therefore, the remarks on celibacy have been drawn up in a style that is quite studied to achieve two results: first, to maintain firmly the discipline now in use; second, to leave the door open to possible developments. In other words: first, to reassure the Holy See; second to allow it the freedom to change position.

The question of celibacy is in fact much debated in France. There are numerous radio interviews on the topic, important books (some very balanced) by priests who speak after being laicized in the regular manner by the Church, and long articles in mass-circulation newspapers and magazines.

Particular stress is laid on the fact that the Pope presented celibacy only as the treasure of the Latin Church at the same time he activated the reform of canon law.

What is important to keep in mind in all this is that, whether by free decision or under the pressure of events, the bishops of France are very energetically undertaking the reform of their clergy. They are succeeding at the same time in reaffirming their authority, because they are regaining the initiative in this area.

They are also handling the matter in a very "conciliar" manner.

**Jaqueline Grennan Plans to Marry**

Webster Groves, Mo. — (NC) — Jaqueline Grennan, president of Webster College here, has announced her intention to resign from the presidency of the college and marry a New York business executive.

Miss Grennan, 42, a former Sister of Loretto, will wed Paul J. Wexler, a New York executive in the recording business. Wexler, 49, is a widower with two children, presently residing in Tenafly, N.J.

since they are settling nothing before all the priests, and even all the Catholics of France, can have their say.

**U. S. Religious Membership 126.4 Million**

New York — (RNS) — Membership in churches and synagogues in the U.S. totals 126,445,110 — a gain of less than half of 1 per cent from the 125,778,656 reported last year by the National Council of Churches. The increase was 666,454.

Roman Catholic membership is placed at 47,468,393 — a figure cited from the Official Catholic Directory for 1968. This was a rise of 603,423 over the previous year.

The American Jewish Year Book places the 1967 Jewish population — not necessarily synagogue affiliated — at 5,779,845.

The remaining 73.2 million are members of Protestant, Orthodox and other religious groups.

The 9 largest Protestant and Orthodox Churches in the U.S., according to the Yearbook, are:

- Southern Baptist Convention, 11,140,486; The Methodist Church, 10,289,214; National Baptist Convention, U.S.A., Inc. 5,900,000; Episcopal Church, 3,420,297; United Presbyterian Church, 3,268,761; Lutheran Church in America, 3,157,543; Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod, 2,759,308; National Baptist Convention of America, 2,668,799; and American Lutheran Church, 2,375,506.

**St. Joseph Still In'**

St. Louis — (NC) — The Little Sisters of the Poor may be borrowing money from the federal government, but it doesn't mean they've abandoned St. Joseph.

The Little Sisters, famed for their dependence on their heavenly provider, broke ground in north St. Louis this week for a new, nine-story apartment residence for the elderly, replacing the present century-old structure.

Financing the project is a \$2 million-50-year loan from the Federal Housing and Urban Development department, under provisions of the Senior Citizens Housing Act of 1959.

Sister Augustine, superior, said it is the first time the Little Sisters have borrowed money for construction — but does not represent a loss of trust.

"We have always had outstanding trust in Divine Providence and confidence in St. Joseph," Sister Augustine said. "The Little Sisters feel that the HUD loan is just one form of assistance, and that St. Joseph, who is still our provider, and our friend, will help us pay off the loan."



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3. Gold Chantilly china by Royal Worcester, 25.75 the 5-pc. setting; Kent goblet by Stuart, 8.50; Gold Tangier Community Gold electroplate flatware by Oneida, \$27.50 the 6-pc. place setting. Service for 8, \$200.

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