

Catholic Joining of Church Councils Grows

The full rapprochement of the Roman Catholic Church to the World Council of Churches is merely a question of a very short time," according to a recent statement by an expert on ecumenical affairs.

While some observers seem less certain of the imminence of full Catholic entry into the World Council, the evidence of closer links on all levels between Catholics and Protestant-Orthodox ecumenical movement is growing rapidly.

The Fourth General Assembly of the World Council, held at Uppsala, Sweden, included 12 official delegate-observers although they did not vote. This development marked a significant step beyond previous Catholic participation in such meetings.

Catholic observers were invited to the first WCC Assembly in Amsterdam in 1948, but the Sacred Congregation of the Holy Office forbade such participation. Similarly, when the Second General Assembly was held in 1954, in Evanston, Illinois, the late Samuel Cardinal Stritch, Archbishop of Chicago, without specifically mentioning the event, issued a pastoral letter stressing that Catholics "are not permitted to attend the assemblies or conventions of non-Catholic organizations or councils."

World Council meetings began tentatively, at the Third General Assembly (New Delhi, 1961) with five observers who did not speak. The escalation from New Delhi to Uppsala (July, 1968) was massive: 12 delegates as against 5; and participants, not merely observers.

of joint efforts for development. The latest recognition of this joint action was the awarding of foundation grants totaling \$100,000 to the World Council of Churches in 1967, in Evanston, Illinois. The World Council of Churches, a joint WCC-Catholic Committee on Society, Development and Peace, for an experimental program in development education.

Before the Catholic Church joins the World Council, however, it is probable that Catholic membership will become more widespread in regional and national councils of churches.

The most remarkable example of theological discussion but also in the highly practical area of development education.

A few weeks earlier, the Louisiana State Council of Churches, formerly composed of 12 Protestant denominations, voted to become the Louisiana Interchurch Conference with membership open to Catholic and Orthodox churches.

The constitution of the Texas Conference of Churches was signed last February, creating what has been called "the first totally ecumenical geographic organization in the world." Its membership comprises 16 Protestant denominations, 10 Catholic dioceses and a Greek Orthodox diocese.

In other parts of the country, individual Catholic parishes and dioceses are already members of their local church councils. In the Archdiocese of Santa Fe, the first Catholic to join a state council, a Catholic priest, Father Albert Schneider, is the president of the New Mexico Council of Churches. A Catholic layman, Al Hauser, holds the same office in the Carondelet Ecumenical Council of Churches, a group organized on the parish level in South St. Louis.

On the national level, discussions of Catholic affiliation with church councils have been taking place not only in the United States but in countries as far apart as Finland and New Zealand. Informal conversations have been conducted for some time in the U.S. between the National Council of Churches and the National Conference of Catholic Bishops. A more official study committee has now been constituted. It held its first formal meeting on April 9.

Francis Sally, committee chairman, said Catholic men 18 and over, along with men who may wish to re-instate or transfer their memberships, are invited to attend. Women also are invited.

Sally said there will be a showing of a film, "The Papal Challenge," followed by refreshments.



Planning Mercy Hospital Cotillion

Pictured planning annual Mercy Hospital Cotillion, scheduled May 17 at Auburn Country Club are, from left: seated — Mrs. F. Donald Hoffmann; Dr. and Mrs. Joseph F. Rowley, co-chairmen; standing — Mrs. Peter P. Midura; Mrs. Ernest Brown and Mr. Ernest Brown. Also on committee are Mr. and Mrs. William McKeon, Mr. and Mrs. Harry Orpalo, Mr. and Mrs. James Cuddy, Mr. and Mrs. John Geherin and Mr. and Mrs. Joseph E. Lynch.



Knights Open Harlem Council

National and state officials of the Knights of Columbus attend ceremonies in which officers were installed at the newly-formed Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Council of the K. of C. in Harlem. They are, left to right, Supreme Knight John W. McDevitt of New Haven, Conn., Grand Knight Snowden Eickelberger, Father Harold Salmon, vicar delegate of Harlem parishes and State Deputy James E. Foley. (RNS)

Parishes Asked To Aid Inner City

Newark, N.J. — (NC) — Financially solvent parishes in the Newark archdiocese will assist urban parishes which are in financial need, according to plans of Archbishop Thomas A. Boland.

In a pastoral letter read in all parishes, the archbishop said he was implementing a proposal made in December by a special committee of the Senate of Priests.

He said a special fund would be established by the archdiocese, with all contributed monies being placed in it. The fund would be administered by two inner-city vicars.

Participation in the program will be voluntary, the archbishop said in his letter, but he urged all parishes which could earmark part of their income for the Church's work in urban areas.

The concern of Catholics, he said, must be "directed toward the poor, the disadvantaged and the distressed."

He said that despite establishment of a central fund, more affluent parishes could direct their contributions to special purposes if they wished. He specifically cited aid to a particular parish, adoption of a school, or underwriting individual classroom or parish maintenance costs or teacher subsidization.

Solon Asks State School Aid Study

Boston — (NC) — A Massachusetts legislator will file a bill to establish a citizen's commission to undertake study of state aid for parochial schools because a survey has been published indicating that the phasing out of Catholic schools in Massachusetts will pose a major tax problem.

The survey was prepared by the New England Catholic Education Center at Boston College for the Massachusetts Advisory Council on Education (MACE), using statistics supplied by the state department of education. It indicated that if the Catholic school-closing trend accelerates here, the tax rate increase in cities and towns will average \$10 to \$12 per thousand over the next five years.

If all the Catholic schools were closed, the report said, the public schools would be required to absorb some 208,000 pupils.

Although there is no plan for closing all 550 Catholic schools in Massachusetts, some have begun phasing out, others have tentative proposals for shutting down, and most are encountering serious financial problems.

Richard Cardinal Cushing has authorized an in-depth study of the schools in the Boston archdiocese. A report is expected in early summer.

The report to MACE indicated that a total closing of Catholic schools would cost taxpayers \$1.2 billion for new buildings, and within five years a \$242 million increase in yearly operating costs. The average operating cost per year to public expenditures in the state over a 10-year period would be \$179 million.

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Jesuit Superior Sees Value in Youth Ferment

New Delhi — (RNS) — Today's youth are reacting with an intuitive "no" to the actual state of the whole world, the Jesuit Superior General Father Pedro Arrupe, observed during Pedro Arrupe observed India. The Jesuits' problem, he said, is to be "clever enough and spiritual enough" to help youth in its search for a new way.

Provincials of the 12 Jesuit Provinces in India and the Provincial of Ceylon conferred with the General. In a message to India's 3,000 Jesuits Father Arrupe said, "In this time of transition we have to try to know better our spiritual heritage and the particular charisma of St. Ignatius in order to aid the modern world. We have to rely more on individual responsibility and real spirituality if we are to react correctly to modern conditions."

Experiments in education, spiritual formation, social service, and other activities of Jesuit life decreed by the 31st General Congregation in 1965 will continue, said Father Arrupe. Conditions in the modern world are not stabilized, he pointed out, and new ways must be found to meet new problems.

The mass media educate youth to the "actual state of the whole world" including social conditions, international injustice, the evil effects of communism and capitalism," he said. Youth react with great sincerity as "outsiders against the Establishment."

Many universities, Father Arrupe said, are as they were a century ago. Students are aware that their education does not fit them for life in the modern world.

"Anarchic elements" play off the naivete of youth and unscrupulously take advantage of their own economic or political purposes, he added.

An Experiment: Churchless Parish

Troy, Mich. — (RNS) — A "churchless" parish? Father William Davidson of St. Anastasia is trying it here.

His plan calls for two, possibly three, parish centers, each to contain a worship area and room for general meetings and religion classes.

His reasoning is that this Detroit suburb has mostly young middle-class residents who need to budget carefully.

Position Changed On Prayer Bill

ANNAPOLIS, Md. — (NC) — The Maryland House of Delegates voted March 17 in favor of a measure that would permit prayer and Bible reading in public schools. The next day, the legislators reversed themselves.

The measure was intended to attack the U.S. Supreme Court's ban on prayer in public schools.

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Meeting Slated On K. of C. Plans

Horseheads — The final meeting for charter membership in a Knights of Columbus Council being formed here is scheduled at 8 p.m. Monday, April 14, in St. Mary Our Mother School hall.

Francis Sally, committee chairman, said Catholic men 18 and over, along with men who may wish to re-instate or transfer their memberships, are invited to attend. Women also are invited.

Sally said there will be a showing of a film, "The Papal Challenge," followed by refreshments.

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