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ECUMENICAL EVENTS

Pioneers Blazing Trail Toward Religious Unity

By KIM LARSEN (NC News Service)

Washington — Ecumenical trailblazers are making their way through a wilderness, slowly but progressively, but they are not sure what they will find once they conquer the wilderness.

The wilderness is a vast, uncharted land filled with many obstacles. But the pioneer spirit of the Committee for Ecumenical and Interreligious Affairs, National Conference of Catholic Bishops, gives hope that the ecumenical frontier will be tamed.

The Catholics' chief scout, Msgr. Bernard F. Law, executive director of the Ecumenical and Interreligious Affairs Committee, expressed his vision thusly:

"I believe it is God's will for His Church that Christians manifest their unity in a common faith in Christ and in a common celebration of the Eucharist.

"The ecumenical movement," he added, "is in response to this will of God."

This movement consists in a series of dialogues with other churches. Dialogue means talk, and there seems to be a lot of talking. To the casual observer, all this talk might seem meaningless. But there is a significant reason for it, Msgr. Law insists.

"The way is not clear how we can unite," Msgr. Law said. Dialogue can help clear away the fog, he said, adding that prayer also is very important. Msgr. Law also emphasized that there must be hope "that the Holy Spirit will guide us to a fuller unity."

The process that is taking place, he said, requires a measure of time. How Christian unity will finally be expressed and when the goal will be reached are not known, Msgr. Law said.

One of the major difficulties now, Msgr. Law said, is how so many different points of view will converge, but "I believe they will converge," he added.

Msgr. Law observed that the

present Catholic relationships with Protestants and Jews did not exist 50 years ago.

"There are a lot of intangibles in regard to an operation like this," Msgr. Law said about the "Ecumenical and Interreligious Affairs secretariat. "Getting to know, and to love, one another is a very important thing and it takes time."

Msgr. Law said he approaches ecumenism from a point of view of hope, not as a bureaucratic program. Even so, his desk was cluttered with papers that he must continually shuffle.

Msgr. Law may have some appearances of a bureaucrat, but he does not think like one. "We want nothing more than to be put out of existence," he said. When unity is achieved, there will be no need for his office.

Ecclisial unity is the ultimate goal of the ecumenical movement, Msgr. Law said. He pointed out, however, that such a union does not have to be a strict monolithic structure.

Msgr. Law explained that the Catholic Church already has "a variety" of customs and liturgy represented by separate rites that are in full communion with the See of Rome.

"No one is to say there cannot be other types of variety," he said. "I don't think we've exhausted the types of variety" that are possible.

Progress in ecumenism made by the Committee for Ecumenical and Interreligious Affairs so far is measured by talk, and there has been a lot of that. It is through talk that the different churches can discover mutual understanding and seek ways to reconcile differences, according to Msgr. Law.

• With the Orthodox Church: Discussions on the theology of marriage. Both sides have been considering New Testament teachings of the indissolubility of marriage. The discussions are still in process; thus there have been no results yet, Msgr. Law said.

• Anglican Church: The nature and meaning of the office of bishops and the meaning of collegiality in both churches is

the present concern of dialogue here.

• Lutheran Churches: Some results of the dialogue are available in three publications. The Eucharist has been a recent dialogue topic with the Lutherans. The ministry has been another subject.

• United Methodist Church: The question of federal aid to parochial schools has been raised in this dialogue. Purpose of getting into this subject, according to Msgr. Law, is an attempt to understand the issue in all its perplexity. "The issue has caused much tension between Christians," he said. "It needs to be looked at closely in light of today's realities and the exposure of yesterday's myths."

• American Baptist Convention: Authority in the Church has been the topic of this dialogue.

• Christian Church (Disciples of Christ): Theology of the Eucharist and marriage have been recent subjects. Discussion now is centering on the ministry.

• Presbyterian-Rev for med Churches: Again, the question of ministry has been of concern to both sides.

All of these topics have some relationship to unity, Msgr. Law said. Mixed marriages, certainly, "present some very practical problems," he noted.

Contact with the Jewish community has been another goal of Msgr. Law's office. The effort here, he said, has been twofold and is meeting with success.

Cenacle Lists May Retreats

A retreat for high school seniors will be conducted next weekend, May 24, at the Cenacle Retreat House, by Father David Simon.

Other events scheduled at the house, 683 East Avenue, Rochester, are the St. Raphael Guild retreat, with Father Louis Hohman, May 9-11; and a retreat for married women, May 23-25, with Father James Malone, S.J.

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Girl's Editorial Wins Award

Barbara Eiseemann, a Nazareth Academy Junoer, is a national winner in Quill and Scroll's writing contest.

The winner of St. Mark's Parish is the daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Henry Eiseemann, 1934 Edgemere Dr. As a national winner Barbara has received a Gold Key Quill and Scroll Award.

Barbara's entry was in the field of editorial writing. Her editorial, based on interviews with teenagers who have experimented with drugs, appeared in the November issue of her school paper, The Gabriel.

Speakers' Bureau Established at St. John Fisher

To assist program chairmen of organizations in Monroe and surrounding counties, a speakers' bureau has been established at St. John Fisher College.

Thirty faculty members participating in the bureau constitute a pool of trained public speakers well versed in many subject areas. Many of them will be on campus most of the summer and will be available to give talks.

Organization officers seeking speakers have been invited to contact the college's public information office.

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"Romance or Routine"

Thomas Merton, beloved monk of the twentieth century, once said of his fellow monks: "Dedication, for us, is not romance, it is routine."

This thought was echoed recently in a letter we received from a missionary-bishop in South Africa. "To build a new Church, to found a new school, to open a new mission hospital is exciting and romantic," he wrote. "Not nearly so romantic is meeting the bills for the feeding and clothing of the Mission Fathers, Brothers, and Sisters, or keeping the overworked mission vehicles on the road."

Both Thomas Merton and the Bishop in Africa have stated that real dedication to the Christian ideal is not always fashionable or glamorous. More often than not, our attempts to live the Christian life end up in the gritty-gritty business of personal sacrifice on behalf of others. And there is nothing glamorous about daily self-sacrifice!

Honeymoons do not last forever. Many a young missionary has learned soon enough that the initial excitement and charm of mission life soon give way to day to day routine. He must learn a new language, adapt to a new culture, develop new eating habits. He must walk miles in blazing heat to visit sick villagers. He must help out in the dispensary, its walls bursting with crying children. He must, with patience, train a team of catechists who will eventually assist him in his work of spreading the gospel. But, above all, the missionary must be available to the people, open to the people, and willing to learn from them.

This daily routine does not lessen the nobility of the missionary's calling. Rather, it raises his vocation to a new level—that of persevering and dedicated service to others.

This is our calling, too. As Christians we must accept the challenge of day to day living. We must be willing to sacrifice for others each and every days of our lives. For it is in the seeming routine of daily sacrifice that we will find our reward. Send your sacrifice TODAY!

SALVATION AND SERVICE are the work of The Society for the Propagation of the Faith. Please cut this column and send your offering to Right Reverend Edward T. O'Meara, National Director, 366 Fifth Avenue, New York, N.Y., 10001, or directly to your local Diocesan Director.

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Another Bi For Aquinas

By WHIT JOHN
The Aquinas Inst ball team is shooti seventh straight winni and despite a couple tion marks, the te well do it.

The Irish finished 9 record last year, b ter than its record. The year before, it posted a fine 14-3 captured the Diocce plonship.

With only a hand turned, Coach Mil C.S.B. will have to number of juniors, making his debut as coach. The Baslian, is assisted by Bill Becket Hall. Both a graduates.

Heading the list of senior Al Grazlar hitting first baseme competitor, he give cent every time he field.

Two of his infield also veterans and ar ters — and fielders — junior Bill Falanday; Glenn Pezzulo at s third, respectively.

Short stop is up with sophomore T and senior Mike I tling for the job. E expects to help ou mound.

Gerry Lasponara, leading hitter last se as catcher. He's a lin ter with good power pertoire will cover r

The other two out are open with Bill I Allen, Benjamin hav side track. One o pitching staff may for outfield duty

Aquinas opens t Monday, April 25. Irish host Batavia p.m.

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