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What Are They Doing to the Saints? Nothing Shocking

Some very popular saints made the news this week. Headlines inflated by such secular press verbs as "defrocked," "demoted" and "deleted" spread emotional consternation and misinformation. The Courier-Journal asked Father Robert McNamara, professor of Church History at St. Bernard's Seminary, to calm and clarify the issue: What are they doing to the Saints?

By FR. ROBERT McNAMARA

"What has the Church done to St. Christopher?"

Many Catholics have been asking this question since the newspapers reported last week that the revised liturgical calendar of the Latin Rite omits the names of scores of saints, including St. Christopher, long venerated as patron of travelers.

The trouble with a news report of this sort is that it refers to only one small phase of a large liturgical project. Let me explain the background of the project before I attempt to deal with St. Christopher.

Anybody familiar with the church calendar realizes that there are two

great cycles of "liturgical days." One of these is the cycle of observances dealing with our redemption—like Christmas, Easter, Pentecost, Advent, Lent, etc. (This is called the "temporal cycle.") The other is the cycle of feasts of saints, which normally fall on the date of their death. (This is called the "sanctoral cycle.") The "temporal cycle" is obviously the more important of the two.

Now in assigning feastdays to the saints, the Church faces a real problem of logistics. There are over 2,000 listed saints. But there are only about 200 days on which to honor them. Since new saints are added from time to time to this list, the problem is a growing one. Attempts have been made in the past to turn over to the saints days that properly belong to the "redemption feasts"; but this is not really a good thing.

What the popes do, therefore, is from time to time to revise the calendar, excluding from worldwide obligation the feasts of saints of whom the devotion is basically local, or of whom the worldwide devotion, once strong, perhaps, has declined.

Pope St. Pius V did just this in

establishing the Roman Missal in the 16th century, as a part of the reforms prescribed by the Council of Trent. Pope John XXIII also reduced some of the feast of saints in the early 1960s. So revision is a routine procedure.

The Second Vatican Council in December, '63, gave orders for a reform of the liturgy, including the rearrangement of the calendar, and the reduction of feasts universally binding on the whole Latin Rite: "Let the feasts of saints should take precedence over the feasts which commemorate the very mysteries of salvation, many of them should be left to be celebrated by a particular Church or nation or family of religious; only those should be extended to the universal Church which commemorate saints who are truly of universal importance" (Const. on the Liturgy, III).

The change of the calendar just announced obeys this mandate.

Two hundred names of saints which formerly appeared on the calendar applying to the universal Church have been removed. Many of these have been left optional, so

that on their feast day a priest may still say their Masses if he chooses. Still others, I gather, are permitted to be celebrated locally, i.e., at the place or in the land of their origin, or in the convents and churches of the religious orders they belong to or have established. All this is quite sensible.

For years there has been a complaint that Americans, for instance, were required to celebrate the feast days of too many ancient European saints of whom they knew little.

The new calendar thus leaves more room for a broader range of saints' days. New names have been added to emphasize the universal scope of the Church. Americans should be pleased to know that the New York State Jesuit martyrs of the 17th century, St. Isaac Jogues and his two companions, will henceforth be on the calendar of the universal Church. England will be represented by the layman, St. Thomas More. Scandinavia by a bishop, St. Ansgar. Negroes will be represented by the Latin American, St. Martin de Porres, and Africa by the Martyrs of Uganda. Japan will be represented by the

Martyrs of Nagasaki. Polynesia will be represented by the martyred St. Peter Chanel. This is all to the good.

But to get down to the question of the "dubious" saints whose names have been dropped. There are at least 46; and they are cases in which historians have admitted, sometimes for years, that there are serious doubts regarding the historical value of the accounts about them which have come down to us. The reasons for doubt differ in each case. Sometimes it is whether the supposed saint ever existed. In other cases it is whether the saint venerated really bore that name, or whether a holy person came to be called a saint by accident. In other cases, the question is not so much whether the person existed as whether his legends are more fiction than fact.

How could a situation like this arise? Does not canonization perhaps involve the infallibility of the Church?

We must not forget that the Holy See established the present-day rigorous procedures of investigation for

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St. Christopher by Albrecht Durer

(Cable from Vatican City to the Rochester Pastoral Office)
May 8—In private audience today lasting 40 minutes, Holy Father lovingly blessed the Bishops, priests, religious, laity, youth and everyone in the Rochester Diocese.
Fulton J. Sheen

Movies

They're Getting Worse, Catholic Agency Says

New York City — (NC) — Movies are getting worse than ever, the National Catholic Office for Motion Pictures complained this week, reporting that only 11 feature films out of 111 reviewed by the agency since Jan. 1 were "suitable for the family trade."

One-third of the year's movies were severely criticized for gross exploitation involving sex or violence.

"If parents are concerned about current film fare," said Father Patrick J. Sullivan, S.J., NCOMF director, "these statistics should suggest that their complaint is amply justified. And they should also prompt exhibitors to ask some hard-nosed questions of producers."

"Readers familiar with NCOMF," his report said, "need no reminder that this office, even as the Church, has long affirmed that the motion picture deserves respect and support from the public because of the unmatched potential it possesses for helping a person reach a better understanding of himself and of his relationship to his fellow man and to God."

"How is this potential of the medium being realized?" the report asked. "The truth is that the majority of films during the last six months has been neither entertain-

ing nor enlightening for any level of audience."

The NCOMF report defended the distinction between general audience film fare and legitimate adult movies, and also the rightful freedom of expression to be accorded the creative artist.

But it criticized the "pornographers-posing-as-artists" who are being hired by even the "reputably responsible" production companies. "Bankers who lend family savings to finance most of today's film production" should examine their share of responsibility, the report said.

The NCOMF statement suggested possible courses of action which individuals and families can take "to make their dissatisfaction known to an industry which is enormously sensitive to public reaction."

"A selective choice of entertainment (including the support of good films, a refusal to patronize objectionable movies, a collaboration at the community level with civic organizations that will inform local theater owners of the community's expectations — are old formulae that responsible men in a free society employ," the statement noted.

Jesus, Mary Cited As Supreme Models

Vatican City — (NC) — All mothers and children can find their "supreme model and higher salvation" in Christ and His mother, Pope Paul VI declared on Italy's Mother and Child Day (May 11).

There is a twofold reason for honoring the Blessed Mother and Christ on this day, the Pope told crowds gathered in St. Peter's Square to hear his Sunday homily.

"The first is a healthy and experienced reaction toward a climate, far too often unhealthy and morally infected, in which motherhood and childhood find themselves in the disorder and license of the modern world.

"The second is a joyful and consoling reference to Mary, the Mother par excellence, and to Jesus, the Son of Man and the Son of God, in whom every mother and every child can find their supreme model and their higher salvation," the Pope said.

The Pope praised the mother as "the nourisher and the educator of the son, the lamp of the hearth and the guardian of the family, the teacher of the first language and of moral sense."



James Forman, principal spokesman for the Black Manifesto demanding \$500 million from white churches and synagogues, is shown on the steps of the Chancery Office of the New York Archdiocese just after he had presented demands to Catholic officials for \$200 million in reparation for "exploiting black people". Forman is burning the court order which restrained him from disrupting services at New York's Riverside Church on May 11. He had interrupted communion services there on 4th to read the manifesto demanding money from the church. (RNS)

Closed Circuit TV Mass Due for Hospital Patients

The third in a series of Masses will be seen at 8:30 a.m. Sunday on WHEC-TV, Channel 10.

Patients in St. Mary's Hospital can now make a "visit" to the chapel without leaving their rooms and assist at the 8:30 Mass every morning without getting out of bed, simply by dialing a special channel on the television set in every room.

Closed-circuit television from the chapel to the eyes of 300 patients began yesterday afternoon as Bishop Fulton J. Sheen celebrated Mass for the institution's employees on "Employee Recognition Day" in national Hospital Week. A stationary camera mounted high on the entrance wall of the chapel, covered the altar area perfectly.

Enthusiastically describing the new facility, Father John Rosse, hospital chaplain, said that the telecast of the early daily Mass and the two Sunday morning Masses will be welcome benefits for the patients.

"Because the chapel camera will be 'on' all the time, it will be possible for any patient at any hour to see the altar and have the atmosphere of 'being there' even though no services are taking place," he said.

The possibility of using the chapel

television to bring the patients morning and evening prayers now recited over the public address system and to provide other devotions or talks which the patients might desire will be explored immediately, Father Rosse indicated.

Sylvania Company, which has the concession for the TV sets in all the hospital rooms except the intensive care section, installed the chapel camera at the request of the hospital administration.

Confirmations Of Adults Set On 2 Sundays

Bishop Fulton J. Sheen will administer the Sacrament of Confirmation for adults from parishes in the Rochester area on two successive Sundays — May 18 and May 25.

Adults from the east side of the city — with the exception of parishes noted below — will be confirmed during Mass at 5 p.m. May 18 in St. Ambrose Church.

Those from the west side of the city — as well as from parishes of St. Stanislaus, St. Margaret Mary, Our Lady of Perpetual Help and Christ the King — will be confirmed during Mass at 5 p.m. May 25 in Sacred Heart Cathedral.

Confirmations and their spouses may receive Holy Communion under both species.

Blacks Pressing For \$500 Million

(Religious News Service)

New York City — U.S. churches, faced with threats of interruption of religious services and seizure of facilities unless \$500 million are given to black Americans in "reparation for the evils of white racism," are in open confusion over how to pay such a price and how to defend themselves against the possible consequences of black protest.

The Catholic Archdiocese of New York, the National Council of Churches, the N.Y. Episcopal Diocese and the Lutheran Church in America were faced with money demands in quick succession last week by James Forman, representative of the National Black Economic Development Conference.

That conference, comprised of 700 Negro leaders from across the nation, adopted on April 26 a Black Manifesto which called on the "white Christian churches and Jewish synagogues" to pay \$500 million in "reparations," the money to be used for a list of specific black projects.

The manifesto, voted by 187-63 of all the black leaders present, charged that the churches and synagogues are "part and parcel" of a capitalist system — "the most vicious, racist system in the world" — which had exploited blacks, and should therefore pay the reparations.

If the demands are not met, the manifesto warned, blacks would "disrupt" selected churches and synagogues and would seize the facilities of "all church-sponsored agencies" around the world to emphasize the demands. The disruptions were to begin May 4 or thereafter.

The "black manifesto" delivered to the Archdiocese of New York demanded \$200 million from U.S. Catholics.

The sum, according to documents presented to archdiocesan officials, would be used to establish a South-

ern Land Bank to help poor blacks establish cooperative farms.

The NBEDC statement addressed to the Catholic archdiocese charged that the Catholic Church "must be the biggest corporation in the United States."

It is demanded that a list of all Church assets be given to NBEDC. When such a list is compiled, it said, a percentage of the income from those assets would be negotiated to be given for the demands of the Black Manifesto.

The situation in New York was sharpened as Mr. Forman and a few supporters interrupted a communion service at the city's famed Riverside Church on May 4 to read the manifesto.

Mayor John Lindsay immediately announced that churches which are worried about possible disruptions would have police protection. He reminded the religious leaders of their "rights, and, indeed, their obligation" to notify law enforcement officials if a disruption of worship seems imminent.

Two major Jewish agencies have rejected both the "substance" and the "tactics" of the "black manifesto."

The Synagogue Council of America and the National Jewish Community Relations Advisory Council said, in a joint statement, that the demands and the tactics of the spokesmen for the National Black Economic Development Conference are "objectionable on both moral and practical grounds."

The General Board of the National Council of Churches, meeting here, urged its 33 Protestant and Orthodox member churches to give "serious" attention to the "Manifesto."

The board was said to share "the aspirations of the black people of this country." The statement con-

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'We Need Not Be Twins' Catholics, Baptists Told

Winston-Salem, N.C. — (RNS) — Ecumenical problems will be solved, in a sense, when Christians realize that brothers do not have to be twins," a Southern Baptist layman said here at the first joint ecumenical workshop of Roman Catholics and Southern Baptists.

In the first formal meeting of the two Churches, some 60 Catholics and Southern Baptists focused on the distinctive qualities of their Churches as well as their common heritage and devoted much of their attention to exploring what they could learn from one another.

The discussions, covering such fields as Bible scholarship, social involvement, forms of worship and Church structures, will be continued at later meetings already scheduled for February and April, 1970.

Baptists hailed the growing Catholic interest in the Bible, while an eminent Catholic liturgist said that his Church needs more of the Baptist spontaneity in its worship. A Baptist speaker warned his denomination against making religion too personal and neglecting social responsibilities.

But while the atmosphere was enthusiastically friendly, the participants took to heart a warning that "warm handshakes and friendly chatter" are not enough in ecumenical relations.

The meeting, sponsored by the Ecumenical Institute of Wake Forest

University, was chaired jointly by a Catholic bishop and a former president of the Southern Baptist Convention, Auxiliary Bishop John S. Spence of Washington, representing the U.S. Catholic Bishops' Committee for Ecumenical and Interreligious Affairs, was the Catholic co-chairman.

One of the differences between Catholics and Baptists noted by a speaker was in their viewpoints on creeds and doctrinal formulations. Baptists, viewing the Scriptures as "the only rule of faith and practice," are reluctant to draw up creeds, though not to make statements, said Dr. E. Glenn Hinson of the Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, Louisville, Ky.

Discussing liturgy, Father Godfrey Diekmann, O.S.B., of St. John's College, Collegeville, Minn., said Catholics are only beginning to realize that this may be the area where "we have the most to learn from other traditions." He called for a "proper balance" between "inherited forms" and the "creative forces that every generation spontaneously provides."

Father Kilian McDonnell, O.S.B., director of the Ecumenical Institute at Collegeville, Minn., noted that Baptists have many similarities to Catholic monastic orders (including a relative withdrawal from social action) but noted that Baptists tend to emphasize and Catholics to obscure the personal note in faith and salvation.

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A Look at Teen's Problems

How do I know if I have a vocation to the religious life? Why aren't we teens judged capable of seeing any films we want and making our own decisions on their worth?

These are typical of the kind of questions common with teen-agers. In an effort to reach the general teen audience through representative questions and answers, the Courier-Journal next week will begin a new feature series, "Teen-age Problems."

The series is prepared and written by Father Martin, a Redemptorist Father.