

Church's Ghetto Role Discussed



From Here . . .



. . . to There

His Eminence Joseph Diangienda, spiritual head of the 3-million-member Church of Christ on Earth by the Prophet Simon Kimbangu of Congo (Kinshasa), listens as the World Council of Churches' Central Committee approves WCC membership for the African Church. It was the first time in its 21-year history the WCC approved membership for a Church not founded by missionaries. The Kimbanguist leader, shown in the Congo above, is the youngest son of the Prophet Simon Kimbangu who founded the Church. (RNS).

French Bishops, Priests To Discuss Celibacy

Paris — (NC) — The second national assembly of bishops and priests, which will meet in Lourdes in November, will deal particularly with the problem of priestly celibacy.

The first such assembly, held last May 26 and 27, had resulted in a series of votes on subjects concerning the priest, with a view to determining the agenda for the work of the coming months.

On the basis of the May votes, the principal subject on the agenda will be "Basic Pastoral Units and Priestly Teams." This choice indicates that the entire French hierarchy and clergy consider the traditional parish struc-

ture with the functions of pastors and vicars unsuited to the modern world.

Three "other questions of very special importance" will also be examined by the Lourdes assembly: authority and co-responsibility in the Church, the material life of the Church and the priest, and priestly celibacy.

NEW MODERATOR

Seattle — (RNS) — Dr. James M. Moody, 53-year-old chancellor of Texas Christian University in Fort Worth, was elected moderator of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) at the denomination's General Assembly here.

Dayton, Ohio — (NC) — If the Church is to survive in the inner-city, black parishes must be under black control, a white priest told a "confrontation" session at a convention of the National Black Sisters' Conference at the University of Dayton here.

A panelist, Father Robert Kennedy, in charge of the poverty program of the Brooklyn diocese and a member of the National Urban Task Force, said the black community must be in control of its churches welfare programs, police protection and educational system, because "its their (the blacks) turf and anything else is colonialism."

The white in the ghetto cannot be a leader, the priest said. The white's role in the ghetto is limited, he continued. He must come in only when invited and must have "specific skills to do a specific task."

Father Kennedy was a "reactor" to a talk given by Dr. Henry Etzkowitz, a sociologist at Washington University, St. Louis, and author of "Ghetto Crisis." In his talk, entitled "Driving Whites Out of the Ghetto Will Solve Nothing," Dr. Etzkowitz said ghetto leaders looked with disfavor on white involvement in a day-care center, but stressed that the mothers who were being helped wanted both whites and blacks. The separatists threatened the operation, but they went without a substantial following, he said.

The speaker said blacks, rather than whites, should be operating and owning stores in the ghetto, but he warned that a mere change from white to black control of ghetto businesses would not solve the problem of the

'Stop Berating Ourselves' High-Ranking Nun Says

Milwaukee — (NC) — "It's time to stop berating ourselves and see the really remarkable people that are in religious life," said Sister Mary Luke, who last week was advanced to the international governing body in Rome of some 11,600 School Sisters of Notre Dame.

Before her election as second counselor to the Notre Dame nuns' general superior, Sister Luke was novice mistress at the Mequon (Wis.) motherhouse and editor of the community's magazine, School Sister.

She has seen in her recent travels that and weaknesses, real crises, and confusion, "so many remarkable women are making a sincere effort at dialogue." "A real depth growth is taking place," she said.

One of the factors contributing to the crisis facing religious communities, she said, is that "we have somehow lost our sense of mission. I feel very strongly an apostolate is where you find it, whether in the inner core, the suburb, the college. It doesn't make a great deal of difference where you are."

"Again, I'm not saying we shouldn't go to where the people need us most, but we have to open to the Holy Spirit in order to respond. We also have to help motivate the gritty jobs some of us may have, many of which are not so glamorous," Sister Luke said.

Some religious communities have experienced a desire to switch apostolates, she observed. The School Sisters of Notre Dame are primarily a teaching community. "We'll continue by and large as teachers, since most of our Sisters have

been trained to be teachers," she said. "But if we see other apostolates, we'll meet them. They will still, I feel, be somewhat related to education in some way."

One of the areas about which the Notre Dames are concerned, she said, "is doing our utmost for our retired Sisters and working out an apostolate for them. We live in a culture of aging peoples."

Though best known for her work in journalism and public relations, Sister Luke has a wide theological background which also qualifies her for her new international position. She has a master of sacred science degree from Regina Mundi, the pontifical institute of theology in Rome, permitting her to teach religion on any level in any diocese.

These great accomplishments of black people," she said. "The incident made me realize how unaware the white community in general is," she recalled. "The white community was never told about the achievements of the black man."

Last summer, her years of research and study reached a high point when she completed "The Black Man in America," a grade school textbook currently used in Philadelphia public and parochial school systems and in Newark, Chicago and several other cities.

Sister Mercedes said she hopes the book will expose youngsters to knowledge about the black community. "This lack of exposure is the biggest 'hang-up' in improving racial relations, she said.

"White people only hear about problems in the black community," she added. "They are unaware of all the similarities with their own community."

With this idea in mind, Sister Mercedes three years ago wrote and directed a play on black history for students at Holy Providence School, an integrated school in suburban Cornwells Heights. The play, which also has been produced throughout the country, resulted in a great pride in black students for their history.

Furthermore, the white children became interested in black history. "They seemed to lose all prejudice and just want to learn," she said.

Sister Mercedes said she hopes to apply this same technique on a wider scale in September. She aims to start by working principally in a consulting capacity with the faculties and create a conducive atmosphere. Then she will bring together the faculties, from different schools to discuss various techniques of dealing with human relations problems, and to exchange ideas, she said.

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people of the ghetto. "New institutions" must be built to serve the needs of the poor, he said, and these can involve whites as well as blacks.

The professor's address drew sharp criticism and jeers from some of the panel members and from many in the audience during a stormy session of the convention, one of the few meetings to which whites as well as blacks were invited.

The exchange turned into a shouting match between the speaker and members of the audience, most of them Black Sisters.

At the panel session, Sister Helen Margaret, S.C., of Santa Maria Neighborhood House, Cincinnati, said whites in the ghetto "are going to have to be willing to work under black leadership" and she cautioned those who come into the black community to work that the "usual ideas and usual sociology books" written by white people, won't work.

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Nun's Job: To Make Integration Appealing

Philadelphia — (NC) — Making integration more appealing is the principal task confronting Sister Maria Mercedes, newly appointed director of human relations for the Philadelphia archdiocesan school board.

"Integration will only work if it has something better to offer," Sister Mercedes said. "People don't want films and speakers telling them they're prejudiced; they want to know what they can do."

Before coming to Philadelphia, Sister Mercedes spent 11 years teaching in Harlem and worked a short time in Port Arthur, Tex., and New Orleans. In each city, the Sister of the Blessed Sacrament worked with the black community.

Sister Mercedes recalled that while she was in Harlem, the father of one of her students gave her a book on black history written by John Hope Franklin.

"There I was, a member of an order that teaches only black children and Indians and I didn't know any of

these great accomplishments of black people," she said. "The incident made me realize how unaware the white community in general is," she recalled. "The white community was never told about the achievements of the black man."

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Contemplative Nuns Mull Ending Cloister

Baltimore — (NC) — Some 135 nuns of contemplative communities are engaged in a two-week seminar at Woodstock College, conducted by Jesuits, seeking to determine how far to open their cloistered doors to modern life.

The central issue is the goal of contemplative education and its relevance to the culture and status of today's American women.

The nuns represent 57 communities in the United States and Canada. The seminar is the first of its kind ever in the United States.

Exploration of the current educational process of contemplative Sisters is being made in several developmental areas:

The meaningfulness of the contemporary world.

• A more profound penetration into what it means to be a woman of prayer.

Some revision in the education of young Sisters had been discussed previously by some communities, but the seminar in progress seeks to reach all members of individual communities.

A distinctive feature of the seminar is that the Sisters themselves are involved in communities in the United States and Canada. The seminar is the first of its kind ever in the United States.

Aside from the group discussions, the two-week sessions also are a time for communal and personal prayer, plus serious study.

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