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## Crash Study Planned on School Plight

(Special to the Courier-Journal)

Albany—A crash study of the fast-growing financial problems of non-public school education was recommended this week to the Board of Regents at their second annual legislative conference here.

Rev. Patrick E. Shanahan, superintendent of schools for the Diocese of Rockville Centre and current president of the New York State Council of Catholic School Superintendents, called attention to declining enrollments and rising costs in the Catholic elementary and secondary schools of the state. "The resultant problem," he said, "is a financial squeeze which threatens to accelerate the number of forced closings of our non-public schools."

"The immediate implication for the taxpayer is a loss of an annual savings of three quarters of a billion dollars. That's what more than 750,000 children in non-public schools means to the tax-paying public in operational costs alone. You can add at least another \$2 billion if they all had to be housed in public school classrooms."

In their respective dioceses the 6,600,000 Catholics of the state are being urged to inform their legislators and their non-Catholic neighbors of the "real and present" financial crisis facing parochial schools.

They have been told that by providing education "to one out of five New York children at less than one third the cost of public education Catholic schools make a significant contribution to New York State. Based on an estimated \$1,000 cost of each New York State public school student the contribution runs to almost \$750 million a year."

This and other data is included in a special report prepared by the State Council of Catholic School Superintendents. The survey was the result

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## Rate of Decline Slows in Catholic Enrollment

Washington, D.C. — (RNS) — A decrease of 156,000 pupils is noted in Catholic elementary and high school enrollments this year, according to estimates released here by the National Catholic Educational Association.

The 3 per cent decline, if it holds, will represent a distinct leveling off of the Catholic school population which has followed a pattern of decrease for the past several years, the NCEA research office said.

Mrs. Winifred R. Long, who heads the office, said that the projected enrollment for the current semester is 4,860,000 — last year's enrollment was 5,016,000.

In the school year 1967-68 the decline in enrollment was 4.3 per cent; it was 5 per cent in 1968-69. Thus, she said, a decrease of only 3 per cent in the current year would represent a definite leveling off in enrollment decline.

A decrease in the number of Catholic schools is also expected. Mrs. Long estimated that 12,425 schools will open, as against 12,819 in 1968-69.

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This is view local priests are getting as they accompany city police on their rounds in patrol cars.

## Priests Get First-Hand Look At City Police Force in Action

By FATHER RICHARD TORMEY

If you saw your pastor riding in a Rochester police car last week, don't grieve that he had been arrested.

He was probably one of the 25 city priests cruising in patrol cars each evening for the past month, learning the problems of law enforcement by watching police officers in action.

Priests have accompanied the patrolmen from 7 p.m. to midnight responding to radio-calls ranging from "boys annoying" and "prowlers in the yard" to store burglaries, auto accidents, fires and domestic quarrels.

Invited by police superiors to travel with the young patrol-car officers wherever their duties took them, the priests were given only one advance caution: "If it's a shooting alarm, clerics should keep out of the gunfire."

So far no priests have been shot at, attacked or cursed while traveling with the police. But they have had eye-witness contact with myriad social problems never viewed from a rectory window.

My assignment for mid-evening patrol was in the ghetto of inner-city Rochester, the area of the most concentrated population and highest crime rate in the city.

Spending hours cruising through slum alleys and side streets I had never seen before, watching the technique of two different pairs of young patrolmen dealing with people in trouble. I realized for the first time the drama hidden in the statistics of police work.

The patrol-car, the officer on a motorcycle and the foot policeman are just part of the city landscape to most of us until we are involved in an auto accident or have something stolen or need a police officer when danger threatens our neighborhood.

Then we're glad we have a 24-hour organization to preserve law and order. But even then we may miss the bravery, zeal, skills and alertness our policemen possess.

Priests who have been riding with patrolmen in recent weeks agree: "There's a lot more to being a cop than wearing a uniform and badge."

Among the riders have been Fathers Thomas Wheeland, James Moynihan, Lawrence Murphy, Daniel Torrey, Patric Doyle, Mark Miller, Gerard Guli, plus Joseph Gersitz and Albert Barlett of McQuaid High School and others.

Even pastors such as Father Charles Connell of St. Philip Neri Church, Father Paul Wohlrab of Good Coun-

sel, and Father Robert Meng of Holy Rosary have cruised with police in their own neighborhoods.

Patrolmen Robert Gill and Roy Irving were my first guides, driving car "Adam-15" through the teeming streets between Hudson Avenue and Clinton Avenue North, just north of the Penn-Central railroad.

In an 8-hour trick from 3 p.m. to 11 p.m. a car might travel 50 to 60 miles in the narrow confine of that one district, the officers said, "but if we're really busy and make many calls we may only drive 10 miles a night."

Like the cars in every other sector, Adam-15 travels in no set pattern. The driver varies his route through and around the assigned district so that no one planning mischief or crime could anticipate the absence of the car for a set number of minutes.

I had just joined the car, a little after 7 o'clock, when a call came in on their radio "Adam-15: 'Girl at Central and North: claims assault by her boyfriend.'"

Patrolman Gill picked up the phone and said: "Adam-15, right nearby." Turning to his partner he add-

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## Synod May Talk On Pope-Bishops Communications

Vatican City—(NC)—Suggestions for mutual exchange of information between the Vatican and national bishops conferences before either makes important public statements have been proposed by various bishops' conferences for discussion at the forthcoming Synod of Bishops.

A resume of these suggestions was contained in the French edition of IDOC International, which also published the text of the working agenda of the synod, beginning in Rome Oct. 11.

One section of the magazine dealt with suggestions submitted by more than one country. Among these was one which stated: "It is greatly to be hoped that the Supreme Pontiff would not treat of the most important problems until he had heard the opinions of the Synod of Bishops or those of episcopal conferences."

Other such suggestions were that the Pope send to episcopal conferences the most important documents before publication for their information and preparation; that the conferences send the Pope the opinions of the individual churches; that the Pope approve the statutes and decisions of individual conferences; that the Pope be represented in some way at the meetings of episcopal conferences.

It also was suggested that the Synod of Bishops be convoked in either ordinary or special sessions on a regular basis and that the episcopal conferences draw up the agenda of the synod, or at least participate in its production.

At present the Pope convokes a synod whenever he feels it necessary. The first synod was called in 1967 and none has been held since.

The Pope also has reserved to himself the right to propose the agenda of the meeting. In the case of the October synod the agenda has been limited to the function, interrelation-

ship and aims of episcopal conferences and their relationship to the Pope and the offices of the Roman Curia, the Church's central administrative offices.

Since the agenda has already been fixed on the subject of episcopal conferences, it would seem that a number of suggestions for discussions coming from various hierarchies will not be considered.

Among these is the question of the reform and internationalization of the Roman Curia, a subject which the Pope has more than once said he considers to be a matter of his competence. Others include the problems of priestly vocations, education, discipline, celibacy and laicization. Also suggested for discussion were the question of the place of Religious in the diocese, their formation for pastoral needs and for actual life and questions on liturgical reform and mixed marriages.

Pope Paul VI has named 17 cardinals, bishops and priests as his own personal nominations to the synod.

Among the papal nominees are Terence Cardinal Cooke of New York and Pennsylvania-born Archbishop Martin J. O'Connor, president of the Pontifical Commission for Social Communications.

Other Americans to be present include John Cardinal Dearden of Detroit, president of the National Conference of Catholic Bishops in the U.S. (NCCB); John Cardinal Wright, who will attend in his capacity as prefect of the Congregation for the Clergy; Abbot Rembert Weiland, O.S.B., Abbot primate of the Benedictine Confederation, elected a delegate by the Union of Religious Superiors; and Archbishop Ambrozij Senyshyn of the Ukrainian-rite archdiocese of Philadelphia and Archbishop Stephen Kocisko of the Byzantine-rite major archbishops of Eastern rites.

## Less Secrecy Predicted For Coverage of Synod

By ROBERT R. HOLTON  
Courier-Journal  
Special Correspondent

Vatican City—Official news reports on the deliberations of the October Extraordinary Synod of Bishops will be more specific and detailed than those issued during the last synod two years ago.

Bishop Ladislau Rubin, secretary-general of the synod, told this reporter that the decision to lift somewhat the curtain of secrecy that shrouded the last meeting was based on opinions filed by prelates throughout the world.

"The opinions were not all for more press coverage," he said in an interview. "There were some bishops who wanted even less press coverage for this synod than the first one."

He said at least two priests will be assigned to sit in on the deliberations and then report back to the news media representatives at the close of each working day. This practice was followed during the later sessions of Vatican II and the first Synod two years ago.

However, in their press briefings, the priests were not permitted to link the names of any of the speakers with statements they made. Bishop Rubin said that this restriction would be lifted for the coming synod. How-

ever, he would not say whether every speech made on the synod floor would be reported.

"I am very much in favor of opening the press coverage more than it was the last time," he said. "After we received the letters requested from the bishops of the world, our special planning commission studied them and decided the synod should be more open."

He said the agenda — or schema — for the deliberations was sent out to every prelate in the world last May 15.

"The schema carries as its title the topic which the Holy Father has set for the synod," the Polish prelate explained. "We were called here to discuss the relationship between episcopal conferences and the Holy See and between one conference and another."

He said the schema does not list any topics as such but merely gives "a description and presentation of the matters that come under these two general topics."

He said "a great many" matters may come before the group — including Pope Paul's birth control encyclical.

"But if the encyclical is mentioned" (Continued on Page 2)

## 'Deformity in Prayers' Draws Papal Cautioning

Castel Gandolfo, Italy — (NC) — Praising the new and vital reforms in the Church's liturgy, Pope Paul VI warned against "deformity" of the Church's fixed norms for prayer.

Speaking at his weekly general audience the Pope said: "We thank the Lord that the liturgical movement has entered the consciousness of the clergy and faithful and has already brought an increase of faith and grace."

"We would like to encourage all those who are devotedly toiling to breathe a new spirit of prayer into the Church."

He called "for trust and cooperation on the part of those who must give up their habits and preferences in order to follow the revised liturgy."

At the same time, he said, reform presents some dangers, including the making of individual "arbitrary decisions" in liturgical matters.

The Pope said: "It would be a great damage if the concern of Mother Church in granting the use of the spoken languages, certain adaptations to local desires, a certain abundance of text and rite variations and not a few other developments of divine worship, were to give rise to the opinion that there no longer exists a common norm, fixed and obligatory, for the prayer of the Church and that each may presume to organize it and rearrange it as he pleases."

"It would no longer be pluralism in the area of what is permitted but deformity."

The Pope said this disorder "is of grave prejudice to the Church." He said this is because of the obstacles "it raises against the disciplined reform which the Church has specified and authorized," and also because of "the discordant note it introduces in the concert of ecclesial prayer."

## Priest's New Mission: Teen Runaway

(Catholic Press Features)

New York — The classified ad appeared in a Greenwich Village newspaper:

"Catholic Priest will act as Go-Between for any teenager wishing to negotiate peace treaty with family. Will also do what I can for any pregnant teenager wondering what to do now in regard to family, etc. No sermonizing and confidences will be kept. Write: Father B. P.O. Box 70, Cooper Station, New York, N.Y. 10003. Or call 982-7556 (24-hr. service); don't leave name but just a number where I can contact you."

The "Father B" who placed the ad was the Rev. Robert Benedetto, a 33-year-old Paulist priest whose "person-to-person" ministry to runaways in New York's "East Village" is perhaps the most up-to-the-minute apostolate there is — and one that he thinks should be copied in other parts of the country as well.

Living alone in an East Village walkup and meeting frightened run-

aways in coffeehouses or on a park bench, Father Benedetto says his main work is "to let kids know there is someone who will just listen."

Father Benedetto, who moved into the "Village" two summers ago with the permission of his religious superiors to conduct an experimental ministry among the runaways, tries to show the runaways that "you're not just another institution, another structure, but that there's a human being around who knows other human beings who can be helpful."

Referring to pregnant, unwed teenagers who "call on" Father Benedetto for help, the priest explained:

"Maybe we go to a nurse's house, talk over the situation, then maybe the nurse will take her right to the hospital, cut away the red tape of getting her admitted."

"Then if she needs a place to go, there are certain people around town who have told me they are willing to keep somebody temporarily. Right away, then, we have maybe four or five people involved who are taking an interest."

"There's a psychiatrist on Park Avenue who got in contact with me and told me that any time I wanted to send someone up to see him he would do so free of charge. Sometimes he schedules an appointment at six in the morning because it's the only time the kid can get there."

Father Benedetto also finds much of his time being spent as a go-between for runaways who want to get in touch with their parents but who don't want the parents to know exactly where to find them.

"Some of the runaways who contact me just want to talk," he said. "Maybe they have a lot of guilt about the fact that they ran away but they have no intention of going back. Sometimes they want to know whether I think they should contact their parents or not; if they want me to, I do so."

"If I contact their parents I don't give where they are or how to get in touch with them unless they want me to. This causes friction with the parents. I can tell them they're in good health, that they're down here, but they don't want to say where they

are, but they might want to know what their position would be if they should go home."

Father Benedetto does not believe the runaway number has peaked yet (there were an estimated 5,000 in the "Village" this summer), although he admits "they may be running away, to other places; the communes, this seems to be a big attraction, or New Mexico."

He believes that in some cases a youngster "has to just leave home. This is absolutely necessary for his sanity. I think as society gets more alienated and as youth gets more alienated from society and their parents, there's just going to be a lot more dropping out."

Father Benedetto said that he identified himself as a Catholic priest in the ads not because he expects to be a spiritual advisor or confessor to the runaways, but because "if I just put my name down and offered to help, they would be very very suspicious; they would not know what I wanted."