

'A Task for the Man in the Pew'

Anglican-Catholic Commission Studies Problems of Unity

By FATHER LEO E. McFADDEN
(NC News Service)

London — To an outsider, the reunion of Rome and Canterbury might seem sufficient work for a lifetime. But for 19 members of the joint Anglican-Roman Catholic international commission working for that purpose, it is only a beginning.

In fact, some members feel that the final goal, "full organic union" cannot wait for a conjoined "giving mission to the world" by helping the man of a technological age find his rightful path by the Gospel.

At Windsor Castle, 20 miles west of London on the Thames, the commission probed the themes of authority, ministry and Eucharist as part of their mandate to seek eventual unity of the two communions, an assignment given them by the Pope of Rome and the Archbishop of Canterbury in 1966.

A common declaration by the two Christian leaders at that time, while recognizing the difficulty of the task, and that its fulfillment was "far from imminent," instructed the commission to "forget what was behind and reach for those things which are before." The commission, in addition to aiming at the unity of the two creeds, is considering a church which will equip the man of tomorrow to solve his most pressing needs.

In a position paper prepared for the commission by an Anglican and a Roman Catholic, the "task of making the Christian commitment intellectually and imaginatively acceptable" in today's world was defined.

This task, it was asserted, "cannot wait upon the solution of our historic differences," cannot depend on traditional apologetics or seek convert-appeal, but involves a look at the "crux" of life which is still centered in the human personality, "whose soundest instinct is to react against all that is the enemy of the authentic."

The commission was in full agreement that the task was not just for the commission, but as one member put it, "for the man in the pew and his family, right down to the last of his unbelieving friends."

The paper then cited as examples of interest for the Church not only racism and poverty and war, but also contempt for nature, air and water pollution, noise, vandalism and "all of the expensive, base and ugly things which are offered to the voiceless."



At Windsor Castle, Anglican and Roman Catholic clergy hold the first session of a week-long meeting of the Permanent Joint Commission which was established by the Churches last October. (Religious News Service)

Regarding the complexity of unity, Dr. Günther Cassman said that it is much more than a realignment of theology. An official observer to the commission for the World Council of Churches, the young minister told the group they must view unity from all sides lest there be an eventual embarrassment.

He noted the lack on the commission of the Anglican progressive element and the tendency to agree more on their heritage than on their theology.

In contrast, Prof. J. J. Scarisbrick, the only layman on the commission, held out a "real hope for the resolution of theology."

He noted many areas of the convergence of theologies, and was optimistic for their total solution. "I yearn for the day when this full, organic unity will be made visible in living under the college of bishops gathered around the See of Peter," stated the brilliant biographer of Henry VIII.

Asked if this acceptance of Rome had been discussed yet by the commission, he answered in the negative, but insisted that no member of the commission would accept two authorities in a united church. "That," he quietly but emphatically stressed, "would be ecclesiastical carping and no one will stand still for it."

Father Herbert Ryan, S.J., of Woodstock College in New York was more emphatic in

speaking of a Catholic-Anglican unity of co-existence. "There is no value in glueing together two antiques to put in a museum," he softly stated. "If the Church is the sacrament of unity, how can a fractured Church serve mankind? No, theological convergence is coming, and unity will be upon us before people imagine, a unity that will enable the Church to fulfill its mission to mankind."

The American Passionist, Father Barnabas Ahern, insisted that it was the consensus of the commission that the discussion of unity should

be taken to the "grass root" level for preparation of the faithful for its eventualty. Further, he pointed out, the members did not look upon themselves striving for that full, organic unity for which they were brought together.

This session at Windsor was a transition for the commission, having advanced from the status of being merely a preparatory group to a plenary commission. Prior gatherings of the group were held within 12 months in three different countries. Their next meeting will be convened in September, either in Malta or Spain.

IHM Sisters Elect Superior General

Los Angeles—(NC)—Sister Eileen MacDonald was elected to a four-year term as superior general of the Sisters of the Immaculate Heart of Mary during the religious community's general chapter here.

Sister Eileen in June 1968 was appointed by the Holy See to direct those Sisters who had chosen to remain united to the original Institute of the Sisters of the Immaculate Heart. Other members have continued as a separate body following a dispute with officials of the Los Angeles archdiocese over experimental programs undertaken by them for the renewal of religious life.

Earlier in the special general chapter, which opened last October, the Sisters drew up and approved a revised constitution. The document, according to spokesmen, aims at preserving the original spirit of the community while updating it in light of Vatican Council II. It provides for a year of experimentation.

'Where Thieves Break In And Steal' 'Chairman Jesus' Stirs Controversy

Paris—(RNS)—A national television program started millions of viewers recently by reporting that some 18,000 churches and chapels have been abandoned or are at the point of being abandoned in France.

That figure represents about half of the places of worship in France.

They are suffering from neglect, dwindling attendance, lack of funds, and perhaps above all, vandals with an eye on valuable antiques.

Hardly a week goes by without a brief announcement that some church is being closed down to be used as a garage, workshop, or market—or that a church has been pillaged or vandalized.

In some "almost deserted" villages, a client churches have been stripped by gangs or passers-by. At Clignon-Haut, a small village in the Alps, which is abandoned during the winter by the clergy, children used to dress themselves in beautiful, embroidered capes of the 18th Century left in the sacisty. Such examples are not rare.

In many cases, the attitude of the clergy contributes to the unfortunate situation. Seminars do not give courses in the history of art. Some parish priests, in order to finance improvements, do not hesitate to sell antique furniture, vases, carpets or candelabras. In exchange for a statue or chandelier, they obtain, say, a heating system for the church, or sound equipment installation.

Technically, churches in France are the property of the communes. This includes all furnishings. It has been found that local mayors have light - heartedly authorized priests to sell goods belonging to the church.

French Cultural Affairs Minister Edmond Michelet has sent a sternly worded circular to all prefects to end the exodus of religious objects from the churches.

The title was chosen not only as a parody of the "Quotations from Chairman Mao" book, but also, Kirk said, to stress the contemporary Christian allegiance to Christ before everyone else.

Many quotations deal with violence — "Jesus told him, 'Put down your sword. Every one who lives by the sword will die by the sword,' Matthew 26:52" and civil disobedience ("These men have turned the whole world upside-down, and now they have come to our city. They're staying at Jason's place. They are breaking all of the Emperor's laws, and they say that there is another king, called Jesus! Acts 17:6-7").

Reviewers in a number of Catholic diocesan newspapers have been enthusiastic about "Quotations from 'Chairman Jesus.'"

Catholic Press Features

New York — "Quotations from Chairman Mao," a little red book filled with sayings by the Chinese Communist leader, was a best-seller, and now there is an unusual new sequel to it: "Quotations from Chairman Jesus."

Advertised as "the revolutionary best-seller," the red-covered, 4 1/2 x 5 1/2" pocket-sized paperback bearing Christ's image on the front and back is described by its publisher as "an enlightening and disturbing book ranging from the gospels through the early years of Christianity and underscoring the essentially revolutionary character of the life and teaching of Jesus and his immediate followers."

Compiled by David Kirk, coordinator of the ecumenical "Emmaus House" community-service center in Harlem and carrying a foreword by Father Daniel Berrigan, S.J., "Quotations from Chairman Jesus" contains quotes from the gospels, the early church fathers, councils, the Old Testament and various saints — all on the themes of poverty and affluence, non-violence and resistance to claims of the state over the dictates of private conscience.

For example, one of the quotations of Jesus printed in the book is from Luke 3:11 — "If a man has two coats, he should give one to the man who doesn't have one. If a person has food, he should do the same thing."

"I am hopeful," wrote Kirk in an introduction, that "Quotations from Chairman Jesus" will provoke in some the urge to become fellow-travelers with Christ."

The title was chosen not only as a parody of the "Quotations from Chairman Mao" book, but also, Kirk said, to stress the contemporary Christian allegiance to Christ before everyone else.

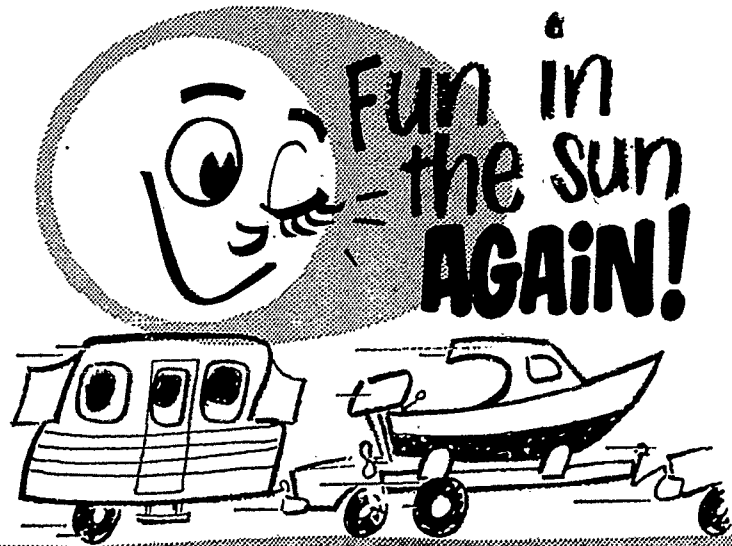
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A Kind of Pil

Actress Ingrid Bergman went to a U.S. Army chapel near the tape-recorded voice of a British missionary of the Sixth Happiness" film had died in Taipei at the age of 49.

A novel by British writer the petite British mission via Siberia to a remote n her life to missionary work Chinese orphans. The novel

Miss Aylward, who lat to Taiwan in 1957 and had children until the day she

India: Bigger

India's Roman Catholic meeting in Cochin with an the hierarchy in efforts to and more in the world."

The plea was made in conference described as "the history of the Catholic Bi

The bishops stressed tion in the affairs of the Whom we serve, we wish involve in our consultation

A Close

New Orleans — (NC) Twenty-five U.S. bishops spent a week here, seeking to find out why television is "what it's at, baby," and exploring the "hot" medium.

A cooperative venture Loyola University, the Catholic Conference's department of communications, the three commercial television stations in New Orleans. The seminar gave the bishops and opportunity to delve in all forms of communication media.

Television was the emphasis of the seminar, cause as one bishop phrased it, "there is more on over the written word in form of a press release or statement to all news media. But in television, once open your mouth and something, it's been said that's that," he added.

Working on both sides the coin, the bishops learned how to act and react before television camera, portraying a cool image as well as they can most effectively make use of the visual medium in their work in their dioceses.

The bishops learned firsthand how a television station operates. They studied how read from a teleprompter with emphasis on how to natural and relaxed while doing it; how to field controversial questions on panel shows and how to be at ease in press conference with questions flying thick and fast all sides.

Young or old, each bishop got his turn before the camera, and before his peers.

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