



Blacks In Mormon Choir

The Mormon Church, which has come under fire recently because of its policy barring Negroes from the full priesthood, now has two black singers in its famous Mormon Tabernacle Choir. Wynetta Martin, left, and Marilyn Yuille, both converts to the church, made their debuts with the ensemble this year. (Religious News Service)

Roundup on Abortion

Hawaii Liberalizes Statute

New York—(RNS)—Efforts to liberalize abortion laws in a number of states across the country has produced in Hawaii what might be the nation's most liberal statute.

In Honolulu, the Hawaiian Senate, by a vote of 15 to 9, approved a measure which radically changes an abortion law which had been on the books for more than 100 years. Previously, the House had sanctioned the measure, 31 to 20.

Gov. John A. Burns, a Roman Catholic, indicated that he would allow the bill to become law without his signature.

While the old law would only permit an abortion if the woman's life was in danger, the new statute would allow any woman who has lived in Hawaii for at least 90 days to have an abortion simply because she did not want to have a baby.

However, the embryo or fetus would have to be what the law calls "nonviable." Legal experts interpret this to mean that women would be eligible to undergo abortions only if they were in the

first four or five months of a pregnancy.

In addition to Gov. Burns, another key figure in the progress of the bill through the legislature was another Catholic, State Sen. Vincent H. Yano, chairman of the Public Health Committee.

Both Gov. Burns and Sen. Yano had said before the measure was put to a vote that they felt an abortion should be left to the individual decision of the mother and doctor.

Meanwhile in Annapolis, Md., at a hearing conducted by the House Environmental Matters Committee, physicians and officials of the state Department of Health claimed that abortions are solely a medical question and should not be controlled by state law.

In other actions concerning abortion reform around the country:

• A liberalized abortion measure has been reported out by a legislative subcommittee in Virginia. It has now been placed on the docket of the House of Delegates General Laws Committee where

sentiment for and against is about even.

The proposed law would allow an abortion on the following grounds: danger to the life of the mother; harm to the mental and physical health of the mother or child; and pregnancy resulting from rape or incest. The current law only recognizes danger to the life of the mother.

The bill further requires an affidavit from the woman's physician and her consent, sets up a hospital abortion review board, and has a state residency restriction of six months.

• The U.S. Supreme Court refused to review the decision of a California court which declared the state's abortion law unconstitutional. The state court had declared that the current law, which allows an abortion only when necessary to preserve the life of the woman, was held to be unconstitutionally vague.

The California court charged that the statute infringed upon the woman's rights of privacy in sex, in marriage, and upon their freedom to choose whether to bear children.

Another Priest In Politics

Youngstown—(NC)—Another Catholic priest has filed as a candidate for Congress. Father Joseph R. Lucas, philosophy professor at Youngstown State University, will seek the Democratic nomination from Ohio's 19th district in the May 5 primary.

Father Robert F. Drinan, S.J., of Boston College, a noted law scholar and activist in the peace and civil rights movements, will enter a congressional primary in Massachusetts.

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Much Ado--or Is It A-Due?

York, Eng.—(RNS)—A royal rumple is brewing at Ampleforth, a town outside York.

Ampleforth is the site of an historic Roman Catholic Benedictine Abbey and school but this controversy has nothing to do with the Catholics.

It concerns the 1,000-year-old parish church of St. Hilda's, now Anglican, a local farmer who doesn't go to church, the Archbishop of York, and a decree which goes back to the 16th Century reign of King Henry VIII, who sparked the Reformation in this country.

The farmer, Geoffrey Wood, has just received an immediate demand from the

parochial church council of St. Hilda's for the equivalent of \$480 for repairs to the ancient church.

Not only that, he was told that other pending repairs to the church might run to something like \$4,800, and he would have to pay the bill. Wood, not unexpectedly, said he was "stunned."

But investigation showed that all this was an old story and that King Henry VIII is really to blame. Back in the days of Bluff King Hal, a decree was authorized whereby the owners of Lodge Field House Farm—which Wood owns today—were made responsible for repairs to the local parish church. This decree existed through history but no one did anything about it.

In 1930, Wood's father, Walter, bought the farm, but he was assured that no one would expect him to pay anything—as no one in living memory had expected this before.

However, "minutes had hardly passed" before Walter Wood received demands from the parochial church council for repair bills, according to Geoffrey Wood.

There were further demands in 1965 and 1967 but they seemed to "fizzle out". Last year, however, Geoffrey Wood took over the deeds from his father, who is still living at the farm. And Geoffrey has received a demand from the Ampleforth Parish Church Council for \$480 for church repairs, with a possible demand for a further \$4,820 later.

Said Wood Jr., on getting this demand: "I am determined not to pay a single penny. To be expected to pay for repairs to the parish church under a system introduced hundreds of years ago is absolutely scandalous."

Geoffrey Wood added that he never went to church, anyway, and if repairs are necessary "then the church can pay for them... I cannot remember the last time I set foot in a church and I am not inclined to go again when they carry on like this."

2 Women Declared 'Doctors of Church'

Vatican City—(RNS)—Two women—the first in Roman Catholic Church history—have joined the rare and high rank of such prestigious figures as St. Thomas Aquinas and St. Augustine.

They are St. Teresa of Avila and St. Catherine of Siena who, on Feb. 14, were declared "Doctors of the Church" by Pope Paul VI.

The papal action is interpreted as part of the Pope's avowed policy of giving greater recognition to women in the Church.

A "Doctor of the Church" is an ecclesiastical writer, noted both for his—and, now, her—learning and holiness of life.

St. Teresa of Avila (not to be confused with St. Teresa of Lisieux) was born in 1515 and died in 1582. She was a Spanish Carmelite nun, a

founder of numerous convents, an indefatigable reformer of organized religious life for women, an authentic mystic and visionary, and a writer of books, including, most importantly, her "Interior Castle," a classic study of mystical prayer.

For the last century or two, she has been admired as a pioneer feminist and a literary figure who has made a great contribution to the knowledge of human psychology.

The only other newly proclaimed "Doctor of the Church," St. Catherine of Siena (Italy), was born in 1347 and died in 1380. She was attracted to the life of prayer and solitude, gained admittance to a lay group, the Third Order of St. Dominic, and involved herself in house work and service to the poor.

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