

# Two Church Leaders Foresee Eventual Unity of Christianity

New York — (NO) — Leo Cardinal Suenens of Malines-Brussels joined Anglican Archbishop Michael Ramsey of Canterbury here in predicting an eventual union of the Roman Catholic Church with worldwide Anglicanism in terms of their common Christian essence.

The two churchmen were here as the main speakers at a landmark three-day closed seminar at Trinity Episcopal Institute to discuss "The Future of the Christian Church," attended by more than 80 Episcopal bishops from throughout the U.S.

Among the events scheduled during their week-long stay were the conferring of an honorary doctorate in human letters on Archbishop Ramsey by Woodstock College, Jesuit seminary; a reception and prayers with the Anglican primate by Terence Cardinal Cooke, archbishop of New York, at St. Patrick's Cathedral, a public lecture by Dr. Ramsey at the interdenominational Riverside Church.

At a joint press conference, Cardinal Suenens noted that "something is moving and moving very fast" in Anglican-Catholic relations. The prelate said he was "confident the Holy Spirit is at work."

"But we have to be both patient and impatient... unity does not mean uniformity," he said. "There is a unity of essence in Christianity, but a plurality of ways of thinking of spirituality."

Archbishop Ramsey, 65, a tall and massive man, said the cardinal and he agreed on the Malines concurrence (set up in the 1920s) by both sides to be "united but not absorbed." Ecumenism generally, he said, has developed along these lines:

- The "necessary negotiations" among churches about such matters as intercommunion and union.

- The possibility of different churches worshipping together in a "remarkable" and "unselfconscious" way, though they may not be in negotiations.

- Joint efforts in service to communities on issues such as race, poverty and pollution "with which as Christians we are becoming more and more concerned."

"I do not think that the cardinal or I are speaking exclusively about the Anglican Communion or the Roman Catholic Church," he said, "but about the entire Christian community, so sadly divided but with whose unity we are so concerned."

Cardinal Suenens said that both the celibacy debate and the recent papal birth control encyclical dramatized the way in which Catholic bishops' conferences are taking their "responsibility" in a collegial way to wrestle with problems which today are critical for millions of Catholics.

Asked whether he felt the debate between the Dutch clergy and the Vatican over celibacy was being handled in a collegial way, Cardinal Suenens said that celibacy was not the central issue but was a "serious problem" in the Church. "We have to discuss it collegially," he said.

"One aspect is priests becoming married and the other is of married men becoming priests," the cardinal said. "If you open the discussion on the second aspect, well, it would be very important."

It was his view that the Pope opened this discussion there by saying that he himself was not in favor of lifting the celibacy regulation. "But that does not mean that all of the bishops of the world will follow the same sort of position, because they are responsible in their own local churches."

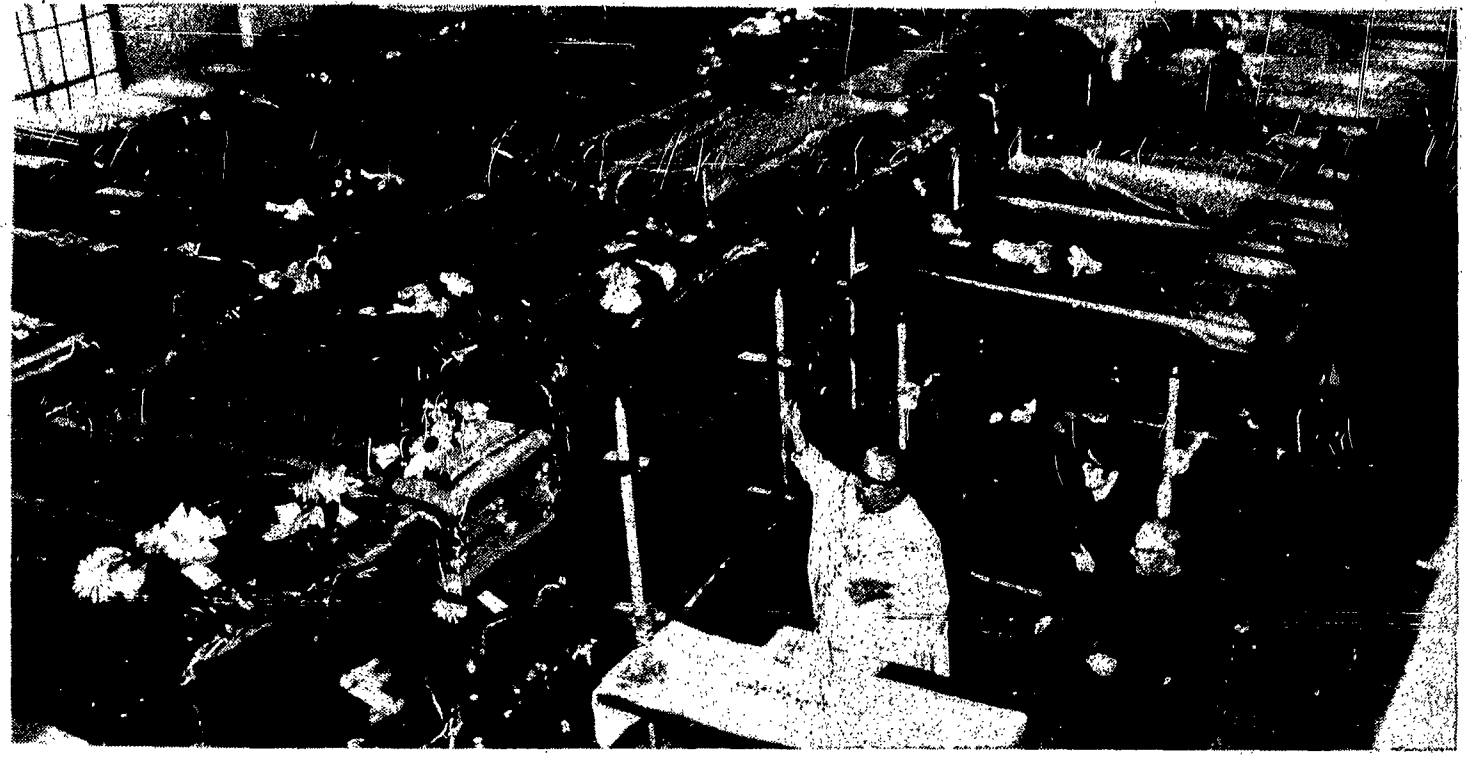
Cardinal Suenens and Archbishop Ramsey both felt that the question of family planning is a moral one, and said the Belgian prelate, "not the concern of government as such." The Anglican Communion offers guidance in birth control, Dr. Ramsey said, stating that procreation is one intention of marriage but at the same time "non-selfish (family) planning is right."

Archbishop Ramsey and his wife visited contrasting Episcopal parishes, including the church of St. Stephen and St. Martin in the Bedford-Stuyvesant section of Brooklyn.

His unscheduled visit to Bedford-Stuyvesant was triggered by his concern over a tenement fire there March 6 in which seven children had died.

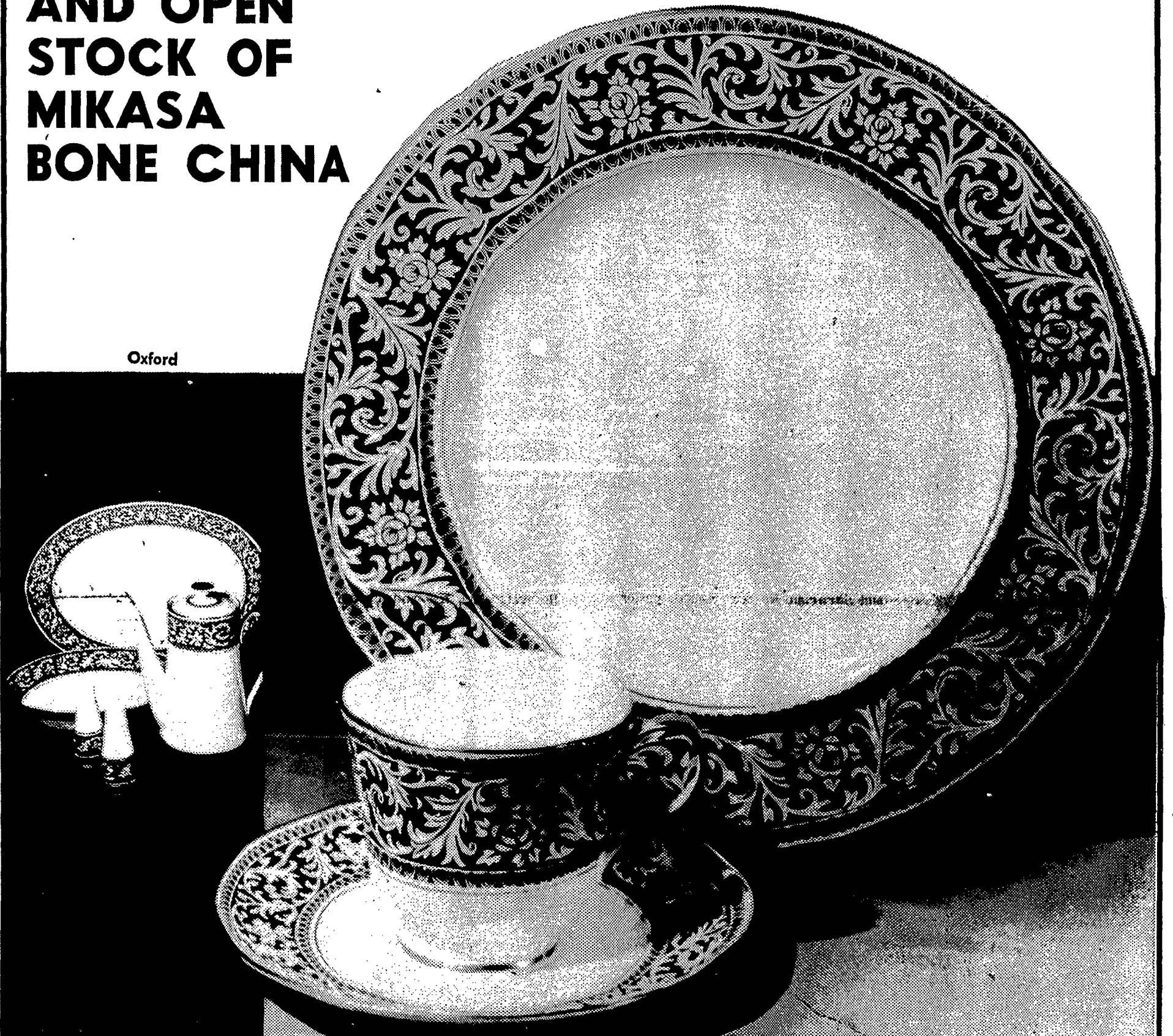
While at the century-old Negro parish, the primate watched from the worn wooden chancel as Suffragan Episcopal Bishop Richard B. Martin confirmed 16 children. Afterwards, Dr. Ramsey cut a centennial cake in the parish hall.

"We never thought an Archbishop would come near this place — we're amazed," commented the Rev. Dr. Herman E. Blackman, vicar since 1954.



In a New York warehouse, Msgr. Gustav Schultheiss, pastor of St. Raymond's Catholic church in the Bronx, blesses some 400 caskets containing bodies whose burial has been delayed by the seven-week-old strike of New York cemetery workers. Agreement was reached Monday. (Religious News Service)

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Surrounded by children, Dr. Michael Ramsey, the Archbishop of Canterbury, arrives at the Church of St. Edward the Martyr in Harlem, where he celebrated a Sung Eucharist on March 8. The Anglican Primate is in New York to lecture before Episcopal Church bishops at a seminar. (Religious News Service)

## good news

The Courier-Journal will print selected stories from among the entries in the recent "Good News" contest run in connection with the National Catholic News Service.

This week's article is by Virginia T. Giordano, staff nurse at the Reconstruction Home in Ithaca.

By VIRGINIA T. GIORDANO

Ithaca — Since 1919, The Reconstruction Home, Inc., has been a rehabilitation center, providing care for people of all ages. Today, the patients range from young children to the very elderly men and women.

The home is in the heart of this city of about 30,000 people. It is surrounded by institutions of learning, such as Cornell University and Ithaca College in addition to the Immaculate Conception Parochial School and the numerous facets of the Ithaca Public School System which educates all age levels.

A professional, diversified, salaried staff makes every effort to give each person the attention that is indicated in his or her particular case.

There are, however, the indispensable volunteers, many of whom have contributed generously over a number of years. Some give of themselves as individuals, many in established organizations, such as the Kiwanis, Mary Hibbard Aid, etc. Their material gifts can range anywhere from fresh garden vegetables to a considerable sum of money, as is likewise true of the community as a whole.

We have somehow come to expect certain things of and from the so-called "older generation", but it is the unsolicited youthful participation, begot from thought and born of love that captures our attention.

Few employees could adequately express themselves when just before Christmas a deluxe record player was donated to the children's department. It was personally delivered by dozens of boys and girls from the Henry St. John Elementary School nearby who had conceived the idea and devised the plan.

They pooled their little funds to provide a useful and thrilling gift for their young neighbors. Their bright eyes and enthusiastic program evidenced the fact that the joy of giving exceeded the pleasure of their usual package exchange to one another.

And now, speaking generally, I have yet to find the adjective which adequately describes the interest and vigor so frequently displayed all through the year by the young men and women of Cornell University and Ithaca College.

The general public is too seldom aware of the countless contributions made in such various ways by this age group. One can only be astonished at the number of students who entertain these patients with well-chosen programs, geared to interest and please all ages. It is hard to judge which are having the most satisfaction — the performers or the audience.

When one realizes the numerous ways in which these hours might otherwise be spent by any student, it is gratifying to see how they have chosen to utilize much of their own, personal time.

COURIER-JOURNAL

Vol. 81 No. 24 March 13, 1970

Published Weekly by the Rochester Catholic Press Association. SUBSCRIPTION RATES: Single copy 15¢; 1 year Subscription in U.S., \$4.00; Canada and South America, \$5.50; other foreign countries, \$9.50. Main Office, 26 Solo Street, Rochester, N.Y. 14604, Second Class Postage Paid at Rochester, N.Y.

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