

Canadian Envoy Reports to Pope

A new chapter in Vatican diplomatic history opened when the first Canadian Ambassador to the Holy See presented his credentials to Pope Paul VI.

Canada's ambassador is Dr. John Everett Robbins, 66, former president of Brandon College in Brandon, Manitoba. Born a Methodist, he has not maintained a church affiliation since Canadian Methodists were merged into the United Church of Canada in 1925.

Dr. Robbins said that the Canadian initiative to establish diplomatic relations with the Holy See came from an appreciation of the advantages derived from relations between peoples, and a joint interest in solving urgent international problems.

Britons Preparing Ethics Code

The bishops of England and Wales are preparing a statement of ethical guidelines, Cardinal John Heenan of Westminster announced at a London meeting of the archdiocesan pastoral council. The views of the National Laity Commission and other organizations will be solicited. It will deal with matters of conscience in public issues.

The pastoral council rejected a recommendation to allow the Sunday Mass obligation to be fulfilled on Saturday.

Church Slips in Cuba

There has been a sharp decrease in Sunday Mass attendance and Catholic baptisms and marriages in Cuba, the Catholic news agency Prensa Asociada reported in Madrid.

The agency said a Cuban Church authority had reported that 2% of baptized Catholics in Cuba attend Sunday Mass, 4.8% of the marriages are Catholic ceremonies and about 30% of infants are baptized Catholic. The same source reported that there are 59 young men studying for the priesthood in two seminaries. There are 200 priests in Cuba, about 80 of them from Spain and 40 from other European countries.

Surveys made by a Catholic student organization in 1954, before the communist regime of Fidel Castro, showed that in a population of 5.6 million, about 72% were professed Catholics.

Theology and Environment

Churchmen and scientists will discuss the significance of theology and ethics in environmental problems, population growth and biological experimentation at a conference in Geneva June 28-July 4 on "The Future of Man and Society in a World of Science-based Technology."

Approximately 100 persons are expected to attend, among them physicists, computer experts, biologists and biochemists, demographers, professors of social ethics and theologians. The Catholic Church will send eight official observer-participants to the meeting, sponsored by the World Council of Churches' Department on Church and Society.

Pope Plans Reply to Disciplined Priests

San Francisco — (NC)—The apostolic delegate in the U.S. has told 19 Washington, D.C. priests who were disciplined by Cardinal Patrick O'Boyle for their birth control views that Pope Paul VI will reply soon to their appeal for a hearing.

Father Joseph Byron, one of the 19, said here on the eve of the American hierarchy's semi-annual meeting that Archbishop Luigi Raimondi had informed him:

"I have now been authorized to inform you that your letter has been received, and a reply soon will be forthcoming."

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