

Oberammergau Criticized by Bible Scholars

New York — (RNS) — The revised text of the 1970 production of the famed Oberammergau Passion Play "still reveals the sin of anti-Semitism," according to six of America's leading biblical scholars.

"The play unfortunately perpetuates the age-old Christian attitude toward the Jews which contributed to the holocaust of the thirties and forties of this century," the scholars said.

A statement on the drama, which is presented every ten years in the German town of Oberammergau, was issued a few days after the group met in an all-day session at Union Theological Seminary here. The signers, five Protestants and a Catholic, were:

Dr. Markus Barth, Pittsburgh theological Seminary; Father Raymond Brown, S.S., St. Mary's Seminary, Baltimore; Dr. W. D. Davies, Duke University Divinity School, Durham, N.C.; Dr. W. R. Farmer, Perkins School of Theology, Southern Methodist University, Dallas; Dr. James Sanders, Union Seminary, and Dr. Krister Stendahl, dean of the Harvard University Divinity School.

Originated in 1634, the play used the same text from 1860 through 1960. As plans were made for the 1970 production, a great outcry from Jewish groups through the world protested that the script contained hostile attitudes toward Jews.

The whole issue of the text was partly raised by action of the Second Vatican Council in recognizing that modern Jews are not to be seen as responsible for the death of Jesus. More recently, the Catholic Church, and some Protestant communions, have made deliberate attempts to counter the impact of traditional or biblical material which casts Jews in a negative light.

The statement explained: "The biblical authors provided the material for all men, Christian, Jews and Gentiles alike, to recognize themselves in the disciples, the Jewish and Roman officials and the populace responsible for Christ's death.

"Thus they revealed the guilt of champions of law and order as well as that of zealous revolutionaries, and also revealed God's way to overcome their common sin."

Actors Guild Honors Priest

New York — (NC) — Father Gilbert V. Hartke, O.P., a leading college theatrics authority, was presented with the first George M. Cohan Award by the Catholic Actors Guild here.

The presentation by actor Cyril Ritchard, guild president, was made at the annual Communion brunch in the Belmont Plaza Hotel here May 17.

Father Hartke has been head of the speech and drama department at the Catholic University, since its inception in 1937.

The award was established to perpetuate the name of George M. Cohan and to honor persons of various religious faiths for contribution to the communications arts field.

In the early 1940s Father Hartke's department first produced a musical based on the life of George M. Cohan. It later was adapted into the movie "Yankee Doodle Dandy" which won James Cagney the best actor Academy Award in 1942 for his portrayal of Cohan.

'Tut' Encore Set at Nazareth

"Tut," a rock-musical set in the times of the Pharaohs of Egypt, is slated for an encore performance at Nazareth Arts Center, May 27, at 8:15 p.m.

Lee Sarkis, a teacher at Immaculate Conception school in Rochester, composed and di-

rected the musical show. It stars Robert Works as Tut. His wives are played by Cathy Roberts, Donna Hodgkins, Cynthia Johnson and Connie Mitchell.

The principals are students of the grade school of Immaculate Conception parish, Rochester.

K of C Council Receives Flag

Flag Day, (June 14), came one month sooner for members of Knights of Columbus Pope Pius XII Council, 4691 of Irondequoit. John J. Ochs, civic affairs chairman of the council, presented the council with a flag. It was blessed by the chap-

lain, Father Robert J. Winterkorn.

Members present included William D. Gasser, warden; Victor A. DeSimon, state chairman of civic affairs; Thomas J. Grosondonia, grand knight.

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