

Pope John Memorial Unveiled

Loretto, Italy—(RNS)—A monument to Pope John XXIII was unveiled here July 5 as a permanent memorial of the late Pope's visit to the Marian shrine in 1962. The bronze statue, by sculptor Alessandro Montelioni, stands in the town square named after Pope John.

The Marian shrine of Loretto shelters a tiny house of the Holy Family believed, in the middle ages, to have been transported from Nazareth in a miraculous manner. Many Popes have regarded it with honor, as a symbol of the humble and hidden life of Jesus and Mary.

Lutherans Note German Losses

Geneva—(RNS)—World Lutheran membership has declined slightly in the past year, principally because of losses among Churches in East Germany.

Mid-1970 membership totals were 75,124,215, compared to 75,157,353 in 1969, according to figures received here by the Lutheran World Federation Information Bureau. The loss was 33,138. The over-all loss in Germany amounted to some 413,000 members.

Bishop Chides Priest Guerrillas

Mexico City—(RNS)—"Our brothers who have picked up rifles and headed into the mountains don't understand what the priesthood is all about," a Catholic bishop declared here.

Criticizing those Latin American priests who have joined armed movements or guerrilla factions, Bishop Juan Fremiot Torres Oliver of Ponce, Puerto Rico, said, "They have forgotten the teachings of Vatican II that the main duty of a priest is to preach evangelical ideas."

The prelate spoke at the recent convention of Serra International here. Some 39 bishops and more than 2,000 lay delegates

U.S. Bishops Establish New Black Office

Washington — (NC) — The nation's Catholic bishops moved to bring new life to the Church's work with America's blacks with the announcement of their funding of the National Office for Black Catholics.

Launched with an interim budget allocation of \$45,716 and headed by Brother Joseph Davis, S.M., the new office here is devoted "to the liberation of black Catholics." It is the result of two years of planning and petitioning by members of the Black Catholic Clergy Conference, the National Black Sisters' Conference and representatives of black Catholic lay caucuses.

Impetus for the NOBC, Brother Davis said, came from a growing realization among black priests and black Catholics generally that "the Church was at a critical stage in the black community."

For example, he explained, "there are only 800,000 black Catholics in the United States. Black converts to Catholicism are rare today. There is a lack of black vocations. Both of these facts come from the Church's loss of credibility among black people. We don't see the message of Christ in operation in the United States."

"The NOBC is an effort to revitalize the Church in the black community, as an institution for and about black people. It will be devoted to the liberation of people, black and white. In short, it will give black Catholics — especially black priests and Religious — a chance to be about our father's business."

PARIS CARDINAL UNLOADING RICHES

Paris — (NC) — Cardinal Francois Marty of Paris has decided to sell some furniture from the archbishop's residence to aid aged priests and to make a symbolic gesture on behalf of under-developed countries.

The furniture, a collection of period pieces, could bring about \$18,000.

Cardinal Marty said he is also seeking to do away with "riches incompatible with the poverty of Christ."



But Not Fatal

A new anti-riot weapon was used for the first time by Berkeley, Calif., police on July 4 when gangs went on a rampage. Developed in Hong Kong, the weapon hurls blocks of wood from a gas-powered gun and is called the Multiple Baton Shell. Shown are the metal cylinder shell and 5 painful but not fatal pellets.

took part in the three day meeting aimed at promoting vocations to the priesthood and encouraging development of lay leadership in the Catholic Church.

N.Y. Rabbi Heads World Unit

Amsterdam—(RNS)—Rabbi Bernard J. Bamberger of New York was unanimously elected president of the World Union for Progressive Judaism at the agency's 16th international conference here. He succeeds Rabbi Jacob K. Shankman of New Rochelle, N.Y.

Draft Office Clarifies Objector Status

Washington, D.C. — (RNS) — The primary test for conscientious objectors to military service is how deeply their views are held, according to guidelines laid down by Curtis W. Tarr, director of Selective Service.

Their views need not be comprehensible to draft board members, Dr. Tarr said in an official memorandum to local boards.

"The primary test . . . is the test of sincerity," he said. "The board should be convinced by the information presented to it that the registrant's personal history reveals views and actions strong enough to demonstrate that expediency is not the basis of his claim."

The new guidelines were issued in the wake of a recent Supreme Court decision that claims to conscientious objector status do not have to be based on traditional religious beliefs.

Conceding that the criteria may give an advantage to educated men, Dr. Tarr urged draft boards not to favor a registrant who is "learned or glib."

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