

Catholic Unit May Back Amish in School Dispute



Sainthood Urged

This huge monument in Joazeiro, the second tallest in Brazil, was dedicated last year to the memory of Padre Cicero Romao Batista. The priest lived in the impoverished expanse of Northeastern Brazil from 1844 to 1934. Efforts are being directed by the Catholic archbishop of Fortaleza toward his beatification, a major step toward sainthood. In a recent book, "Miracle at Joazeiro," historian Ralph della Cava recounts how the priest became the unwitting center of religious and political controversy provoked by a "miracle" in his parish. While administering Communion in 1889, Dr. della Cava noted, "the white host was believed to have miraculously transformed itself into blood unquestionably held to be the blood of Jesus Christ." Although the Church did not proclaim a miracle, Padre Cicero became a folk hero. (RNS)

Madison, Wis. — (RNS)—The Wisconsin Catholic Conference has adopted a resolution requesting its staff to investigate the feasibility of submitting a brief to the Wisconsin Supreme Court expressing concern that the religious liberty of the Old Order Amish sect is threatened.

A suit has been brought by three Amish fathers, members of a small community near New Glarus, who have been fined \$5 each for failure to send their teenage children to school. The

Amish, citing religious reasons, oppose sending their children beyond the eighth grade, holding that elementary school education is sufficient for their simple farm life.

The defendants, Jonas Yoder, Wallace Miller and Adin Yutzy, sent their children through the community's grade school but did not enroll them in high school in 1968. They were charged before Green County Judge Roger L. Elmer with violating the state law requiring

children to attend school through age 16.

The appeal was filed by the National Committee for Amish Religious Freedom.

Attorneys William B. Ball of Harrisburg, Pa., and Thomas C.

Eckerly of Madison, representing the defendants, contended that the suit interfered with the freedom of their clients to act in accordance with their sincere religious beliefs, as guaranteed by the First and 14th Amendments to the Constitution.

La. Bishops Plan Study Following School Aid Ban

Baton Rouge, La. — (RNS) — Bishops of the four Catholic dioceses in Louisiana said a statewide financial projection is under way to determine what Catholic schools will do in September 1971, as the result of the Louisiana Supreme Court's decision nullifying state aid to non-public schools.

Some 3,800 non-public school teachers received checks from the state in October, before the court ruling was handed down. About 70 per cent of the teachers taught secular subjects in Catholic schools.

Officials of the Louisiana chapter of Citizens for Educational Freedom (CEF) also are planning strategy. They were primarily responsible for the legislature's adoption of the aid bill and the appropriation of \$10 million for the 1970-71 school year.

Archbishop Philip M. Hannan, of New Orleans, speaking for the bishops of Lafayette, Baton Rouge and Alexandria, said the decision to conduct a timely survey of Catholic school finances was reached jointly by the bishops and superintendents of diocesan school systems.

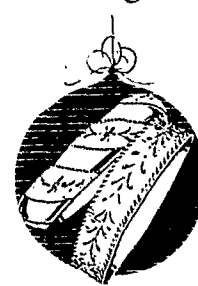
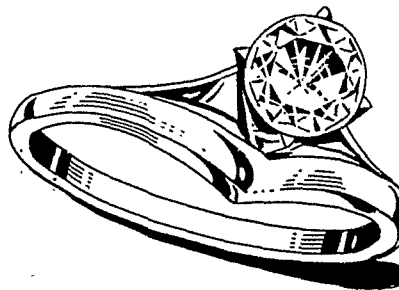
He said any decisions which would involve closing Catholic schools, which educate more than 115,000 students in Louisiana, will be viewed in light of the impact on public schools.

"Statewide the voters have clearly demonstrated their reluctance to provide new taxes for government," Archbishop Hannan said. "Thus, whatever decisions we make regarding non-public schools must be viewed in the light of the impact upon public schools and the communities of this state.

"Will Catholic schools close? Our effort has been to keep them open and even improve them. But the inflation in school costs — non-public as well as public — has been startling."

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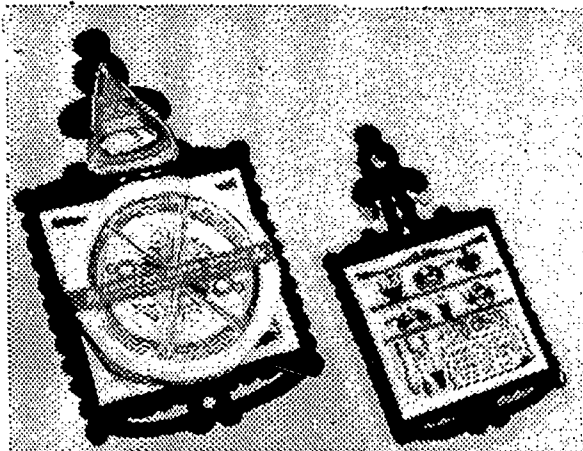
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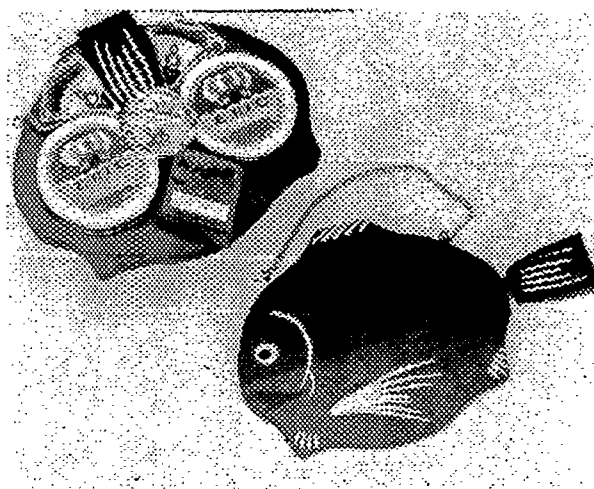
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