

Vatican Notes Satisfaction Over Nixon-Peking Plans

(From Courier-Journal Sources)

The Vatican expressed "great satisfaction" with President Nixon's announcement that he will visit Red China made in a television address July 15.

Federico Alessandrini, the Vatican's press officer, told newsmen the Holy See always has welcomed such initiatives "in the hope that they would help consolidate peace and collaboration among peoples."

Meanwhile Pope Paul VI, who is spending a few weeks in Castel Gondolfo said "new and great" events were in progress that could "change not a little the face of the earth."

The Pope, in his first weekly blessing at his summer estate, spoke briefly of "international events which demand the attention of everyone."

Without mentioning either Nixon or the announcement of the President's planned visit to China specifically, the Pope said the recent events made one ask the question, "What is going to happen and what will take place in the world?"

"Something new and great is being accomplished and being prepared which can change not a little the face of the earth," the Pope said.

In the United States Protestant and ecumenical churchmen welcomed President Nixon's surprise announcement.

Although speaking as an individual, Dr. John Coventry Smith, an American president of the World Council of Churches, said he believed he reflected the sentiments of the WCC in being thankful for the move.

"The possibility of closer contact between the peoples of China and the U.S. will be welcomed with thanksgiving by the world Christian community," said Dr. Smith.

Expressing gratitude for the new initiative were Dr. William P. Thompson, stated clerk of the United Presbyterian Church; Dr. Robert V. Moss, president of the United Church of Christ; Bishop Paul Hardin of South Carolina, president of the United Methodist Council of Bishops; Dr. Dudley Ward

and Dr. Herman Will, both of the United Methodist Board of Christian Social Concerns; Dr. Tracy Jones, head of the United Methodist Board of Missions, and Dr. Joseph Smith, the East Asia specialist for the Disciples of Christ.

Dr. Moss expressed hope that the announcement on China would be the first in a "series of moves that will be taken promptly to end the war in Indo-China."

In commending President Nixon, Dr. Thompson voiced hope for concrete U.S.-Peking diplomatic relations. The United Presbyterian Church first advocated improved ties in 1967.

Bishop Hardin said he favored any kind of "direct communication with China that

is possible. Communication does not imply agreement but it is absurd for any two great powers, no matter how wide their differences in philosophy, to be unable to communicate with each other."

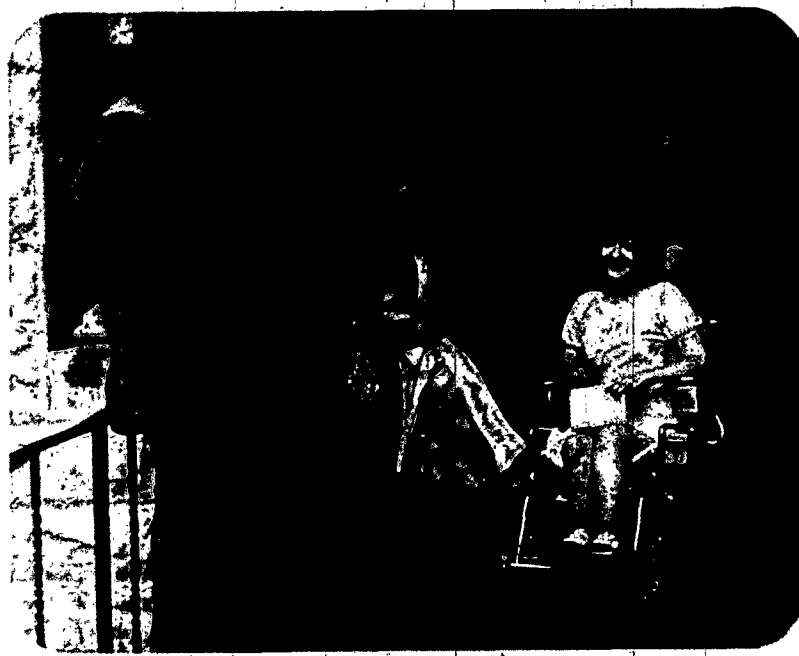
Dr. Ward of the United Methodist social concerns agency and Dr. Jones of the mission board both noted the long-standing concern of the churches for direct links to Peking. Dr. Will, head of the United Methodist world peace agency, added that he still wished President Nixon would end the war in Vietnam quickly "by withdrawing U.S. forces."

Dr. Joseph Smith voiced "hearty gratitude" for the announcement and "enthusiasm" for the President's visit to China.



Easy Going

Miss Fran L'Ambrose of St. Michael's parish in Rochester refused to settle for a confined life because she has to use a wheelchair. Now she goes in and out of her church on a special ramp set down at the 11 o'clock Mass each Sunday. Below, she comes out of the church in the company of her mother and CCD pupil Karen Beriga. The ramp, says Father Benedict Ehmman, pastor of St. Michael's, can easily be put in place for any invalid who wishes to use it.



Pope Urges Sanctity In Everyone's Life

Vatican City — (RNS) — Pope Paul has urged Christians, "in this period of moral laxity," to exert "continuous moral effort" to maintain and "live" the "life of sanctity" they had received from God through the sacraments.

The Pope, speaking at a general audience in St. Peter's Basilica, reminded his listeners that "sanctity" is not a prerogative of a few human beings, "who have realized in full and sublime measure the reality of following Christ," but is "a gift from Christ," conferred on men by Baptism and the other sacraments.

"Through the sacraments," he said, "man enjoys the mysterious, inner presence of the Holy Spirit, which we call 'sanctifying grace' — a gift that makes us saints and sharers, to some extent, in God's own ineffable and transcendent nature."

"However," the pontiff went on, "this state of grace requires continuous moral effort . . . and a committed freedom. Christians must ever strive, with the help of God, to maintain, perfect, and live the sanctity they have received."

This moral effort must be exerted in the face of a pervasive "moral laxity," he said. "Often mere 'instinct' is substituted for a sense of honesty and duty. Pan-sexuality, frivolous and passionate hedonism have caused violence and rebellion within the social framework. Robbery, extortion, and widespread abuse of drugs, with their attendant criminal aspects, are architects of moral disintegration."

"Is the moral sense completely lost?" the Pope asked. "Let us hope that it is not. Perhaps in some of the abnormal and disturbing manifestations we have referred to are hidden seeds of reaction that can effect needed changes in a hypocritical moral order . . . and give rise to a more authentically human and Christian life."

The pontiff called on Christians to "decry the suggestion that in order to be modern, one must behave like those persons who feel they are free, not only from contingent, historically-determined forms of behavior, but also from the exigencies of the Faith and the ecclesial community."

Parishes Busy with Neighborhood Program

Parishes such as St. Francis Xavier in Rochester keep busy during the summer months with programs designed for neighborhood children. The youngsters in the accompanying photograph are practicing reading as part of the Martin Luther King Jr. Summer School at the parish.



A centerfold look at the whole program at St. Francis Xavier is provided in this week's issue by reporter Barbara Moynehan and photographer Laurence E. Keefe.

And in Auburn, correspondent Mary Ann Ginnerty tells about Father Edward Shamon's plans to raise \$26,000 for a religious education center. That story is on Page 4B.

Although schools are in recess, a new principal in Bath has extra reason to look ahead to September. John Cucinotta, just named principal at St. Mary's in Bath, is

the first layman to hold such a position in a parochial elementary school in this diocese. He discusses his plans on Page 1B.

Away from the local scene, the long-running controversy over the shroud which some believe was used for Jesus Christ has received new impetus from a national magazine. For a synopsis of the article concerning this intriguing question, turn to Page 6A.

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