

Lay Council Pleases Pope

Vatican City — (RNS) — Pope Paul VI expressed warm appreciation for the work accomplished by the Vatican's Council of the Laity and outlined challenges still facing the agency.

Noting that the Council had made great strides in "developing and coordinating" lay apostolate movements the world over, Pope Paul emphasized "the immense and manifold needs" of mankind that provided "ample possibilities for immediate (apostolic) action."

The 74-year-old pontiff drew attention to the "problems of youth — youth's uncertainties and rebellions," remarking at the same time, "We must not be unmindful of youth's aspirations to build a world of brotherhood and peace, to establish dialogue and a more sincere collaboration with the adult generation."

He said pastoral concern must strive to be ever more aware of "family situations" and "the dangers which threaten" the well-being of the family.

"In all these areas," he said, "and in many others, the search for pastoral solutions more and more adapted to different socio-

cultural groups is very necessary," and points to the "fundamental role" to be played by the Council of the Laity.

He continued: "At a time when the forms of social, economic, political and cultural life are undergoing such profound changes, and when so many tragedies are hitting mankind... the proclamation of the Good News is more than ever necessary."

The Pope summarized the key tasks facing the Council during its next three years:

- To promote the laity's apostolic commitment in all human environments.
- To adapt the apostolate to these environments.
- To promote collaboration between priests and laity in the pursuit of goals illumined and sustained by faith.

The Council of the Laity was constituted by Pope Paul VI in 1967 to promote the development of the lay apostolate on an international basis. It is one of the departments of the Roman Curia, the central administrative arm of the Church.

Pope Will Have Last Word On Synod Recommendations

Vatican City — (RNS) — In a brief summary of the Synod documents on justice in the world and the priesthood, Vatican Radio stressed that Pope Paul VI reserves the right to judge which of the recent Synod's recommendations shall be put into practice.

The Pope will decide, the broadcast said, the "very controversial" question of whether the Church should permit the ordination of married men "in special circumstances."

Cardinal Jean Villot, Vatican Secretary of State, was cited as confirming "in particular that the centuries-old rule of priestly celibacy should be retained in full."

The cardinal's introduction to the published documents,

Rome sources pointed out, stated that Pope Paul now "accepts and confirms" all conclusions that "conform to current norms." But this does not say which recommendations might not conform to the norms.

However, these sources also observed that the decision to publish the documents was made by the Pope himself after the Synod delegates had decided not to publish them but to offer them to the Pope as advice.

JERSEY BUS AID STANDS

Washington, D.C. (RNS) — The U.S. Supreme Court refused to hear an appeal opposing public busing of parochial school students in New Jersey.

Pope Discusses Women's Rights

Vatican City — (RNS) — Pope Paul VI has urged support for women's rights movements so long as their advocates do not espouse "subversive principles."

The pontiff spoke in private audience with 150 members of the Italian Women's Center.

"There are many groups of women who need to be helped

to take up their rightful responsibilities," he said. "But we must not forget the necessity of a firm stand against the spreading of certain subversive principles, and to support those sacred and fundamental values that undergird the truly human and Christian dimensions of womanhood, with its own dignity and specific mission."

OSV EXECUTIVE DIES

Huntington, Ind. (RNS) — Francis A. (Bill) Fink, 64, executive vice-president of Our Sunday Visitor and a former president of the Catholic Press Association, died Dec. 4 in Fort Wayne, Ind. He had been hospitalized with a heart condition. Mr. Fink had been affiliated with the OSV for more than 40 years.

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