



Is Pope Changing Tone Of Dutch Hierarchy?

Vatican City —(RNS)—Some Vatican observers and officials are convinced, as a result of the recent appointment of a new bishop in Holland, that Pope Paul is determined to change the complexion of the Dutch hierarchy.

The assessments came on the heels of the appointment of Father Jan Gijzen, 39, as Bishop of Roermond.

A year ago, the pontiff displeased the liberal hierarchy in The Netherlands when he selected Father Adrien Simonis, leader of Dutch conservative forces, as Bishop of Rotterdam even though his name was not on the list sent to the Pope by the Dutch bishops for consideration.

Father Gijzen has long been a close friend of Bishop Simonis and for years has not tried to hide his conservative bent in

religious matters in a nation that has become known for its advanced ideas on theology and other matters.

"When Simonis was named," one Vatican observer said, "there was always the excuse that it was really done without the Holy Father having given the matter enough thought."

"But now with this second appointment — another conservative — it is obvious that the Holy Father is out to make the hierarchy of the Netherlands a conservative hierarchy."

Cardinal Bernard Alfrink, the primate of Holland, reportedly made no secret of his distaste for the Simonis appointment but he sent congratulations to the new bishop soon after his selection was made known.

"This (the new appointment) also means an open denouncement of the other Netherlands bishops headed by Cardinal Alfrink," said the Roman Catholic newspaper, Volkskrant.

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Rome Meets Malta

Prime Minister Dom Mintoff of Malta (left) meets with Pope Paul VI at the Vatican. The Maltese leader is embroiled with Britain in a dispute over his attempt to obtain more money for British use of military facilities on the Mediterranean island. He met with the pontiff for nearly one hour before joining British Defense Secretary Lord Carrington and NATO Secretary General Joseph Luns in Rome for talks on the crisis.

Pope Cites St. Agnes

Vatican City — (RNS)—Pope Paul VI scored what he called "licentiousness" in fashions, the press and entertainment, and held up as an exemplary figure a Fourth-Century martyr who died in defense of her purity and virginity.

Referring to St. Agnes, whose feast day is Jan. 21, the Pope said that she is one of the "most illustrious" saints of the Church, "who underwent martyrdom in defense of her chastity" at the age of 12 or 13.

As an antidote to contemporary immodesty, Pope Paul held up St. Agnes as "a martyr for virginity," "a custodian of Christian beauty," and "a maiden, who though very young, was aware of the sublimity and baseness that what is called love can assume."

Unity with Orthodoxy Gets Papal Nudge

Vatican City — (RNS)—Pope Paul exchanged the kiss of peace with a representative of Eastern Orthodoxy, and pledged his efforts to bring about closer ecumenical links between his Church and Rome.

The pledge was made during a private meeting with Orthodox Metropolitan Meliton of Chalcedon who visited the 74-year-old pontiff as a personal representative of Ecumenical Patriarch Athenagoras of Istanbul.

The Pope and the metropolitan later observed the close of Christian Unity Week at a joint prayer service in the Basilica of St. John Lateran. This is the "church of the Pope" in his role as Bishop of Rome.

Pope Paul called for a new determination on the part of all "to go forward, convinced as we are that prudence demands and guides courage based on faith."

"Our common march has brought about a new situation between us which may be the root of new progress and gives us a glimpse of new solutions," the Pope said, adding that both sides must "not hesitate" to go forward along the path to unity but all the while being careful to retain "full faithfulness to our common tradition."

"The eyes of the faithful are turned to their pastors, who certainly do not want to disappoint their expectation," the Pope stressed. "We will pray for the light and the strength needed to guide our advance toward a time when we may be invited by the grace of God to take decisive steps, not only between us, but for the whole Christian family, in what we wholeheartedly hope and want to be a near future."

The Roman Catholic and Orthodox Churches have been drawing closer together since Vatican II at a rate that many observers say could never have been expected.

Much credit for the accelerated move toward unity between the two Churches is given to Pope Paul. Among other things, he met with Patriarch Athenagoras in Jerusalem in 1964. There, the men embraced and exchanged the kiss of peace. The Pope later met with

the Patriarch in Turkey. A third meeting took place in St. Peter's Basilica in view of thousands of members of both Churches.

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