

Pope Paul Attends Cardinal Tisserant Funeral

Vatican — (RNS) — Pope Paul set a precedent for Popes in modern history when he broke the cloistered atmosphere of a traditional Lenten spiritual retreat to attend the funeral of Cardinal Eugene Tisserant last Thursday.

It also is reportedly the first time since 1969 that a pontiff has attended the funeral of a cardinal. On that occasion, Pope Paul attended the funeral of Cardinal Josef Beran, Czech Primate who died in exile in Rome.

Cardinal Tisserant, the 87-year-old dean of the College of Cardinals and long-time head of the Vatican library and archives, died at Albano, 20 miles from Rome.

The bearded French prelate had been confined to the hospital for many months and was visited last Summer by the Pope when the pontiff was staying at his nearby Summer retreat at Castel Gandolfo.

The last rites of the Catholic Church and a special papal blessing were bestowed on the dying cardinal Feb. 21 by Cardinal Jean Villot, Vatican secretary of state.

At the time it was believed by most top Vatican officials that had Pope Paul not been in spiritual retreat he would have gone to the bedside of the dying cardinal to administer the rites and blessing personally.

It surprised no one in Vatican circles when it was announced that the Pope would set the precedent and attend the funeral.

Although the two men had at times disagreed on policy and other matters over the years, Pope Paul and the French prelate remained close personal friends to the end.

"I expected nothing less of the Holy Father than to do what he is doing," said one Vatican source. "After all, Cardinal Tisserant is the Dean of the College of Cardinals and he was, even though the two did have some disagreements, a close and trusted and beloved friend of Pope Paul."

As dean of the college, it fell to Cardinal Tisserant to set up the secret conclaves at which Popes John XXIII and Paul VI were elected.

There even was a brief pe-

Vatican NEWS



CARDINAL TISSERANT

riod in history — after the death of Pius XII — that Cardinal Tisserant literally held the reigns of world Catholicism.

This period occurred in the interim between the death of Pius XII and the election of John as his successor. Cardinal Tisserant was temporal ruler of the Universal Church then because Pius had never named a chamberlain.

Cardinal Tisserant, a patriarchal figure with a long, gray-flecked beard, was a man of vast erudition and one of the world's leading Orientalists. As a young scholar, he published numerous linguistic studies and editions of ancient texts that are still regarded as classics.

A master linguist, it was his custom for years to recite the rosary daily in a different one of the 11 languages he spoke: Italian, French, English, German, Persian, Hebrew, Arabic, Syrian, Assyrian, and Ethiopian.

As perfect of the Vatican's Congregation for the Oriental Churches from 1937 to 1959, Cardinal Tisserant supervised the affairs of some 8 million Eastern Rite Catholics throughout the world.

During this period, he traveled widely and came into official and scholarly contact with non-Catholic Eastern Churches, and was credited

with helping to lay the groundwork for the ecumenical spirit that blossomed during Vatican II.

In 1947, Princeton University gave him an honorary doctorate of laws as "a distinguished scholar and eminent churchman, interpreter of early Christian documents, expert in the liturgical arts of the Eastern Rites, world authority on the Oriental languages, master of manuscripts."

That same year, during his extended visit to the U.S. and Canada, he was accorded similar honors by two Catholic institutions: Fordham and Duquesne.

Cardinal Tisserant's 1947 visit to the U.S. was one of several such visits. In 1927, he was invited to the U.S. by the Carnegie Foundation and visited some 40 libraries in the U.S. and Canada to prepare himself for the technical reorganization of the Vatican Library.

In 1933, he attended the International Congress of Librarians at Chicago and later lectured in several American colleges, including Michigan, Yale, and Columbia Universities. In 1950, he came to New York as featured speaker at ceremonies formally opening a new Institute of Contemporary Russian Studies at Fordham University.

In 1964, he was given an honorary doctor of laws degree by the University of Notre Dame, and, later, visited the World's Fair in New York.

Cardinal Cody In Vatican Post

Washington, D.C. (RNS) — Cardinal John J. Cody of Chicago was named a member of the Vatican Prefecture for Economic Affairs, which supervises the over-all financial operation of the Roman Catholic Church.

The prefecture supervises all economic affairs of the Vatican, and its responsibilities include reviewing of budgets, coordination of investments, and the examination and development of new work projects.

New Conversion Rites Instituted

Vatican City — (RNS) — A new rite of "Christian initiation" of adults into the Roman Catholic Church was published here Feb. 17.

The new procedure makes a return to the early days of the Church when persons wishing to embrace the Catholic faith were required to pass through a prolonged period of initiation before being accepted into the Church.

In effect, the new rite restores the ancient institution of the "catechumenate," a period of apprenticeship of varying lengths of time during which the "catechumen" — the non-baptized adult desirous of becoming a Catholic — will receive necessary instruction in the faith and undergo a spiritual formation preparatory to his receiving the "sacraments of initiation" — Baptism, Confirmation and the Eucharist.

The new rite allows for adaptation to contemporary needs and to different situations which arise from a variety of traditions and

Under preparation for seven years, the rite has been used

experimentally in various mission countries and in certain other selected areas.

A Vatican spokesman said the idea of receiving converts into the Church by slow degrees would permit them to make up their minds "without pressure and thereby deepen their faith."

For many years there have been complaints in some Catholic circles that the ritual and form leading up to "conversion" to the Roman Catholic Church has been too lenient.

This leniency has been blamed for many men and women adopting the Church before marriage, only to become lukewarm Catholics, at best, or even to leave the Church, soon after marriage.

Many Vatican officials are convinced that the new procedures will help much to eliminate this problem, something the Pope and the predominantly French commission who drew up the new regulations expect to accomplish.

Different ceremonies during the "catechumenate" or appren-

tice period will correspond to the different stages of the catechumen's spiritual growth and development:

After an initial instruction in the Catholic faith, the candidate for baptism will be welcomed into the Christian community in a ceremony in which he becomes, formally, a catechumen, "marked with the sign of the cross of Christ."

Then, over a period of time that in instances may be years, the catechumen will receive "a kind of apprenticeship to the Christian Life," through basic religious and spiritual formation. During this time, the catechumen will participate in "blessings and prayers," services designed to support him in his progress.

Then, usually at the beginning of Lent, at his or her own request, the catechumen will be called by the bishop or his delegate to receive, within a short time, the sacraments of baptism, Confirmation and the Eucharist, and thus be received fully into the Church.

Wednesday, March 1, 1972

Bangladesh Bishops Meet with Pontiff

Vatican City — (RNS) — Two Bangladesh prelates — Archbishop Theotonius Amal Ganguly of Dacca and Bishop Michael Rozario of Dinajpur — were received in private audience by Pope Paul VI on Feb. 20.

A Vatican communique gave no details on the 30-minute meeting, but it is assumed that the churchmen discussed the questions of status of the Church in Bangladesh and the question of assistance to the refugees and victims of the recent war.

This view was seemingly confirmed by the fact that the Bangladesh prelates met earlier with Cardinal Jean Villot, Vatican secretary of the state, and with Archbishop Sergio Pignodoli of the Congregation for the Evangelization of Peoples.

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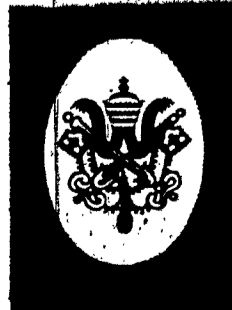
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