



Father Angelo Sabatini, pastor of Santa Francesca Romana church, blesses vehicles parked in front of the Colosseum in Rome on the feast of St. Francesca Romana, patron saint of all drivers. (RNS)

Contemporary Humanism Assailed by Pope Paul

Vatican City — (RNS) — Pope Paul, rejecting "the idolatry of contemporary humanism, which denies or ignores the existence of sin," called for a "new awareness of good" among Christians that will grow in opposition to evil.

During a general audience here, the Pope invited Catholics to reflect upon the "sad reality of sin" and the tendency of modern times to "shrink away" from not only considering sin for what it is but even from speaking about it.

"The notion of sin involves two other realities about which modern man does not wish to

occupy himself," he added.

He said these are the "mysterious but undeniable reality which is God," and the "metaphysical moral reality" of man's relationship to God, "who is present and omniscient and who questions us on our free choices."

The Pope then maintained that "it is exactly because we are free that we can follow or deny the Lord and the love of God.

This estrangement constitutes in sin the breaking of relations which we are capable of prolonging but not of remedying."

The fact that "we are capable

of losing ourselves, but not of saving ourselves," he added, "should make us reflect on where our responsibility leads us."

"The idolatry of contemporary humanism, which denies or ignores our relationship with God, denies or ignores the existence of sin," he noted, produces two kinds of "mad ethics."

First, there is the "madness of optimism, which tends to make everything man does permissible and the second is the "madness of pessimism" which degrades life into "anguish and despairing fatuousness."

On the other hand, he pointed out, "Christianity initiates man in the sense of perfection and consoles him with the gift of spiritual energy — grace — making him capable of stretching out and following it."

Pope Paul urged restoration of "the correct answer to sin, not fearfully or weakly, but in a virile and Christian way. Then the awareness of good will grow in opposition to that of evil."

In that way, "Our sense of responsibility will grow, rising from our interior moral judgment, to spread out in our personal religious and social duties," the pontiff added.

'Unity and Trinity' of God Emphasized by Pope Paul

Vatican City — (RNS) — Pope Paul VI reminded Catholics here that "the unity and trinity of God" and "the divinity of Jesus Christ" are "the two fundamental truths of our faith and its principal mysteries."

"We must have a firm and fervent faith," he said, "that God is one in essence and three in persons and that we have been baptized . . . in Christ — God and Man — from whom we can draw the light and love to give life its truly human dimension."

Addressing crowds in St. Peter's Square for his customary Sunday-noon blessing, the pontiff also warned against misinterpretations of the two doctrines.

"In these latter times," he said, "these mysteries, here and there, have not been correctly interpreted and annunciated by different authors, with the

grave danger of irreverence towards these mysteries and the deformation of our faith."

The Vatican Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith, the former "Holy Office," responsible for guarding against doctrinal errors, issued a 1,500-word document March 9, stressing as "contrary to the faith" claims that the person, Jesus Christ, has not existed for all eternity, and that he is not truly divine.

"When the mystery of the divinity and eternity of Christ, Son of God, is abandoned, the truth of the Holy Trinity also is destroyed, and with it the truth of the Holy Spirit who has proceeded from all eternity from the Father and the Son," the statement said.

The document named no names, but observers felt it was aimed at a current tendency seen in some Roman Catholic circles to view Jesus as a divinely inspired human being, rather than as the true Son of God with a divine and a human nature.

Pope Paul, in his address, said that the doctrine of the first ecumenical Council of Nicaea (325 A.D.) still enshrines the "official teaching" of the Church's magisterium (teaching authority) today.

That church council, convened by the Emperor Constantine with the sanction of Pope Sylvester I, decreed: "The Catholic Church anathematizes those who say that there was a time when the Son of God was not, and that he was not before he was begotten, and that he was made out of nothing; or who assert that he is of other essence or substance than the Father, or that he was created, is altered or is subject to change."

MALTA CONFERS

Vatican City — (RNS) — Archbishop Michael Gonzi of Malta, acting on behalf of Maltese Premier Dom Mintoff, was received in private audience by Pope Paul VI, March 13. No details of the meeting were disclosed, but Dr. Paul Farrugia who accompanied the 86-year-old archbishop as personal physician, told newsmen the prelate had come to Rome to meet with Vatican officials, with Joseph M.A.H. Luns, secretary general of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO), and representatives of the Italian government. All talks, Dr. Farrugia said, are concerned with the dispute between Britain and Malta over British bases on the Mediterranean island.

Courier-Journal

Cardinal Elevated

Vatican City — (RNS) — In a move to prepare for the election of a successor to the late Cardinal Eugene Tisserant as dean of the Sacred College of Cardinals, Pope Paul VI has raised three members of the college to the rank of cardinal bishops.

The prelates named are: Cardinals Carlo Confalonieri, 78, prefect of the Vatican Congregation of Bishops; Paolo Marcella, 77, president of the Vatican Secretariat for Non-Christians, and Luigi Traglia, 76, chancellor of Holy Roman Church.

There are three categories or ranks of cardinals: cardinal bishops, cardinal priests and cardinal deacons. The dean and sub-dean of the college are elected by cardinal bishops, in accordance with a decree issued by Pope Paul on Feb. 26, 1965.

The other members of the cardinal bishop category are: Cardinals Fernando Cento, 88, a member of the Council for the Public Affairs of the Church; Amleto Cicognani, 89, Vatican secretary of state, emeritus; Giuseppe Ferretto, 73, chamberlain of the College of Cardinals; and two Eastern Rite patriarchs, Cardinal Peter Paul Meouchi, 77, Patriarch of Antioch for the

Maronites, and Cardinal Stephanos Sidarous I, 68, Patriarch of Alexandria for the Copts.

TV 'Conversation' With Fr. Atwell

Father Henry Atwell, new executive director of the Genesee Ecumenical Ministry, will be interviewed on television Channel 10 during Jim Reilly's "Conversation," at 6:15 p.m. Saturday, March 25.

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