

# 'Christ Needs Apostles'

Vatican City — (RNS) — Pope Paul VI said that the "very being" of the Church depends on a qualified and dedicated ministry.

"The Church," he said, "as harbinger of the reign of Christ, needs not only faithful followers, but a dedicated corps of ministers, who will consecrate everything — thought, heart and life — to the Church."

The pontiff addressed throngs in St. Peter's Square on the ninth World Day of Prayer for Vocations.

Declaring that the voice of Christ was calling "to free and courageous souls, who can understand the economy of salvation," the Pope cited verses from St. Paul's letter to the Romans (10:13-17) to describe what the pontiff called "the logic of the plan of salvation."

"Everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved. But they will not ask His help unless they believe in Him, and they will not believe in Him unless they have heard of Him, and they will not hear of Him

unless they get a preacher, and they will never have a preacher unless one is sent . . . So faith comes from what is preached and what is preached comes from the word of Christ." (Jerusalem Bible)

"Humanity needs Christ," said the Pope, "and Christ needs apostles."

The pontiff sketched some facets of what he termed "the extremely important complex" problem of spreading the good news of salvation.

"It is a sociological problem," he said, "one calling for priests, missionaries, religious, who will dedicate their lives to it. It calls for an inspired charity. It requires all of one's life — in all its dimensions."

"It is a psychological problem," Pope Paul continued, "one dominated by a secret impulse of the spirit. Yes, even personal charisma are necessary. No one can assume such an honor unless he is called by the Lord."

It is a pedagogical problem," he said, "one of the most delicate and most beautiful. It is a gym-

nasium for athletes of the spirit."

"It is an ecclesiastical problem," he added, "because, as Vatican II reminds us, it is the duty of everyone in the Christian community to help increase vocations."

## Pope Praises Astronauts

Vatican City — (RNS) — Pope Paul sent President Nixon a cable expressing the pontiff's "admiration" for the three Apollo 16 astronauts, who returned from their 11-day moon voyage on April 27.

"On the occasion of the safe return of Apollo 16," the Pope said, "we express our admiration for its accomplishments, and extend our congratulations to its courageous crew on the successful conclusion to their mission."

"Together with men of goodwill everywhere we offer prayers of thanksgiving to the Lord of the heavens."

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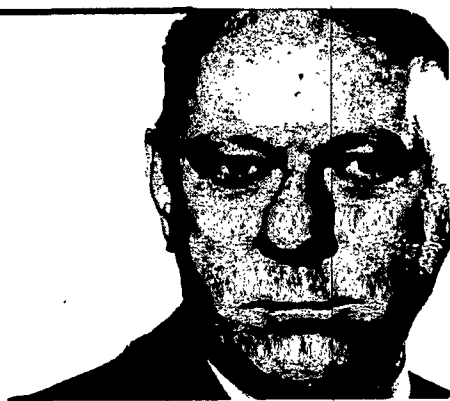
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## BOB CONSIDINE On the Line



It's probably a crime to knock astronauts, punishable by death in a centrifugal chair. But it's hard to refrain from commenting that the small talk that came back to earth from Apollo 16 spacemen Capt. Young and Col. Duke was as sappy as Cosmonaut Titov's constant claim "I am eagle!"

If there's a seat left on Apollo 17, last of the series, let's save it for Walter Cronkite or Rod McKuen.

Chunag Tse-tung, chairman of the Chinese Table Tennis Team of the People's you-know-what, has received a letter from the scrutable West. It was sent by P. J. McGovern, president and chairman of Little League Baseball.

It proposes that the Little League send its championship team to mainland China for exhibitions of the strange American sport — pretty much as the Chinese have been giving table tennis demonstrations here.

### Excerpt

"Little League functions is in its 33rd year and enrolls more than 50,000 teams throughout many countries. It is the largest baseball program in existence, but more importantly a youth movement dedicated to discipline, sportsmanship and exemplary volunteer interest on the part of those who administer it as a service to youth."

Little League functions throughout the Far East under the guidance of Tatsuzo Mizukami in Tokyo, chairman of Mitsui & Co. There are leagues in Japan, the Philippines, Taiwan, Okinawa, Korea, Australia and the Marianas. The game of baseball for youth can be regarded as a medium for establishment of spirit and good behavior in young boys.

Who knows? Some day, this

document may be known as the first salvo in what became the Spirit of Williamsport (Pa.), or the birth of baseball on mainland China, where I understand there are quite a few boys 12 and under. One complication: some of the best Little League teams in recent years have represented Taiwan.

To pay the help and the light bills, the UN has frequently been forced to dip into funds earmarked for humanitarian purposes — tending to the awesome needs of the poverty-stricken nations.

Probably illegal, notes the N. Y. Times. But what's a world organization to do? Its rich member nations give it peanuts, apparently fearful that if the UN was ever put on a sound financial basis it might do something radical — like declare peace.

Having no other problems, New York is setting out to reduce the weight of its cops. Naturally, there is grumbling among The Finest. One, 29 pounds overweight at 235, growled that if he got a call to go into a rough neighborhood and break up a fight, the innocent bystanders would rather see somebody "big and beefy" coming to their aid.

FBI agents around the country receive occasional instructions from Washington to guard against lard. One who read with dismay that he must not weigh more than 185 pounds gasped, "My bones weigh that much!" A Boston agent of considerable girth was sternly approached by an FBI inspector.

"What are you doing about your weight, Pat?" the inspector demanded.

"I'm praying to St. Jude," Pat said piously.

## Vatican Polls Bishops on Synod Schedule

Vatican City — (RNS) — Leaders of episcopal conferences throughout the world have been asked if they would prefer to schedule synods of Bishops every three years, instead of every two years.

A spokesman for the Permanent Secretariat of the Synod told RNS that letters asking that question were sent out on March 24.

RNS reported exclusively early last month after a meeting of the 15-member secretariat that the suggestion to change from two to three year intervals between synod meetings had been made.

The letter contains the questions of whether the bishops would like to see the synods held every two or three years or at an even different interval, the spokesman said. "It is purely a question put to the bishops, and it is not a decision nor even a strong suggestion."

The source noted that "many of the bishops have thought that holding the synods every two years was too often."

RNS learned that it was generally agreed at the secretariat meeting early last March that the world's bishops do not feel they can spend a month every two years away from their dioceses.

Many bishops feel that adding another year between the Synods "would give the men who come to these meetings more time to prepare themselves more properly for the job."

## Churches to Have Burglar Alarms

Rome (RNS) — The Vatican Commission for Sacred Art in Italy and the Italian Government will share the cost of installing burglar alarms in the nation's Catholic churches in a concerted effort to end a wave of art thefts.

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