



Concert Chorus

A youthful blend of voices will be a highlight of the performances of the Concert Chorus on Palm Sunday weekend, April 14 and 15. Shown here with adult choral members are, [l.-r.] Steven Finn and Ann Woloson, of St. Thomas More School; Melissa Eisenhart of Avon; Monica Zorsch, of St. John's, Greece; and Molly Hayes of Avon. The complete children's chorus includes 35 youngsters who will sing selections from the musical, "You're a Good Man, Charlie Brown." The concert, is the major spring event for the Chorus. The concert will be held in the auditorium of St. Agnes High School at 8 p.m. Saturday and at 3 p.m. Sunday.

Senate Passes Amendment Respecting Abortion View

Washington, D.C. [RNS] — An amendment to a Senate bill has been passed, 92-1, which would insure that religiously operated hospitals which refuse to perform abortions and sterilizations will continue to be eligible for federal grants or loans.

The amendment, offered by Sen. Frank Church (D-Idaho), is to S. 1136 which would extend for one year (to June 30, 1974) 45 federal health programs in the Public Health Service Act and the Community Mental Health Centers Act. Only Sen. J.W. Fulbright (D-Ark.) voted against it.

The Idaho Senator cited a case in which a Montana Roman Catholic hospital (St. Vincent's) was compelled by a federal district court, contrary to Catholic belief and teaching to allow its facilities to be used for a sterilization operation.

He also referred to a news report which mentioned a bill in the Oregon legislature which would require Catholic hospitals to admit patients for abortion operations, and in Wisconsin to a measure which would threaten the license of a doctor or nurse who refuses to perform an abortion.

His amendment, encompassing provisions of a bill he introduced.

in the Senate earlier, would also protect physicians, health care personnel as well as other health care institutions "in the exercise of religious beliefs which proscribe the performance of abortions or sterilization procedures," he said.

"Freedom of religion is one of the great gifts of our land," Sen. Church said. "Congress must never allow federal funding to be used as an excuse for eroding freedom of religious practice by forcing abortions or sterilizations on church-affiliated institutions."

Noting that a U.S. Supreme Court decision can "neither be altered nor repealed by statute, since it rests upon the Court's interpretation of the Constitution, the Supreme law of the land," he pointed out:

"But Congress can and should fashion the law in such a manner that no federal funding for hospitals, medical research, or medical care may be conditioned upon the violation of religious precepts."

The text of Sen. Church's amendment to S. 1136 follows:

"Section 6. It is hereby declared to be the policy of the federal government, in the administration of all federal programs, that religious beliefs

which proscribe the performance of abortions or sterilization procedures (or limit the circumstances under which abortions or sterilizations may be performed) shall be respected.

"Section 7. Any provision of law, regulation, contract or other agreement to the contrary notwithstanding, on and after the enactment of the Act there shall not be imposed, applied, enforced, in or in connection with the administration of any program established or financed totally or in part by the federal government which provides or assists in paying for health care services for individuals or assists hospitals or other health care institutions, any requirement, condition, or limitation, which would result in causing or attempting to cause, or obligate, any physician, other health care personnel, or any hospital or other health care institution, to perform, assist in the performance, or make facilities or personnel available for or to assist in the performance, of any abortion or sterilization procedure on any individual, if the performance of such abortion or sterilization procedure on such individual would be contrary to the religious beliefs of such physician or other health care personnel, or of the person or group sponsoring or administering such hospital or other institution."

Irish Catholic Bishops Welcome White Paper

Dublin [RNS] — The Roman Catholic bishops of the Irish Republic and of Northern Ireland, welcoming Britain's White Paper on the future of Ulster, have demanded an immediate end to "all campaigns of violence" in the strife-wracked province.

In a statement issued at the close of a two-day Lenten meeting at Maynooth College, the bishops said:

"The continuing violence in (Northern Ireland) with its callous disregard for the sacredness of human life has shocked the Christian conscience of the world."

Noting that "the overwhelming majority" of the Irish people "passionately desire and

daily pray for peace," the prelates remarked that it was "sad" that the majority should be held responsible for the crimes against God and humanity "of the very few."

"In God's name," the bishops went on, "we call upon all who are seeking political ends by violent means to defer to the manifest will of the people of all Ireland and bring all campaigns of violence to an end."

The reference, unmistakably, was the terrorist "Provisional" wing of the outlawed Irish Republican Army (IRA), which has rejected the British proposals for Northern Ireland, and has announced its intention to pursue its frequently-stated aim of bringing about the reunification of Ulster with the Irish Republic by force of arms and bombs.

The British White Paper—"Constitutional Proposals for Northern Ireland"—announced March 20, provides for a sharing of power between the province's majority Protestants and minority Catholics.

Referring to the British plan, the bishops said: "Just now the course of events has entered on a significant new phase. We profoundly hope that the recent proposals will be implemented in a way that will bring about true reconciliation in justice and peace, and we ask the people of Ireland to pray for this end."

The bishops, in their statement, announced that they were sponsoring a triduum (three-days) of prayer for "Reconciliation in Peace and Justice" in all Catholic churches in Ireland, north and south, on April 11-13.

Crime Drop Seen in 72

Washington, D.C. [RNS] — In 1972, for the first time in 17 years, serious crime in the United States declined, Attorney General Richard G. Kleindienst announced here.

In reporting the 3 per cent decrease as tabulated in preliminary FBI statistics, the Attorney General declared: "This is a day that we have been looking forward to for many years. It is an important milestone in the fight to reduce crime and is directly attributable to the strong efforts of law enforcement officers throughout the nation to turn back the wave of crime that rolled upward in the 1960s."

"During the year 1972, decreases in serious crime were reported by

94 major cities, compared with 53 in 1971. The greatest decrease was 27.6 per cent, reported by Stamford, Conn.

Serious crime registered a 1 per cent increase from January to September last year, but declined 8 per cent over the remainder of the year. The 1972 decline of 3 per cent compared with an increase of 6 per cent for the year 1971.

Previously, the last measurable decrease in serious crime was a 2 per cent drop recorded for the year 1955 in FBI crime records. A peak year was 1968, when serious crimes rose 17 per cent above the previous year. In the succeeding years, the rate of increase declined to 11 per cent in 1969 and 1970, and 6 per cent for 1971.

Noted Jesuit Leads Renewal

The Church of the Holy Spirit, Penfield, will hold a Week of Renewal, from Friday, March 30, to Friday, April 6.

Special guest of the parish for the week will be Father Vincent McCorry, SJ, a well-known Jesuit writer.

During the week, confessions will be heard Monday through Friday, 8-9 a.m., followed by morning Masses, discussions, and coffee hours. In the evenings, Masses and renewal services will

be held at 7:30, followed by confessions.

Father McCorry is an associate editor of America magazine, and author for 20 years of the column "The Word." He has written 12 books.

Ordained in 1940, he has taught English at Fordham, Conesus, and LeMoyne Colleges, and has conducted many retreats around the country.

All are invited.

Sounder, Emigrants Religious Winners

New York — "The Emigrants," a film about a Swedish family in the U.S., and "Sounder," the story of a black sharecropper family during the depression, have received the 1972 Interreligious Film Awards. The citations are presented by the National Council of Churches, the U.S. Catholic Conferences and the Synagogue Council of America.

"The Emigrants," directed and photographed by Jan Troell, was honored for telling its story of 19th-Century emigrants "with consummate artistry and luminous grace."

MUSICAL COMEDY

The Greece Theatre Guild will present Lil Abner at 8:15 p.m. April 6 and 7 in Olympia High School, Maiden Lane.

"Sounder" produced by Robert B. Radnitz and directed by Martin Ritt, was praised for its portrayal of the "forging of a youngster's self-image of dignity through the strength of a father's love and his family's support in the midst of external hardships and poverty."

WALK FOR WATER

Millions of families in the developing nations overseas wind up walking miles to find a well that will yield a panful of murky, foul tasting water. Catholic Relief Services-USCC is attempting to alleviate this situation by sponsoring world-wide water projects. Simple, gravity-fed filtering systems, piped to central concrete holding tanks, distribute clean drinking water to roadside taps in towns and villages throughout Asia, Africa and Latin America.



In a rare moment of peace, a British soldier attempts to get acquainted with a child in Belfast. In the year that Britain has directly controlled Northern Ireland, violence has not diminished. More than 400 have been killed in that period. And such moments remain few and far between. [RNS]