

From Courier-Journal Services

According to Bishop Leo T. Maher of San Diego, letters and telegrams have been pouring into his office ever since he told his priests to refuse Communion to those who favor freedom of choice on abortion. "The response has been overwhelming in favor" of the pastoral letter, he reported. Meanwhile, Clara Marie Henning, a canon lawyer, has charged Bishop Maher with setting a "dangerous precedent" in withholding the Eucharist from Catholics who support abortion. She has asked the Canon Law Society of America to investigate the action and that body said the request will be taken up at the May board meeting. Writing in the Cardinal Mindszenty Foundation Newsletter, Father Raymond de Jaeger reports that two Catholic bishops and nine priests have been killed during the current Communist offensive in Vietnam. "Bishop Pierre Nguyen Huy Mai of Ban Me Thuot, has been killed with two priests. In addition, the bishop of the new diocese of Phan Thiet and seven priests are known to have been executed approximately April 5 by the Red insurgents." The presiding bishop of the Episcopal Church and the president of the Lutheran Church in America have been named vice chairmen of the committee planning ecumenical participation in the 41st International Eucharistic Congress, next summer in Philadelphia. They are Episcopal Bishop John Maury Allin and Dr. Robert J. Marshall.

Religious News Service reports that confrontation between Church and state in Paraguay has intensified. The right wing Gen. Alfredo Stroessner government charges that Church-sponsored agriculture communes or colonies are subversive, Marxist-oriented and centers for guerrilla training. Bishops say the colonies are basic Christian communities. In Brazil, Cardinal Paulo Evaristo Arns of Sao Paulo has again accused the government of torturing prisoners. He charged that "systematic torture has been instituted in Brazil with modern techniques to obtain confessions from ordinary as well as political prisoners."

In St. Paul, Minn., a proposal of the Sisters Council to begin a joint dialogue over the proposed Equal Rights Amendment (ERA) has been rejected by the Priests Senate. Four religious organizations, including the U.S. Catholic Conference, will share in a \$100,000 Lilly Endowment grant to promote U.S. bicentennial television specials. The president of the Roman Catholic Conference of Major Superiors, Father Joseph A. Francis, SVD, has repudiated the administration of a Christian Brothers military academy, St. John's College High School in Washington, D.C., for naming Gov. George Wallace of Alabama to receive its annual president's award. He termed it "tragic, insensitive and lacking in Christian witness to the awareness of minority groups" to honor Gov. Wallace for special achievement in education. A Lutheran bishop from Norway told a lecture group at Luther Theological Seminary in St. Paul, the Western world is experiencing an abortion explosion because of the life-style and mentality of modern capitalism. Bishop Per Lønning said the abortion boom "run parallel to a series of social diseases which develop in modern 'technocized' society in which the concern for the quality of life has become subordinate to the privilege of ever-expanding consumption."

Pope Paul beatified a 16th Century French priest, Father Cesare de Bus, before some 30,000 people in St. Peter's Basilica April 27. The Catholic bishops of England and Wales have warned their thousands of clergy that the unity of the Church is endangered if the rules laid down by the Holy See for the celebration of the Mass are not observed. "Some priests neglect to follow the rubrics, to wear sacred vestments, or to recite authorized prayers. Great harm is done to souls by priests who virtually make up their own Mass," the bishops said, adding they equally oppose those at the other extreme who say that Catholics are under no obligation to accept the reformed liturgy. An American Maryknoll priest who has supported the South Korean human rights movement has been ordered to leave the country. Father James P. Sinnott was told by immigration officials that his visa would not be extended beyond April 30. He is vicar general of the Catholic diocese of Incheon.

Episcopalians Hold Communion Service in Vatican City Church

Vatican City [RNS] — In an unusual ecumenical gesture, Pope Paul invited 40 United States Episcopal and Canadian Anglican clergymen to celebrate Holy Communion at the Vatican.

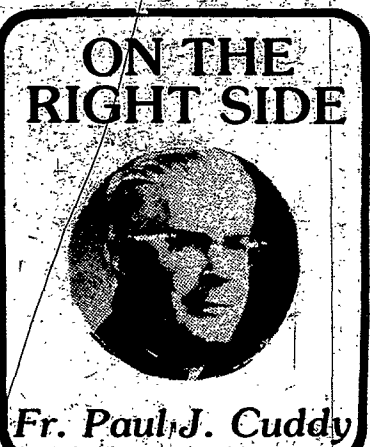
The 30 U.S. and 10 Canadian priests, all deans of cathedrals, concelebrated the Eucharistic service on Sunday, April 27 in the church of St. Stephen of the Abyssinians inside Vatican City State.

The 40 deans — some accompanied by their wives and assistants (canons) — had come to Rome for their annual conference there in private, unof-

ficial connection with the Roman Catholic Church's current Holy Year.

The trip to Rome was organized by the Rev. Francis Sayer, dean of the Washington (D.C.) National Cathedral.

Members of the group met with Cardinal Jan. Willebrands, president of the Vatican's Secretariat for Christian Unity, Cardinal James R. Knox, prefect of the Congregation for the Discipline of the Sacraments and of the Congregation for Divine Worship, and with Cardinal Sergio Pignedoli, president of the Secretariat for Non-Christians.



Fr. Paul J. Cuddy

ON THE RIGHT SIDE

What do you think of Bishop Leo Maher's denying Communion to members of NOW?

The 49-year-old Bishop is responsible for the Church in San Diego. NOW is a pressure group, which includes in its platform, the right of a mother to destroy her unborn child. NOW persons disregard the right of the father of the child. They deny the right to life for the child. This is pagan female chauvinism. Since abortionists flatly oppose Catholic teaching, I do not know why they would want to be considered Catholics; or why they would want to receive Communion in the Church whose teaching responsibility and authority they attack.

But to deny Holy Communion seems so unlike the Christ of love!

Have you some mushy idea of Our Lord? He is no male Pollyanna or a Caspar Milktoast. The Gospels give a Christ of conviction: "To the wicked shall I say: depart from me; you accursed, into everlasting hellfire." (Mt. 21) "He who scandalizes one of these, my little ones; it were better for him that a millstone be tied about his neck and cast into the sea." (Lu. 17) No. Bishop Maher exhibits the strength of Christ, and like Him he will be vilified and attacked. For heaven's sake, what do you think a bishop is for? St. Paul wrote to Bishop Timothy: "The time will come when men will not listen to the truth, but will follow their own desires, and will collect for themselves more and more teachers who will tell them what they are itching to hear. But you must keep control of yourself in all circumstances; enduring suffering, do the work of a preacher of the Good News, and perform your whole duty as a servant of God..." (2 Timothy 4)

Well, why not talk with NOW persons, quietly, and come to an amicable settlement?

May I recommend to you a recent book: MEMOIRS by Cardinal Mindszenty? (Macmillan Co. \$10) When talk is a one way traffic, and the pressure is to destroy you, then that's the time to stop talking and start acting. When the NOW persons approach Christ's Body wearing a NOW button, in a histrionic defiance of the Church, a strong shepherd acts. Bishop Maher did. The faithful bishop protects the Faithful against terrible scandal. Furthermore, the normal good woman — Catholic and non-Catholic — will breathe a sigh of relief that some one is willing to stand up and be counted.

Don't you tend to be anti-feminist?

Oh, come off it. The whole effectiveness of my priesthood would have been greatly diminished were it not for the generous help of many women, whose talents, generosity, intuitions they gave for the sake of the Kingdom. Men and women complement one another. Just because some modern Amazons press for a defeminizing role of women, don't get the idea that

most women are chauvinist Amazons.

What do you mean?

In Greek stories, the Amazons were militant women who engaged in activities normally relegated to men, e.g. war and hunting. They cut off their left breast so they could wield their bows and arrows better. They had courage and persistence. But I do not believe that most women fall for the defeminizing gospel of the modern Amazons. A few months ago I asked a book-seller: "What books are moving these days?" He said: "We've had a run from women for 'The Total Woman' by some Marabel Morgan. 'I read the book and found it very bible oriented, accepting with love the Pauline admonition: 'Let wives be subject to their husbands. Let husbands love their wives as their own bodies...' The book is hardly likely to get an an-

thusiastic following from the Amazons. Parts of it could be quite debated. But the fact is that many women find it enthralling. The book is blatantly sexy, and I blushed through parts of it. But The Song of Songs in the Bible is a bit torrid. Here is an interesting comment: "Ann Landers wrote that years ago, a prominent divorce lawyer told her that nine times out of ten divorces start in the bedroom. She found that when a marriage is on the rocks, the rocks are usually in the mattress." (P. 100)

Then you think Bishop Maher was right in refusing Communion?

I would think him an episcopal wetcher if he did not do his duty as a bishop. That's why he was consecrated. That's what he's paid for: to be a shepherd of his flock which is being savaged by contesting wolves.

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