

ON THE RIGHT SIDE



Fr. Paul J. Cuddy

According to our contract, the Courier-Journal pilgrims were to be furnished first-class lodgings, and a continental breakfast and evening dinner. By some fluke, the lodging was shockingly inadequate, and compared with the sumptuous meals of previous tours, especially in Mexico and Ireland, the Roman meals were austere enough to qualify for investigation by the Office of Human Development.

Fortunately the hotels and meals in Ireland were superb, and acted as a counterbalance. Our CJ group of 19 agreed that the indifference to the needs and hopes of the pilgrims to Rome were quite removed from the spirit of the Gospels. Canny commercial Rome is on the make during the Holy Year, taking advantage of the innocence and inexperience of the pilgrims.

There were many compensations, however. Our Group quickly formed a family, solicitous for one another and liking one another. Religious, historic and artistic Rome is a wonderful experience. The magnificence of St. Peter's, the holiness of many places, the glorious churches, the Sistine Chapel, the Catacombs, the Spanish Steps, the fountains and piazzas; the hunks of the Forum, testimonials of the law and discipline which made Western civilization cohesive; the gardens, shops; the meeting of thousands of fellow pilgrims from all the world converging on Rome and on the Holy See as the center of all unity; all were an inspiration.

The Wednesday audience with the Holy Father was a mixture of frustration, humor, human weakness and human strengths, culminating in a good example of the unifying force of ecclesiastical Latin.

Through Msgr. Richard Burns of Rochester's St. Thomas the Apostle we had tickets to the 11 a.m. audience which was to be in the New Audience Hall, seating 8,000. With what some described as "organized confusion" a large number of pilgrims for the afternoon audience came for the 11 a.m. audience and captured the seats of some 3,000 pilgrims who stood in the courtyard awaiting entrance. Youthful Swiss Guards kept order and directed pilgrim traffic. One looked like a plump St. Aloysius in his innocence. Suddenly it was realized that

some 3,000 were stranded in the courtyard, unable to enter the hall. So Pope Paul was driven in an automobile before us stranded standees. The roof of the car was raised. The Pope stood and extended his arms toward us with benign graciousness and disappeared into the audience hall. What we couldn't see we did hear over loud speakers: viz. the presentation of bishops, diocesan groups, etc. A special group was a school of young men, Stockholm Lutherans, who sang a Latin Hymn in reverence for the Pope. The Holy Father acknowledged their singing; and then addressed groups in French, Italian, Spanish, Brazilian Portuguese and English.

Anxious women, including two energetic nuns, were almost fighting in the courtyard to get nearer. Ah the effects of original sin, active even in the Papal courtyard. Suddenly, toward the finale of the hour's audience, the Pope called out: "Let us sing the prayer which binds men in unity. He intoned: *"Pater Noster, qui ex in coelis."* The competition ceased. Selfishness dissipated. And nearly every one of the 11,000 voices joined in the Latin chant of the Lord's prayer which all knew from the Tridentine Mass: *"sanctificetur Nomen*

tuum. Adveniat regnum, tuum. When the prayer was ended, it was as if a new people stood together. The Pope blessed us, and returned to his work at the Vatican.

Odds and Ends. Inflation is high in Italy. The price of everything is high, excepting bus fare, which is 50 lira (about 8 cents). Gasoline: about \$1.80 a gallon. Coffee in coffee bar: standing, 25, sitting, 50, or more. A two-cup pot of coffee or tea at the hotel: 80c plus an expected tip. Cabs: reasonable enough if the cab driver does not cheat you.

On the plus side, to see the Holy Father was a thrill. On Sunday, by accident, we came upon Mass in St. Peter's celebrated by Pope Paul, with Sistine Choir singing the Mass. The choir sang the common of the Mass in Latin, with the Kyrie, Gloria, Sanctus, Benedictus, Agnus Dei and Creed from the Tridentine translation, the Proper parts of the Mass were in Italian, which seems to me an unconscious affront to pilgrims who are catholic Catholics, from multi-lingual groups. I must write to the Holy Father about this:



Award Winners

These Girl Scouts from St. James Parish Troop 597 will receive the Regina Coeli Award tomorrow. They are shown outside Temple B'Rith Kodesh with Mrs. Sophie Tepperman, their guide on a tour of the temple. Front row, left to right, are Celeste Walsh, Theresa Bonn, Robin Isaacs, Kim Petrus, Joanne Apetz, Cindy Bailey. Standing are Tracy Romano, Sharon Dipolito, Mrs. Tepperman and Kelly Ann Dunn.



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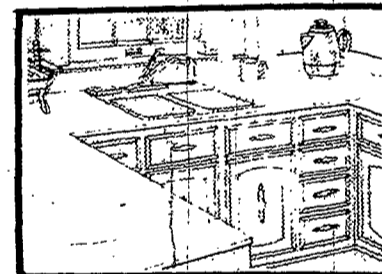
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