

No Radical Change In Way to Choose Pope

Vatican City [RNS] — Pope Paul, in a new apostolic constitution on papal elections, has dispelled rumors of radical changes in the electoral process by reaffirming that only members of the College of Cardinals may elect a pope, even when a bishops' Synod or ecumenical council is in session when a pope dies.

The Pope also limited the number of cardinal-electors to 120 and prescribed that no cardinal over 80 years of age — as 19 of the current college of 120 are — could take part in a papal election.

The new constitution, "On the Vacancy of the Apostolic See and the Election of the Roman Pontiff" (Romano Pontifici Eligendo), is dated Oct. 1, 1975, but was released here and in other parts of the world more

than a month later. It replaces previous apostolic constitutions on papal elections issued by Pope Pius XII in 1945, and by Pope John XXIII in 1962.

Perhaps more noteworthy for what it does not proclaim than for what it does stipulate, the new constitution does not introduce any bishop-representatives of the World Synod of Bishops or patriarchs of the Eastern Catholic churches into the election process.

In March 1973, Pope Paul told members of the Permanent Secretariat for the World Synod of Bishops that he would like to make the "conclave" — the body that elects the pope — "more representative." Many observers believed he would include bishops and patriarchs in the balloting process.

But bitter opposition to these

moves was reported from conservative members of the Roman Curia, the Church's administrative arm, and some Vatican sources predicted that the inclination to include bishops in the conclave would be abandoned to appease the conservative prelates.

In the introduction to the new constitution, Pope Paul said that down through the centuries pontiffs have opposed "all tendencies that sought, through alterations of ecclesiastical institutions, to take away their exclusive right to decide upon the composition of the body of electors and the latter's manner of exercising its functions."

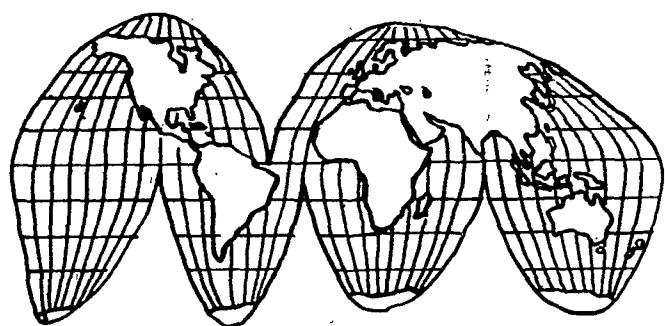
Noting that while the papal election process has undergone a "general evolution" through the centuries, the Pope indicated that there has been a strong "preoccupation" by popes to forestall undue interventions and maintain the "regularity of the procedure."

The current election process, he noted, was begun in 1059 by Pope Nicholas II and "definitively reserved" to the College of Cardinals in 1179 by Pope Alexander III during the Third Lateran Council.

Claiming that the electoral body "should not be too numerous" and yet should represent the "various Churches of the Catholic world and of different countries," Pope Paul said he was issuing the new constitution so the norms concerning the election of a pontiff "may fit the present-day situation and correspond to the good of the Church."

In a statement that could account for the exclusion of Eastern rite patriarchs, the Pope noted: "At the same time we reaffirm the principle whereby the election of the Roman Pontiff is by ancient tradition the competence of the Church of Rome, that is, the Sacred College of Cardinals which represents her."

the nation and ...



... the world

From Courier-Journal Services

Catholic Relief Services has sent an emergency shipment of medicines and medical supplies to strife-torn Lebanon to assist victims of the civil strife between Christians and Muslims, which has claimed some 3,000 lives in six months. . . . A priest who heads a national Catholic program to promote interracial understanding has said that Church concern over the issue has declined while racism itself is enjoying an upsurge in America. Father James J. Sheehan of Detroit is executive director of the National Catholic Conference for Interracial Justice. . . . At the United Nations, the United States has mounted a major publicity campaign to convince the U.N. that its support in other countries would wane if the General Assembly approves a resolution saying that Zionism is a form of racial discrimination.

How about a reverse view of the world population problem? In Capetown, South Africa, a minister of South Africa's largest Dutch Reformed Church called on its members to "have more children or Roman Catholics will soon outnumber us." Right now there are 3.3 million Dutch Reformed in South Africa compared to 1.8 million Catholics, including 1.3 million blacks. . . . More than 1,500 European Roman Catholic blind persons gathered in Rome recently for a special Holy Year congress of the blind. Pope Paul VI asked them to bear their "daily cross" of sightlessness as a plea to God for the conversion of the sighted who "though seeing, do not see." . . . Father Raymond C. Herman, a 45-year-old priest from the Dubuque archdiocese, was shot and killed Oct. 20 in the Bolivian village of Morchatta where he had founded a mission for Bolivian Indians. Details of the slaying are sketchy.

According to Newsprint, an ecumenical newsletter, a national conference on family life convened by evangelical Protestant churches endorsed a statement condemning "the free and easy practice of abortion as it now exists in our society." . . . Father Walter Conway of Philadelphia, an expeditor for next year's Eucharistic Congress, has expressed hope that every parish in the nation will have its own mini-congress and that the primary thrust will be spiritual renewal.

The interfaith Morality in Media honored actress Helen Hayes at its 10th annual awards dinner in New York City. Miss Hayes was too ill to attend but was represented by actress Mildred Natwick. . . . In Green Bay, Wis., a married permanent deacon, the Rev. Mr. Glenn T. Beudry was named associate pastor of a parish in what was described as a "clear indication" of a priest shortage. . . . Remember Murph the Surf, who tried to steal the Star of India sapphire some 10 years ago? Well, Newsprint reports that he is has found a "new life in Jesus" while serving a life term in a Florida prison. He credits a prison chaplain and a former inmate for leading him back to Christianity. . . . In Canada, the Anglican bishops voted, 31-3, to allow the ordination of women as priests of the church after Nov. 1, 1976.

Advent Program For Families

Guardian Angels parish will celebrate the Feast of St. Nicholas with an Advent program for families. While the adults are meeting with Father Albert Del Monte for a film and discussion, the children will be making decorations for a Jesse tree. Then all will get together for the dedication of the tree, refresh-

ments and a visit from St. Nick.

The program Saturday, Dec. 6, will open at 2 p.m. with a worship service and run until 4, under the direction of Mrs. Gerry McLaughlin. People wishing to take part should register after Masses Sunday, Nov. 23.

'GIFTS'

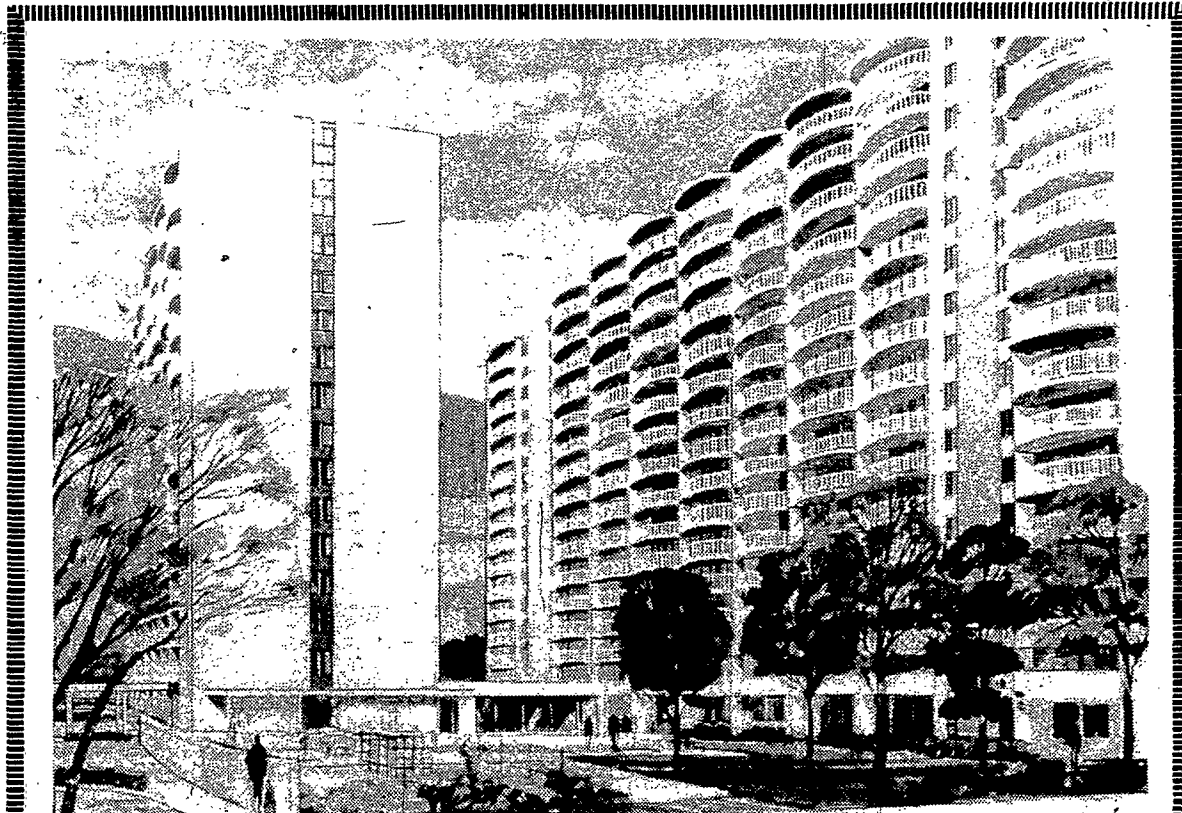
Ithaca — Immaculate Conception Church is about to hold the Gift Program. This semester features a five-part survey course on The Old Testament given by Father John Zimmerman. The "Gift" lectures will be held on Wednesday evenings, Nov. 5, 12, 19 and Dec. 3 and 10 from 8 to 9:30 p.m. in the school.

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