

Pope Raises Status Of U.S. Melkite Rite

Washington, D.C. [RNS] — Pope Paul has raised the status of the Melkite Rite in the United States.

Where once Melkites were members of an exarchy (diocese) that was required to report to the Vatican, Pope Paul's proclamation gives them the status of an eparchy, which means that Melkites will come under the overview of Melkite Patriarch Maximos V Hakim of Beirut, Lebanon.

Announcement of the change from exarchy to eparchy was announced here by Archbishop Jean Jadot, apostolic delegate in the U.S. and the pontiff's direct representative in this country.

Simultaneously, Pope Paul has promoted Archbishop Joseph Tawil, current leader of American Melkites, from the rank of exarch to eparch.

[St. Nicholas on Remington Street in Rochester is a Melkite Rite parish.]

As early as 1969, there were reports that Pope Paul planned to raise the status of the Melkite Rite in the United States.

Archbishop Tawil, since 1969, has been serving as apostolic exarch for Melkite Catholics in the U.S., approximately 22,000 persons in 17 states. The exarchy, established in 1966 with the appointment of the late Bishop Justin Najmy, has headquarters at West Newton, Mass.

Following the 1969 appointment of Archbishop Tawil to succeed Bishop Najmy, Pope Paul reportedly gave assurances that the status of the prelate would be changed from apostolic exarch to eparch, shifting responsibility from Rome to the Melkite patriarch and synod.

In 1968, upon the death of Bishop Najmy, a controversy arose over the appointment of his successor. Patriarch Maximos V Hakim, who heads the Melkite Rite from Beirut, defended his right to appoint an eparch for American Melkites. At the same time, the Vatican Congregation for Eastern Churches refused to recognize that right, claiming that the "home rule" of the Patriarch was limited to the Middle East.

The Patriarch rejected the congregation's interpretation and took the matter to Pope Paul. He said later that the Pope assured him that the status of Archbishop Tawil would be changed to "eparch."

Melkite Catholics, originally Arabic-speaking Catholics of the Byzantine Rite in Syria, Egypt, Palestine and elsewhere, follow the same basic traditions as the Orthodox Church and celebrate the same liturgy. However, unlike the Orthodox, they recognize the primacy of the Pope.

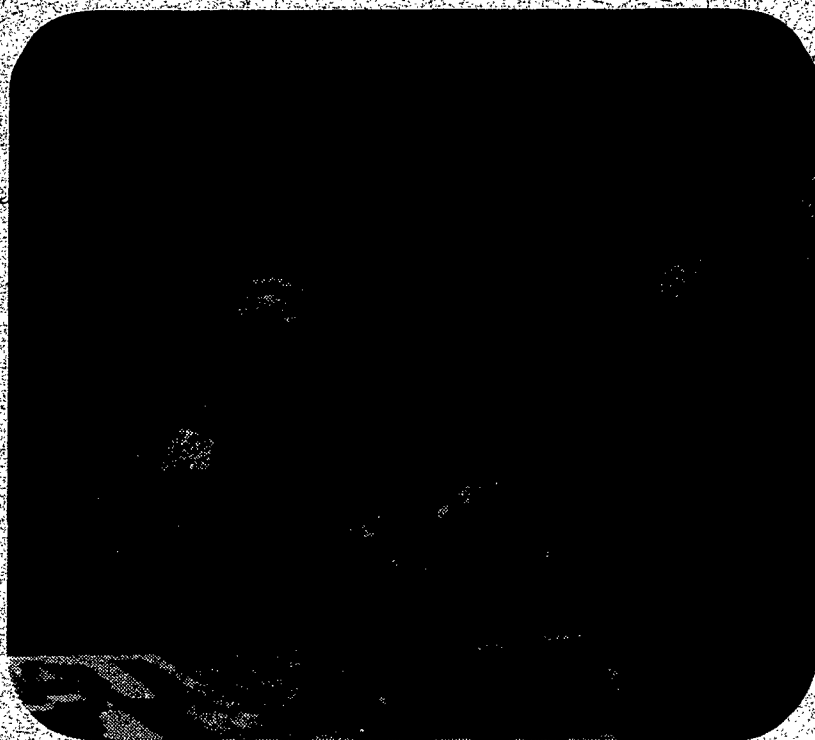


Photo by Susan McKinney

Spreading the Word

Leo A. O'Halloran carries on a discussion with Denise Servello at the Legion of Mary's display in Midtown Mall last week.

New Pastors Named at Two Parishes

Two parishes in the diocese that are staffed by Franciscan priests of the Order of Friars Minor, Conventual, will have new pastors Aug. 10.

Father Felix Mazur will come to St. Hyacinth, Auburn, from Mater Dolorosa parish in Holyoke, Mass. He will replace Father Felix Bracikowski, who has been assigned to Holy Trinity in Lawrence, Mass.

Father Joseph Trawinski, transferred to St. Theresa's, Rochester, from Our Lady of Perpetual Help in New Bedford, Mass., will take the place of Father Ferdinand Cisek, who is going to St. Joseph's, in Mt. Carmel, Pa.

The priests belong to St. Anthony of Padua Province, headquartered in Baltimore. The appointments were approved last week by Bishop Joseph L. Hogan.

Congress

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leading entertainers will offer special performances. Among them will be Ella Fitzgerald, jazzman Dave Brubeck, Eugene Ormandy and the Philadelphia Orchestra, Arthur Mitchell and the Dance Theatre of Harlem and Benita Valente of the Metropolitan Opera.

The 41st congress will be unique in many ways.

It will be the first held in the United States in 50 years. It will mark the first time many Americans will see the full impact of renewal and reform set in motion 11 years ago by Vatican II. It will be viewed in dynamic liturgies created for the congress, in special prayer, commissioned performing arts and music.

The congress will showcase the total universality of the Church with participation by 27 national heritage groups offering their own liturgies, music, dance and native dress.

Women will be widely recognized in the Eucharistic Congress. From the very outset they have had an active role in the policy-making of the Congress; they have served on special planning committees and developed their own seminar. They will participate in liturgies through the reading of Scriptures.

The congress will offer a major ecumenical dimension with participation by many Christian traditions. Black and Hispanic people will play a major role in special liturgies and conferences.

Vacationers Beware!

Unpleasant a thought as it may be while planning Summer vacations, diocesans were urged by the Monroe County Sheriff's Department this week to take the following steps to avoid home break-ins and robberies while away:

Be sure to lock all doors and windows. If just one window is left open, you're vulnerable.

If you're going to be away for awhile, tell your trusted neighbors and the police. Be sure to let them know what lights are to be left on, and leave a key with a neighbor so he can check your property.

If you want to talk about your vacation, wait until you get back.

Stop all newspaper and mail deliveries, or arrange to have them taken in by a neighbor.

Don't leave your house dark and don't let the grass go uncut.

Lights are good, but lights which go on and off seemingly at random are better.

Invest in a timer. Better yet, get two or three timers. Set them logically. Living room lights should go on in the evening. Bedroom lights should go on later. A bathroom light can go on anytime.

Study Women's Role in Ministry, Male Major Superiors Urge

Washington, D.C. [RNS] — The national assembly of the Roman Catholic Conference of Major Superiors of Men (CMSM) has called for a collaborative theological investigation of the role of women in the ministry as a contribution to the development of "ultimate theological positions" by the Church.

In a statement issued by Father Alan McCoy, OFM, president of the CMSM, the conference's executive board was urged to initiate "appropriate action" and join with the Leadership Conference of Women Religious (LCWR) in carrying out the necessary theological investigation.

The statement said the call for a "re-examination of the meaning of ministry and priesthood" by the women's movement in the Church is among "the many important concerns facing us today."

"The radical questions of who ministers, how we minister, and to whom we minister must be answered in terms of the Gospel imperative, in fidelity to the tradition of the Church," the statement added. "These are questions which we not only cannot ignore but which require our active collaboration in the theological research which must be carried out."

"We therefore call for specified action through serious theological investigation," it said. "We see this action as a valuable contribution to the development of the ultimate theological positions which will be taken by the Church in this matter."

The CMSM statement stressed that such an action will not only answer the call of "our sisters" but the call of the Church for further clarification of the scriptural and traditional bases for ministry. "We believe that religious should be in the front line in responding to this need as religious before us in every age have done."

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