

Vatican Urges Governments To Fund Parochial Schools

Vatican City (RNS)—Because Roman Catholic schools face "a very heavy burden of cost," the Vatican has urged national governments to fund parochial education.

A 32-page document, "The Catholic School," published by the Vatican Congregation for Catholic Education, stressed the "positive role" of the parish school.

"In the pluralistic world in which we live," the document said, "the Catholic school is in a unique position to offer, more than ever before, a most valuable and necessary service" by emphasizing its "mission of education to insure strong character formation."

But the study noted that "the Catholic community must still shoulder a very heavy burden of cost" to maintain its schools. "The position of very many Catholic schools has improved," it said, where countries have provided state funding.

Without mentioning the

countries by name, the report praised those governments which "have appreciated the advantages and the necessity of a plurality of school systems." Some nations, such as Holland, New Zealand and Zaire, fund parochial education.

The financial problem facing Catholic schools stems not only from worldwide inflation but also from the diminishing number of priests, brothers and nuns who teach. The study, pointing out that since the Second Vatican Council some orders have abandoned school work because of social or political changes and have involved themselves in other activities, urged Catholic authorities not to forget "the excellence and the apostolic value of educational work."

The Church also had high praise for its teachers. It referred to the "nobility of the task" of education and exhorted teachers to stay in touch with modern developments in the fields of child psychology, pedagogy, and particularly catechetics. They "should

especially keep abreast of directives from competent ecclesiastical authorities," the report said.

Contrary to charges that Catholic schools are outdated, the study argued that they have a more urgent calling today as an alternative system of education in a world where "the state increasingly takes control of education."

The document said the Church "is particularly sensitive to the call from every part of the world for a more just society." But in some countries, the schools are forced to admit "a majority of children from wealthier families."

"Since education is an important means of improving the social and economic condition of the individual and of peoples," the report continued, "if the Catholic school were to turn its attention exclusively or predominantly to those from the wealthier social classes, it could be contributing towards maintaining their privileged position, and could thereby continue to favor a society which is unjust."



In defiance of Pope Paul and using the 16th century liturgy of Pope Pius V, Archbishop Lefebvre ordains 14 priests at his seminary in Ecône, Switzerland.

Prelate Ignores Papal Warnings

Ecône, Switzerland (RNS) — Since Pope Paul's solemn warning of June 20, rebel French Archbishop Marcel Lefebvre, CSSp, has gone ahead and illicitly ordained a total of 15 priests.

Some weeks ago, the 71-year-old foe of Vatican II reforms, announced his intention of ordaining new groups of priests and subdeacons at his seminary

here on June 29.

In explicit reference to this announcement, Pope Paul sent the archbishop a handwritten letter on June 20 warning him that he would be "making irreparable the break with the unity and charity of the Catholic communion." This warning was interpreted by many observers as a threat of excommunication.

Despite the papal warning, however, Archbishop Lefebvre ordained a Benedictine monk as a priest in a private ceremony at a monastery in eastern France on June 26.

On June 27, at a consistory during which he installed five new cardinals, the Pope reiterated that the suspended archbishop should "be mindful of the breach" he would cause by going ahead with his "unlawful ordinations."

Two days later, on schedule, Archbishop Lefebvre ordained 14 priests and 16 subdeacons in a ceremony held in a large tent near his seminary, as thousands of his traditionalist followers applauded.

A spokesman for the archbishop said later that 22 candidates were due to be ordained sub-deacons, but that only the 16 showed up.

The spokesman also said that Archbishop Lefebvre intended to continue "as before," even "if the Pope excommunicates him," insisting that the archbishop "had no intention of setting up a rival Church."

The situation is being likened to the schism by "Old Catholics" who rejected the proclamation of papal infallibility issued by the First Vatican Council in 1870.

Area Nuns Attend National Conference

Steubenville, Ohio — Catholic Sisters from 29 states and Canada gathered at the College of Steubenville, Ohio, recently for the second National Catholic Charismatic

Conference for Religious Women. Seven Rochesterians were among them.

The sisters from the diocese who attended were

Mercy Sisters Alphonsus Kruckow, Hilaire Gaelens and Lucille Fournier; St. Joseph Sisters Rosina Smith, Agnes Catherine Battersby, Carolyn Cardinal and Irma Coccia.

"This is a crucial conference," said Father Michael Scanlan, college president and conference chairman. "One of the major questions in the Church today is, 'What is the problem with our religious communities?' We want to confront that issue head on in this conference and begin to give viable answers and directions."

A team of four speakers took on this task for three and one half days: Sister Mary Reddy, a core member of the Dominican Reflection Center in Ossining; Sister Ann Therese Shields, director of the Office for National Charismatic Ministry at the College of Steubenville; Father Daniel Sinisi, chairman of the theology Department there; and Father Scanlan.

One clear direction was presented through Sister Reddy and Father Sinisi. They spoke of charisms in religious communities. Referring to recommendations from Vatican II, they said that the basis for a particular community's life together can be traced to the charisms of the Order's founder. By rediscovering the founder's original intent and vision for establishing the Order, a religious community can redefine their relationships and commitment together. Sister Reddy also spoke about the real meaning of vows and

virtues in religious women.

Another significant direction was given by Sister Ann Therese Shields in her talk on "Hearing the word of God." Sister Shields outlined three ways to hear the word of God effectively noting that His word was to form the very lives of the sisters.

"We're the future of religious life. We're the prophetic voice. We may be the voice of crying in the wilderness, but we're it! And so we have got to be formed by the word of God daily."

Even powerful gifts manifested in the charismatic renewal are not enough to change religious life, she said. "Gifts are not a sign of holiness...and it's holiness of life that's prophetic — not telling the other sisters in our convent that they have to experience the charismatic renewal."

Steve Clark, a coordinator of the Word of God Community in Ann Arbor, Mich, spoke from his experience of the communal life.

He noted that the people living in the 20th century technological society have a series of limited commitments to things and functions — but rarely permanent committed relationships. Four stumbling blocks to these committed relationships that are prevalent in American society, he said, are the ideals of self-fulfillment, independence and pluralism, and identification with things other than the Body of Christ.

Pro-Marriage Groups Meet in Conferences

Los Angeles (RNS) — More than 10,000 couples belonging to the Worldwide Marriage Encounter gathered here for a three-day global meeting which stressed that the revitalization of marriage and family leads to the renewal of church life.

The Marriage Encounter convention was held in conjunction with a local Catholic Church call for vocations, which included marriage. And in nearby Long Beach, 750 couples attended the first national Lutheran Marriage Encounter convention at California State University.

The weekend on the campus of the University of Southern California culminated in a celebrated Mass offered by Cardinal Timothy Manning of Los Angeles and scores of priests which drew about 35,000 persons. There were couples present from 28 nations, most of them Catholics.

Father Charles Gallagher, SJ, a prime mover in the U.S. Marriage Encounter movement, told the couples that trust, responsibility and change must develop between husband and wife through new techniques in communications brought about by Marriage Encounter sessions.

Marriage Encounter leaders stressed that putting new life into marriages also revitalizes church life, claiming that about one-third of the couples who take part in a weekend encounter become active in their parishes.

The leading Marriage Encounter couple, Dick and Barbara McBride, warned that the movement is not for everyone. Couples discussing divorce need counseling and those who have married outside the Church would find the

weekend encounter difficult, they added.

Described as the largest "pro-marriage organization" in the world, Marriage Encounter stresses "making good marriages better" and usually involves scheduled encounter sessions led by a priest and couple. The Catholic-oriented movement has put about 500,000 couples through encounter weekends and renewal weekends for the last nine years. It emphasizes mutual love between marriage partners and the sacredness of marriage.

Marriage Encounter, which has both Jewish and Protestant versions, was brought to the U.S. in 1967 by a Spanish priest, Father Gabriel Calvo, and was launched as part of the Christian Family Movement in the Catholic Church.

42nd CONGRESS

Vatican City (RNS) — The Vatican announced that the next International Eucharistic Congress, the 42nd in the series, will be held at Lourdes, France, in 1981. The year marks the centenary of the first International Eucharistic Congress, which was held in Lille, France, in 1881.

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