

Synod Explores Diverse Religious Needs

The Fifth World Synod of Catholic Bishops is into its second week of discussion of religious education. The special needs that emerge in the diverse cultures, economies and political systems of the world are being aired.

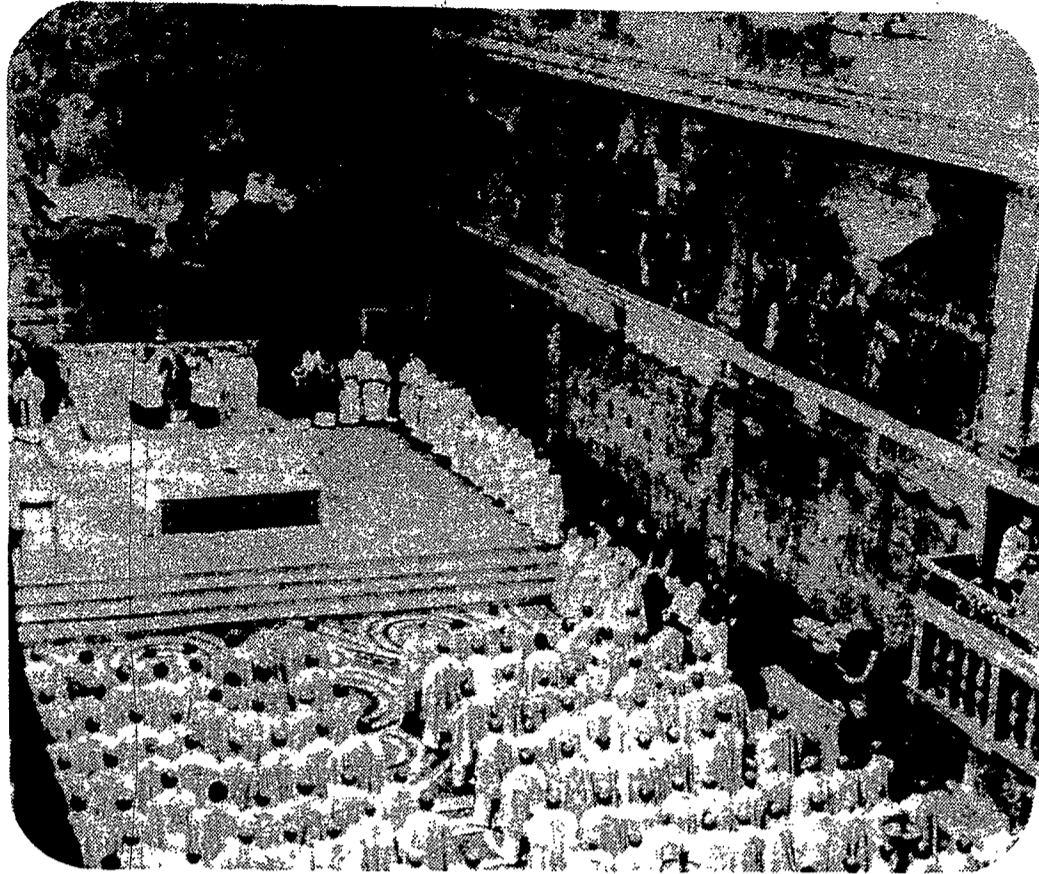
The emphasis of the study is on the education of young people, and in this connection "the behavior of adults" comes under scrutiny, according to Religious News Service reports from Vatican City.

"Young people say yes to the Gospel and no to the Church," Cardinal Leo-Joseph Suenens of Belgium told the assembly. "This is a very revealing distinction. It signifies that youth cannot discover in the behavior of adults in the Church the authentic image of Jesus and of his message."

Adult catechesis is "primary and fundamental" in the Italian Church, according to Cardinal Giovanni Benelli, Archbishop of Florence.

Said Bishop Raymond Lucker of New Ulm, Minnesota, "Religious teaching for the child loses its impact and is really rather silly, unless there are parental and communal models of the practice of the faith."

Archbishop Joseph L. Bernardin, president of the U.S. Bishops Conference agreed with his colleague, and he added that "back home in Cincinnati" there was "a feeling that the parishes lack a sense of community."



Fifth Synod Of Bishops Opens

Pope Paul (center background) inaugurated the 5th synod of bishops in the Sistine Chapel on Sept. 30. In his talk to the 204 prelates, the pontiff called for an energetic propagation of the Christian faith in a world that is "abandoning religion" in favor of technology and science. (RNS)

The synod opened Sept. 30, with 204 prelates taking part. It will go on throughout October.

Speakers from Latin America refer often to matters of social justice. Those from Communist-dominated countries talk about limitations imposed on religious life. Delegates from developing nations note that their catechetical materials are inadequate, news reports state.

At the start of the synod, the prelates received a 28-page document entitled Report on the State of the Church, which alluded to the situation of Archbishop Marcel Lefebvre, CSSp, and his followers.

"This archbishop and his disciples have been going forward on the road that leads step by step to schism," Archbishop Johannes J. Degenhardt observed. "Their dissidence

is due not only to nostalgia for the Tridentine Mass, but to a rejection of the reforms of Vatican Council II."

The "risk of schism," he added, arises from Archbishop Lefebvre's continuing ordinations of priests, even though he has been suspended since 1976 from all priestly and episcopal functions.

Among the observations on young people was Cardinal Timothy Manning

West Germany, presented the report with a discourse on the state of the world and the Church in the three years elapsed since the last Synod of Bishops.

"Grave problems exist concerning the basic rights of the human person," he said. "The defense of the poor is one of the most important tasks of the community, but this must be achieved without recourse to violence."

He said that in the past three years there had been "increased collaboration" of the laity in the life of the Church and its parish communities, but that there had been also a shift toward secularization which "adversely affected religious life."

"Even Christians," he said "were subject to the pressures of moral permissiveness, as could be seen, for example, in the spread of abortion, illicit sterilization, euthanasia."

The German archbishop ended his talk with a challenge.

"The man of today places great hope in the Church," he said. "Indeed, many non-Christians look to the Catholic Church for an answer to such problems as the meaning of life and of history, of pain, and of death. They expect the Church to lead in the reestablishment of peace and the bettering of society."

Cardinal Timothy Manning

that they "hunger for the spiritual." They are alienated from the institutional Church, he said, but they have frustrations and insecurities that are "a crying out for recognition, for response, for healing." Cardinal Manning is from Los Angeles.

A delegate from Thailand, Bishop Joseph EkThabping of Ratchaburi, told the assembly that his colleagues at home were impressed by the training of Buddhist monks, and he suggested similar training for young Catholics.

Most young men in predominantly Buddhist Thailand become "monks" for three months, a period of "serious education in doctrine, religious practices, discipline and common life." Such a regimen for Catholics, he noted, might build up a mature Christian faith to "guide their actions and attitudes in their adult life." It could be good preparation for marriage, he said.

At a session chaired by Cardinal Hyacinthe Thiandoum of Dakar, Senegal, a lengthy exposition of the need to integrate the Gospel with African cultures was delivered by Cardinal Maurice Otunga, Archbishop of Nairobi, Kenya. Pope Paul "has already given us a lead," he concluded, "in his appraisal of African culture and his encouragement to study the traditional experiences of Africa. In this respect we Africans must take ourselves seriously."

Vatican Commission Cautions On 'Liberation Theologies'

Rome (RNS) — The Vatican-based International Theological Commission, while recognizing the value of various "theologies of liberation," has warned against what it said were their shortcomings and dangers.

A commission statement was published in the Italian Jesuit journal of opinion, Civiltà Cattolica.

Liberation theology developed chiefly from reflection on the Christian experience of widespread injustice and oppression in Latin America. It has been criticized because of alleged similarities with Marxism and also because of its purported lack of clarity in stating priorities in line with the mission of the Church.

The theological commission's statement recognizes that "the various theologies of liberation cannot be criticized if one is attentive to the cry of the poor and seeks a better way of responding to it." It then offers a number of objections.

It would be a mistake, the document said, to consider the history of the world and salvation history as simply two sides of the same coin. "This conception," it said, "would tend to make profane history coincide with the Gospel of Jesus Christ." The document contended that "faith in practice should not be understood in such a way that political engagement embraces and totally directs

all man's activity in a radical sense"

It stressed that "political debate which normally involves the confrontation of forces, must not cause one to lose sight of the objective of Christian activity, which is peace and reconciliation."

Further, the document said, "Politics does not deserve an absolute value that would confer an ultimate meaning on life. If theology is rightly directed towards practice, its prime function consists in seeking to understand the word of God."

The statement continued: "Theologies directed towards the building of a more humane society should take account — when they adopt sociological theories — of the risks inherent in such operations. In any case, it is important to appreciate the degree of certitude of these theories. Very often they are purely conjectural. Not infrequently they contain ideological elements, whether explicit or implicit, which are founded on philosophical presuppositions that are open to discussion, or on erroneous anthropological conceptions. This is the case, for example, of a large part of those analyses inspired by Marxism or Leninism."

The International Theological Commission agreed that "through sin," contempt and injustice were "insinuated" into social and political structures and that this situation "calls for efforts for reform."

It insisted, however, that efforts to build a just socio-political order — efforts that should involve a Christian commitment — should never entail "recourse to violence"

Christians, it said, must do their best to effect change by formation of social consciences, open discussion, and firm and unwavering support for "nonviolent action"

Auditions Set for Choristers

Auditions have opened for persons wishing to sing with the parish choir at St. Theodore's Church.

According to Peter Cazalas, choir director, the group which now numbers 20 members will be expanded to 30. Auditions are held on Thursday evenings from 7:30 p.m. to 9 p.m. in the church at 168 Spencerport Rd.

The choir shortly will prepare for its Advent and Christmas programs, Cazalas said. Two pieces from the Messiah Oratorio by Handel will be featured in this year's offerings.

The choir is noted for the variety of music it performs, in a variety of languages, including Latin.

Auditions close on Oct. 13.



Check Presentation

Mrs. John Dever III presents a check on behalf of the Catholic Women's Club to Sister Eileen Daly, principal at Corpus Christi School, second from right. Looking on are Kathy Smith, right, head of publicity for Corpus Christi, and Theresa Augsburg, the school's secretary center.

Cold Blooded Killings Attributed to El Salvador

New York (RNS) — Amnesty International (AI) in a cable to El Salvador's President Carlos Humberto Romeo, has denounced continuing "cold blooded killings" and "extra-judicial detentions" by government security forces in the Salvadorean countryside, it was reported here.

The London-based organization urged that "special high level measures be taken to protect lay members of the Roman Catholic Church who have increasingly suffered persecution" following the

threatened killing of the nation's Jesuit community

The two men were arrested by government troops and police and later found murdered, AI reported. The slain men, AI said, were religious leaders in their village, which has no resident priests, and reportedly ran religion and literacy classes in their own homes. Government spokesmen say the two men were killed as they attacked a police

patrol and that they were cattle thieves.

The cable specifically condemned the slaying of two lay deacons, Aug. 26, in the village of El Salitre.

The two men were arrested by government troops and police and later found murdered, AI reported. The slain men, AI said, were religious leaders in their village, which has no resident priests, and reportedly ran religion and literacy classes in their own homes.

Government spokesmen say the two men were killed as they attacked a police

SSJ BOUTIQUE

The Sisters of St. Joseph will open a boutique Oct. 15 at the Motherhouse, 4095 East Ave. The new shop, Cornerstone Crafts, will carry hand-made articles exclusively — such things as afghans, scarves and mittens, aprons, decoupage, ceramics and other original art, all produced by the Sisters and their friends. The shop will be open Wednesdays, Fridays and Saturdays from 11 a.m. until 4 p.m. Further details may be obtained through 586-1000.