

# A Logical Choice

By FATHER ROBERT A. GRAHAM SJ

**Vatican City** — At the conclave of June 1963, the cardinals, fresh from the first session of the Second Vatican Council thought that Giovanni Battista Montini, Archbishop of Milan, was just the man to take over the work of Pope John XXIII. Their choice was logical and correct.

As pope, Paul VI not only reconvened the council but steered it through epoch-making decisive phases, backing it with his own official authority and personal encouragement. When the time came for him to confirm, as pope, the conciliar decrees, he could do so with impressive conviction and authority.

The remaining years can be looked upon as the late Holy Father's dedication to the cause of Vatican II. His unprecedented visits to a variety of places, institutions, and persons in the succeeding years gave him the opportunity to dramatize his concern for ecumenism, peace and development, religious renewal, and other high themes that marked also his multiple official papal encyclicals, letters and discourses. It was a way of presenting the Church, in the person of the pope, to world opinion.

Who can forget, for example, the startling appearance of this white-clad figure at the rostrum of the United Nations General Assembly, literally in the presence of all the great of this world, bringing the message of Christ?

Paul's passion for peace and development of his own personal interests and inclinations were expressed in his pastoral labors. If one seeks for a key of some sort to his words and works, perhaps one clue is the fact that as a young priest he was national chaplain to university students. In this privileged post he got to know at first hand the aspirations of the cream of young Catholic Italy.

Some of his proteges became national leaders, inspired by the principles imbibed in these associations. One of them was Aldo Moro, whose tragic death, some say, was itself one of the causes of the pope's own decline and death. But one can be forgiven for recalling that the Montini family was also a family of newspapermen. Did his early



journalistic surroundings have anything to do with his awareness of human and contemporary problems in their Christian context?

Pope Paul VI put the conciliar reforms

into execution not merely out of duty, but because he believed in them. There were other so-called reforms, unsanctioned by the council though often promoted in its name, which he did not approve, because he did not believe in them. Some of Papa Montini's

"dissidents" were spectacular and unpopular, but he proceeded anyway.

There was a time, particularly in the years of his cardinalate at Milan and then in his first years as pope, that Paul VI was described as "Hamletic," that is, indecisive and inconsistent. Anyone who believed that certainly misunderstood Montini. He was not a demolition squad, as has been pointed out here in Rome by one commentator, but a patient worker. He took some hard decisions and issued some strong documents. In these, and in the aftermath, there is no trace of any ambiguity or vacillation.

But in studying the key to Paul VI and his pontificate, it also must be borne in mind that he was one of that much-maligned group, the "Vatican Curia." Perhaps this has been forgiven him, but in all fairness it must be conceded that if this group of devoted papal aides can produce a Paul VI it can't be all bad.

And finally, Pope Paul was a disciple of Pius XII whose methods in many ways he adopted for himself. Under Pius XII he learned to cope with the powerful ones in this world, whether the warlords, the political chiefs, or the lords of the press and of culture.

Paul VI made no secret of his admiration of his old chief and the attacks made upon Papa Pacelli for alleged "silences" of the pope during World War II profoundly pained him. All the more that he knew from his personal and constant associations with the Pope in these same years the real concern of Pius XII for all the victims of the war, without discrimination as to nationality, religion, or race.

Of course, in dying, Paul VI leaves a lot of unresolved problems to his successor. What pope does not? At least it can be said he has done some of the preliminary work towards their solution. He too took on the unfinished work of both John XXIII and Pius XII, bringing them to completion. The last 15 years was truly a great pontificate.

Father Graham is widely known as a commentator on the Vatican scene. He also is an historian and has published works on the role of the Vatican in the historical crises of our day.

## His Impact Here Seen Great

By FRANK MAUROVICH

**New York** — Nowhere in the world has the impact of the two most salient characteristics of Pope Paul's reign — his unstinting efforts to promote world peace and to preserve unity within the Roman Catholic Church — been felt more than in the United States.

His most dramatic call for world peace, "No more war! War never again!" was made on these shores in 1965 before the General Assembly of the United Nations. In that same speech Pope Paul emphatically quoted the words of President Kennedy, "Mankind must put an end to war before war puts an end to mankind."

That same evening, the first pope to come to the United States told 90,000 people in Yankee Stadium, "If we wish to be Christians, we must love peace."

Again, in June of this year, his message to the United Nations Special Session on Disarmament, delivered by his personal emissary, Archbishop Agostino Casaroli, offered to go beyond pleas against the horrors of war to intervene politically if it would serve the cause of peace and disarmament.

In an unprecedented papal initiative in modern times, Pope Paul declared, "If you ever think the Holy See can help overcome the obstacles blocking the way to peace, (the Holy See) will not shelter behind the argument of its 'non-temporal' character nor shy away from the responsibilities that could

be involved in interventions that have been desired and asked for."

The pontiff, of course, many times repeated his urgent pleas for peace at the Vatican where he met personally with world leaders of both democratic and Communist nations, but it was here that he most forcefully enunciated the biblically-inspired formula for turning swords into plowshares — replacing the balance of terror with a balance of trust in international politics and displacing the profit motive for justice in international economics.

Less noticed but more immediately effective were Pope Paul's delicate, painstaking efforts to preserve Roman Catholic Church unity in the United States where — with the possible exception of The Netherlands — the crisis in Church authority became the most serious in the world following Vatican Council II.

The pope's conciliatory impact here can be measured by two events of critical worldwide importance.

The first was the resolution of two conflicts: the confrontation of Cardinal Francis McIntyre of Los Angeles with the Immaculate Heart Sisters over the renewal of religious life and a clash between Cardinal Patrick O'Boyle of Washington and some 40 of his priests who publicly dissented from Pope Paul's birth control encyclical.

The second was the appointment of Archbishop Jean Jadot as apostolic delegate in the United States.

Both the Immaculate Heart Sisters and the Washington priests appealed to the Vatican after their disputes with their respective Cardinals reached an impasse. In both cases, after prolonged negotiations, each side was asked to give ground in favor of reconciliation although the Vatican was careful to uphold each prelate's authority.

The Immaculate Heart Sisters, immediately after Cardinal McIntyre's retirement in 1970, were allowed to split into two groups, the majority becoming a lay organization with the Church's blessing and a minority continuing with the traditional religious rules.

Cardinal McIntyre's successor, Cardinal Timothy Manning, had been called to Rome before he took office. No one knows what the agenda entailed for such an unusual action but a solution for the Immaculate Heart situation which had such ramifications for religious orders throughout the world undoubtedly had top priority.

In the Washington case, Pope Paul openly commended Cardinal O'Boyle for his unqualified support of the controversial encyclical, but a 1971 Vatican ruling allowed for reinstatement of the suspended priests without a formal retraction of their stand on the issue as the Cardinal had demanded.

In both cases, Pope Paul with his astute political sense and charitable grace placed reconciliation ahead of recrimination, an enduring characteristic of his pontificate.

Even more significant than the above in

the long-term effect, however, was the 1973 papal appointment of Archbishop Jean Jadot as apostolic delegate, the first non-Italian and, in the opinion of many, the most open-minded Vatican diplomat to hold the post.

Msgr. John Tracy Ellis, the dean of Catholic Church historians, has called the Belgian-born delegate's appointment "one of the happiest things that has happened to the American Church since the Vatican Council," and described him as a person who "opened windows where they were closed before."

More specifically, Msgr. Ellis focused on Archbishop Jadot's key role — forwarding the names of future bishops to the Holy See. "He's reached out and taken certain men that were of open mind themselves and made them bishops, or promoted them," he said.

Archbishop Jadot has had a hand in naming more than one-quarter of the present U.S. Catholic hierarchy, appointments that have been generally applauded as the right men for the right time. As such, they will influence the course of the American Church for generations to come.

For that, American Catholics owe gratitude to Pope Paul whose own intelligent insights sent the right man at the right time — a critical period of Church renewal — as his personal envoy to the Church here.

Frank Maurovich, Religious News Service Staff Writer, is former editor of the Catholic Voice of Oakland, Calif., and covered, for the Catholic press, the Second Vatican Council.