

Our Man in Vatican Is Man in Middle

By William Willoughby

Washington (RT) — There were few people who doubted that the next ranking American prelate to receive a summons to Rome to be the American Church's representative to the inner workings of the Roman Catholic Church would be Washington's Cardinal William Baum. He will be in charge of setting policies for Catholic higher education.



CARDINAL BAUM

Baum has been one of those quiet workhorses of the American Church, visible mostly because he was spiritual head of the country's showplace archdiocese — far from being one of the biggest, but in its political importance the most important in the country. The men of rank both of the world and of the Church cross paths here and the man from the suburbs of Kansas City was the genial host.

When he was in town, of course. Quite often, possibly more than any other contemporary American prelate, he was in Rome, because Baum was a favorite with Pope Paul VI, would have been with Pope John Paul I and certainly is with Pope John Paul II.

Even when he was in the minuscule diocese (40,000 Catholics) of Springfield-Cape Girardeau in Missouri, Baum was on his way up, for in 1972, a year before coming to Washington, he was chairman of the Bishops' Committee for Ecumenical and Inter-religious Affairs. He carried that position with him to Washington the next year and held it until 1975.

In short, he was the American Church's chief ecumenical relations officer at a time when ecumenism was receiving big talk if not always big action.

From 1976 to 1979 he was chairman of another important committee in America, the Committee on Doctrine. This was at a time when there were some rather serious rumblings within the American Church, particularly on celibacy, sexuality, authority and the priesthood.

Quite often the Washington see became a sounding board for dissidents, most of them, however, not attached to the diocese.

Fr. MacNutt Celebrates His Own Marriage

Clearwater, Fla. (RNS) — Francis S. MacNutt, a Dominican priest and a leading figure in the Catholic charismatic renewal movement, was married here Feb. 9 to Judith Sewell, a

Parish Mission Slated

Newark — A week-long parish mission will take place at St. Michael's parish here from March 1-7. The mission will be led by Redemptorist Father Andrew Costello of St. Alphonsus Retreat House, Tobyhanna, Pa.

Father Costello will preach at the regular Saturday and Sunday Masses, with Mission Masses scheduled for the remaining period at 9 a.m. and 7:30 p.m.

According to a parish release each day's morning

voices deemed to be countering Vatican teaching.

Mulloy asked the question before the Vatican appointment was announced, but it is reflective of many now that he is going to a place of influence in the very heart of the Church. "Will he be able to do us any good or is he only going to be an idea man?" is what some of the more outspoken conservative and liberal spokesmen are asking.

Father Francis X. Murphy, a recognized, albeit controversial expert on the Vatican commented after Baum's appointment: "Much of what he has said is good, but will he be able to do us much good over there? He has had his chance here, but what has he done?"

Murphy is the one who has taken to chiding Pope John Paul II for "preaching love before the crowds, but coming home and using heavy-handed tactics against men like Hans Kung and Edward Schillebeeckx who are only trying to put the Gospel in terms of the modern man, not in the language of the ancients. He has fallen into the net of the conservative Curial cardinals."

Baum's new position does carry with it considerable impact, largely in the realm of setting guidelines for education in Catholic universities and seminaries. A powerful, but potentially vexsome, new policy governing university, "Sapientia Christiana" must be put fully in force by next January around the world.

So while the Sacred Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith appears to be cracking down rather hard on theologians it feels are going off on errant tangents, all of this filters back into the universities and seminaries, and in many ways it will be Baum's problem to handle — at least as far as guidelines.

The archbishop takes a pretty sanguine view of the "tension" which is only natural between bishops and theologians. The bishops, he said, are engaged in the task of proclaiming the truth, safeguarding it.

Theologians, on the other hand, "are engaged, oftentimes, in speculation — and that's correct. It's only right that theologians conjure

mittee of the Catholic Charismatic Renewal. The committee issued a statement expressing "love and concern" for the priest, who has been the movement's leading faith healer, and also describing his decision to wed as "objectively, seriously wrong and... a tremendous personal mistake."

Prask, a resident of Hollywood, Fla., admitted that he and his wife were witnesses at the ceremony. He said the couple had left on a month-long trip and would live in Mrs. MacNutt's apartment in Largo on their return.

Father Donat McDonagh, spokesman for Bishop W. Thomas Larkin of St. Petersburg, in whose diocese the marriage took place, issued a one-sentence statement: "We have no comment on the MacNutt-Sewell marriage."

and speculate, and sometimes they may even make errors or go off in a false track. I think we can expect that and we should have a great deal of understanding and patience."

Theologians, like bishops, are concerned with proclaiming the faith and safeguarding its truths, he said, "But they have another mission to do this kind of exploration. This time of tension is not special to our age in the Church."

"There probably never has been a period in history when

there hasn't been some kind of tension between the pastoral office of the teaching authority with the probing of the bishops and the speculative work of the theologians."

Speaking to the Kung incident in which the Swiss theologian was stripped of his standing as a Catholic theologian, Baum said that from time to time "it is necessary for the teaching authority of the Church to speak clearly when questions have been raised, especially for a long time. Then it is

necessary to speak a word of clarification, to serve all the Church:

"Here is my hope, that we can work our way through. It takes a great deal of patience and dialogue, of mutual respect — all qualities that Pope John Paul possesses. He has a very high esteem for theological research and he will give great encouragement to theologians. At the same time, he has this pastoral responsibility of speaking clearly the Word of God which has been committed to him."

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