

DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC & FOREIGN RELATIONS  
of the  
SYNOD OF BISHOPS  
OF THE RUSSIAN ORTHODOX CHURCH OUTSIDE OF RUSSIA

NEWSLETTER #31

June-July, 1980

FROM THE LIFE OF THE RUSSIAN ORTHODOX CHURCH OUTSIDE OF RUSSIA

HIERARCHAL SERVICES OF NOTE

On the feast of Sts. Peter and Paul, His Eminence, Metropolitan Philaret celebrated the divine liturgy at Holy Trinity Monastery, Jordanville, New York, at which he ordained the deacon Michael Fritz to the holy priesthood. Fr. Michael has been assigned to St. Spyridon's Russian Orthodox Church, Perth Amboy, New Jersey.

The following day, Sunday, the consecration of the new cathedral of the Entrance of the All-holy Theotokos into the Temple, in Syracuse, New York, took place, being served by Archbishop Anthony of San Francisco, Archbishop Seraphim of Caracas, Bishop Laurus of Syracuse and Holy Trinity and Bishop Alypy of Cleveland. The liturgy which was celebrated following the consecration was led by His Eminence the Metropolitan and the above-named bishops.

On Monday, a session of the Synod of Bishops was held at Holy Trinity Monastery, for which, apart from those hierarchs who took part in the divine services of the previous day, His Eminence Archbishop Vitaly of Montreal and Bishop Gregory of Manhattan arrived.

AN EXPLANATION FROM THE SYNOD'S CHANCERY

Concerning the publication in various Greek magazines and publications of the American Metropolia of news that our Diocese of Australia & New Zealand has agreed to participate in a Standing Conference of Orthodox Churches in Australia, the following is reported:

In a number of its conciliar resolutions the Russian Orthodox Church Outside of Russia has recognized that all types of ecumenism are inconsistent with Orthodoxy and, in consequence of this, we have no liturgical communion with the Church of Constantinople and a number of other churches. This circumstance and the dialogue with Roman Catholics now beginning in Greece, the stated intent of which is to reach an agreement with them on establishing liturgical communion, without their repudiation of the heretical teachings which have separated them from Orthodoxy, violates the loyalty they should have to the Orthodoxy of their fathers. This renders impossible the participation of representatives of our diocese with representatives of other Churches in a Standing Conference headed by Archbishop Stylianos. Thus, the Diocese of Australia & New Zealand, on general principles, cannot join this Conference of Orthodox Churches. At most it would be permissible for observers to take part in the conference, as has taken place in the past at conferences of the World Council of Churches and at the Vatican Council.

As is apparent from the report of Archbishop Theodosius to the Synod of Bishops, he, keeping in mind the position of the Russian Orthodox

Church Outside of Russia, did not take part in ecumenical services, agreeing only to be present at the first session of the Commission. Archbishop Theodosius was under the impression that the objective of the Commission was the drafting of laws which would safeguard the juridical rights of Orthodox in Australia with the help of a corresponding act of Parliament.

Immediately on learning that he had been deceived in his expectations, Archbishop Theodosius declined to attend further sessions, sending only one of his priests as an observer of the proceedings.

#### BRITISH DIOCESE PUBLISHES BULLETIN

Beginning in mid-June of the current year, Archimandrite Alexis, Administrator of the British Diocese, began to publish an English-language bulletin entitled The Shepherd, which will be issued approximately twice a month. The content of The Shepherd will include extracts from the Fathers, brief accounts of feasts and lives of the saints celebrated, explanations of the divine services and parish news. Those who wish to receive The Shepherd regularly should send their name, address and a check in the amount of \$10.00 (to cover postage and material expenses) to:

Archimandrite Alexis, St. Gregory Parish, St. Dunstan's Rd.  
London, W. 6, England. Checks should be made out to St.  
Gregory Parish Account.

#### THE SERBIAN CHURCH & ECUMENISM

The participation of individual clergymen of the Serbian Church in ecumenical prayer services of various sorts, at which all manner of heterodox clerics, even rabbis and women, take part, has been the cause of serious disturbance to members of the Synod of Bishops of the Russian Orthodox Church Outside of Russia. His Eminence, Metropolitan Philaret, on behalf of members of the Synod of Bishops, asked the Patriarch of Serbia how one should understand these cases of such corrupting concelebration.

Patriarch German stated in his letter of response that he is grateful for the information sent to him on this subject and assures us that it will be given the most assiduous attention.

"In fraternal love I inform Your Eminence," write the Patriarch, "that the participation of priests of the Serbian Orthodox Church in so-called 'ecumenical services' is quite by chance, unforeseen and contrary to the views of the Serbian Orthodox Church."

#### A CONFERENCE WITH ROMAN CATHOLICS ON THE ISLANDS OF PATMOS & RHODES

As was agreed upon by the Pope of Roman and Ecumenical Patriarch Demetrios at their meeting in Istanbul (Constantinople) late last year, a joint commission of Orthodox and Catholics began their sessions on the Island of Patmos on May 29 and finished on the Island of Rhodes on June 4.

The sessions were to have taken place in the Monastery of the Holy Apostle John the Theologian, however, it was possible only to open the proceedings there. When the delegates had arrived, it became apparent that the brethren of that monastery were so inimicably inclined to the whole idea that it became necessary to transfer the entire group immediately to the Island of Rhodes. It is interesting that not only the religious press, but the secular press as well have accorded tremendous significance to the conducting of this

"dialogue" between the Orthodox and Catholics and much space has been devoted to this question. However, although the newspapers wrote of the gatherings on Patmos and Rhodes, nowhere and by no one in the Greek papers was the reason why the Commission was forced to move to the Island of Rhodes mentioned. Glory and honor to the brethren of the monastery who protested the shameful proceedings so decisively!

The question which was first and foremost among the Greeks at their joint session with the Catholic commission was that of the uniates. The Catholics had included several uniates in the composition of their group which was headed by Cardinal Willebrands. The Greek's indignation over the matter is not really comprehensible, for in fact they have assembled to do precisely what the uniates of Slavic extraction did several centuries ago.

Despite a joint statement that there is "hope" that it will be possible to take steps toward "the restoration of full ecclesiastical communion between the Orthodox and Roman Catholic Churches," apparently, the Committee's conferences were far from as smooth as the organizers had hoped and as the press tried to present them. It is difficult to understand what in fact was discussed during this "dialogue" if one depends on the press reports for information.

The Orthodox Observer, official mouthpiece of the Greek Exarchate in America, reports that the negotiations almost broke off completely after the International Herald Tribune published an article in which Pope John Paul II is quoted as stating that "papal infallibility" was "not negotiable" at the conference's sessions. This announcement brought about an outburst of displeasure among the Orthodox. As Athens radio reported, "peace was restored" after the Catholics succeeded in assuring the Orthodox that there was no truth to the report. As reported in The Path of Orthodoxy, official mouthpiece of the Serbian Orthodox Church in America, one of the members of the Catholic delegation phoned the Vatican and was assured that it was all false. However, a week before the beginning of the session of the Commission, as reported in the June 5 issue of the Greek-language newspaper Hellenic Chronicle, the Pope made the statement that the doctrine of papal infallibility is "the key itself for certainty in professing and proclaiming the faith... From the point of view of Christian unity, the church cannot in any way renounce the truths that it professes."

Even the Moscow Patriarchate was displeased with the negotiations with the Catholics, though in this it had its own motives. It has not hidden its displeasure over the fact that it had not been informed of the convocation of the conference by Patriarch Demetrios, but by the Pope of Rome.

The Vatican's underhanded policies regarding the question of the Holy Land also disturb the Greeks. The Catholics have entered into agreement with Egypt on the establishment of a common Christian-Moslem-Jewish tabernacle on Mount Sinai, encroaching upon the rights of the Patriarch of Jerusalem to protect and preserve the holy places.

It was decided as the sessions drew to a close that the members of the Commission would divide themselves into sub-commissions, each composed of eight theologians from both sides, which will submit the results of their deliberations in Venice two years from now. Mention here of Florence or Lyons would be superfluous...

Aware of the fact that the questions of the primacy and infallibility are the principal obstacles to unity and fearing that these traitorous negotiations may disintegrate, Metropolitan Meliton of

Chalcedon, in his interview after the conclusion of the sessions on Rhodes, called upon the Catholics to try to give their dogma a new interpretation, for which it would be necessary to convoke another Vatican Council.

One may say that for the time being the final agreement will have to be put aside until "better times."

#### AN EPISTLE OF THE FATHERS OF MT. ATHOS ON THE SUBJECT OF THE DIALOGUE WITH THE ROMAN CATHOLICS

In April of the current year, the fathers of Holy Mount Athos composed an epistle for general information on the subject of the so-called "dialogue" with Roman Catholics. This epistle is so significant and so beautifully written that to cite it in abbreviated form is not possible. Therefore, we have appended the full text thereof to this Newsletter (#31) as a separate work.

#### ON THE "REPENTANCE" OF FR. DIMITRY DUDKO

We will not repeat the report on the "repentance" of Fr. Dimitry Dudko which all the newspapers have circulated, but the reaction of the press to this lamentable occurrence has itself been noteworthy.

The "Keston News Service," a well-informed bulletin of information published in England and specializing in questions on the persecution of religion in communist-dominated lands, in its July 14 issue writes that information received about Fr. Dimitry himself after his arrest and "repentance" is so contradictory that until more reliable information is obtained the editors of the bulletin would refrain from any commentary or analysis of the matter. The bulletin, however, does emphasize that, judging from the fact that Fr. Dimitry's statement was not only read during a television broadcast but also printed in its entirety in eight of the most prominent newspapers, it is apparent that the Soviets are according his "repentance" the greatest possible significance.

Apparently, to speak of "a priest whom no one knows," as certain of Fr. Dimitry's ill-wishers spoke of him, has not come to pass.

The editorial staff of Novoye Russkoye Slovo (New Russian Word), the New York-based, Russian-language newspaper, has treated Fr. Dimitry very sympathetically, printing a beautiful article by A. Syedykh and then, in two consecutive issues, a very pertinent interview with General Grigorenko, who was baptized by Fr. Dimitry and knew him well. Such also was the attitude assumed by Russkaya Zhizn' (Russian Life) in San Francisco and Russkaya Mysl' (Russian Thought) in Paris.

Gen. Grigorenko, who is well acquainted with the methods of the KGB from personal experience, points out the probability of medicinal coercion on the psyche of Fr. Dimitry and also to the indubitable influence of the Patriarchate upon him. There are grounds for believing that he was brought to the Patriarch himself for admonition.

In the May-June issue of Rus' Abroad (Zarubezhnaya Rus'), a Russian-language periodical published in Washington, D.C., the editorial staff did not conceal its malicious delight over Fr. Dimitry's repudiation of his former activity. Quite different and entirely Christian was the reaction of one of his former disciples which reached Russkaya Mysl' by way of "samizdat." We will quote it below in full.

According to the latest information, Fr. Dimitry and his family will have to leave Moscow. None of the people who were close to him are permitted to see him.

It is clear that his stated intention that he was prepared to become a martyr has not been realized. However, how this came to pass and whether it is irrevocable we do not know.

FROM "SAMIZDAT"— REGARDING THE STATEMENT OF THE PRIEST DIMITRY DUDKO (from Russkaya Mysl', Thursday, July 17, 1980—#3317)

In his statement for publication, Fr. Dimitry addresses himself in particular to those with whom he was formerly of one mind. Insofar as I rightfully and proudly can call myself one of those with whom he was formerly of one mind, I consider it essential to state the following:

I am sincerely glad that he is now free and has returned to his family and can, finally, rest after the long years of his intensive battle, in which he was ever in the front ranks.

Fr. Dimitry always fought alone. He was surrounded by people who needed his help, but were unable to accord him any support in a difficult moment. I consider it an indelible blot on my conscience that, after the arrest of my spiritual father, I was not able to undertake anything decisive, but only talked endlessly, wrote and signed letters and appeals which clearly could not help him, could not move his jailers, could not open the doors of his cell.

Fr. Dimitry's repudiation is his last and perhaps his most important lesson for us all. My teacher, whom I have lost, is the price of my cowardice, sloth and inability to act.

Repudiation is a terrible word, but the earth did not stop revolving after the repudiation of Galileo. No one could take that repudiation seriously and only his scientific accomplishment lives eternally in the memory of mankind. So also the pastoral accomplishment of the priest Dimitry Dudko shall never be forgotten. The truth which Fr. Dimitry preached is alive. This truth of the holy Gospel he gave my heart, and it still beats in my breast.

His hands accomplished a great task in our land. This task is completed. New tasks lie before us and new hands are needed to labor on new tasks.

Farewell, Batiushka! May the Lord grant you salvation for all that you have done for me. And if it does not befall us to speak with you again in this life, to look each other straight and trustfully in the eyes, there still lies before us eternity, in which, as you have taught me, there is no fear or falsehood, no doubts, but only righteousness and love. I believe that in this eternity you will again stand at my side, powerful, bold, full of pure light, and thus will I preserve you in my heart's memory until the hour of my death.

I have read through what I have written and am horrified by the thought of what an ugly emptiness remains where this enormous man stood steadfastly for so many years. Is it really impossible to recover him? Perhaps. But with God all things are possible. O Lord, for the sake of all his hundreds of spiritual children who have been led by his weakness into temptation and for the sake of Thy Holy Church, for whose purity he fought, give him back his strength, enable him to raise his head to look again at the face of danger as becomes a man and an Orthodox priest.

Moscow June 27, 1980

M. Probatov

## AN AGREEMENT BETWEEN THE MOSCOW PATRIARCHATE AND LUTHERANS

In its July 18 bulletin, the Religious News Service reports that in June a "dialogue" between the Moscow Patriarchate and Lutherans took place in the city of Turko, Finland. The Orthodox delegation was led by Metropolitan Anthony of Leningrad who noted with satisfaction that, thanks to the discussions, "a step (has been made) in the rapprochement of our churches." As is clear from this bulletin's report, the Moscow Patriarchate and the Lutherans almost identically interpret the Western theory of satisfaction, according to which God the Father, angered by the fall of the first-created, sent His Son, Who suffered, thereby satisfying the righteous wrath of God the Father; they also share a common understanding of the doctrine of the salvation of the human race.

Apparently, in the given instance, the official position of the Moscow Patriarchate has drawn close to the Protestants' points of view.

## PERSECUTION OF BELIEVERS IN THE SOVIET UNION

Anastasia Kleimenova, a resident of the cillage of Bolshoi Khomenets (in the Lipetsk region), fervently petitioned that a church be opened. Beginning in 1974, she and her fellow villagers composed petitions and demands that their church be returned to them for use.

On April 7, 1978, this woman was returned home from a place in which she and other villagers had managed to organize the conducting of the divine services. Along the way she was stopped when a bus pulled up beside her and two men forced her to get inside. Anastasia was taken to a psychiatric hospital in which she was held for twelve days and released, having been diagnosed as healthy.

Despite this, she continued her efforts, sending letters to the Committee for the Defense of Believers' Rights. She complained bitterly about the condition of the Kiev-Caves Lavra, in which the services are celebrated in a very slipshod manner and the infamous Hegumen Gavriil does everything possible to prevent any contact between the monks and pilgrims. Her activism drove the godless ones out of their minds and early in 1979 the poor woman was again apprehended and confined to a psychiatric hospital.

It is the atheists' allegation that only abnormal people can believe in God.

## AN ECUMENICAL SERVICE AT A DIOCESAN ASSEMBLY

As reported by the Orthodox Observer, official mouthpiece of the Ecumenical Patriarchate's Exarchate, Archbishop Iakovos served an ecumenical service on Sunday, June 29 of this year, on the occasion of the twenty-fifth biennial clergy-laity congress of the Archdiocese, which took place in Atlanta, Georgia. The congress was dedicated to the Apostle Paul.

In the caption to a group photograph stresses that inhabitants of the city "experienced a unique event: the largest ecumenical gathering of Roman Catholic, Protestant and Greek Orthodox Christians that it has ever seen." The "unprecedented" (as the Greek newspaper correctly terms it) ecumenical prayer service took place at 7:30 P.M. Catholics, Protestants, Baptists, Lutherans, Presbyterians, United Methodists (who had only just elected their first female bishop) and even representatives of the Jewish faith took part in it.

It is difficult to understand why they were all participants in an Orthodox diocesan congress.

Archbishop Stylianos of Australia, who is not unknown in wider ecumenical circles, was present as the official representative of the Ecumenical Patriarchate.

Fifty clergymen of various denominations entered the Orthodox church in solemn procession. Thereafter, Bishop John of Charlotte invited all to begin to pray. Some "hymns" were sung (the Orthodox newspaper does not detail which), the great ektenia was intoned, the epistle and gospel were read and, in conclusion, a combined choir of singers from various denominations under the direction of John Demos performed a rendition of the "Battle Hymn of the Republic" with soloist Xavier Leath. James Laney, a Methodist pastor, delivered the sermon.

Archbishop Iakovos responded with a speech of gratitude in which, among other things, he said: "Let us give thanks to God who called us to such a magnificent manifestation of the faith that unites us into one family. Let us pray without ceasing so that the good Lord may keep us in His unifying discovery that we belong together."

During the course of the Congress, Archbishop Iakovos, accompanied by Archbishop Stylianos and a number of other participants in the assembly, visited the grave of Martin Luther King, the famous leftist activist of the '60s. In the presence of the father of the late Dr. King, Archbishop Iakovos blessed the grave and placed a wreath of flowers on it. Here also he made a short speech, stating that "We of the Greek Orthodox faith have come in continuance of the journey commenced by the Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr, twenty years ago, in pursuit of the liberties to which all Americans are entitled... We came to assure Martin Luther King's soul that his grave continues to raise our concern in our hearts over the tardiness of our society in its pursuit of the ideals and values for which he suffered martyrdom..." "Eternal memory to him!" concluded the Orthodox hierarch in his speech over the grave of the Protestant radical.

#### SEDITIONOUS ECUMENISM

The "Orthodox Christian Witness," a bulletin published by Archpriest Nicetas Palasis in Seattle, Washington, reports in its July 6 issue, on the basis of a letter received by him from a member of the Syrian Church (the Exarchate of the Patriarchate of Antioch) that "St. George Syrian Orthodox Church in Montreal (Canada) celebrated its seventy-fifth anniversary. Metropolitan Philip (Saliba) was celebrant and the (Roman Catholic) bishop of Montreal was guest of honor. At the time of Communion, the Roman bishop was given a piece of Antidoron (as is sometimes given to servers and readers)—then, when Communion was given out, he approached the Cup and asked if he could dip the bread into the Chalice. Metropolitan Philip (standing aside) gave his permission to the priest to allow the Roman bishop to do so. This was on T.V.!"

This is already the third case of Metropolitan Philip's manifesting "eucharistic hospitality." Ten years ago he permitted a group of Catholic nuns to commune. On another occasion, while serving in a Catholic church (apparently one belonging to the very same bishop he recently invited to the anniversary celebration), he gave Communion to all any and all Catholics who wished to approach the chalice at the encouragement of their own bishop.

The Syrian who informed Fr. Nicetas of this disturbing event quite reasonably wonders whether the piece of bread sent to the Catholic bishop was in fact antidoron. Perhaps it was a portion of the consecrated Lamb. Whatever the case, the Catholic bishop himself believed it to be consecrated, which is why he asked for permission to dip it in the consecrated wine (in what the Romans refer to as intinction).

### THE POPE OF ROME'S JOURNEY TO BRAZIL

Early in the month of July, Pope John Paul II arrived in Brazil for a visit which lasted for twelve days. Of all the papal journeys this was the most contradictory. Preparations were made for it long in advance, both at the Vatican and in Brazil.

In June, a month prior to his departure, the Pope summoned to Rome two hundred of Brazil's 335 bishops. According to them an eight-hour long conference, the Pope surveyed the lie of the land before his visit to the country which stands on the brink of communist revolution and is controlled only with difficulty by a conservative military government.

The predominant faction of Brazil's Catholic hierarchy consists of liberal theologians with political views which are extremely leftist. The majority of them are followers of a certain Leonardo Boff, who preaches "liberation theology," which is understood in the sense of the liberation of those who have been oppressed by capitalists.

Under the direction of these liberal bishops and monastics of like views, 80,000 "ecclesiastical base communities" in which the poor are taught, under the guise of the preaching of the Gospel, to "recognize and remove exploitation."

The Vatican has ordered an inquiry into this matter which, of itself, has provoked the indignation of the episcopate. The Pope "advised" Cardinal Evaristo Arns of Sao Paulo not to allow an official convocation of these "theologians," but the cardinal ignored the Pope's instruction. This same hierarchal party not long ago organized a forty-one day long strike in Sao Paulo, directed against a large automobile manufacturing company. Moreover, a portion of the episcopate has issued a call for land reform which is highly critical of the government and defended proposals for church reforms, including the ordination of married men, against the Pope himself and conservative Vatican officials. In actuality, the Brazilian church is almost independent of the Vatican.

Brazil's president had nourished the hope that the Pope's visit would dampen the revolutionary ardour of his episcopate, but it seems that in this he was mistaken.

Circumstances in Brazil are further complicated by the fact that in a land of whose 123 million inhabitants 90% are Catholic, there are only 13,000 priests. Despite such an acute shortage of clergy, the Brazilian authorities have been forced to forbid the transfer of clergy from abroad, for it has been their experience that most such priests arrive with revolutionary views already instilled in them. Approximately one third of the populace are adherents of the "macumba" cult and other occult sects which somehow incorporate elements of Christianity into their beliefs and rituals.

The "theologians of liberation" have not confined their activities to Brazil, but have expanded it to Peru, Chile and Central America, everywhere provoking conflicts with the authorities.

The conservative faction among the Brazilian episcopate speaks openly of the existence of a "parallel, almost heretical" Church.

For eight months in a row the liberal and conservative groups within the Catholic hierarchy have waged a persistent battle, trying to win for themselves the right to write as many of the Pope's speeches as possible (there were 44) and to designate the places he was to visit.

Soon after his arrival, the Pope spent about forty minutes with the president alone, without even the presence of an interpreter. Afterwards, both appeared on the balcony and were greeted by the enthusiastic cries of the crowd, "Long live the Pope!" To this the eminent guest responded, "Long live the president!"

Yet all of this did not hinder the Pope from embracing Dom Helder Camara with particular fervor at the formal reception arranged in his honor by the president. Camara is one of the most radical of Brazil's bishops and consequently has much difficulty with the civil authorities. In Rio de Janeiro he addressed a speech to twenty-two conservative bishops, calling upon them to stand on the path of pastoral activity which "defends the poor in the face of unjust campaigns that offend their dignity."

At a stadium in Sao Paulo, in the presence of 100,000 workers, the Pope accepted the greetings of the Christian-worker activist Waldemar Rossi, who said in his speech to him that "we seek a new order in which the worker will enjoy the use of the product of his labor and even more than this, decides his own destiny." To this the Pope responded with an especially well thought-out speech which was quoted by almost all the ecclesiastical and secular journalists who reported on his trip to Brazil. "The persistence of injustice threatens the existence of society from within," the Pope said. "This menace from within really exists when the distribution of goods is grounded only in the economic laws of growth and a bigger profit...when there persists a big gap between a minority of the rich on the one hand and the majority of those who live in want and misery on the other." It is not surprising that the stadium was adorned with an enormous scoreboard which bore the slogan: "Comrade John Paul, worker for Christ."

In all of his speeches, the Pope called the populace of Brazil to a "peaceful revolution" (in Russia they called for a "bloodless Revolution"). The liberal-radical (as long as one doesn't say communist) episcopate was enraptured by the papal speeches. Cardinal Paulo Evaristo Arns of Sao Paulo stated that the danger of a rift with the Vatican had ceased to exist. "There will no longer be suspicion or possible misunderstanding with Rome," he said.

The Brazilian government expended a fabulous sum of money on the Pope's visit, but did not receive the hoped-for support from their honored guest. A minor official of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs openly complained that the government "made a bad investment by spending so much money," citing funds used to effect a clean-up of several cities prior to the Pope's visit. "His presence strengthens the prestige of the (radical) bishops," he said.

Even the American government was displeased with the Pope's visit. In the "Washington Whispers" column of the magazine U.S. New & World Report (July 21 issue), it was reported that experts in the American administration are very disturbed by the Pope's visit to Brazil, considering that, in the long run, it would bring more turmoil to the life of that country. In their opinion, the revolutionaries can easily profit from the Pope's statements that Brazil now must face a choice between reform and violence to justify their terrorist activities.

ACTIVITIES OF THE WORLD COUNCIL OF CHURCHES IN AUSTRALIA

As reported in the July 16 issue of the Orthodox Observer, official mouthpiece of the Greek Exarchate in America, a conference was held in Melbourne, Australia, between May 12 and 25, in which five hundred representatives from one hundred nations took part. The conference was organized by the W.C.C. and was entitled "Your Kingdom Come." Apart from Protestants, thirty-five Orthodox members took part in the conference, as did an equivalent number of observers from the Roman Catholics, insofar as their church does not yet permit them to enter into the membership of the Council.

The principal theme of the conference was, of course, "the poor," and four subcommittees were formed to deliberate on various questions concerning them. The subcommittee designated "Good News to the Poor" the following resolution was adopted: "The poor are already in mission to change their own situation. What is required from the churches is a missionary movement that supports what they have already begun, and that focuses on building, evangelizing and witnessing communities of the poor that will discover and live out expressions of faith among the masses of the poor and oppressed. The churches will need to surrender their attitudes of benevolence and charity by which they have condescended to the poor; in many cases this will mean a radical change in the institutional life of the missionary movement. The churches will also need to be ready to listen to the poor, so that they can hear the Gospel from the poor, as well as learn about the ways in which they have helped to make them poor."

One can easily discern the influence of the pro-communist powers which dominate the W.C.C. in these lines.

The conference also warned representatives of the churches against uncritical alliances with either centrally planned economies or capitalist urban consumerist systems. "If social action becomes impatient activism supported by only vague ideals, worship may become a private indulgence with not active concern for others."

The conference apparently showed little concern for local problems but did adopt a number of resolutions expressing displeasure over the fate of those who suffer in Latin America, noted in particular the "martyrdom" of the radical-activist Cardinal Romero, addressed to President Carter an appeal to terminate support to military regimes and "to respect the right of the people of Latin America to seek a new social order that is more just and human."

The drafts of the radical resolutions might easily have been composed in Moscow or, in any event, with its consent.

The conference also gave particular encouragement to the representatives of the new, pro-communist government of the African nation Zimbabwe (the former Rhodesia), who stated that their "hard-won victory" did not come only through their own determination: "We were sustained and reinforced by the cooperation and support—material, moral and spiritual—accorded us by the WCC and its member churches."

The support accorded by the WCC two years ago by the "Program to Combat Racism" was expressed in a \$85,000 donation to the Zimbabwe Patriotic Front, a terrorist group which then brutally slaughtered thousands of its own citizens and tens of missionaries and their families. Several Protestant member denominations withdrew from the membership of the WCC in protest over this donation.

As the Ecumenical Press Service reports in its June 18 issue, the Presbyterian Church in Ireland has withdrawn from its membership in

this pseudo-ecclesiastical organization as a form of protest. Robert Dickinson, a representative of the Presbyterians, stated that: "The WCC sought unity which was not based on Scripture but rather on mutual tolerance of truth and error which Scripture forbids...the WCC is based on an unholy alliance between the WCC and Marxist principles and aspirations."

#### FIRST METHODIST FEMALE BISHOP

As reported in the July 18 issue of the New York Times, a certain Marjorie Matthews has been chosen as bishop for the United Methodist denomination, the adherents of which number about 10 million.

According to information supplied by the National Council of Churches, at present seventy-five denominations have female minister, while eighty-seven do not. But this is the first case of a woman being admitted to the episcopacy.

Archbishop Iakovos participates in prayer services with members of the United Methodist denomination in his ecumenical escapades. They participated in the prayer service held recently at the Archdiocese's clergy-laity conference in Georgia (see above). If present trends are followed to their logical conclusion, it can hardly be doubted that in the future the Archbishop may well have occasion to celebrate with the new "bishopess."

The Methodist conference which chose the "bishopess" also toyed with a proposal for a study to "give guidance" for understanding and reconciliation with homosexuals.

#### WHO WILL CONTROL THE WEATHER?

Under the above title the very widely popular magazine Reader's Digest printed a significant article in its May issue this year. Reporter Lowell Ponte, the author of the article, states that in February of 1978 such an unusual amount of rain fell in California that homes were washed down hillsides and coffins out of cemeteries.

For several months prior to this disaster a program of "cloud-seeding" (a new term) was conducted. In this case it was difficult to prove that the catastrophe resulted from manipulation of the clouds, yet many feel that there is some connection.

The first attempts to regulate the weather were made as early as 1946, when Vincent Schaeffer, a scientist in the employ of the General Electric company, dropped six pounds of dry-ice pellets into a single cloud not far from his laboratory in Schenectady, New York. As a result of this experiment a burst of snowflakes fell from the cloud. A similar experiment conducted several weeks later resulted in a snow-storm which dumped eight inches of snow on the city. Delighted with these results, the company asked the government to sponsor its experiments in this province. The government readily agreed and even signed a contract with General Electric. Soon the scientist began to experiment with other chemicals which he dissolved in acetone, vaporized in a propane flame, thus producing a delicate smoke which is then introduced into the clouds.

The author of the article has no doubt that the possibility of controlling the weather in the United States would be a great boon for the nation, yet recognizes that there are tremendous juridical and practical problems connected with it.

In June of 1972, in the city of Rapid City, South Dakota, a record flood took place only a few hours after a nearby cloud-seeding. More than two hundred persons lost their lives; material damage was esti-

mated in the millions.

In the past three decades at least eight lawsuits have been filed against companies involved in weather manipulation. The difficulty in winning such cases has been to prove what the weather would have been had no attempt been made to moderate it.

Experiments with the weather have been conducted not only by the government and commercial firms, but not, increasingly, by private individuals. It is known that as many as seventy-five cloud-seeding operations take place each year. Disturbed by these circumstances, Congress has created a special commission which introduced the National Weather Modification Policy Act, which was passed in 1976, as well as a number of recommendations. At present thirty-two states have laws governing weather modification. Most require the licensing of cloud-seeders, thus eliminating untrained operators, and many require cloud-seeding firms to file environmental impact statements and to keep detailed records.

The government will also attempt in the near future to work out general guidelines for this procedure, and also to labor over various legal questions connected with it, such as who will pay for damage sustained by farms as a result of bad weather stemming from cloud-seeding programs.

Confronted with the wide-spread drought and famine that is afflicting much of the world, and now is plaguing the Mid- and South-Western states of America, we must consider the possibility that this may well be the result of the endless experiments of men who are so deluded as to believe that they know better than God when and where snow and rain should fall and in what quantity.

#### VOODOO IN NEW YORK

In its June 8 issue, the New York Times reported that, at the request of the American Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals, the city police raided a home in which more than sixty animals—from goats and sheep to domestic fowl—were being prepared for ritual sacrifice.

Priests of this sect charge no less than one hundred dollars for a single sacrifice, after which the adherents of the sect hope to receive wealth and health. When the authorities entered to search the home, they found seven people cleaning pieces of coconut, chopping herbs and wrapping large leaves into bundles in preparation for the sacrifice.

As reported in the July 21 issue of the newspaper Spotlight, it seems that the growth of such cults is greatly disturbing to the city authorities in Miami, Florida, where a tremendous number of refugees from Cuba and Haiti have settled. The authorities are finding "the eviscerated remains of goats, chickens, guinea hens and sheep...regularly around the city. In some instances goat heads have been found in churches, wrapped in red ribbon as a thank-you offering for someone."

In the opinion of the police of the city of New York alone, there may be as many as one thousand such groups, each with hundreds of members. The principal nest of these sorcerers seems to be the Bronx. The police questioned Mrs. Emilia Plasencia, owner of the home that was raided and self-professed voodoo priestess, who said that she was an adherent of the beliefs of Lucumin, which is itself a version of Santeria, a cultic set of beliefs brought from Nigeria

to Cuba by slaves in the eighteenth century and which once practiced infanticide as well as animal sacrifice.

RELIGION IS BACK, BUT...

Under this title the newspaper Spotlight printed a short note in its July 7 issue on holidays in public schools:

"From the same people who brought you 'winter vacation' instead of Christmas vacation and 'spring vacation' instead of Easter vacation—the public school system—now comes their latest version of separation of church and state. According to the 'Michigan Lutheran' (June), public schools in Cranston, Rhode Island, will close next September for two days in observance of Rosh Hashanah, the Jewish New Year.

"Where is the American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU) when you really need them?" the note concludes on a pathetic note.

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