

DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC & FOREIGN RELATIONS
of the
SYNOD OF BISHOPS
OF THE RUSSIAN ORTHODOX CHURCH OUTSIDE OF RUSSIA
NEWSLETTERS ##37-38

April-July 1981

TO OUR READERS AND SUPPORTERS:

The Department of Public and Foreign Relations of the Synod of Bishops of the Russian Orthodox Church Outside of Russia sincerely regrets the long interruption in the publication of the English translation of its Newsletter. This combined Newsletter ##37-38 has been edited heavily and certain material which has by now become dated has been deleted. We hope that this course of action will not become necessary again in the future, and that we will be able to supply our readers and supporters with information which will help them to assess the continuing decline of the state of affairs in the realm of contemporary religion and of morality in Western society, regularly.

THE PATRIARCH OF JERUSALEM VISITS OUR CONVENT ON THE MOUNT OF OLIVES

Archimandrite Anthony, who heads our Russian Ecclesiastical Mission in Jerusalem, reports that "On Tuesday, May 19, His Beatitude Patriarch Diodoros paid an unannounced visit to our convent on the Mount of Olives. His arrival took place while a service was being celebrated in the church. The patriarch entered the church during the reading of the kathismata and was welcomed in a manner befitting his rank. The choir chanted 'Ton Despotin' for him and he blessed everyone. The Patriarch then visited Fr. Dmitri, the convent's spiritual father, and treated him very cordially. He then went to the grave of Abbess Tamara and served a Litia there. Abbess Theodosia invited the Patriarch to her quarters and presented him with an icon of the Lord's Ascension." All the sisters were very happy to have the Patriarch in their midst and as he departed they rang all of the bells for him.

In accordance with the express desire of the Synod of Bishops, His Grace Bishop Laurus of Syracuse & Trinity was delegated to attend the ceremony of the enthronization of Patriarch Diodoros of Jerusalem. He arrived in Jerusalem on Friday, February 27; on Saturday he attended the all-night vigil on the Mount of Olives and presided over the polyeleos. Liturgy on Sunday began at 6:00 A.M., and was celebrated by Bishop Laurus, Archimandrites Innokenty and Modestus, and Hegumen Methodius concelebrating. After the liturgy was finished, Bishop Laurus was driven to the Church of the Resurrection, arriving there at 9:00 A.M. Accompanying him were the clergy of the Mission and several nuns representing both of the Mission's convents. Children of the school at Bethany had by then already found places within the church, having arrived very early lest they find it difficult to enter. The Mission's clergy were escorted into the sanctuary by the Dragoman, Fr. Athanasios, while the nuns remained in the nave of the church. There were many celebrants in the sanctuary: twenty bishops, thirty-four priests, deacons and attendants, in addition to bishops and clergy who were not concelebrating. Bishop Laurus and Frs. Nectarius and Boris stood in the sanctuary until the Great Entrance, after which they moved to the steps of the ambo, where they remained until the conclusion of the service. By the time the service ended the church was overflowing with people; the balconies were filled, as was the courtyard.

Immediately after the liturgy the rite of the Patriarch's enthronization began; the Patriarch himself blessed the beginning of the moleben, standing

with a portion of his clergy in the middle of the church. After the chanting of the moleben had been begun by the choir, Archbishop Vasilios brought the Patriarch an old silver mitre, which the Patriarch placed on his own head; the archbishop then proclaimed "Axios", which was repeated by the people in a solemn manner. Then Metropolitan Germanos, who was Locum Tenens of the Patriarchal Throne after the repose of Patriarch Benedict, and Archbishop Vasilios led the new Patriarch to the patriarchal throne, and Metropolitan Germanos handed him the staff and delivered a short speech of congratulation. When the moleben was completed, those present began to approach the Patriarch with their own congratulations. First to be received by Patriarch Diodoros was the minister of the Greek government, followed by Metropolitan Meliton of the Patriarchate of Constantinople. After him, Metropolitan Juvenaly, the representative of the Patriarchate of Moscow, began to address the Patriarch in Russian; but the Patriarch did not permit him to finish and left his throne when representatives of the Israeli government approached him to greet him. Metropolitan Juvenaly was visibly annoyed at the interruptions, and as soon as they left the church he resumed his speech. Then a Roumanian bishop spoke, following which the Patriarch read an address of his own, first in Greek and then in Arabic. The church was very noisy; and as there were no loud-speakers, it was impossible to make out what the Patriarch was saying. When these speeches had come to an end, the Patriarch, standing at his throne, began to receive the congratulations of other clergymen. Bishop Laurus also congratulated him, and the Patriarch responded with "Thank you, Vladyka, thank you!" Then the Patriarch removed his vestments, and all the clergy, processing two by two, followed him to the throne room of the Patriarchate. Bishop Laurus walked in the procession with the Greek hierarchs. In the throne room everyone sat wherever he could, and the Patriarch greeted all with a small glass of cognac. Then, in French and in English, the Patriarch greeted the representatives of the World Council of Churches, and afterwards, in Arabic, he addressed himself to the Arab clergy.

Bishop Laurus conveyed to His Beatitude the congratulations of His Eminence Metropolitan Philaret, the Synod of Bishops and the episcopate of our Church. He also conveyed the congratulations of the head of the Mission, who at that time was in America, and of the abbesses of our convents and of all our monastics. Bishop Laurus told the Patriarch that we pray that the Lord will help His Beatitude in his position of responsibility as first-hierarch of the Church of Sion, and that grant him to resist the pressure of the ecumenists who are betraying the Truth for the sake of union with the heterodox. Patriarch Diodoros replied that he was grateful for the congratulations and good will, and gave assurance that he would try always to guard and protect Holy Orthodoxy, and that the Church of Sion will follow in the steps of his predecessors and the Holy Fathers.

A NOTEWORTHY BIOGRAPHY

From highly trustworthy sources received from Russia, some interesting details have come to light concerning the person of Alexander Andreevich Chernov, who has been received as a clergyman by one of the Greek Old-Calendarist groups who accept him as a member of the Catacomb Church. A prior attempt made by him to be received into the Russian Orthodox Church Outside of Russia met with refusal.

The report we have received says that "according to his tale, he is of Old Believer provenance, though he did not say from which sect; he did not say where he was born, but mentioned that he was baptized in Kiev and emigrated to Bulgaria with his parents in 1920. He completed studies in Bulgaria in the Military Academy, the Theological School of the University of Sofia, the Institute of Rhetoric and the School of Philosophy. He was preparing to become a doctor, but the physicians dismissed him because of the state of his nerves. In Bulgaria he enrolled in some sort of political organization called 'Salvation of Russia', but withdrew from its membership. In 1944 he married, but was soon arrested by the Soviets, transferred to Moscow by plane and sentenced by Abakumov, the minister of the secret police,

to ten years of hard labor in concentration camps. In camps in which both men and women were incarcerated he had relations with one woman in particular and begot a son by her, who looks very much like his father; he subsequently reconsidered and withdrew from contact with this woman. He was transferred to the Spassk camp in the Karagandinsky district of the Kazakhstan S.S.R. There he took upon himself the struggle of silence for his sin, began to pray fervently with tears, and to such an extent that he was admitted to the psychiatric department of the camp's hospital. He grew a beard, and, while concealing himself beneath the covers of his bed in the psychiatric ward, wrote an extensive brochure of a religious nature directed at all the sects likely to be found in the camp." At the same time he also composed a "'Service and Akathist to Matushka Michaila', foundress of the Mikhailov sect of flagellants [khlysty]. Every day he read the troparion he had composed to her, and he kept her photograph over his bed....When I was a young man of twenty-one," writes the author of the report, "I believed him because he had been an emigrant and had a noble visage; and so I followed him.... When, after Stalin's death, meetings with prisoners were permitted, his former concubine learned through the camp administration where Alexander Andreievich Chernov was located and demanded a meeting with him. At first he wavered for a long time, but later he refused to meet with her.

"After his release from the camp, he was taken in by someone who agreed to be responsible for him, in the hope that he would make a learned catacomb priest. The people accepted him with joy, and he fitted in to the Catacomb Church; but it was not long before he began to break up the flock. Before his arrival in 1959 there was oneness of mind everywhere. They gave him refuge thinking that he was an archimandrite or a bishop, but it turned out that he was simply a lay author. During this period of time he was tonsured into the mantia by one of the catacomb priests, but later "he turned on him with great malice and sent leaflets all throughout Russia reviling the priest who tonsured him and accusing him of being unOrthodox and of violating all manner of canonical norms; he took off his monastic garb and sent it back to him; and he upset, dispersed and frightened the people into not accepting any priests whatever, but to await the appearance of angels for them to be able to commune worthily. The priest who had tonsured him fell into a terrible depression and was tossed about on all sides; no one defended him or supported him morally. The theologian [A. Chernov] formed his own organization, attracted certain young people through strict selectivity, raised them in the spirit of the sect of the "wanderers", and authored many pamphlets against the Sergianist Church. He took an intransigent and malicious stance with regard to the priests, monastics and laity of the official church. No less a malicious position did he take with regard to the priests of the Catacomb Church, calling them heretics and agents of the soviets; thus he led the people into great confusion and extreme distrust of any priest whatever. In general he went over to the position of the priestless Old Believers and supported them in every way possible. But as he inculcated the mania of suspicion among his followers, the people began to fall away from him, and he was left with five or six adherents..."

And having managed somehow to emigrate from the U.S.S.R., Alexander Chernov is now waging a similar struggle to bring about dissension with embittered propaganda against our Church Abroad.

RECENT INFORMATION ON THE LAVRA OF POCHAEV

In the June 5 issue of the Keston News Bulletin it is reported that the state of affairs in the Lavra of Pochaev has taken a turn for the worse, as compared to the situation in 1979. The faithful dare not remain long in the monastery aside from attending the services. Only clergymen are permitted to remain for a short period of time, but even they must fill out preliminary applications in triplicate, which are then transmitted to the local militia.

Archimandrite Job, as well as the prior Fr. Pancraty and several of the monks who are members of the Spiritual Council, have taken up arms against

all the monks who are loved and respected by the faithful. As a result, Hegumen Amvrosy, who is especially widely renowned, has been subjected to persecutions at the hands of the Lavra's administration. He has been forbidden to deliver sermons and to confess the pilgrims. As of late February, the abbot and prior of the Lavra have been circulating rumors that there is in the monastery a monk who has connections with masons, occultists and even black magic. On March 1, 1981, one of the archimandrites of the Lavra stated openly in a sermon that this terrible monk is Hegumen Amvrosy. The abbot has not even hesitated to go to the militia with the request that they help him deal with "this anti-soviet Amvrosy." Hegumen Amvrosy had to leave the Lavra, and for a time took up residence in a neighboring village at the home of his niece. But even there the authorities would not leave him in peace. The militia, under the leadership of the abbot, Archimandrite Iakov and the prior Pankraty, appeared at Fr. Amvrosy's door, producing an accusation of theft of monastery property; then a search was made of his niece's house. Soon afterwards, Fr. Amvrosy went to Kiev, in the hope of there obtaining a review of his case.

At present all who honor the monks for their pious life are subjected to persecutions by the monastery authorities. Sermons and the confession of the pilgrims have nearly ceased. According to rumors, the spiritual children of Fr. Amvrosy have sent a petition to the patriarch, seeking his defence of their spiritual father.

WORTHY OF AN AWARD!

In its May 20, 1981 issue, the "Orthodox Observer", the official organ of the Greek Exarchate, reports that Archbishop Iakovos has received the first annual Sam Levenson award, which has been given to him by the New York City Jewish Community Council. The presentation took place on May 5, in the Urban Administration building, on the occasion of the opening of the "Week of Jewish Heritage." In presenting the memorial plaque, Rabbi Schneider spoke warmly of Archbishop Iakovos, emphasizing his great contribution to the ecumenical movement in America and his gift of spiritual leadership.

It is interesting to note that ecumenism is now uniting a multitude of religious groups on the most diverse grounds. Thus, for example, according to a report in "Orthodox Way", the official ecclesiastical organ of the Serbian Church in America, printed in its May issue, it is apparent that on May 17, 1981, an ecumenical concert was held in Pittsburgh on the initiative of the Presbyterians. An Orthodox church choir, Roman Catholics, Baptists, Jews and various Lutherans participated. The program consisted of hymns sung by each choir individually from its own spiritual texts, and closed with the singing of Archangel'sky's "Now lettest Thou Thy servant depart", which was sung by all the choirs under the direction of James Mina, the conductor of the Orthodox choir.

BISHOP ANTHIMOS' STEP TOWARDS RAPPROCHEMENT WITH THE ROMAN CATHOLICS

The Greek newspaper "Hellenic Chronicle" has reported that on the first day of Pascha, 1981, there went into effect an agreement which had been reached between the Greek Bishop Anthimos of Boston and Cardinal Madeiros, to the effect that an Orthodox Christian who marries a Catholic in a Catholic church is no longer considered to be living in illicit cohabitation and, on that basis, deprived of Holy Communion, but remains a full member of the Orthodox Church.

Bishop Anthimos, the initiator of this scandalous violation of the canons, has with satisfaction called this "a significant step, not only with respect to the multitude of spiritual benefits manifest upon those affected by it, but it is also a very significant step which serves as an incentive for closer ties between our Churches." This agreement with the Catholics affects the twenty-four parishes of the Boston Diocese. Bishop Anthimos sent out a special letter to his clergy announcing this, stating that the details and practical guidelines would follow, but that in the meanwhile he asked his priests to seek out among their parishioners all those couples who fall un-

der this agreement and to assure them that there will now be no impediments to their receiving Communion "for spiritual success and for the benefit of the Church."

THE RESIGNATION OF METROPOLITAN JUVENALY

Metropolitan Juvenaly, the head of the Moscow Patriarchate's Department of External Affairs, has submitted a petition to be relieved of his duties by reason of the poor state of his health. Metropolitan Juvenaly recommends that Metropolitan Philaret of Minsk & Belorussia be appointed as his successor.

A MODERN EXPERIMENT

As the newspaper National Catholic Register reports, New Zealand's Catholic diocese has been conducting an experimental service celebrated by laymen. Throughout the diocese, on one of the Sunday's in March, 1981, the service was conducted by laymen who intoned petitions, read passages from the Holy Scriptures and even distributed the eucharistic bread prepared beforehand by priests. Instead of a sermon, the laymen read a pastoral epistle from diocesan bishop Edward Haines. In Hamilton's Catholic cathedral of the Virgin Mary, Michael Herdle, one of the university's prominent functionaries, occupied the bishop's seat and presided over the "service."

While all of this was going on, fifty-eight priests of the diocese, headed by their bishop, underwent a twelve-day program of renewal.

SECOND VISIT OF THE PATRIARCH OF JERUSALEM

Word has been received from the head of the Mission in Jerusalem that on June 14, 1981, His Beatitude Patriarch Diodoros, accompanied by Archbishop Vasilios of Caesaria and Archimandrite Theodosios, a member of the Synod, paid a visit to Gethsemane. The Patriarch entered the church and was greeted with the chanting of the troparion of Pentecost. Afterwards, His Beatitude blessed all present. The head of the Mission welcomed him with a speech and the patriarch replied to him with a lengthy and cordial response of his own. After the intonation of "Many years" to the Patriarch, His Beatitude and his entourage passed to the abbess's quarters, where the eminent guests were offered tea and lemonade. To mark this occasion, Archimandrite Anthony presented the Patriarch with a beautiful staff.

ON THE PERSECUTION OF THE CHURCH IN THE U.S.S.R.

In an interview given to the Russian-language newsletter "Religion & Atheism in the U.S.S.R.", A. Levitin-Krasnov, an emigrant from the Soviet Union, has reported that according to information he has received, Fr. Gleb Yakunin received permission in April of 1981 for a short meeting with his wife. He did not look well, for his transport to the camp had been very debilitating. As a new means of insulting Fr. Gleb, they have shaved off his beard and cut his hair, something which was not done to priests even in Stalin's time. On arriving at the camp, he learned that Dr. Orlov, a professor of physics who was imprisoned there, had organized there a hunger-strike, the goal of which was to secure for political prisoners the rights guaranteed them by the "Declaration of Human Rights." Exhausted by his long journey, Fr. Gleb none the less agreed immediately to take part in the camp's hunger-strike. Although he seemingly has the right to receive mail, he himself can write but two letters per month. Levitin-Krasnov asked to report that the more letters sent to Fr. Gleb, indicating to the administration that he is not forgotten in the free world, the better it will be for him.

The same issue of that periodical reports that the priest Vasily Boiko, the choir director of the Church of the Protection in Solomenko, Kiev, organized a choir of young people who wished to learn ecclesiastical chant and take part in the divine services. The choir, comprising about thirty members, became one of the best in the city. The overseer of the Kiev district demanded of the parish council that the youth choir be immediately disbanded.

Thus, in August of 1980, an automobile drove up to the church and men in secular garb, accompanied by the parish warden, went up to the choirloft, where a rehearsal was in progress. They demanded that the singers show them their passports. Several of them had their passports on their person and were able to produce them. During the course of the two following weeks, an automobile drove up to the church with people in secular garb who, blocking exit from the choirloft, demanded that passports be produced and would not permit the singers to continue the rehearsal. The church's administration has dissolved its contract with Fr. Vitaly, and he had no more work there before January of 1981. He now directs the choir in the church of the city of Irpen.

ACTIVITIES OF SOVIET HIERARCHS

Metropolitan Philaret of Minsk & Belorussia, the Moscow Patriarchate's exarch for Western Europe, while recently in London spoke about certain aspects of Russian Church life in the U.S.S.R. According to him, his flock is 10 million strong, for which there are 370 parishes; this means that there is one "parish" for each 27,000 believers, approximately. For all of these 10 million faithful there are some 383 priests. In Zhirovitsy there still functions an ancient monastery, but it has become a dual establishment, with both men and women monastics, its community being comprised of fifteen monks and thirty-three nuns. Metropolitan Philaret had to admit that there are not enough priests to service the faithful; thus, in Belorussia it has become a common occurrence for simple laymen to be ordained priests while they continue theological courses on an independent study basis. But even with the aid of these courses it is almost impossible to train the clergy. Thus, in 1980, of the fifteen Belorussian candidates, only five individuals were able to enroll in the courses.

He brought attention to the fact that the Church is strictly forbidden to engage in any charitable activity, and also to the difficulties encountered in teaching children the rudiments of the Faith, such being permitted only to their parents.

To questions as to the fate of Fr. Gleb Yakunin, Metropolitan Philaret refused to answer on the pretext that the opinions of Fr. Gleb concerning the Moscow Patriarchate are so unobjective that it would not be seemly to speak on that topic.

No brighter picture is obtained from the remarks of Archbishop Chrysostom of Kursk & Belgorod, assistant to the head of the Moscow Patriarchate's Department of External Affairs, who gave an interview while in Philadelphia as a guest of Cardinal Krol. According to him, of every four men who wish to enter seminary, only one is accepted. In fact, the three seminaries and two ecclesiastical academies have a combined enrollment of only nine hundred students, while 1,100 are engaged in taking independent study courses. He has ordained 120 laymen for his own diocese while they complete independent study courses as time permits.

Bishop Chrysostom was mentioned in the recently published "Appraisal" of V. Furov for the members of the Ministry of Cults, in which he was characterized as having "zealous activity for the vivification of religious life", and thus worthy of reproof, and as having as his "purpose to renew the activity of moribund parishes, to activate the faithful, stopping to whatever means are necessary."

ORTHODOX IN THE WORLD COUNCIL OF CHURCHES

In accordance with an agreement with the Church of Bulgaria, there took place in May of 1981 a meeting of members of the World Council of Churches, which was convened in Sofia. There representatives of the Orthodox Churches stated that "as one of the two great Christian traditions represented in the World Council of Churches," they would like to see themselves on a par in the future with all those who have the right to make decisions in that organization. From the outset, these delegates affirmed that their Churches are aware that they are full partners and members of the W.C.C., and that several of them were themselves founding members. In evaluating their position

in the W.C.C, the Orthodox stated that the Council's methods are such that "they do not feel themselves comfortable with them." In setting the programs of the conferences, the Council gives precedence to such themes as early contradict Orthodox Tradition, as, for example, questions of the ordination of women to the priesthood, while at the same time questions in which the Orthodox would be interested are relegated to the bottom of the agenda.

As the Ecumenical Press Service reports in in June 4, 1981 bulletin, the conference bore results, and about twenty propositions were formulated by the Orthodox, who are first demanding a significant increase in the number of their members on all levels who will have a part in the resolution of important questions "in accordance with their real numbers as members and their historical significance," changes in the procedure of voting on questions of theological texts when "the vast majority of reformed churches can easily overwhelm the position adopted by the minority of Orthodox Churches." Among the proposals there is also one of a practical nature: that Greek become the working language of the World Council of Churches!

In order to give the Orthodox some wort of satisfaction, during the course of 1981-82 there will be held a symposium of Orthodox theologians under the auspices of the W.C.C., on the theme: "Jesus Christ—the Life of the world."

HOPE FOR THE SUBVERSION OF THE ORTHODOX

The National Catholic Reporter in its June 19, 1981 issue, and the Wanderer in its June 2 issue, report that, during the celebration of the Catholics' Pentecost in Rome. the 1,600th anniversary of the Council of Constantinople and the 1,550th anniversary of the Council of Ephesus were marked in the Basilica of St. Peter, on which occasion a mass was celebrated by fifty cardinals, 250 bishops and servers, and which was attended also by numerous representatives of Protestant and Orthodox churches. The Pope, who was in the hospital at the time, recorded his greetings on tape, and observers were quick to call attention to the fact that in reading an extract from the Symbol of Faith he omitted the "Filioque." The Pope said that difference of practice with regard to the "Filioque" should not have become a cause of separation, for both sides (he says) could equally use or refrain from using the words "and from the Son" in the Symbol of Faith. As is apparent, the Pope treats very lightly the question of the recognition or repudiation of such a fundamental dogma of the Church.

In greeting a group of delegates from Constantinople to Rome who were headed by Metropolitan Damaskinos, the Pope said further that "A like joy fills us because of the fact that the delegation sent by the Bishop of Rome to the See of the Patriarchate of Constantinople under the leadership of Maximilien Cardinal de Furstenberg can participate in the splendid liturgy commemorating the historic event, a liturgy through which the two sister Churches of Rome and Constantinople wish to venerate the Divine Majesty for the work done by the Council of 1600 years ago can any day be more suitable than the day of Pentecost for such a celebration?..." "To you and all the faithful here present, to all the churches of the world whose hearts beat in unison with the church of Rome and Constantinople, I affectionately impart my apostolic blessing," the Pope concluded.

The observers present and the Catholic bishops understood the Pope's gesture as a "sizeable olive branch" extended to the Orthodox.

To both the Latins and to all the varieties of Protestants which have derived from them, the Trinitarian dogma of the procession of the Holy Spirit from the Father alone has hitherto been of scant significance; indeed, it seems to them a "disputable question", which they now often refer to not as a dogma, but as a "clause."

Unification whatever the cost is the a more important objective than a precise exposition of the Faith. Thus, the Pope's unexpected statement will, it is possible, impress Constantinople and those with her.

A NEW JERSEY GREEK CHURCH'S PARISH FESTIVAL

The Greek Orthodox Church of St. Demetrios in Perth Amboy organized a three-day festival on the parish's premises. Widely circulated leaflets and the Woodbridge, N.J., News Tribune (June 17, 1981 issue) reported that besides the sale of Greek culinary delicacies and handicrafts, one of the the things which the public found most attractive was a six-foot tall bronze idol of the Greek god Zeus, which had been executed by Auguste P. DeCasas. In this connection, one immediately recalls that St. Metrophanes of Voronezh, when invited to the papalce of Emperor Peter I, refused to enter the palace grounds until the emperor had removed the classical statues which stood round it. The enraged emperor threatened the courageous hierarch with death for his disobedience, but even this did not induce him to alter his demand. In the end, the emperor had to give in, and the statues were moved out the the vicinity; when St. Metrophanes visited the emperor thereafter, the latter showed him considerable honor.

Should it happen that one of the parishes of the Church Abroad decide to display an idol of Perun on its premises, the pastor and parishioners will not be able to carry through their plan with impunity.

WOMEN'S RENOVATIONISM IN THE CATHOLIC CHURCH

Unrestrained by any definite means, the women's movement in the Catholic Church continues to grow. The June 30 issue of the New York Times printed a report from Boston on a meeting of the National Assembly of Women Religious which was held there the day before.

According to the printed report, an attempt was made to obtain permission for women to celebrate the liturgy at this assembly. They have already been gathering together for the celebration of the liturgy and the reception of their eucharist without a priest.

On Saturday, June 29, 1981, mass was served for the assembled women by Fr. Jack White, formerly on the staff of the National Federation of Priests Councils. He served the mass dressed in a sports shirt over which he placed a stole; he also wore a blue arm-band symbolizing his support for the ordination of women.

The following evening, the women celebrated a "women's liturgy" themselves, distributing their eucharistic bread to one another. Msgr. James Connolly, chairman of the liturgical commission for the archdiocese of New York, explained to a Times reporter that the service was invaild in that it had been performed by a "non-ordained person." Yet he did not mention any measures which might be taken against the participants. Meanwhile, Sister Chris Loughlin presented a list of typical renovationist demands. "It is necessary for us to recast all our symbols and traditions," she said. She also mentioned that women at the retreat house where she lives in Massachusetts have even discussed whether bread and wine would be the appropriate symbols for a women's liturgy!

Sister Barbara Ferraro, a member of the Women's Ordination Conference, sees in such liturgies celebrated by women a way of protesting against the domination of the church by men. The Times reports that such women's organizations are not longer willing to wait until the church acts officially to introduce women's services and communion. One nun said that as early as 1976 she was present at a eucharistic rite at which communion was distributed by a woman; since then she has regularly taken part in such services. The first time she experience a sense of awe, but since then it has become natural for her.

Such women are demanding a complete reform. It is interesting that the Catholic ecclesiastical authorities are taking no measures to stem the tide of feminism which threatens to inundate the vestiges of truth which it has retained. The questions remain: Do the ecclesiastical authorities feel a sense of complete impotence, or do they secretly sympathize with the women who know no bounds in their precipitous rush towards reform?

MODERNIST CATHOLIC PRIESTS

The Wanderer, a conservative Catholic newspaper, in its June 11, 1981, issue, has reported that seven pastors of parishes in Seattle, Washington, including the cathedral itself, have joined the Maryknoll Missioners in pledging "to continue our effort to avoid male dominance in liturgical settings." These modernist Catholics wish to see women as "trained cantors, ushers, lectors, greeters, eucharistic ministers, servers..." etc.

These priests promise to continue the struggle so that women may lead eucharistic services when no priest is present, and act as counselors, retreat directors, spiritual directors and teachers of theology; they also intend to invite women to "speak within the Church services letting the gifts of women break open the Word of God to enrich [them] not only on women's issues but on the entire spectrum of [their] mutual pastoral concerns."

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IMPORTANT NOTICE TO OUR READERS!

The continuous escalation of postal rates and the price of paper, as well as an increase in the amount of money the Department must pay to subscribe to the publications from which we obtain our information, make it ever more difficult to secure the funds necessary to cover our expenses and to mail out our Newsletter.

We have not established a fixed subscription rate and have hitherto managed with the help of good-will donations sent from our readers. We are always grateful to them for their assistance, and we hope that it showing it our readers will find it possible to allow for the rise in costs and increase their donations.

Department of Public & Foreign Relations