

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

Pastoral Conference of the Eastern American Diocese

On October 11 of the current year a Pastoral Conference of the Eastern American Diocese took place. After the Liturgy and a light breakfast, His Eminence Metropolitan Philaret opened the conference, in which His Grace Bishop Gregory and about fifty pastors of various parishes took part.

His Grace, Bishop Gregory delivered a short report on the subject of various unexpected questions which are encountered in pastoral practice, and afterwards he suggested that those present submit questions on the subject of the report. This resulted in a lively exchange of opinions. The session broke for lunch, throughout which lively discussion took place, and thereafter continued until five o'clock p.m.

Illness of Archbishop Philotheos

His Grace, Bishop Mark has informed us of the sudden deterioration of the state of His Grace, Archbishop Philotheos' health; he has undergone a third stroke. In view of this, the Synod of Bishops has resolved to retire His Grace, Archbishop Philotheos and to appoint in his place His Grace, Bishop Mark, according to the latter the title "of Berlin & Germany."

Deposition from Rank

At its 3/16 September session, the Synod of Bishops adopted a resolution on the deposition from rank of the priest Mark Shin for his uncanonical transferral of himself to the "Orthodox Church in America", violating the oath of loyalty to the hierarchy of the Russian Orthodox Church Outside of Russia which he gave prior to his ordination.

Award

At the same session, the Synod of Bishops, in an extraordinary manner, awarded the mitre to Archpriest Alexander Trubnikov, at the request of his diocesan bishop, His Grace Archbishop Anthony of Geneva.

Court Case of the Mission in Jerusalem

The long drawn out legal suit of the Russian Ecclesiastical Mission in Jerusalem against the Mission of the Soviet Patriarchate, which illegally appropriated a portion of our Mission's property in 1948, received a favorable decision from the Israeli Supreme Court not long ago. After a positive decision of the Circuit Court in favor of our Mission in Jerusalem, the Soviet Mission lodged an appeal with the Supreme Court, which rejected its complaint, leaving in force the decision in favor of the Russian Ecclesiastical Mission of the Church Abroad.

Reception of Two Parishes from the "Orthodox Church of America"

Two parishes of the "Orthodox Church in America", in the towns of Mayfield and Simpson, Pennsylvania, have submitted official petitions to be received into the Russian Orthodox Church Outside of Russia, in view of their categorical refusal to change to the New Calendar which has been imposed throughout the "O.C.A." (with the exception of Alaska and Canada), as of September 1. Prior to this, the parishes of the "O.C.A." retained the right to vote individually on which calendar each would follow.

Both parishes have been received into the jurisdiction of the Russian Ortho-

dox Church Outside of Russia. The priest of the Mayfield parish, Fr. John Sorochka, has also been received into our Church.

Priest of the Greek Archdiocese Received into the Jurisdiction of the Russian Orthodox Church Outside of Russia

The Greek priest, Fr. Nicholas Liberis, who was in the jurisdiction of Archbishop Iakovos, being troubled by the progressive modernism of the Greek Archdiocese of North & South America, submitted a petition to be received into the jurisdiction of His Grace, Archbishop Anthony of Los Angeles.

Archbishop Anthony has made available to Fr. Liberis and a group of parishioners who have come over with him, the church of St. Andrew the First-called in the city of Glendora. In view of the fact that the Russian parishioners of that church have either reposed or moved away, the church had long been unused. Glory to God, now the prayers of Orthodox people are once again offered up therein.

Jubilee of His Grace, Archbishop Vitaly

On 25 October/7 November, the twenty-fifth anniversary of His Grace, Archbishop Vitaly's assumption of the cathedra of Montreal & Canada was solemnly observed in Montreal. The Liturgy was concelebrated by six hierarchs in the huge Cathedral of St. Nicholas, in the presence of a large concourse of the faithful, and thereafter a solemn moleben was served. Afterwards, in the spacious Slovak Hall a banquet was held, at which Vladyka Vitaly was greeted with numerous speeches and gifts, among which was a vessel for oil which was especially crafted for the occasion. Unfortunately, for technical reasons, Vladyka Metropolitan was unable to attend the festivities.

The presence of so many bishops in Canada facilitated the holding of a plenary session of the Synod of Bishops at that time.

Installation of Domes in the Church in Canberra, Australia

On the feast of the Holy Great Princess Olga, the St. John the Baptist Church in Canberra, the capital of Australia, was adorned with a dome weighing 3,000 pounds and a cross twenty-five meters in height. A.P.Lukin, the parish warden and one of the chief founders of the church, is of the opinion that the actual cost of the still far from completed church has already reached a million dollars.

More than 700 people attended the solemnity, headed by His Grace, Archbishop Paul. A local newspaper printed a very favorable article on installation of the dome and cross on the church.

It is apparent from the photographs that the church is a sizeable building which doubtless stands as an adornment and a notable sight in the capital.

From Letters from Moscow Received by the Synod of Bishops

The Poor of Moscow

"Beginning with the remarkable conference 'In Defense of the Sacred Gift of Life Nuclear Catastrophe' in Moscow, war was declared on the poor of the Church, to prevent them from disturbing foreigners there can be no poor among us, they say. For this reason, in the instruction to wardens of parishes it is ordered to drive the poor away, and the wardens in fact pass on this duty to the church watchmen. Thus, for example, in the church in the Vagan'kovsk Cemetery, the warden dealt with the problem in the following manner: 'On whosever shift poor people are to be found,' he told the watchmen, 'that person will either be discharged or will receive only half his pay for a month.' Actually, the poor did not prove a problem for them."

The driving away of the poor from Orthodox churches in the U.S.S.R. is a manifestation of heartlessness which aims to please the regime. From the first days of the founding of the Church, benevolence has been one of the basic Christian activities.

On the Canonization of the New Martyrs

"I have been observing the beneficial influence which the canonization of the new martyrs has been having on church life (especially that of the youth). It has, firstly, infused a lively spirit; and in the second place, one can easily determine who is who by asking the question: 'How do you view the canonization?'"

PERSECUTION OF THE SERBIAN CHURCH

Glasnik, the official publication of the Serbian Orthodox Church, in its #7 issue printed three pages of facts which have been submitted as material for review by the Council of Bishops of that Church.

As it says in the Serbian Church's statement, attacks on it and its property have occurred over a period of decades. A multitude of complaints have reached the Synod of Bishops against the destruction of cemeteries and holy places, arson and physical assaults on the clergy and faithful.

"With great pain and profound sorrow," the statement says, "the Most Sacred Synod of Bishops has done what it found possible to do: it has directed all complaints, together with its own request for defense, to the Commission of the Supreme Soviet Parliament for Matters Relating to Religious Unions....Unfortunately, no intervention was forthcoming, and at times there was even no reply.

"Meanwhile, our faithful have been complaining that the Church is not taking and has not taken any measures to bring an end to this. For this reason, the Most Holy Council of Bishops at its present session has resolved to publish but a small portion of the material it has which bears witness to the terror in Kosova."

In the mid '60s attacks on monasteries especially became more frequent. Their property was confiscated by the surrounding populace, and the monks were beaten mercilessly.

In 1969, the Synod of Bishops resolved to ask His Grace Bishop Paul of Rashko-Prizrensk to inform the Synod systematically of all cases known to him of assault by the Albanian populace on monastics, their monasteries and the faithful in general. At that time, on May 19, 1969, the Council of Bishops lodged with President Tito a complaint against the activities of the local authorities. In the petition it said that "the Synod of Bishops has repeatedly appealed concerning concrete cases to the appropriate authorities...but the situation has not improved. No sooner is violence quelled in one place when it appears in another place and in a more serious form. Over the past year they have been characterized by a more serious nature." In enumerating the many acts of violence, the Council brought to Tito's attention that it was not only monasteries and the fields and forests of peasants which were being destroyed, but that physical assaults were also taking place. Thus, in the Deviche Convent a serious wound was inflicted upon the abbess; a novice of the Dechani Monastery was wounded with an axe; a hieromonk of the Gorioch Monastery was struck in the head with a stone; priests were driven from Kosovo's Mitrovitsa with stones, so that many of the faithful had to leave the area because of it. In all of these cases, the Church has formally complained to the authorities.

On May 23, 1969, President Tito expressed regret that such incidents could take place and confirmed that they were violating the law of the Serbian Federal Republic of Yugoslavia, according to which all of its citizens are equal before the law. Tito also promised to take measures so that "these iniquitous acts might cease and that the freedom and integrity of the citizens and their property might be safeguarded." Furthermore, Tito promised the Council that he would forward a copy of his letter with a new accompanying letter from himself to Parliament.

The Synod of Bishops reproduced Tito's letter and sent copies of it to all the members of the Council of Bishops. However, this did not help in the least, and Glasnik devoted two pages to enumerating instances of violence and other offenses against the Orthodox. Among them: while walking to the post office, Bishop Paul was pulled by the beard by a youth who then struck him about the back with his kamilavka; no action was subsequently taken against the assailant.

Before World War II, there were 4,200 parish churches and 220 monasteries in the Serbian Church. From the data published in the magazine Politika it is apparent that the Church has lost 1,800 churches and 70,000 hectares of land and forest, which have been confiscated from it under pretense of agrarian reform.

THE ABBOTS OF MOUNT ATHOS LODGE A PROTEST

The Ecumenical Press Service has reported that the abbots of the monasteries on Mount Athos have brought to the attention of Patriarch Demetrios of Constantinople that they do not share his hopes for, as they put it, "a common celebration of Pascha with heretics of all denominations." The statement of the Athonite monasteries was

issued as a reply to Patriarch Demetrios' paschal epistle, in which he expressed the hope that, in the near future, all Christians would be able to celebrate Pascha simultaneously by means of the change of the Church's calendar to some new calendar arrived at by compromise.

At the same time, a magazine published by one of the clergymen of the "Orthodox Church in America", entitled The Orthodox Herald, reports in its November issue that Cardinal Ugo Poletti, papal vicar for the diocese of Rome, and thirty Catholic prelates were refused entry. The visit was scheduled for 10 September, but could not take place, for the governing body of the monastic republic of Mount Athos refused to receive the Catholics' delegation, despite the fact that it had received permission from the Greek government and had been supplied with a special letter of recommendation by Patriarch Demetrios.

Archbishop Seraphim of Athens apologized to the Catholics for the monks' actions but said that he was not in any position to alter the decision arrived at by the monasteries.

It is heartening to see that Orthodoxy has not yet withered away on the Holy Mountain.

A SESSION OF THE PRECONCILIAR COMMISSION IN CHAMBESY

The Ecumenical Press Service, in its October 5th bulletin, has reported that at the initiative of the Ecumenical Patriarch, a meeting of representatives from fourteen autocephalous Churches took place between September 5 and 12 at his ecumenical center in Chambesy, Switzerland. Each autocephalous Church was permitted one episcopal representative and two prominent theologians. The meeting was termed the Second Preconciliar Conference.

The basic question at this Conference was the paschalion, which they are determined to change, in whatever way necessary, so that the Orthodox might celebrate Pascha with all the contemporary heretics. Other questions were set forth at the Conference under the considerable influence of partisans of reform in the Orthodox Church. Proposals were made to mitigate the canons on fasting, the ordination of rassophor-monks to the episcopate, the coordination of rules for divorce, the permitting of monks who have been reduced to lay status to marry, the possibility of clergymen to marry after ordination, and similar innovations.

At the Conference, however, a more traditional tendency was noticeable, which nonetheless left room for the adoption of substantial changes.

On the question of the Paschalion, it was resolved that the faithful "are not prepared, or, at least, are not sufficiently informed, to consider and accept a change in the determination of the Easter date." For this reason, it was decided that any changes should be "reserved to a more propitious time according to God's will." However, this decision also expresses the hope that a systematic sharing of information about the question among the faithful will make it possible for Eastern Orthodox to "advance together on the way toward a common celebration" of Pascha with the heterodox. As is well known, the Vatican is also working in the same direction.

Concerning the question of fasting, which was worked on by the Serbian Church, it was decided to retain the existing rules, while at the same time permitting the possibility of certain mitigations in practice. The point of the agenda was to be carried over to the next session, at which other Churches are to air their own opinions.

At the Third Conference deliberations are planned on the consideration of relations of Orthodox Churches with the rest of the "Christian" world, the ecumenical movement, and also the "contribution of local Orthodox Churches to the realization of Christian ideals of peace, liberty, fraternity, and love among peoples, and the suppression of racial discrimination." With all certainty one can say that this last item was imposed upon the agenda by the Moscow Patriarchate and its satellites.

The so-called Orthodox Church in America and the Japanese Orthodox Church, in that they are recognized by no one other than the Moscow Patriarchate and Churches located in communist-dominated lands, did not take part in this Conference.

GREEK ARCHDIOCESE HOLDS A DIOCESAN CONFERENCE IN BOSTON

In mid-August, a pastoral conference of the clergy of the Diocese of Boston was held in Worcester, Massachusetts.

The Conference, at which sixty-two parish priests were present, was presided over by Bishop Anthimus, and adopted three resolutions:

1.) A resolution on the Falkland Islands conflict called on Great Britain and Argentina "to reach a peaceful settlement of the dispute by adhering to resolutions as may be adopted by the United Nations toward this end."

2.) In regard to the current crisis in the Mideast, a resolution was adopted which stated that "continuing tensions in the Middle East have been heightened by the Israeli attacks on Palestinian strongholds in Lebanon, thus violating the sovereignty of Lebanon..." and following the attempted assassination of the Israeli ambassador to Great Britain, called for parties involved "in the current conflict to take quick and decisive action to end the hostilities in the region, as set forth by the United Nations Security Council towards this end."

3.) the final resolution voiced support for the world disarmament movement and warned of the danger of nuclear war, which would "result in the loss of countless millions of lives as well as a continuing loss of life through contamination, disease and famine for generations."

The Hellenic Chronicle, in reporting on this clergy conference, does not even obliquely mention that questions relative to the ecclesiastical life of the diocese were discussed. If one did not know from that newspaper that the conference had been held in America, but had only the texts of the resolutions on which to rely, it would be easy to conclude that they were resolutions of the Synod of the Moscow Patriarchate.

A REFORM OF THE GREGORIAN CALENDAR?

In its September 19 issue, the National Catholic Reporter states that the Vatican is investigating the possibility of a reform of its own calendar with the aim of making it palatable for the Orthodox.

From August 20-31, at Castel Gandolfo, the Popes' summer residence, there took place a number of sessions of the astronomical commission which had been set up to commemorate the 400th anniversary of the introduction of the Gregorian Calendar in the West. This is a particularly interesting fact, if one keeps in mind that it is precisely because of this calendar that schisms have taken place in a number of Orthodox lands. Of course, Rome does not intend to accept the Orthodox calendar, but will try to find a middle ground, which might accord with the intentions of Orthodox modernists who have been seeking to establish a calendar which would satisfy all the Western denominations.

"Your examination of both the astronomical and sociological aspects of the calendar reform will surely help for a more harmonious understanding of what has happened and what remains to be accomplished in the area of calendar reform," the Pope said to the astronomers he had assembled. "In particular, your examination of how the Gregorian calendar was received by various societies and by various Churches will surely be of great help to all of us in these days when we sincerely seek a strengthening of that unity which Christ desired for His Church," the Pope added. He emphasized that, thanks to the refusal of the Orthodox to accept the Gregorian Calendar, they almost always celebrate Pascha at a time different from that when all the rest of the Christians celebrate it.

The Pope stated that his church "has had and continues to have a profound personal interest concerning calendar revisions, since such work influences the occurrence of religious feasts which constitute, as it were, the rhythm of the church's daily life."

The World Council of Churches has repeatedly convened commissions for the study of the possibility of carrying out a reform of the calendar, and especially of the Paschalion, so that the Orthodox might celebrate their Pascha simultaneously with the Western heretics who follow the Gregorian calculation. And now the Pope of Rome is prepared to accept yet another "revised" calendar, the better to deceive the Orthodox, so that another "unia" might be quickly forthcoming.

Of whatever type the newly worked out calendar might prove to be, it is beyond doubt that it will as before remain unacceptable to genuinely Orthodox members of the Church who have survived without it for more than 1,600 years.

DEPORTATION OF ARCHBISHOP VALERIAN (TRIFA)

In its October 8th issue, the New York Times reports that Archbishop Valerian (Trifa), spiritual leader of some 35,000 Romanians, who brought his church into integral unity with the "Orthodox Church in America", is subject to deportation within sixty days.

Archbishop Valerian was forced to renounce his American citizenship in September of 1980. He was accused in American court of lying to immigration officials to conceal his membership in the Iron Guard (a militant pro-Nazi organization) and of having delivered an inflammatory speech in January of 1941, which "touched off four days of rioting in Bucharest in which 300 Christians and Jews were killed." Archbishop Valerian continues to deny categorically that he incited of an antisemitic pogrom.

Mr. Allen Ryan, director of the special investigations office, has stressed that "this is the first time in thirty years [that] a person has been ordered deported for fascist activities, and it won't be the last." He added that his office was investigating 210 people living in the United States who are believed to be fascists. The government has already begun the prosecutions of twenty-five.

Kenneth Bialkin, national chairman of the Anti-Defamation League of B'nai Brith, announced his complete gratification by the impending deportation of Archbishop Valerian. "We congratulate the Justice Department and offer the A.D.L.'s continued cooperation in ridding this country of Nazi war criminals," he said.

Elizabeth Holtzmann formerly a U.S. Representative and chairman of the House Subcommittee on Immigration, stated that "the fact that Trifa consented to deportation is a testament to the strength of the Government's case against him."

Archbishop Valerian proposes to emigrate to Switzerland, if he is successful in obtaining a visa. However, as Charles Kramer, a prominent "Nazi-hunter" told a reporter for the New York Daily News (same date), Archbishop Trifa must remember that he will never find rest this side of the grave. "I intend to go after him even there [i.e., in Switzerland], through contact with Jewish organizations. He must not have any rest," Kramer said.

The newspaper Jewish Press reports in its October 15th issue that the Swiss embassy in Washington, D.C., had not yet accepted Archbishop Valerian's application for a visa, and that Peter Volger, the embassy's press attache, has expressed doubt that such a visa would be issued. "I don't think he would qualify for political asylum," Volger said. But even if he applies for a normal visa, Archbishop Valerian must expect that his case would be reviewed in the light of the conditions which Switzerland has established for emigration to that country, and Volger already foresees a number of points which might result in the reception of such a visa being hindered.

PRIMATE OF THE "ORTHODOX CHURCH IN AMERICA" VISITS KIEV

As a rule the Journal of the Moscow Patriarchate reaches America only after a three-month delay, or sometimes as much as a five-month delay. By then the "news" in it has become somewhat dated. Thus, in in March issue, which we have only just received, there is a report that on June 28, 1981, at the invitation of Metropolitan Philaret of Kiev and Galich, the Primate of the "Orthodox Church in America" arrived in Kiev and served there on the occasion of the patronal feast of Kiev's Cathedral of St. Vladimir.

After the service, Metropolitan Philaret "warmly greeted His Beatitude Metropolitan Theodosius, expressing joy on the occasion of the prayerful communion of the archpastors [of the Soviet Church] with the Primate of the Orthodox Church in America and Canada." In his speech he noted that "the Russian Orthodox Church has welcomed the peace movement from the first days of its existence, and with other Christian churches and all people of good will is making every effort to maintain peace among the peoples, to save them from the threat of nuclear catastrophe."

Metropolitan Theodosius, in thanking his host, also expressed joy over his church's union in prayer with the Moscow Patriarchate and stated that "we also, together with other religious associations, are taking an active part in the battle for the extending of mutual relations between nations, for the strengthening of peace among them, for the preservation of life on earth. This is the chief concern of all the Churches in our days! May the Lord help us to accomplish it."

An astonishing expression of oneness of mind!

A PARISH WITHOUT A CHURCH BUILDING AND WITHOUT A PASTOR

Several Catholic newspapers have reported on the formation of a parish in Longmont, Colorado, which, with the blessing of Archbishop James V. Casey, will permanently use (though only on Saturdays and Sundays) a Presbyterian church; and instead of a pastor, it will be headed by a group comprising three laymen, one nun, one monk and a what they term a "priest-enabler."

This group is to minister to itself, organizing and teaching their own educational programs, composing their own liturgical services, and gathering for prayer services in private homes in groups of ten to twelve families.

Roman Catholic priest Daniel Flaherty suggested this idea to the Diocese of Denver about a year ago and was very pleased that it was accepted by the archbishop and received the appellation "Catholic Community of the Spirit of Peace."

The National Catholic Register newspaper considers that with the shortage of clergymen among the Catholics, such communities might be able, through self-ministry, to resolve this difficult problem in a positive sense on a nation-wide scale.

Fr. Flaherty, the initiator of this new community, has stated that "The parishes have always been run by priests, and the priest is the one who is looked to for all the answers...That's nice, but there aren't that many priests anymore. And if there were, they're still not able to do the sort of ministry we need to be doing today.... Spirit of Peace team members will encourage and enable these communities, and they will know that they truly don't need a priest that badly. They can minister to each other."

Participants in this new community are very pleased that they do not now have to exert themselves to build a church, which would cost quite a bit, but that instead funds can be utilized for the social needs of the "parish."

Initiating this community, which is new in every respect, with a solemn mass, Archbishop Casey of Denver delivered a sermon, in which he said that the parishioners must "work for the rights of minorities, the poor and the hungry," and that they must become "the spiritual home where everyone is welcome."

In one of the photographs used to illustrate the National Catholic Register article, a group of "communicants" is shown. Women in tee-shirts are presenting the chalice to the communicants! Wafers previously consecrated by a Catholic priest in another parish are supplied to this community.

The abolition of the traditional hierarchical milieu in Catholic dioceses is now receiving its impetus more frequently from above than from below, as is patently obvious from the case of the Spirit of Peace community in Archbishop Casey's Diocese of Denver.

CHANGES IN ROMAN CATHOLIC CANON LAW

In its September 17, 1982, issue, the National Catholic Reporter newspaper reports that in late 1982 or early 1983, there will be published a new code of Catholic Canon Law, which, as the New York Times maintains (Oct. 22), will consist of seven volumes and 1,800 additional canons. The canons must be reviewed in their totality so as to correspond to the directives and general direction accepted by Roman Catholicism after the Second Vatican Council.

While these canons have yet to take effect upon the lives of Catholics in their new form, not much is known of the details of the changes, but from information which has leaked out, it is already apparent that many changes are in store.

Thousands of alterations are being considered, and several of them will have tremendous consequences. Thus, for example, laymen will be involved in the administration of parish life to a far greater degree than has been the case in the past. It is proposed that they be permitted to perform baptisms, and be appointed lay preachers who would be empowered to fulfill pastoral obligations in the absence of a priest.

Laymen would also be able to perform marriages with a special dispensation from the Vatican, and they could also become members of spiritual courts which deal with questions concerning marriage annulments.

It is also envisioned that a layman might, under certain special circumstances, be permitted to replace the parish priest entirely. The breadth of the powers of such a layman would depend on instruction received from the local bishop.

As the newspaper reports, the new canons also felicitously resolve the question of altar-servers. The duty of "altar-boy" will be abolished, and in its place will be instituted that of "liturgical assistant." Such assistants may be of either

sex, which will thus permit women to assist at the altar.

Fr. Bertram Griffin, past president of the American Canon Law Society, has stated that he is very happy over these thousands of changes in the Catholic canons, which were last reviewed by the Vatican in 1918. However, in promulgating this renewal of its canon law, the Vatican has imposed one limitation on its interpreters: all canonists, especially those who teach in seminaries, must receive special permission from their ecclesiastical authorities or the local bishop to undertake such a pedagogical position. This stipulation is viewed by several American scholars as a limitation of freedom of scholarship. The Vatican, of course, is thereby attempting to provide for some self-defense against the machinations of the modernists.

HAS ARCHBISHOP LEFEBVRE GIVEN IN?

Several Catholic newspapers reported in August and September that Archbishop Marcel Lefebvre, head of the traditional Catholic movement, who turned 77 not long ago, has proposed to go into retirement, retaining, however, his position as head of the movement in such a form that as before he would be able to ordain priests for his own organization. The newspaper The Wanderer reported that, according to information obtained from Vatican sources, Archbishop Lefebvre met in Rome with the head of the Congregation of Doctrine, Cardinal Ratzinger. According to rumors, Lefebvre wished to receive the consent of the Vatican for the ordination, to be performed by him, of a bishop for his group.

In giving an interview to Swiss reporters after his meeting with Cardinal Ratzinger, Archbishop Lefebvre said that "Rome is asking for a declaration from me in which I should recognize the whole council and all liturgical reforms which followed. In conscience, I cannot go that far right now."

Questioned as to the state of the case, the Vatican told that press that it could say nothing new, but that the suspension of Archbishop Lefebvre from serving remains in force. Those close to the aged Archbishop maintain that he "is stepping down as general vicar of the society and a successor will be nominated in September who will take care of day-to-day business." However, Monsignor Lefebvre will remain as a general superior and still be the overall leader."

Although proponents of the Archbishop maintain that he "is enjoying beautiful health," the newspaper National Catholic Reporter reports that its correspondent, in company with a Swedish Protestant and an Irish Catholic, tried to receive an interview with Archbishop Lefebvre at his seminary in Ecône, Switzerland. The priest Patrick LaRoche, Lefebvre's personal secretary, telephoned the seminary, where the Archbishop had resided until recently, and there they replied that the arrival of the journalists was awaited. However, when they made their appearance, it seemed that no one knew anything about their interview. They heard mass and afterwards addressed themselves to an African nun, asking her where the Archbishop was to be found. She replied that he had apparently already taken his medicine and gone to bed. The reporters were permitted to take pictures, but were asked not to tour the classrooms of the seminary. The priest who conversed with them there, however, declined to be photographed and persuaded others to refuse also.

Subsequently the journalists held a conversation with a French priest named Tissier, who answered their questions in the course of an interview which lasted for two hours. They noticed that he was particularly disturbed by a question concerning the future ordination of seminarians. Archbishop Lefebvre has thus far ordained 120 men, he remarked, but "We have to hope and to go knock at every bishop's door to see if someone is willing."

The case of Archbishop Lefebvre remains unclear. In any event, no definite word has been heard that he has left his post, although September is long since past.

SANTERIA

There has begun to spread in America a religion known as Santeria (a word derived from the Spanish word Santo, meaning holy). At this time, in New York City alone, there are estimated to be no less than 300,000 adherents of the sect, and possibly as many as 100,000,000 throughout the world.

The religion of Santeria traces its origin back to Cuba, where its founders were African slaves forcibly brought there. There the slavemasters forced them to become Catholics, and the resourceful pagan priests quickly found a way out of their difficult position when the Catholics began to baptize them by the thousands and forbade

them to worship their gods. The pagan priests guessed that it was possible to identify Christian saints with the symbolism of pagan gods. Thus it transpired that Chango, a diety which the African tribesmen particularly feared and revered, began to be venerated under the guise of St. Barbara. Oshun, the goddess of love, began to be revered under the name of Our Lady of Caridad del Corbe, the patroness of Cuba. Ellugua, one of their most potent gods, came to be worshipped under the form of the Guardian Angel.

Tom Viola, a writer for the New York Daily News, states in his article in that newspaper's Sunday magazine supplement on November 7, 1982, that the rituals and ceremonies of Santeria are conducted in great secrecy, and that it is no easy matter to gain admission to their prayer services. They are accompanied by the beating of drums and frenzied dancing. The whole ritual has incorporated within itself many elements of pure witchcraft. Nicholas Conde, the author of a book which included much material on Santeria, writes that "From the moment I began my research [into Santeria], I knew I was in the presence of something phenomenal."

It is interesting to note that Roman Catholicism regards this religion (which has flourished in South America) on the one hand with a certain suspicion, but on the other hand without any definite condemnation. The Rev. Kevin Colleram, vice chancellor of the Diocese of New York, has stated that "There is always the temptation even within Catholicism for rituals to cross over into superstition."

A few of the members of this sect at first become "saints", and later pass over into another, more exalted category of "santeros", who have direct relations with their dieties which, according to the teaching of the Orthodox Church, are demons.

Blood sacrifice forms one of the elements of the ritual of this religion. They slaughter domestic fowl, goats and sheep. The American Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals considers their method of sacrifice torture for the animals, and whenever they learn that such is taking place somewhere, they put a stop to it with the help of the police. However, all manner of such rituals are taking place behind closed doors in this immense city, in little, barely noticeable apartments; and thus it is very difficult to keep track of them.

If one takes into account that there is a large number of Hindus, also idolators, in New York, one cannot help but marvel that there are so many pagans at the threshold of the twentieth century.

Had the Catholic missionaries utilized more persuasion and enlightenment than force in their dealings with uncivilized peoples, we would probably not now be witnesses to the simultaneous veneration of the all-holy Theotokos and the Greatmartyr Barbara as heathen dieties.

THE VATICAN COUNCIL TWENTY YEARS LATER

October 11, 1982, marked the twentieth anniversary of the opening of the Second Vatican Council. Several Catholic newspapers devoted whole pages to this event. A great many articles and letters to the editors tried to sum up the results of this Council for Catholics. All of them, with few exceptions, were distinguished by a markedly pessimistic character.

Thus, the leading article of the newspaper National Catholic Register, authored by one Michael Novak, poses the question: "Is Renewal Still on the Right Track?"

Speaking of the enthusiasm he had when, as a reporter, he attended the convocation of the Council twenty years ago, the author now contrasts it with the bitterness which he and many other of his contemporaries feel, having endured what they consider to be great personal damage. Summing up the lamentable results of the Vatican Council for Catholicism, the author writes that loyalty to the papacy has sharply declined, the emphasis placed on the significance of national churches has weakened the bond with Rome, and now, not only the Vatican itself, but every local council of bishops is conducting its own politics, and this leads to a situation where the bishops of America feel free to condemn the aid given by their government to El Salvador. While at the same time the bishops in El Salvador say that such aid is absolutely essential for them. Beginning with the '60s, the majority of Catholic organizations, schools, universities and monasteries, as well as the Catholic press, began a sharp turn to the left. Priests, monastics and laymen are abandoning Catholicism in droves, and Catholic morality is becoming increasingly secular.

As the author correctly states, "As the concept of heresy wanes, the concept of truth is emptied of content. If nothing is heresy, nothing is truth, either. Few today get 'hung up' on theological controversies. Few argue about faith and morals; wide latitude is given."

The Catholic priest Gommar DePauw, who heads the traditionalist movement in America, in a large article printed in the newspaper National Catholic Reporter, relates how as one who arrived at the Council he was transported by the idea of the opening of a window to let a breath of fresh air into the Vatican. Barely three years later, his "optimistic expectations" were replaced with "defensive apprehensions"; and now, twenty years later, "all have been replaced with...bitter disappointments." He also sums up the results of the Vatican reforms in an article entitled "A Tragedy That Inflicted Destruction."

These analyses of the Vatican Council might well serve as a serious precautionary example for all modernists who seriously think that they are members of the Holy, Catholic and Apostolic Church, but in actual fact have long since departed from Orthodoxy.

RETURN OF BISHOP GREGORY

At the behest of the Synod of Bishops, His Grace, Bishop Gregory, travelled to Venezuela, where he dealt with ecclesiastical affairs for ten days.

On November 18th, at the invitation of the Postal Service, His Grace, Bishop Gregory, was present at a formal gathering which was held at Lincoln Center for the Performing Arts in New York City, on celebrate the issuance of a new commemorative postal stamp marking the hundredth anniversary of the birth of the famous Russian composer Igor Stravinsky. After the solemn entry of the flag and the singing of the national anthem in an arrangement by Stravinsky, Vladyka characterized the creative gift of his renowned compatriot in a short speech.

The postal Service presented His Grace with a beautifully mounted folder with a page of postage stamps bearing the portrait of Igor Stravinsky, in the 2 cent denomination. The stamp was designed by the famous artist and portraitist Bort Silverman.

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