

Catholic Church Officials Call France 'de-Christianized'

Editor's note: Louis Casseles, prize-winning writer for United Press International on religion in America, is currently in Europe. This is one of several dispatches in which he is reporting on religious developments abroad.

By LOUIS CASSELES
United Press International

Paris—(UPI)—The Catholic church in France is grappling boldly with a task unique in religious history.

It is trying to reconvert a nominally-Christian nation that has lapsed into paganism. Ecclesiastical leaders like Maurice Cardinal Feltin, Archbishop of Paris, are completely realistic about the situation that confronts the church. They describe France

as a "de-Christianized" country which can be won back to the church only through earnest, imaginative missionary efforts.

French bishops are not indulging in overstatement when they call modern France a "mission field." Although 84 per cent of the people are baptized Catholics, surveys indicate that only about 20 per cent actually practice the faith. And this 20 per cent is drawn primarily from the rural areas of the provinces and from the upper economic groups of the cities.

Few Working Class Goers

Among working class Frenchmen, the number of practicing Catholics is much smaller. A careful check in one urban industrial parish showed only 600 regular

churchgoers in a population of 19,000 persons. There is one parish which has not recorded a baptism, marriage or burial for 20 years.

Many historical factors have contributed to the estrangement of the French masses from the church. For centuries before the French revolution, the church was closely identified with the privileged classes. The revolution of 1789 was as much a revolt against the church itself as against the monarchy which it had supported.

Although anti-clericalism, in the sense of active hostility toward the church, has declined markedly in recent years, many Frenchmen still regard the church as a bulwark of political conservatism. This is a major handicap in a country where political radicalism is strongly entrenched in the working classes.

Another basic factor is that religion in France has tended to degenerate into formal observances—as one Jesuit scholar put it, "There was more superstition than faith"—and hence was particularly vulnerable to attack by the militant atheists of the 18th century "age of reason."

Church leaders know that this heritage of bitterness and distrust cannot be quickly overcome. They have embarked with humility and determination, on a long-range effort to show skeptical Frenchmen that Christianity is not an empty ritual nor a tool of the vested interests.

One project on which much progress has already been achieved is the revitalization of worship. Liturgical reforms have made the celebration of mass more meaningful to French Catholics. There is heavy emphasis on the congregation's duty to participate rather than sit as passive spectators.

Literature Has Helped

A massive output of scholarly literature, by both clergymen and laymen, has helped to restore religion to a position of intellectual respectability. In fact, the most obvious signs of religious revival in France today are among the intellectuals, particularly the students and faculty of great universities like the Sorbonne.

The church is also living down its reputation as a citadel of political stand-pattism. To a degree that alarms many conservative Catholics, bishops and priests are taking outspoken, liberal stands on such issues as the Algerian war and the socialization of industry.

The hardest task is regaining the confidence of the working classes. The church has concluded that it will accomplish little by preaching to the workers, or urging them to come to mass. The first step is to send some dedicated Christians to live and work among the poor, to share their worries and concerns, and give them a living example of Christian faith in action.

'Worker-Priest' Movement

This was the idea behind the "worker-priest" movement in which young priests exchanged their clerical costumes for overalls and took jobs in factories. The Vatican placed restrictions on this movement in 1955 after reports indicated that some of the worker-priests were entering into their role so enthusiastically that they were getting infected with Communist doctrines. But about 100 worker-priests are still in Paris factories, limiting their work to three hours a day to conform to Vatican rules. And Cardinal Feltin went to Rome last month, reportedly to ask Pope John XXIII for permission to expand the movement.

At Pontigny, about 75 miles southeast of Paris, Cardinal Lienart has set up a new seminary to give special training to priests to work among unbelievers and lapsed Catholics. This project, called the "Mission of France," now has some 300 priests at work in 80 communities of France, and 82 more in training.

Laymen Being Drafted

Christian laymen are also being drafted into missionary effort, not to preach but to demonstrate through their daily work the emphasis which their faith places on service to mankind. For example, there is one organization called Catholic Workers Action in which membership is limited to those who are "engaged in helping their brothers." Significantly, holding office in a trade union is listed as one good way of serving fellow man.

Is all of this activity achieving any results? Cardinal Lienart's answer is that "Before the harvest can be reaped, the ground must be cleared and the seeds planted."

"This has been done," says the Cardinal, "and the work is beginning to bear fruit."

Valley Events Announced By Presbyterians; Picnic Scheduled in Jacksonville

The Rev. G. Robert Jacks of First Presbyterian church will speak at both the 9:30 and the 11 a.m. services on the topic, "Potential!"

Mrs. Bud Hoover will sing, "I Hear Thy Voice" at both services and Douglas Cummings, organist, will play, "Come, Sweet Repose" for his offertory number.

The Junior High Fellowship will meet at the church Sunday at 5 p.m. for recreation, worship, and a program and discussion on the topic, "The Christian Interpretation of Sex." Dave and Carlye Runyon from the Bethany Presbyterian church, Grants Pass, will be guest speakers.

The Westminster Fellowship, together with the WF group from Grants Pass, will hold a joint meeting Sunday evening. Local members plan to be at the church at 5:15 p.m. to greet the Grants Pass group and to take them to the home of Mr. and Mrs. Otto Frohnmayer, 1656 Spring st. There will be a time of swimming and recreation, followed by a picnic supper, a brief worship service, and a program presented by Dave and Carlye Runyon.

Westminster Fellowship youth night is held at the Frohnmayers' each Wednesday at 7:30 p.m. There will be swimming and Bible study and dessert will be served.

The Geneva Fellowship for all post-high school young people meets Sunday at the Flanagan home on North Pacific highway. Swimming and games will begin at 7 p.m. followed by a discussion on the topic, "Prayer and Bible Study." Geneva Fellowship meets each Thursday for a 6:30 p.m. potluck supper followed by prayer and study of the Gospel of John.

Ashland—"Finding God" will be sermon topic Sunday at both the 9:45 and 11 a.m. worship services at First Presbyterian church, Ashland. The Rev. B. J. Holland, pastor, will speak.

Phoenix—The Rev. William Saladin, pastor of First Presbyterian church, will speak on "Knowing Christ" at the 11 a.m. worship service Sunday. Communion will be observed.

Jacksonville—A picnic lunch will be held on the Jacksonville First Presbyterian church lawn Sunday immediately following the service. Members may view the Jacksonville Gold Rush Jubilee parade during the event. The Women's Association will provide the beverage.

The Rev. King K. Jones will speak Sunday on "The Problem That Stumped an Expert" at the 11 a.m. worship service. The sermon will be the first of four entitled "Jesus Challenges the Personal Life."

The choir will sing "He Leadeth Me."

Tuesday at 3 p.m. the Jacksonville Westminster Fellowship will meet at the church to travel to the Applegate for a swim. The group will return to the John Keaveny residence to roast wieners and to see slides of a trip by Presbyterian young people in Africa. All high school students are invited.

The "Tea room" in the fellowship hall of the church is open daily, Monday through Saturday, from 1 to 4 p.m. Persons interested in touring

the church, built in 1881, are invited to stop and relax in the tea room before or after the tour.

Central Point—The Rev. Robert T. Bridge, guest minister, will speak on "In This Place," Sunday at First Presbyterian church, Central Point, at the 11 a.m. worship service.

"Can You Test Your Christianity?" will be the topic for discussion at the 7 p.m. meeting of the Westminster Fellowship, which will be held at the home of Mr. and Mrs. Leo Ghelardi, Old Stage rd.

Ashland Pastor To Be Installed

"Lord, to Whom Shall We Go?" is the topic chosen for Sunday's sermon by the Rev. John E. Simon, pastor of St. Peter's Lutheran church, 1020 East Main st., at 11 a.m. Holy communion will be celebrated in the service. The Sunday school for all age-groups begins at 9:30 a.m.

A number of members and friends of St. Peter's plan to attend the installation service at Grace Lutheran church, Ashland, of the Rev. Albert Nickodemus, Burns, Sunday at 4 p.m. Mr. Simon of St. Peter's, vacancy pastor and counselor of the Southern Oregon circuit, will serve as the installing minister. The Rev. Norbert E. Dey, Klamath Falls, will preach the installation sermon, Mr. Nickodemus, a graduate of Concordia Theological seminary, Springfield, Ill., served his first pastorate at Indio, Calif., and for the past 11 years has been pastor of First Lutheran church, Burns. Both he and Mrs. Nickodemus are natives of Oregon, having grown up in the Mt. Angel community. They have eight children, two boys and six girls.

Mr. Nickodemus succeeds the Rev. E. Paul Riedel, who left for St. Paul's Lutheran church, Wenatchee, Wash., shortly after Easter.

First Methodists Tell Sermon Topic

"The Doubting Disciple" will be the sermon topic of the Rev. Robert F. Dowrey, assistant pastor of First Methodist church Sunday. This will be Mr. Dowrey's first time to preach at First church since arriving on June 18.

The anthem for the 9 a.m. worship service will be, "All Glory, Laud and Honor." The anthem for the 11 a.m. worship service will be, "Open Our Eyes."

The board of trustees will meet Monday at 7 a.m., at Henry's Broiler. The commission on education will meet Tuesday, at 7:45 p.m., the Women's Bible class will meet Thursday at 1 p.m., and the all church quarterly conference will be Friday at 7:15 p.m.

Dr. George G. Roseberry, who is currently vacationing in Kansas, will be back to preach on Aug. 9.

NEW AGE CHURCH

"The New Age Concept of Reality" will be the subject of Dr. D. E. Millard, sermon lecturer at 2:30 p.m. Sunday at the New Age church, north of Eagle Point on Hammel rd. Preceding the lecture there will be a fellowship dinner at 1 p.m. and a musical hour at 2 p.m. The public is invited.

Village Church to Hear Guest Speaker

Jacksonville—Herbert Hunter, a member of First Baptist church, Medford, will speak at the 11 a.m. service Sunday at the Village church, Jacksonville. His topic will be "On the Trail."

Soloist at the special service will be Mrs. Hunter and the Misses Bonnie and Ronnie Goehring, daughters of Mr. and Mrs. James Edge, Eagle Point, will provide instrumental music.

Californian to Speak Here During August

On the first three Sundays of August the pulpit of the Congregational church will be supplied by the Rev. Charles L. Copenhaver, minister of the Oneonta Congregational church, South Pasadena, Calif.

Before arriving in California Dr. Copenhaver was minister of the Glen Ridge Congregational church, Glen Ridge, N.J., for 10 years. During that time he also served as president of the New Jersey Council of Churches and as moderator of the Middle Atlantic Congregational conference. During July and August last year he was one of 10 ministers in the Protestant denominations of the United States to participate in a preaching mission in Great Britain and The Netherlands.

Vacationing

The Copenhavers are in the Rogue River valley as a part of their summer vacation and will be living in the parsonage of the Medford Congregational church. Their three children are with them.

The Rev. and Mrs. Thomas McCamant and Robert left on a vacation in Wisconsin and in Colorado where they will visit their children and grandchildren.

Services at the Congregational church continue to be at 10 a.m., with Sunday school and nursery care for younger children at the same hour. Visitors are always welcome.

Pastor's Family Returns From Trip

Clynton Crisman, pastor of Medford Friends church, with his wife and family, returned Wednesday from a two weeks trip which included attendance at two conferences.

Mr. Crisman was evangelist for Wauna Mer Youth camp at the Friends operated conference grounds at Wauna, Wash., on Henderson Bay. Following this, he and Mrs. Crisman spent two days touring the Olympia Peninsula before returning to Newberg to attend the Conference of Evangelical Friends.

Gov. Mark O. Hatfield addressed the opening session of the conference attended by over 700 representatives of Friends churches in United States and foreign countries.

Other inspirational speakers, workshop sessions, and meetings for business made up the schedule of this fifth Triennial Conference of Evangelical Friends, the first to be held on the west coast.

Other representatives from the local church who attended were Dr. and Mrs. Alvin Roberts and family, Mr. and Mrs. R. B. Langston, Mr. and Mrs. Cecil Gossard, Mr. and Mrs. Worth Coulson, Dan Nolte, and Kay Johnson.

Topics Told for First Christian

"The House I Live In" is the subject of the sermon which the Rev. William C. Piper will preach at both services Sunday morning at the First Christian church. Mrs. Robert Reaves will give a vocal solo at both services.

The Chi Rho Fellowship will meet at 7 p.m. Miss Marjory North will be in charge of the worship period and Miss Terri Crovette will direct the recreation.

The Christian Youth Fellowship will return from their retreat at Squaw Lake Sunday morning. Their regular Sunday study will be at 7 p.m. in Fellowship hall. Miss Sara Hinkle will be the leader.

A new class has been recently organized in the Bible school for college age people. Claude Haggard will be the regular teacher assisted by J. R. Schwab.

Departmental meetings will be held Tuesday, Aug. 4, at 7 p.m. followed by the official board meeting at 8 p.m.

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CHURCH NEWS

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'Human Relations' Topic Told for Unity Devotions

The theme of the Sunday morning devotional services of Unity through August is the divine adjustments of human relations, according to Mrs. Katharine Bosworth, minister of the Center here.

Sunday at 11 a.m. she will speak at the Pythian hall, Fifth and Grape sts. on "Harmonizing Relationships." Her Friday topic at 11 a.m. at the Center, 995 South Oakdale ave., will be "God Never Fails."

In speaking of the Sunday topic, Mrs. Bosworth explained that as high as 19,000 requests for prayer have been received in one day at the Silent Unity of Lee's Summit, Mo. She said that next to hearing, requests regarding human relations ranks the highest. In this series, Mrs. Bosworth will endeavor to apply Christian principles, as taught by the Master and interpreted by Unity, to this personal problem.

Recess of Classes

During August all weekly classes conducted by Mrs. Bosworth will recess until after Labor Day. The Center will remain open Monday through Friday from 10 a.m. until 4 p.m. for counselling by the minister by appointment. The Center's telephone number is SP 2-6902.

The annual Unity picnic will be held Sunday at 1 p.m. at TouVelle State park. Entertainment and games will be held for the children and a Unity birthday cake will be served. Those attending are to take a lunch and their own drink will be furnished.

Devotional subjects for the remainder of August include "A Career For Everyone," Aug. 9, followed by "Freedom," "Changing the Balance," and "It is Here."

Assistant Pastor And Youth Attend Events at Abbey

The Rev. John A. Ilg, assistant pastor of Sacred Heart church, and Ron Pruitt, son of Mr. and Mrs. Richard Pruitt, attended sessions of the West Coast Convention of Young Christian Workers held last week at Mt. Angel Abbey.

Father Ilg, who is chaplain of the Medford YCW group, took part in a study week for chaplains, while young Pruitt was a scheduled speaker at a workshop for YCW members. Among the 95 YCW members staying at the Abbey during the convention were representatives from Mexico and Canada as well as from the west coast states.

Featured speakers at the first general session were Archbishop Edward D. Howard, Portland; Jack McCarty, national YCW president, and Miss Maryln Langan, national vice president.

Speakers at other general sessions included college professors, recreation directors and leaders of labor and management.

The week long program included workshop for delegates on problems of work, economics and the use of leisure time. Study week sessions for the chaplains covered all aspects of the apostolate and the spiritual development of lay leaders.

Earlier in the month Father Ilg accompanied a group of St. Mary's High school students to San Francisco where they attended a Sodal-ity of Mary conference.

Gospel Jubilee Set For the Week End

Jacksonville—Jacksonville Gospel Jubilee will be held here during Jacksonville's Centennial Gold Rush Jubilee, Aug. 1 and 2.

In an outdoor setting similar to that of gospel services 100 years ago, the Assembly of God church plans to have services at 606 North Fifth st. Services will be held Saturday at 7 p.m.; Sunday at 9:45 and 11 a.m. and 7 p.m. "Old-time preaching" and hymn-singing will be included in the program. The Rev. Wayne Adams, Assemblies of God state youth director, will be the guest speaker. The local young people, in Centennial dress will present the music.

All young people of the area are invited to attend in Centennial dress.

Sunday School Plans Mock Trial Aug. 9

Gold Hill—A mock trial has been arranged for the Sunday school hour at 9:45 a.m. Aug. 9 in the Gold Hill Christian church. Teachers and officers of the Sunday school will be the characters.

Teachers are Mrs. Bessie Henderson, Mrs. Clarence Freeman, Mrs. Leonard Andrews, Rex Allison and Clarence Freeman. Officials of the Sunday school include Leonard Andrews, Mrs. Rex Allison, Mrs. Joe Kaveleskie, and Miss Jean Cunningham, minister of the church.

After Aug. 9, there will only be three Sundays left in the contest. The Sunday school entered a nationwide contest being sponsored by a Sunday school paper, the Lookout magazine. Winner of the contest will receive cash prizes. To qualify there had to be an attendance of 40.

All interested persons in the community are invited to attend.

CAMP COUNSELOR

Talent—The Rev. Earnest Bell, Talent Methodist church, will serve as counselor for the Methodist camp at Dead Indian Soda springs. He will leave Saturday. In his absence, Dr. J. J. Bray, Medford, where they attended a Sodal-ity of Mary conference.

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Church Building Being Constructed For Westminster

Services are expected to be held in the new Westminster Presbyterian church in October, according to the Rev. John O. Reynolds, pastor.

Construction on the new church is currently underway on the property on Oakwood dr. The sub-flooring work has been completed, it was reported, and the framing for the walls is being started.

Although weekly worship services will not be scheduled in the building until fall, plans are underway to start the church school program during September. Mrs. A. J. Johannson, church school superintendent, who is in charge of these arrangements, will announce more complete plans when they are formulated.

Charter membership in the new church was closed recently, Mr. Reynolds said, with a total charter membership of 211 persons. A group of 19 joined the church prior to the deadline for charter memberships.

The church, formally organized last December with 124 members, was sponsored by the First Presbyterian church at the request of the Synod of Oregon and the Southern Oregon Presbytery. Until completion of the new \$95,000 building, the congregation will continue to worship with the First Presbyterian church, Eight and Holly sts.

Presbyterian To Be Installed

Rogue River—An ordination and installation service will be held for Robert Maxson on Sunday at 7 p.m. in the Hope Presbyterian church, Rogue River.

Participating in the service will be William Kurtz, Malin, moderator of the Southwest Oregon Presbytery, and the Rev. John Reynolds, pastor of Westminster Presbyterian church, Medford. The ordaining minister will be the Rev. B. J. Holland, pastor of First Presbyterian church, Ashland.

Mr. Holland will also give the charge to the minister. The Rev. D. F. Barnett, Grants Pass, will present the charge to the congregation. The sermon will be given by the Rev. Robert T. Bridge, Medford.

Mr. Maxson is a graduate of Southern Oregon college and was recently graduated from San Francisco Theological Seminary, San Anselmo, Calif. He has done field work in Fairfax, Calif., and was interim chaplain for a year at San Quentin prison.

A reception honoring Mr. and Mrs. Maxson will be held in Fellowship Hall immediately following the service. The public is invited to attend the service and the reception.

Phoenix Church to Hold Annual Picnic

Phoenix—Phoenix Church of the Nazarene Sunday school will hold its "picnic of the year" Aug. 8 beginning at 3 p.m. at TouVelle State park.

Games, including tug of war and foot races, will be played and other activities are planned. Potluck dinner will be served at 6 p.m.

Members and friends of the church are invited.

The second week of the church's Daily Vacation Bible school will begin Monday. A program will be held at the end of the two week school Aug. 7.

Farewell Message Set for Sunday

The concluding services of the Rev. Raymond W. Hurn's ministry at Medford Church of the Nazarene will be held Sunday. The service, which is broadcast over station KDOV, will be heard at 11 a.m. will be "A Farewell Message to the Church."

Service at 7 p.m. will be a dedication of young people who have been called to full-time Christian service and the sermon subject will be "The Need for Worker."

Mr. Hurn has been pastor at First Church for the past five years and has been called to the superintendency of the Abilene district in northwest Texas. The Hurn's will make their home in Lubbock.

A farewell party for the family is to be held in the activity building of the church tonight at a o'clock. Friends from other valley churches are invited.

Church Plans Ice Cream Social

Gold Hill—An old-fashioned ice cream social will be held on the lawn at the Gold Hill Community Methodist church, Saturday, beginning at 3 and continuing until 9 p.m.

The event is being given to raise funds for the new furnace for the church, to replace the "black monster" as the congregation refers to the present heating facilities.

Contributions towards the new furnace have been made, at the last two Sunday worship services. Those who wish to do so, may donate by dropping their donation in a container, which will be placed on the "black monster," each Sunday morning during the worship hour at the church.

Alan Hill will be guest speaker for the next four Sunday worship services, beginning Aug. 2 at 11 a.m.

The Rev. James F. Eubanks Jr., pastor of the church, is attending Pastor's School at College of the Pacific, Stockton, Calif. Upon his return, he will hold evening worship services beginning Sunday, Aug. 30.

Each of the eight different church school classes will take their turn the next few weeks being in charge of the opening of Sunday school at 10 a.m.

Fred Bowen's junior boys' class presented a story and led the group singing last Sunday. The primary class under the supervision of Mrs. Lawrence Smith will present a movie film strip Sunday.

Men's Club Plans Ice Cream Social

This evening the Methodist Men's club of First Methodist church will sponsor an old-fashioned ice cream social beginning at 6:30 o'clock and ending at 8:30. The public is invited. The ice cream social will be held on the church lawn, at 607 West Main st. Cake, pie, punch and coffee will also be served.

The Methodist men will also attend the Methodist Men's Laymen's Retreat, Aug. 15 and 16, at Dead Indian Soda Springs. This is for the entire Eugene district.

LEAVE FOR CAMP

Forty boys and girls left the Salvation Army at 236 North Bartlett st. Thursday morning to attend the Salvation Army Tresle Glen camp at Barton, Ore. for seven days. There will be an estimated 128 children attending the camp from Oregon. The camping program consists of swimming, recreation, camping and campfires. The children are from the ages of 8-17. This program is sponsored by the Salvation Army.

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