

UNIVERSITY OF NOTRE DAME

RELIGIOUS BULLETIN

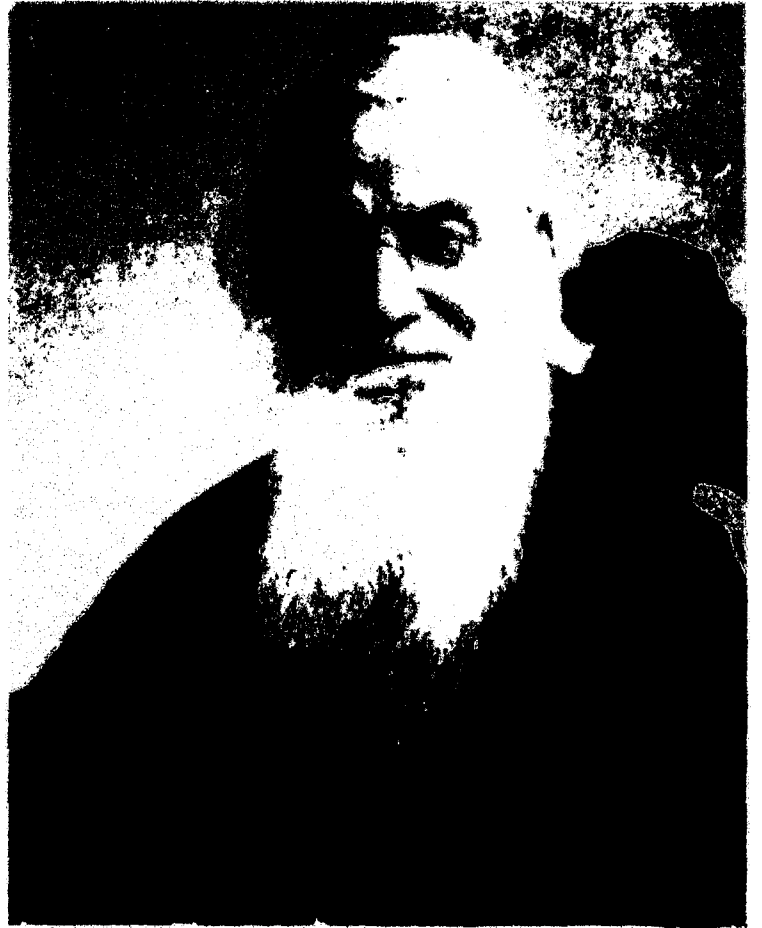
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REV. LLOYD W. TESKE, C.S.C.,
UNIVERSITY CHAPLAIN - EDITOR

A VISION MADE REAL

"This college cannot fail to succeed... Before long, it will develop on a large scale, and it will be one of the most powerful means for good in this Country... Dear Father, you cannot help seeing that this new branch of your family is destined to grow under the protection of Our Lady of the Lake and of St. Joseph. At least, this is my deep conviction. Time will tell if I am wrong."

So wrote Father Sorin of Notre Dame to his superior Father Moreau in France in the year of his arrival, 1842. There was then nothing but a lake and a few hundred acres of land. But Father Sorin had faith and hope in a vision, the vision of a great Catholic university in America. Under his guidance Notre Dame was founded and incorporated and began to grow. Time has told that he was not wrong.



On Sunday Notre Dame will officially pay homage to her founder with a Solemn Mass at 11:00 in Sacred Heart Church. Founder's Day is actually Tuesday, October 13, the Feast of St. Edward, patron of Father Edward Sorin. In former years, when the academic pace was slower, Founder's day was a holiday. The Mass by itself, however, serves the purpose for which the day is observed -- to recall the aspirations of Father Sorin, to express the gratitude of this generation which reaps the benefits of the Founder's sacrifices, and to inspire us to be worthy of our heritage.

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THE COUNCIL TAKES UP RELIGIOUS FREEDOM

With the discussion of the declaration on religious freedom American prelates and theologians have emerged as leading voices in and around the Council chambers.

As everyone expected for the past two years, the Americans would carry the ball of religious freedom. American prelates have

been politely demanding such a declaration for the same number of years. What Archbishop Robert Lucey of San Antonio said last spring is now being dramatically fulfilled during this third session. "It would be entirely appropriate that the American hierarchy should take the lead early in the next session of the Council to procure the adoption of a decree proclaiming authentic and universal freedom of religion..."

Two American priests are distinguishing themselves at this time by their efforts for promoting the declaration on religious freedom. Father John Courtney Murray, S.J., is recognized in all quarters as the most important theologian of religious freedom. His ideas, not too many years ago called suspect in some highly conservative Roman circles, are now being not only welcomed but even uttered on the floor of the Council.....

The other American priest...is Father Tom Stransky of the Paulist Fathers. As a permanent member of the Secretariat for Promoting Christian Unity, Father Stransky has been especially most solicitous for the Protestant observer-delegates.....

Father Stransky, of course, is vitally concerned about religious liberty because of its important ecumenical overtones. His concern is substantiated by one observer-delegate who told me a few days ago that he thought one of the most important effects of the Council to date has been the recent statement of the Spanish bishops. He referred to the "bill of rights" adopted by the Spanish hierarchy on the eve of the third session which gives Protestants in Spain the same legal status as Catholics.....

The declaration on religious freedom now under discussion by the Council Fathers will, undoubtedly, be hailed in every part of the world as a sincere manifestation of the Church's concern for modern man. It insists upon the sacred freedom of the individual man to follow the dictates of his own conscience, even if that conscience be objectively erroneous. It further declares that this freedom is a social right, applicable to religious groups as well as individuals. Although it urges Catholics "to lead" separated brothers and non-Christians to the benefits of the light of the Gospel and of the life of the Church, it vehemently demands that all Catholics in all places must never employ coercion.....

An air of expectant confidence hangs over the Council. Few seem to doubt that the declaration on religious freedom will be met by the enthusiastic support of the overwhelming number of Council Fathers. The "bill of rights" of the Spanish bishops is one indication. The spirit of good Pope John which still breathes through the Council chambers is another. Few bishops have forgotten Pope John's statement in Pacem in Terris: "Every human being has the right to honor God according to the dictates of an upright conscience, and therefore the right to worship God publicly and privately."

The greatest assurance, however, comes from recalling the words

Pope Paul addressed to participants in a United Nations Seminar on Freedom of Information last April 17. Then he said, "The Church, as you know, is also concerned with...religious liberty. That is a question whose importance and scope are such that the Ecumenical Council has been gripped by it. One can legitimately expect on this point that promulgation of a text which will be of far-reaching import not only for the Church but for all those -- and they are innumerable -- who feel themselves affected by an authorized declaration on that subject."

--by Rev. Vincent A. Yzermans
--in Our Sunday Visitor (Oct. 4, 1964)

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DISTINCTIONS AND DISSENT

In speaking before the Council on religious freedom, Archbishop Karl J. Alter of Cincinnati pointed out that the declaration on religious liberty does not affirm a personal right to any individual to teach error or to do harm. He insisted that the declaration does not speak at all of the possible senses in which religious freedom can be understood but only refers to the right of every human being to be free of outside force in his worship of God. He also noted that what the declaration claims for the individual is only freedom from social coercion.

Cardinal Francesco Roberti, president of the Commission on the Reform of the Roman Curia, said a clear distinction is needed between freedom of conscience and freedom of consciences. As freedom of conscience is often understood today, he said, it means conferring on an individual the right of free personal choice, even when confronted with the law of God. The Church cannot, he continued, admit freedom of conscience in its present-day sense because the Church could thereby be in contradiction with itself. However, the Church can admit freedom of consciences from all external coercion in the belief and exercise of religion.

The Master General of the Dominicans, Father Aniceto Fernandez, O.P., criticized the declaration. He called it a sign of our times in that it shows a desire to avoid all division and criticism. He called it weak because it affirms merely the subject principles as the basis for freedom of religion and because, by leaving too much to the dictates of conscience, it obscures the points of Christian doctrine.

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IN YOUR CHARITY please pray for the following: Deceased -- brother of Pat Conroy of Sorin; infant sister of Mauricio Cano of Keenan; brother of Father Thomas Irving, C.S.C.; brother of Father Matthew Schumacher, C.S.C. Ill -- grandmother of Michael Falvey of Howard, of Richard Falvey of Keenan, and of James Childs of Fisher; John R. O'Connor, '50 (automobile accident); aunt and grandmother of John C. Kiefer '59. Special intention of John Dunn.

In the Liturgical Spirit.....

LITURGICAL RENEWAL MAKES LIFE GOD-CENTERED

One of the principal and evident purposes of the "new" Mass is that it helps man put God back into the center of human life. What is true of the Mass in this regard is also true of the sacraments. All of the sacraments have a community value and a God-centered purpose. And the throng of Catholic people who were given in former times to introverted, individualistic, and often concerted prayers, now have occasion and motivation to unite in the assemblies of the people of God in order to accomplish the work of social worship.

"I will praise the Lord with my whole heart, in the assembly of the just and in the congregation. Great are the works of the Lord, which must be studied by all who love them. His work is majesty and splendor; and His justice endures forever." (Psalm 110)

The first work of man as a creature of God is worship -- personally and socially. And the irony of this is that Catholics often pursued private worship in the course of the Mass which is by its nature and purpose the highest kind of Community prayer and action looking first to God's glory and second to man's sanctification.

The new forms and signs used in the course of liturgical action have the same purpose as the older forms and signs. The new signs, however, seem to be more effective for modern man. They help men to penetrate the mystery that has always surrounded the Lord.....

The heart and soul of the Mass and the sacramental system is Jesus Christ, son of God, Redeemer, Mediator of the new law. In the liturgy Christians make use of Christ as Mediator and in this way offer the only adequate worship to the supreme and awesome and infinite God. The Incarnation and Redemption are continued under sacred signs... The people of God, already initiated into the life of Christ and into the orbit of salvation, have fruitful encounter with Christ... God becomes better known, man becomes more responsive, and more ready to praise and honor the eternal presence.

Thoughtful use of the Mass and sacraments also helps man to accomplish the purpose of public worship by welding together a people united visibly and invisibly in the bonds of faith and love. We are not truly and fully God's children until we band together prayerfully in His name, and offer Him adoration as a community and promise to treat each other as children of the same loving father.

Religion is not designed primarily to give man security. That comes later. The primary purpose of religion is to give God first place in the plans and prayers of man.

But when God is honored, particularly when He is honored by the community in and through and with Christ, the Mediator, He responds with a greater fullness of truth and grace and hope for all of humanity.

--by Rev. Joseph A. Hughes
--in The Register, (Oct. 4, 1964)