

News in Brief

New Bishops in Poland. In November last year Pope Paul VI appointed two new Polish bishops: Rev. Dr. Pawel Socha to be assistant in the diocese of Koszalin-Kolobrzeg, and Rev. Dr. Jozef Marek, who remains assistant bishop in the Wroclaw diocese. The consecration of the two new bishops took place in December. Dr. Pawel Socha was consecrated in Gorzów cathedral by Cardinal Wojtyla, Metropolitan of Cracow. Guests at the episcopal consecration of Dr. Marek were invited by the Metropolitan of Wroclaw, Cardinal Kominek. (Adapted from *Gazeta Niedzielną*, 20 January 1974, p. 6.)

Polish Priest in mental hospital. On 2 January it was reported from Warsaw that Fr. Piotr Zabielski had been detained in mental hospital pending trial. This occurred after he had celebrated Mass in his home (in Sobolewo near Bialystok) for villagers who complained that the nearest church was several miles away. On 14 January the government offered to turn Fr. Zabielski over to the Church authorities if they would ensure for him the necessary treatment. The latter refused on the grounds that he was perfectly sane. They complained that he was being denied access to a lawyer and that the local authorities were trying to seize his property. On 5 January *The Tablet* published a story from a correspondent in Poland; it concerned a home in the suburbs of Warsaw for old people and invalids, run by a 78-year-old woman and a priest, himself an invalid. After it had operated successfully for 18 months, the authorities expelled the residents in February 1973 and destroyed the house. Repeated attempts to rectify the situation have failed. It appears that the chief problem was the religious aspect of the community: Mass was said at the dinner table every Sunday.

State architect designs new church in Poland. In Stalowa Wola there was a solemn consecration of a new church dedicated to the Mother of God, Queen of Poland. The Bishops of the dioceses of Pryzemyśl, Tarnów, Sandomierz and Siedlce took part in the service. The new church, built according to a plan by Professor Jan Boguslawski, who is presently directing the reconstruction of Warsaw castle, surprised onlookers by its unusual silhouette. (Translated from *Gazeta Niedzielną*, 13 January 1974.)

Death of Czech Literature Professor. On 24 January Professor Otakar Voadlo died in Prague at the age of 78. He had been Professor of English Language and Literature at Prague University. His brilliant career was interrupted several times by political troubles to which he reacted with a consistent integrity and courage. The writer of his obituary in *The Times* (30 January) stated that: "Voadlo's courage sprang from a deep religious conviction; as a Bohemian Protestant, he was bred in a tradition of unflinching witness."

More Catholic Churches in Ukraine. It has been widely thought that outside the strongly Catholic republic of Lithuania and certain other limited areas, there were almost no "working" Catholic churches in the Soviet Union today. Thus Paul Maillieux SJ in his chapter "Catholics in the Soviet Union" (*Aspects of Religion in the Soviet Union 1917-1967*, 1971, p. 366) stated that: "Besides the churches in Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Belorussia and Transcarpathia, we know of eight Catholic churches open in other parts of the Soviet Union, one each in Moscow, Leningrad, Tbilisi, Odessa, Kishinev, and two in Lvov. There is also a Catholic chapel in a suburb of Kiev but it has no resident priest." However the January 1974 issue of the Ukrainian atheist magazine *People and World* mentioned seven other Catholic churches in the Ukraine. Four of these are in the Vinnitsa region. Another is the Polish church in Stryi mentioned in the Uniate appeal published in *RCL* No. 1, 1974, pp. 31-2.

Baptist Hymnal Published. The publication of the long-awaited hymnal with notes (i.e. music score) was announced in *Fraternal Messenger* ("Bratsky Vestnik" 6/73, p. 68), the official organ of the All Union Council of Evangelical Christians and Baptists in Moscow. Intended for choral use, it contains over 100 hymns, the majority of which have been published before. The rest are compositions by contemporary Russian Baptist composers. The *Fraternal Messenger* in its brief announcement (placed on a separate page to indicate its importance) failed to specify the number of copies printed. Unofficial sources, which reported the same news some months ago, stated that the first copies came out in September 1973 and a printing of 5,000 was expected, i.e. approximately one copy per church for choral directors.

Exiled for distributing Bibles. Eight years exile was the sentence against the German engineer Nikolai Keilmann in the Soviet republic of Kazakhstan. He was charged with illegally distributing Bibles, also with recording foreign religious broadcasts on tapes and playing them in his congregation. As reported in *Ostkirchliche Informationen*, published by the Eastern Churches Department of the German Lutheran Church, Keilmann had previously been sentenced to ten years imprisonment. (Translated from *Erneuerung und Abwehr*, December 1973, p. 22.)

Priest sentenced for embezzlement. On 18 August 1973 the newspaper *Soviet Russia* reported that an Orthodox priest, together with his church cantor and tax inspector, had been sentenced for embezzlement. Fr. Baranovsky of Belovo in Kemerovo region was sentenced to three years, the cantor to five and the tax inspector to four. This type of case has become unusual since the last anti-religious campaign under Khrushchev. In June 1973, the *Journal of the Moscow Patriarchate* reported that: "On 30 May, 1972 . . . Bishop Gedeon of Novosibirsk and Barnaul conducted the All-Night Vigil in the Church of the Ascension in the town of Belovo in the Kuzbas. Clergy and congregation gave a warm welcome to his Grace. At the door of the church Bishop Gedeon was greeted by members of the church council and inside the church by Rector Archimandrite Yevtropi Baranovsky . . . On the feast day the bishop celebrated Divine Liturgy in the same church. The choir sang superbly . . . The bishop remarked on the

beauty of the church and called for divine blessing upon the labours of the clergy and laity." Bishop Gedeon replaced Archbishop Pavel (Golyshev) who was transferred in February 1972 and soon after forcibly retired. Archbishop Pavel had resisted the illegal activity of the local official for religious affairs, A. S. Nikolayev (see *RCL* No. 1, 1974, pp. 5-6) and was widely known for his pastoral activity especially among youth.

Russian Orthodox lawsuit in Israel. The Jerusalem district court has rejected the Government's claim that the Russian Orthodox Church Outside Russia is not entitled to reclaim its property in Israel. The Russian Ecclesiastical Mission in Jerusalem, which represents the Russian Orthodox Church Outside Russia, with headquarters in New York, is now expected to launch court actions to recover property handed over by Israel to the Soviet Government in 1948. The property has considerable value; complications include the fact that the Soviet authorities have built a new church on land in Tiberias and gave a building in Nazareth to the Israel Communist Party as an office. After the 1917 Revolution a large number of Russian priests fled the country and set up a separate Church which does not recognize the Moscow Patriarchate. The British Mandatory Government in Palestine continued to recognize the Russian Ecclesiastical Mission, which gave its allegiance to the Church set up by the émigré priests. The Israelis, whose claims to statehood had been helped by the Soviet Union, expelled the Russian Ecclesiastical Mission and acceded to a Soviet request to hand over the Church property in Israel to its representatives. Moscow later sent priests to administer this property. At the institution of legal action in 1971 Mr. Y. S. Shapiro, who was then Minister of Justice, invited Patriarch Pimen, head of the Russian Orthodox Church in the Soviet Union, to come to Jerusalem as codefendant. Patriarch Pimen refused on the ground that all the Church property and land involved was owned by the Soviet state, although it had been claimed originally in the name of the Church in the Soviet Union. (Abbreviated from *The Times*, 14 February 1974, p. 9).

Charlie Brown in Moscow. Do those atheistic Russians know what they are doing? The *Moscow News*, an English-language weekly published in the Russian capital, is now reprinting old instalments of Charles Schulz's popular comic strip, "Peanuts". Cartoonist Schulz won't be getting any royalties: the editors of the *News* contend that newspapers are not bound by the international copyright agreement that the Soviet Union – after many years of non-compliance – recently signed. Schulz's charitable reaction: "If that's the only way I can get published in Russia, it's all right with me. I guess it's better to be stolen than not to be worth stealing." But the editors of the *News* may be pirating more than they bargained for (or failed to bargain for). We don't know what the circulation of the *News* is, but we do know that a lot of Russians read English these days. We also know that the creator of "Peanuts" is a devout evangelical Christian, and that he is on record as saying that cartooning is a legitimate if indirect vehicle for preaching . . . (Abbreviated from *Christian Century* 3 October 1973, p. 965).