

## **Pope John XXIII**

The Year of our Lord 1962 was a year of American resolve. Russian orbiting, European union and Chinese war.

In a tense yet hope-filled time, these were the events that dominated conversation and invited history's scrutiny. But history has a long eye, and it is quite possible that in her vision 1962's most fateful rendezvous took place in the world's most famous church--having lived for years in men's hearts and minds.

That event was the beginning of a revolution in Christianity, the ancient faith whose 900 million adherents make it the world's largest religion. (Others: Islam, 430 million; Hinduism, 335 million; Confucianism, 300 million; Buddhism, 153 million.) It began on Oct. 11 in Rome and was the work of the man of the year, Pope John XXIII, who, by convening the Ecumenical Council called Vatican II, set in motion ideas and forces that will affect not merely Roman Catholics, not only Christians, but the whole world's ever-expanding population long after Cuba is once again libre and India is free of attack.

So rare are councils--there have been only 20 in the nearly 2,000 years of Christian history--that merely by summoning Vatican II to "renew" the Roman Catholic Church Pope John made the biggest individual imprint on the year. But revolutions in Christianity are even rarer (the Reformation was 400 years ago), and John's historic mission is fired by a desire to endow the Christian faith with "a new Pentecost," a new spirit. It is aimed not only at bringing the mother church of Christendom into closer touch with the modern world, but at ending the division that has dissipated the Christian message for four centuries.

"The council may have an effect as profound as anything since the days of Martin Luther," says Dr. Carroll L. Shuster of Los Angeles, an executive of the Presbyterian Church. Boston University's Professor Edwin Booth, a Methodist and church historian, is so impressed by what Pope John has started that he ranks him as "one of the truly great Popes of Roman Catholic history."

Outranked Concerns. By launching singlehanded a revolution whose sweep and loftiness have caused it to outrank the secular concerns of the year, Pope John created history in a different dimension from that of the most dramatic headline of the year. President Kennedy's victory over the Russian missile threat in Cuba was both an embarrassing retreat for Khrushchev and a cold war turning point; it showed that a

resolute U.S. willing to use its mighty arms, can maintain the initiative in the cold war.

There were other big decisions and stunning achievements. In space, the U.S. creditably launched not only John Glenn but Telstar and Mariner II, but it was a team of anonymous Russian scientists who made the biggest space news by launching the space twins, Nikolayev and Popovich, on record-breaking, three- day tandem orbits of the earth.

European unification, both economic and political, rolled along with the dynamism of history (had Great Britain waited too long?). It was symbolized most graphically as Charles de Gaulle and Konrad Adenauer, the aged and doughty leader of the New Europe, knelt together at Mass in Reims Cathedral, signifying the burial of ancient antagonisms. On the other side of the world, Communist China's inscrutable and ruthless leaders launched an attack on neutralist India so seemingly pointless that the big mystery is why they did it at all. The attack embarrassed Russia and further widened the split within Communism that has become an open ideological battle.

Mistress of Life. Measured even against such portentous events, the turning point that Christianity reached in 1962 is already assured of a firm place in history, that "mistress of life" to which Pope John occasionally refers. By launching a reform whose goal is to make the Catholic Church *sine macula et ruga* (without spot or wrinkle), John set out to adapt his church's whole life and stance to the revolutionary changes in science, economics, morals and politics that have swept the modern world: to make it, in short, more Catholic and less Roman. Stretching out the hand of friendship to non-Catholics--he calls them "separated brethren"--he demonstrated that the walls that divide Christianity do not reach as high as heaven, and made a start toward that distant and elusive goal, Christian unity.

As a consequence, John XXIII is the most popular Pope of modern times--and perhaps ever. Heading an institution so highly organized that it has been called "the U.S. Steel of churches," he has demonstrated such warmth, simplicity and charm that he has won the hearts of Catholics, Protestants, and non- Christians alike. "The Protestant Christian think that they now have the best Pope they have had in centuries," comments German Catholic Theologian Herbert Vorgrimler. The Pope's recent illness raised a tide of concern around the world. "If we should pray for anyone in the world today," says Protestant Theologian Paul Tillich, "we should pray for Pope John. He is a good man."

John is not only a person of luminous human qualities but an intuitive judge of mankind's hopes and needs. At first regarded as a transitional Pope who would only warm the chair of Peter, he took over the Catholic Church in 1958 at an age (nearly 77) when he was able to leap over the administrative details and parochial interests of the papacy and confront the world as "the universal shepherd." Unlike his

predecessor, the scholarly and aloof Pius XII, John lets his interest range far beyond the Catholic fold to embrace the fundamental plight of man in the modern world.

Nobel Contest. Last week alone, John demonstrated in the space of a few busy days the qualities that have made him prefer, among all the impressive titles of the Roman Pontiff, the simple designation *servus servorum Dei*--servant of the servants of God. After delivering a Christmas message in which he rejoiced at the end of the Cuban crisis (he noted that his pleas of peace at that time "were not words shouted into the wind") and pleaded for Christian unity and for peace--"of all the earth's treasures, the most precious and most noteworthy"--he addressed the 50 ambassadors to the Holy See. "The church," said John, "applauds man's growing mastery over the forces of nature and rejoices in all present and future progress which helps men better conceive the infinite grandeur of the Creator." He also asked support for international bodies such as the United Nations, and urged nations to join in "a noble contest" to explore space and solve economic and social problems.

On Christmas Day, John made the first visit outside the Vatican since his illness--to the Bambino Gesù Hospital for children on nearby Janiculum Hill. There he spent 40 minutes walking from ward to ward and speaking personally to almost every child. He talked to them about his own illness. To the doctors and children at Bambino Gesù, he said: "You see, I am in perfect condition. Oh, I am not yet ready to run any races or enter any contests, but in all I am feeling well." Nonetheless, the feeling persisted in Rome that he is still far from well, and John himself has spoken frequently in recent weeks of the possibility of his imminent death. Only last week he told a group of cardinals: "Our humble life, like the life of everyone, is in the hands of God."

### Revolt in St. Peter's

However soon or late that humble life may end, the world will not be able to ignore or forget the forces that Pope John has unleashed. The importance of the council that he called is already clear. By revealing in Catholicism the deep-seated presence of a new spirit crying out for change and rejuvenation, it shattered the Protestant view of the Catholic Church as a monolithic and absolutist system. It also marked the tacit recognition by the Catholic Church, for the first time, that those who left it in the past may have had good cause. "Even the most agnostic and atheistic people were cheered when they saw those thoughtful people saying those thoughtful things," says one Harvard scientist.

Vatican II was the first council called neither to combat heresy, pronounce new dogma nor marshal the church against hostile forces. As the bishops came to Rome to deliberate, Pope John encourages "holy liberty" in the expression of their views. The bishops, who had long considered Rome the sole source of power and authority in the Catholic world, gathered together for the first time in their lives, discovered that they and not Rome constituted the leadership of the church.

Rome Has Spoken. In its anxiety to defend the doctrines attacked four centuries ago by the Reformation, the Catholic Church had often overemphasized its differences with Protestantism, and had become increasingly dogmatic even about matters that were open topics of discussion before the Reformation--the role of Mary in the church, the role of the sacraments, the infallibility of the Pope. As it reached the Atomic Age, the Catholic Church found itself in perhaps the most powerful condition in history in terms of numbers, influence and respect--and yet too often still fighting the old battles against Protestantism and "modernism."

The men chiefly responsible for this negative posture belong to the Roman Curia, the central administrative body of the Catholic Church. Mostly aging Italians quite insulated from the modern world, they have exerted vast influence and control not only on the worldwide church but on the Pope himself. They have usually been satisfied with the church the way it is, and have looked upon any efforts to change it with deep hostility.

This top-heavy, slow-moving and ultra-conservative body controls all the seminaries that teach young priests, all the church's missionary activities, all of its ecclesiastical and liturgical legislation. Through the Holy Office, headed by conservative Alfredo Cardinal Ottaviani, the Curia has frequently silenced or harassed Catholic intellectuals, sometimes forbidding them to publish their works and then forbidding them to say they have been forbidden. "Roma locuta est; causa finita est" has been the Curia's traditional pronouncement in deciding Catholic affairs around the world: "Rome has spoken; the matter is settled."

Now it is clear that the matter is by no means settled. Catholic scholars are deeply involved in new Biblical studies--sometimes over the objections of the Holy Office--that are giving them new insights into the nature and form of revelation and bringing them into intellectual cooperation with Protestant scholars. Was there really a star of Bethlehem? Were there really wise men from the East? Some scholars, in their efforts to plumb the positive depths of meaning in the Scriptures with tools of modern critical research, are willing to question these revered ideas. A new generation of Catholic thinkers, particularly in Europe, has been finding new approaches to theology and, in the case of the late Paleontologist Pierre Teilhard de Chardin and others, new meanings in science. It is the genius of Pope John XXIII that he sensed that the time was ripe for internal renewal in the church, and opened the way for it.

Too Many Bulges. It was a major accomplishment that the Vatican Council ever got going at all. The Curia clearly did not want it. One Curia man, according to a Vatican story, told the Pope: "We can't possibly get a council ready by 1963." "All right," said John, "We'll have it in 1962."

When the Curia cardinals finally decided that John really meant to have a council, they staffed the preparatory commissions with Curia men and decided that the council would be conducted entirely in Latin without simultaneous translation--this

effectively cutting off many Latin-shy bishops from the proceedings. In preparing the 69 proposals to be discussed at the council (since reduced to 20), they followed their own theologically conservative bent, frequently ignoring the suggestions that the Pope had asked the world's bishops to submit.

Pope John let the Curia have its way. To Boston's Richard Cardinal Cushing, he explained: "Sono nel sacco qui"--"I'm in a bag here." But when the council fathers arrived in Rome, they began getting discreet telephone calls from Monsignor Loris Capovilla, the Pope's private secretary, subtly disassociating the pope from the Curia. The progressives among the bishops correctly deduced that John wanted a wholesale reform, but they did not at first realize their own strength. Gradually, encouraged by the knowledge that the world was watching, they became emboldened. "We heard men dare to say things we'd privately been thinking for a long time ourselves," a U.S. bishop said. Britain's Archbishop T.D. Roberts remonstrated that the conservative Ernesto Cardinal Ruffini could "get up in St. Peter's and say that Christ's bride, the Church, is already without spot or wrinkle--but I say she's still got bulges in all the wrong places."

Against Old Ideas. The first council session, discussed five subjects, ranging from church unity to mass media, but the key battles were fought over three important schemata, or proposals:

-- The Form of Worship. By a vote of 1,922 to 11, the council fathers approved liturgical reforms that, among other things, enable the world's bishops to decide for themselves whether they wish parts of the Mass to be said in the language of their own countries. The vote goes much deeper than ceremonials; it is somewhat like the U.S. State Department's allowing its embassies to decide foreign policy. A power historically held by the Curia--the right to change the liturgy--now goes in some degree to national, linguistic or continental bishops' conferences. The way is thus opened to a decentralization bound eventually to extend into such areas as missionary activity and control of seminaries. Atlanta's Archbishop Paul Hallinan called the shift "a vote against old ideas. This first chapter really paves the way for everything else."

-- The Sources of Revelation. In the crucial debate on the sources of revelation, the schema prepared by Cardinal Ottaviani uncompromisingly emphasized the separateness of the two sources recognized by the Catholic Church--Scripture and tradition. (Theologically, tradition is the body of doctrine attributed to Christ or his Apostles but handed down orally rather than as Biblical revelation.) But Protestants recognize only one source--Scripture--and the progressives of the council, seeing no point in stressing Catholic-Protest differences, wanted to present Scripture and tradition as two channels in the same stream. For nearly two weeks the debate raged on. Finally, 1,368 council fathers voted to shelve the Ottaviani document--but the vote was still short of the needed two-thirds majority. Pope John, watching the proceedings in his apartment over closed-circuit TV, ruled that there was no point in

continuing to discuss a document that so many bishops disapproved of. He halted debate and sent the proposal to be rewritten by a new committee co-chaired by Cardinal Ottaviani and Augustin Cardinal Bea, Jesuit head of the newly created Secretariat for Promoting Christian Unity and the leader of the council progressives. Said Canadian Father Gregory Baum, a council theologian: "This day will go down in history as the end of the Counter Reformation." Said the Pope: "Now begins my council."

-- The Nature of the Church. When the time came to discuss Cardinal Ottaviani's draft proposal on the nature of the modern church, the progressives were ready. Ottaviani had tried to get the bishops to end the council's first session with a pious discussion of the Virgin Mary, but the council decided instead to press on to consider the nature of the church before adjourning. The purpose of the progressives was to get any objections on record and thus provide guidance that could be used in rewriting the schema after adjournment. There proved to be many objections to the Ottaviani draft, which was a stand-pat restatement of monarchical church authority. Bishop Emile Josef De Smedt of Bruges, Belgium, rose to speak: "Shouldn't this schema be purged of its triumphalism, its clericalism, its juridicism? This exercise in minor logic is unworthy of Mother Church." When he sat down, Bishop De Smedt received the loudest applause of the council. At council's end, the document was sent back for rewriting, thus opening the way for more tolerant Catholic positions on church-state relations, religious freedom, and the tempering of hierarchical authority by giving the laity a bigger role in the church.

Bishop Seduced? During the deliberations, the conservative and their backers continually sniped at the new spirit shown by the world's bishops. Holy Office Consulter Antonio Piolanti, Rector Magnificus of the Lateran University, warned that "there are rationalist theologians going about Rome seducing innocent foreign bishops," and ominously told one of his classes: "Remember, the Pope can be deposed if he falls into heresy." In the preparatory stage, Cardinal Ottaviani had rejected any help from the Secretariat for Promoting Christian Unity. Said an Ottaviani aide: "We don't need you. We judge you." Rome's right-wing priests joined in with frequent attacks on the direction of the council.

But at the end of the council session, Pope John was obviously pleased; the council, he said, enabled him "to hear the voice of the whole Catholic world." To make sure that the next session would go faster, he set up a new secretariat under his Secretary of State Amleto Cardinal Cicognani, to carry on council deliberations until the council fathers reconvene on Sept. 8. To each bishop he arranged to send all proposals during the recess, in a sort of continuous council by mail order. As for the disagreements that the council had produced, John dismissed them by saying, "We're not friars singing in a choir."

Pope John: Intuitive Being

Though Pope John has proved a happy surprise to both the Catholic Church and the world, his life is full of signposts that clearly mark his life and growth. He is an intuitive being who can pierce to the heart of a matter without taking the circuitous route of deeper and more discursive minds. The rhythmic natural influences of his first years on the farm at Sotto il Monte formed him for all time. A few weeks ago, asked by some bishops what he wanted to do after the council, John replied: "Spend a day tilling the fields with my brothers." Neither an intellectual nor a highly trained theologian, he does not think in concepts but in terms of fundamental human experiences. In a varied and unusual career, he has absorbed and synthesized these experiences to an extraordinary degree.

Unlike most Popes, Angelo Giuseppe Roncalli has spent most of his life living away from the restrictive influences of Rome. He has come to respect and be respected by people of many beliefs. After a year of teaching patrology (the study of early church fathers) at the Pontifical Lateran Seminary in Rome as a young priest, he was removed because the Romani did not consider him quite safe--he was proposing such unthinkable ideas as that mixed marriages might be allowed in certain circumstances. He languished as a letter copier in the Oriental Congregation until the Holy See discovered that it needed an apostolic visitor to remote Bulgaria (1925-34). From there he went for ten years to 98%-Moslem Turkey, and was transferred from exile to troubled France near the end of World War II only because the Holy See did not want to spare a top man for that messy post. But the French were charmed by Roncalli's humility and abilities as a raconteur--as well as by his reputation as "a heavy fork"--and in 1953 Pius XII gave him a red hat and the metropolitan see of Venice.

Everywhere, John has always made a point of meeting and fraternizing with non-Catholics and "anyone who does not call himself a Christian but who really is so because he does good." While in Turkey, John helped rescue and provide for Jews escaping from Nazi Germany, and in France after the war he recoiled in horror when he saw films of Jewish bodies piled high at Buchenwald and Auschwitz: "How can this be? The mystical body of Christ!" When a group of Jews visited him after he became Pope he walked up to them and simply repeated the Biblical greeting, "I am Joseph, your brother."

Host to Rulers. In the papacy, John asked to be known not as a diplomatic, political or learned Pope, but as "the good shepherd defending truth and goodness." He sailed out of the Vatican--to orphanages, jails, schools, churches--139 times. He dispensed with such customs as that of barring visitors from St. Peter's dome while the Pope is walking in the garden below. Said John: "Why shouldn't they look? I'm not doing anything scandalous." He pronounced himself embarrassed at being addressed as "Holiness" or "Holy Father," and admitted that he could not get used to thinking of himself in the plural. "Don't interrupt me--I mean us!" he once joked. He even granted a papal audience to a traveling circus, and fondly patted a lion cub named

Dolly. "You must behave here, " ordered John. "We are used only to the calm lion of St. Mark."

John welcomed more rulers (32) than any other pope, and received some historic papal guests: the first Greek Orthodox sovereign to visit the Pope since the days of the last Byzantine emperor, the first Archbishop of Canterbury since the 14th century, the first chief prelate of the U.S. Episcopal Church, the first Moderator of the Scottish Kirk, the first Shinto high priest. When Jacqueline Kennedy came to visit, John asked his secretary how to address her. Replied the secretary: "'Mrs. Kennedy,' or just 'Madame,' since she is of French origin and has lived in France." Waiting in his private library. the Pope mumbled: "Mrs. Kennedy, Madame; Madame, Mrs. Kennedy." Then the doors opened on the U.S. First Lady and he stood up, extended his arms and cried: "Jacqueline!"

The Pope's frequent pleas for peace are more sympathetic and convincing than those of any of his predecessors as he has urged nations to "hear the anguished cry which from every part of the earth, from the young innocents to the old, rises toward heaven: 'Peace! Peace!'" Even Nikita Khrushchev was moved. He praised the Pope's pleas for peace, sent him a greeting on his 80th birthday. Many in the Vatican thought the Pope should ignore it, but John sat down and wrote a reply: "Thank you for the thought. And I will pray for the people of Russia."

Christianity: "An Irrelevancy"?

Pope John's view of today's world owes little to the long-cherished Augustinian conception of it as divided into the City of God and the City of Man. To John, the church is not an exclusive club with its own narrow rules but a mother who must follow man into the mud as well as the sky. "It is the church that must bring Christ to the world," he said in a recent radio message. That is a never-ending task, to be attempted at a time when the world presents far more formidable obstacles to Christianity than the paganism of the Greeks and Romans ever did.

The great majority of Protestant and Catholic clergymen and theologians--as well as many non-Christians--agree that Christianity is much stronger today than it was when World War II ended. Their reason is not the postwar "religious revival" (which many of them distrust as superficial) or the numerical strength of Christianity. It is that the Christian Church has finally recognized and faced the problems that have cut off much of its communication with the modern world. Says Notre Dame's President Theodore Hesburgh: "We better understand the job that is before us. The challenge is to make religion relevant to real life."

Melting Together. Christianity can justly claim to have relevance to impart. It offers a unified view of the world that has attracted men for centuries, and answers questions of love, life and death as few other religions do. Says Theologian Vorgrimler, "Real religion requires that God come close to man--and there Christianity has the most

radical answers, by teaching that God has become man himself. This is a melting together of God and the world." German Marxist Philosopher Ernst Bloch admits: "Christianity is still a light shining in the darkness, and the light is stronger now."

Yet many Christians believe, with Catholic University's Monsignor John Tracy Ellis, that in practice "religion is just an irrelevancy in the lives of many people--the great majority." Gloomy Christian theologians are fond of speaking of a post-Christian age--the Christian Church estranged from modern society. "We need a theology of the 20th, or even the 21st century," says Dominican Dominique Dubarle, professor at the Institut Catholique de Paris.

Modern man's world offers alluring alternatives to the Christian way of life. He is captivated by his own technical and scientific accomplishments, devoted to the enjoyment of his plentiful goods, self-sufficiently distrustful of the supernatural. "The greatest enemy of Christianity," says Philosopher Mortimer Adler, "is man's self-confidence. The more power he has, the less religious he becomes." Much of the power has been given to him by science, which has made its launching pads and atomic reactors the age's equivalent of medieval cathedrals.

Theology of Space. Christian theologians insist that there is no basic conflict between religion and science--and a lot of scientists agree. They are convinced that if the Christian faith managed to assimilate Darwin there are few other scientific discoveries it cannot handle. Science's function is to describe the nature and phenomena of life--and leave the description of its purpose to religion. Says the University of California's Nobel-prizewinning Chemist Willard Libby: "Science and religion are not in conflict, nor are they in full cooperation. They are fulfilling very different needs."

In conflict or not, science is clearly something that the Christian faith must deal with more knowingly. While vastly expanding man's horizons, science has lowered man in the scale of existence and tacitly called into question the Christian teaching of his unique relationship with God. "Scientific history," says Oxford's Regius Professor of Modern History Hugh Trevor-Roper, "has succeeded in removing man from the center of the universe." More than anything else, a sort of messianic confidence in science's ability to lead man into the future is at the core of a widespread skepticism about religion--a skepticism that would reduce Christianity to the level of a mere system of ethics.

Moreover, many scientists believe that scientific advances in years to come--the creation of real life in laboratories, the control of heredity--will challenge some basic Christian principles. If life is discovered on another planet, what relationship will it have with Christ? Harvard Astronomer Harlow Shapley believes that in the universe there are at least 100 million earthlike planets suitable for life. Christian theologians--who hold that Christ came only to redeem men on earth--have already begun to grapple with this problem, but Philosopher Adler feels that they have not fully

grasped its import. "What Christianity needs today," he says, "is a theology of outer space."

Accommodation? Christianity still has a lot of earthly problems to dispose of first, but it is at least finding new approaches to them. Though Christianity has suffered severe persecutions at Communist hands, many Christian theologians now feel that an accommodation with Communism is possible and desirable. Such an accommodation, in their view, would oppose atheistic materialism and Communism's blatant infringements upon human dignity, but would accept Communism's collectivism as not basically in conflict with Christian teaching. Says Princeton Theological Seminary Professor Hugh Kerr: "From a professional, theological view, this accommodation is possible."

Pope John, though he has roundly condemned "the mistakes, greed and violence" of the Soviet rulers, is known to feel that the 1962 brand of Communism is no worse than a lot of other problems the church has faced in the past. The Vatican's new attitude has already resulted in preliminary negotiations to open diplomatic relations with some Communist countries. In order to get Soviet permission for Russian Orthodox observers to attend the Vatican Council, the Secretariat for Promoting Christian Unity assured the Russian patriarchate that no anti-Communist statements would be made at the council.

Consecrated Materialism. To most Christian theologians, Communism is less of a threat than the philosophy of which it is the highest embodiment: materialism. "The aggressive virtues of ambition, success, prestige are getting ahead of the Christian virtues of the Beatitudes," says Samuel Miller, dean of Harvard's Divinity School. But materialism is at least as old as the Biblical dance around the golden calf, and more and more theologians believe that the way to combat it is to "consecrate" it.

Jesuit Theologian Avery Dulles says that "materialism could almost be reckoned as an asset. People, if they are more prosperous, have more openness, which is more favorable for the apostolate." Philosopher-Missionary Albert Schweitzer has long believed that materialism and spirituality are not mutually exclusive. "Beyond materialism it is often possible to find great spiritual forces at work," he said some years ago. In U.S. aid to underdeveloped countries, the Peace Corps, huge U.S. charitable foundations and the free education of foreign students, theologians see the idealistic uses to which prosperity can be put.

The good life, however, often muffles the hard impact of the Christian message, and church leaders complain that Christians frequently make their churches into something resembling comfortable and conformist country clubs. Says Dr. Jaroslav Pelikan of Yale Divinity School: "They're busy, busy, busy with church activities in which you don't even hear about God." Christianity is also menaced, believes the World Council of Churches' Willem Visser't Hooft, by syncretism: a general religiosity that mixes all religions--Islam, Judaism, Hinduism--"into an unholy Irish

stew." If one believes in revelations through Christ, it is impossible to become part of a religious cocktail where the ingredients get lost."

For all his prosperity and technical progress, modern man is absorbed more and more in a society that makes less and less sense to him. Frequently, his life has no meaning, no sense of direction or fulfillment. Yet the Christian Church often addresses itself to a vague "peace of mind," failing to understand the tension and anxiety of a changing world and the need to say something cogent about them. "Without the aid of religion, the world is like the prodigal son going off and getting more and more weary and miserable," says English Jesuit Martin D'Arcy. "I believe man is in extremity. There is loneliness and death everywhere, and here is this life-giving philosophy which we must bring to them."

That challenge sums up the duty of the Christian faith to forget the quarrels of the past and work at presenting the ancient Christian message of redemption in a clearer and more modern light. No one believes that the Christian churches will join together in this century. But Pope John's actions have begun a reconciliation that is bound to make the Christian message a more unified and vital force. It is already obvious in the unusual sight of Protestant pastors and Catholic priests exchanging pulpits in Holland, of Catholic priests at the consecration of Episcopal bishops in Dallas and Boston, of a gathering of 150 priests and ministers in St. Louis to discuss reform and reunion. It was most dramatically illustrated by the honored places held at the Ecumenical Council by non-Catholic observers who only recently were regarded by their hosts as heretics and schismatics.

Always an Optimist. To a Christianity deeply bothered by the world's condition, Pope John XXIII has brought something more than a simple feeling of good will: a renewed sense of the optimism at the heart of the Christian message, "We are much too pessimistic and not joyful enough," complains Swiss Theologian Karl Barth, who calls for a "theology of freedom that looks ahead and strives forward" to suit the nearly apocalyptic seriousness of our time." Says Pope John: "Men have come and gone, but I always remained an optimist, because that is my nature, even when I hear near me deep concern over the fate of mankind."

To the world at large, John has given what neither science nor diplomat can provide: a sense of its unity as the human family. That sense is at the core of the Christian tradition, whose God lives in history and invites the family of man to help him form it. If the invitation goes begging in a world besieged by tension and seduced by its own accomplishments, Christianity must share the blame. Pope John believes that man should be saved where he is, not where he ought to be. By bringing Christianity to a new conformation with the world and salving the wounds that have torn it for centuries, the Pope has helped vastly to recapture the Christian sense of family.

For in a time of apocalyptic seriousness, man has realized more than ever that he does not live by bread alone.

Nor by guns.