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**EDITOR'S NOTE:** C. Brownlow Hastings, assistant secretary of the Southern Baptist Home Mission Board's department of interfaith witness, has just returned from Rome where he attended the Roman Catholic Synod of Bishops. This is his final news analysis written for Baptist Press.

**Baptists, Catholics Face Same  
Human Frailties, Synod Reveals**

By C. B. Hastings

ROME (BP)--The prophet Ezekiel was commanded by the Lord to go among the exiles and learn of their plight. When he returned, he said: "And I sat where they sat, and remained there astonished among them seven days."

It was often difficult for a Baptist observer at the third Synod of Bishops' meeting in Rome to sit quietly for 21 days. It was not difficult to remain astonished.

In a number of ways Baptists and Catholics are tarred with the same human frailties. Some of these became obvious during the debate on the two main agenda items confronting the Synod of Bishops--the future of the priesthood, and world peace and justice.

Common questions face Baptists and Catholics regarding the ministry: How do you distinguish between the common priesthood of all believers and the special calling of the ordained man? Does the special calling give one priority and power over the lay people so as to be able to interpret the mind and will of God? To what extent should the laity be involved in decision-making for the Church or denomination? These still are open issues in the Roman Church after the long debate on the priesthood by the 1971 Synod.

In the debate on social justice and world peace, Baptists would recognize the cleavage between the priestly role and the prophetic role, between the activists and the withdrawers, between the advocates for "evangelization" and those for social justice.

There was much agonizing over the role of the priest in these cleavages. Should he be content with "forming" the conscience of the laity, who then should take to the trenches in the warfare for social justice? Or should he set the example and take the lead, overthrowing the established order by non-violent methods in order to establish justice?

A weekend trip to the Communist-dominated region of Reggio Emilia provided a more intimate glimpse into Italian Catholicism on the front lines. The little new church was meeting temporarily in a converted barn, but the Sunday Mass was crowded with about 50 worshippers, all but five being women and youth. The young priest preached with almost evangelistic fervor in support of the "apostolic mission to the unbelievers." His few young people had a depth of spirit and dedication that was rare anywhere.

You could have changed the scene and the cast of characters and been right at home in a new mission chapel in one of the Southern Baptist "pioneer areas" of the United States.

The other side of the coin seemed true as well. Where either Baptists or Catholics are the dominant faith, they tend to grow fat and sluggish, making unholy alliances with the social power structures that eventually silence the voice of the prophet.

In the debate on justice, however, it was encouraging to hear the voice of certain bishops calling for a cleaning of their own house before trying to set the world aright. There was an appeal for the return to such moderation in life as to set the example of austerity the world's

affluent nations will have to accept if they are not overwhelmed by the masses of poor and oppressed. There was even the suggestion that the Roman Church should dispose of its art treasures in order to provide for more desperate human need. And rich local churches were urged to share their wealth within the Church with the poorer ones. Such is bitter medicine, indeed.

Another familiar division that appeared was between the doers and the thinkers, between the administrators and the theologians.

At the Synod you heard about the speeches of the bishops from the official press conferences, but you had to go to the smoke-filled basement rooms for informal press interviews to hear the theologians of the Catholic Church. Like the press, they were shut out from observing the Synod directly.

Catholic theologians seldom play any role in the decision-making process of the Church, but in the long run, by virtue of influencing the young seminarians and the thinking layman, they shape the future of the Church.

It is also encouraging to note that the Catholic theologians are returning to biblical studies with power and insight which may soon outstrip their Protestant counterparts. They are having to wrestle with the doctrines of the Church, of salvation, of the sacraments, of the priesthood in a way far different from the theologians of the Reformation. The latter sought only to ferret out arguments from scripture and tradition to justify the decrees of the hierarchy. Their present-day counterparts are most critical of the institutionalization of tradition and dogma and are searching for truth on new ground.

Another area of great promise between Baptists and Catholics is in the distribution of the Scriptures in the common languages of the world. The Commission for the Common Use of the Bible, headed by F. Walter Abbott, an American Jesuit, has for the past six years been cooperating fully with the United Bible Societies in the work of translating and distributing the Bible. The official approval of Cardinal Cushing has been given to Good News for Modern Man, translated by a Southern Baptist scholar, Robert Bratcher, and also to the Revised Standard Version. The Catholic office has accepted the latest edition of the Greek text of the New Testament produced for translators around the world by the United Bible Society. More than 100 Catholic scholars are presently at work in the translation teams in various countries, making up-to-date translations for the common people.

Some observers of the debate on the priesthood believe that the hard line taken by the pope and the bishops on celibacy will cause even wider defections among the priests in many countries. This should not be a cause for rejoicing among Baptists, if for no other reason than that many of those priests who leave to marry continue faithful to the Catholic Church in the lay state. However, few of those who remain are convinced any more by the traditional argument that celibacy enables the priest to be more useful or dedicated to the work of the Kingdom.

Bishop Gran of Oslo, Norway, pointed out that the Lutheran married pastors were certainly no less dedicated than Catholic priests, and furthermore, their wives served very usefully as assistant pastors.

Celibate or married, priest or pastor, both Catholics and Baptists are more concerned than ever over the role of the minister in today's world.

One of the more exciting happenings of the last week of the Synod came when Cardinal Slipji, exiled "major-archbishop" of the Eastern Rite Church of the Ukraine, called his own bishops and cardinals together for a "little synod." Cardinal Slipji was tired of the run-around the pope and the Synod seemed to be giving to the plight of the Ukrainian Church. The pope refused to recognize the legitimacy of the "little synod," just as he had refused to elevate Cardinal Slipji to Patriarch. Since the Russian government closed the Ukrainian Church in 1946, the cardinal and his bishops have been exiled, and thus have not been in their country to exercise rule over their church.

In a lengthy commentary on the situation, the Jesuit priest, George A. Maloney, said: "Rome seems to be playing the perennial game of politics. To gain some concessions, especially for the Latin Catholics in Czechoslovakia, Lithuania, Poland, Rumania, and Russia, the Ukrainian Catholic Church must not be allowed to take on new life."

In contrast with this very involved issue, the Catholic Church in North Korea presents a clear case of religious persecution unto death by the Communist country.

Cardinal Kim, Archbishop of Seoul, Korea, made an impassioned plea to the assembly for understanding and concern for the remnant of the faithful in North Korea. He drew from his plea the conclusion that even without any priests or sacraments, the Church is still alive in North Korea.

"Surely the Church as a hierarchical institution does not exist in North Korea, but I believe there must be existing there the Church as the Mystical Body of Christ," Cardinal Kim said. "Our Lord Jesus Christ, who Himself is Priest, must be with them and among them, sharing their sufferings with them; and carrying there also the Cross of Redemption."

There is no question but that the Synod revealed both the weaknesses and the signs of life stirring within the Roman Catholic Church today.

Gradually the conviction is spreading that religious liberty and separation of church and state must be the trophy of Catholics as well as Baptists; for it is one and the same, a seamless robe.

Baptists, who have suffered much in previous generations even from the same Roman Church, cannot but applaud and pray for their victory as well as that of all men everywhere.

What about future synods? If the bishops decided they can afford a little measure at work in their own dioceses, and if the pope can make "collegiality" a deed and not a claim, there will be more.

The present Synod, however, endangered its future by the mountain's bringing forth only a mouse.

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D. C. Baptists Hit Quarterly  
Revision; Elect Woman Leader

11/15/71

WASHINGTON (BP)--Baptists in the nation's capital voted overwhelmingly to adopt a statement expressing "deep sorrow and grief" over recent action by Southern Baptist Sunday School Board officials to withdraw and revise a teenage quarterly on race relations because they considered it "potentially inflammatory."

Messengers to the District of Columbia Baptist Convention here also elected a woman as president for the first time in the state convention's history, and perhaps in Southern Baptist history.

The new convention president is Mrs. Letha Casazza, a member of Takoma Park Baptist Church here and the first woman president in the 95-year history of the convention. The executive secretary of the Southern Baptist Historical Commission, Lynn E. May of Nashville, said that to his knowledge, her election was the first time in Southern Baptist Convention history that a woman had been elected president of a Baptist state convention.

The resolution, adopted after about 30 minutes discussion, asked the Sunday School Board "to make public apology to our many Baptists, black and white, for putting a higher priority on literature sales and denominational harmony than on courageous obedience to the Word of God."

Delegates declared in the resolution that the action is of "particular insult" to the black Christians of the District of Columbia convention, and that it "undermines the efforts of our churches and this convention to bridge racial division and promote reconciliation."

Meeting in the predominantly black Zion Baptist Church, the convention's resolution said that the board action damages "the witness of our churches at home and abroad."

The resolution further requested the District of Columbia representative on the Sunday School Board "to initiate through the board corrective discipline for this Gospel-dishonoring action."

No delegate spoke against the resolution. When the vote was taken, only one dissenting voice was heard.

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During the discussion, the convention debated a section in the resolution naming James L. Sullivan, executive secretary of the Sunday School Board, and Allen B. Comish, director of the board's Church Services and Materials Division, as those who should make the public apology.

One pastor who supported the deletion of the names from the resolution, said "the people who should apologize are the members of the Southern Baptist Convention who have created this atmosphere, . . . members who have refused to live up to the teachings of Christ."

Another delegate said that Sullivan should "welcome" this resolution because it indicates support for stronger leadership by the board in publishing materials on racial reconciliation.

The issue of freedom of expression among scholars was dealt with in another resolution. The convention approved a statement affirming the right of scholars to publish without "censorship and repression."

The delegates urged "all our Baptist brethren to encourage the publication of the work of responsible and careful biblical scholar without editorial repression."

Other resolutions approved in the two-day meeting called for Baptist support of prison reform and the involvement of church members in working for quality public education.

Also, the delegates called upon District of Columbia citizens, "Congress, the Senate and state legislatures to work for full voting representation for the District of Columbia in the House of Representatives and the Senate of the United States.

The budget adopted for 1972 totals \$496,000, which is \$100,000 less than the budget approved for 1971.

The convention, affiliated with both the American and Southern Baptist Conventions, is made up of 63 churches, a gain of four congregations since 1970. James A. Langley is the executive secretary.

The 1972 convention is scheduled for the week of November 13, at Luther Rice Memorial Church in Silver Spring, Md. The exact dates will be announced later.

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#### Cartoonist Explains Theology Behind the Great Pumpkin

11/15/71

MILL VALLEY, Calif. (BP)--Charles M. Schulz, creator of the comic strip "Peanuts," cleared up a theological question at Golden Gate Baptist Theological Seminary here--"What is the theology behind the Great Pumpkin?"

During a lecture-dialogue session at the Baptist seminary, Schulz said that the Halloween take-off on the Santa Claus idea started with the terrible commercial distortion of Christmas. The Great Pumpkin theme mirrors the ridiculousness of what society has done to Christmas, he said.

In the comic strip, Linus, the security blanket-carrying kid of the Charlie Brown set, sits in the pumpkin patch every Halloween waiting for the Great Pumpkin to bring him his heart's desire.

Schulz, a speaker at Golden Gate Seminary's lecture series, explained that Linus "just got his holidays mixed up."

Schulz, a graying, fashionably dressed cartoonist for more than 22 years, also revealed that "the little red-headed girl won't be back in the Peanuts strip," and that he had not favored the name "Peanuts" for the strip, but preferred something like "Good Ol' Charlie Brown."

The cartoonist threw out another theological question to his laughing audience when he quoted one of his Peanuts characters who asked: "When you die and go to Heaven, are you graded on the percentage or the curve?"

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Theological implications are sometimes intended in his cartooning, but are often something else. He explained, "I have to draw," and religion is just another of the many interests that "make up my life."

Schulz was raised as a seldom-church-going Lutheran, but after World War II, he joined a Church of God in the twin cities of Minneapolis-St. Paul, Minn. "I liked their denominational philosophy," he said.

When the cartoonist moved to California, he began attending a Methodist church near his home and taught Sunday School there ten years, without joining the church. "They're very tolerant," he quipped. He resigned the class recently because, "I ran out of things to say to them."

Though introducing God to people is not the primary concern in Schulz's drawing and writing, his low-key, often searching, questioning and philosophizing on religion brings some bitter responses.

He gets letters from people who say they "think it's sacrilegious to talk about the Bible in a comic strip." The only people who don't sign letters to me are those who complain about religious points, Schulz said.

Though several persons in the audience attempted to draw connections between Schulz's theological references in the comic strip and evangelism, he emphasized, "The ultimate in cartoon ideas is the kind which is simply a funny picture. No matter how much credit we give certain ones for being philosophers and theologians, cartooning is still basically drawing funny pictures."

The personality of each character in "Peanuts" comes from Schulz, himself. Lucy is "sarcastic." Charlie Brown is a "nice, wishy-washy kid who anyone would like to have in their neighborhood." Snoopy, the dog, is the "dreamer" side of the cartoonist.

Schulz's favorite character, at present, in the "Peanuts" strip is Peppermint Patty. She is "sincere and a little naive," and has a good relationship with her father. Woodstock, a bird-friend of Snoopy, came into the strip recently and is included whenever possible, "because I just think he's fun to draw."

Schulz said he is not the person to draw racial humor. "It's not part of my life." Adults aren't included in the strip, which makes the strip a little unique, Schulz said. Also, he quipped, the strip is so small, they'd bump their heads.

One of the most successful themes ever done in the "Peanuts" strip has been Snoopy and the Red Baron. Schulz said the idea of Snoopy as the World War I flying ace and the Baron grew out of a discussion with the cartoonist's son over a model airplane.

"My son claims he thought of it, and I claim it was my idea," Schulz said. World War I is far enough away to be funny, but war today isn't considered something people can laugh at, he added.

Schulz, his wife Joyce, their five children, four dogs, four horses, and assorted cats--at last tally--live in Sebastopol, Calif., where they are often besieged by tourists and autograph hunters.

Schulz sold his first cartoon to the Saturday Evening Post in 1948. A high school graduate, who took two years of art instruction by mail and a term of figure sketching, Schulz began drawing the "Peanuts" gang for United Features Syndicate in 1950. The comic strip now appears in more than 1,000 newspapers. His book sales passed the 55-million mark in 1969.