

PASTOR GENERAL'S REPORT

TO THE MINISTRY OF THE
WORLDWIDE CHURCH OF GOD



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FROM MINISTERIAL SERVICES

RESPONDING TO VISIT REQUESTS

It has come to my attention that a substantial number of second, third and fourth visit requests are being received through the WATS line. Sometimes these repeated requests are made by people who haven't been contacted yet simply because the minister hasn't received the request yet. To expedite these cases, I have instructed WATS to relay the request to the pastor by phone upon receiving the third visit request.

In other cases, the pastor has already responded to the visit request by sending a form letter of acknowledgment, asking the person to contact him as to the best time for a visit. However, very often these form letters are being ignored, and the person calls WATS again requesting a visit. While form letters can be useful in handling visit requests, we ask that pastors first call those people who have given a telephone number and "touch bases" as soon as possible.

If a pastor does need to make the initial contact by a form letter, it is a good practice to enclose a self-addressed envelope to prevent the response from being returned to MPC, as has often been the case.

--Joe Tkach

Budgetary Belt Tightening

As you know, we are now entering a year of financial austerity. This, of course, will mean cinching up our belts in as many areas as possible.

One area in which we will need your help immediately is ministerial expense. A year ago, we were able to institute an expense category called "non-overnight meals." Now, because of the strict budget limitations, we unfortunately need to discontinue this benefit. On the surface this may seem to be a trivial matter, but when added together it can equal the salary of a full-time minister. Therefore, please examine your expense amounts and send us a memo by January 7 telling us how much you are currently spending for non-overnight meals. Your future expense checks will be reduced by that amount. If you find it more convenient, please telephone us with the information. In addition, if there is any other part of your expense allotment that is not essential, please include that information also. Your careful consideration and cooperation will be of great value at this difficult time.

We will all need to pitch in to do our parts in every way we can during this time of budgetary restraints. Some very difficult decisions will have to be made which will include some increased workloads, other areas of general belt tightening and, sadly, some layoffs.

We all need to be more diligent also in our prayers, and we need to take the lead in our congregations as God's shepherds in seeking God, drawing close to Him, overcoming our own sins, faults, and weaknesses, and in zealously and vigorously following the direction God gives through Mr. Armstrong. Take that responsibility seriously! God holds us responsible to set the example, to take the lead, to shepherd our flocks, and to be good stewards of the money God gives us. As we submit to God, respond to Him and please Him, He will bless us.

International News

From the German Office Mr. Armstrong's November 20 Sabbath stopover in Rotterdam, Holland was a major highlight for the 150 German Church members who attended services.

The services began at 2:30 p.m., enabling many members from Hannover, Dusseldorf and Bonn to make the trip. Preaching Elder Mr. Paul Kieffer, who pastors the Hamburg, Hannover and Berlin churches, simultaneously translated Mr. Armstrong's sermon into German for the non-English speaking brethren present. Everyone took home a sobering and eye-opening message from Mr. Armstrong on the coming resurrection of the "Holy Roman Empire."

On November 5, Regional Director Mr. Frank Schnee spoke in Geneva, Switzerland to the French-speaking brethren there. Invited by Geneva's office manager Mr. Bernard Andrist, Mr. Schnee was accompanied by his wife, Esther. Mr. and Mrs. Schnee took the opportunity to get acquainted with the brethren and Geneva's office staff. Mr. Andreas Fischer translated into French.

In November the mail count of regular letters and postcards received showed an increase of 35%. Donation mail was up 32%, renewal cards, booklet cards, and general solicited mail totaled 110% more than 1981. Our Media response increased 102%. Our total mail amounted to 97% more than in November, 1981. For the year to date we have a total mail increase of 53% over 1981 or 169,441 pieces of mail thus far. In November we also sent out 12,515 booklets or 187% more than in the same period last year.

In addition, the bulk of our advertising responses from the fall ad campaign poured in this month. In November we added 16,907 new subscribers to the German PLAIN TRUTH file, mainly due to our flyer advertising. Our fall advertising began in September with 72,000 flyers in the Austrian magazine PROFIL. On October 23, 80,000 flyers appeared in the Vienna newspaper DIE PRESSE and on October 30, 470,000 flyers were placed in Switzerland's well-known SCHWEIZER BEOBACHTER. On November 15th, 310,000 flyers appeared in Germany's leading national newspaper FRANKFURTER ALLGEMEINE ZEITUNG (FAZ). The total results to date for The PLAIN TRUTH (remember that our flyers advertise The PLAIN TRUTH in one of five languages, which we'll be changing to six next year) amounts to 21,757 requests thus far.

In November the mail income increased 12.7% over November, 1981. For the year to date our mail income stands at 30.4% more than 1981.

Australia November proved to be a most profitable and rewarding month of activities in God's Work throughout Australia and Asia. Mr. Gerald Waterhouse arrived in Australia November 23rd and immediately began his tour of the Australian Churches. By the time his tour is over Mr. Waterhouse will have conducted a Sabbath service or Bible study in every Church area in Australia, traveling many thousands of miles across the Australian continent--from Cairns at the northern tip of Queensland to Bunbury in Western Australia. Mr. Waterhouse's untiring efforts in bringing a special and unique message to the brethren everywhere is greatly appreciated.

Though Australia is at present in the grips of the worst drought in living memory and unemployment is continuing to rise rapidly (over eight percent of the work force is now without jobs), income for the month rose by an excellent 30.2%, bringing our year-to-date increase to 15.9%. Our gratitude must go to the Living Head of God's Work, Jesus Christ, for making these funds available.

Mail for the month was one of the highest on record--23,155 letters were processed; a 48% increase over the same month last year. In response to these letters, over 24,000 booklets and articles were mailed out.

Of all the publications produced by the Work, Mr. Armstrong's book, THE UNITED STATES AND BRITAIN IN PROPHECY, is the one most often requested. Over the past two and one-half years, over 76,000 copies of this book have been distributed throughout Australia and Asia, its popularity being three times higher than any of our other publications.

A recent public Bible lecture for PLAIN TRUTH subscribers in Adelaide proved to be most successful. To our great encouragement one hundred PLAIN TRUTH subscribers came--2.3% of the mailing list. Interest in the Work was quite high and our local minister, Mr. Kerry Gubb, was kept busy answering questions for some time afterwards. Over half of The PLAIN TRUTH readers who attended requested a copy each of Mr. Armstrong's book, THE INCREDIBLE HUMAN POTENTIAL, and a number have requested visits from the minister.

Spanish Department A total of 16,795 subscribers were added to the subscription list in November, more than in any other month in the history of the Spanish Department. This brought the total of new subscriptions for 1982 to 102,696, or 30.2% more than all of 1981! Of the 16,795 new subscriptions, nearly 5,000 each come from Mexico and the U.S., and 2,400 from Argentina. This large increase is due to two factors: 1) Huge amounts of mail which accumulated during the Feast of Tabernacles period were processed in November and, 2) Responses from many promotional efforts launched in July, August and early September cascaded into Pasadena in October and November. Since early September, virtually all advertising efforts have been curtailed or drastically reduced because of budget constraints.

In spite of massive devaluations of several currencies, including the Mexican and Argentine pesos, as of the end of October the income from the Spanish and Portuguese language areas showed a 16% increase over the same period in 1981!

As in January, 1981, the ministers serving the Spanish and Portuguese language areas will attend the Ministerial Refreshing Program session of January 10-20. A total of twenty-one men from eight countries are expected. Before the session begins several days will be spent in meetings with Spanish Regional Director Mr. Leon Walker and other personnel.

Appreciation for the Second Ministerial Refreshing Program

Dear Mr. Armstrong:

My wife and I would like to thank you for the opportunity provided for us to attend the eleventh session of the Ministerial Refreshing Program. We were disappointed because we were not able to see you personally on that session, but we were very grateful for the video tape recording of your message to the session before us. We really did learn and benefit from what you said and appreciate the inspiration God gave you. The information you gave us is very helpful and is being related to the brethren.

We diligently pray for you and those who assist you that we all will hold up your hands in the great Work God has commissioned you to accomplish.

Jeff and Judy McGowan

Dear Mr. Armstrong:

Please accept our sincere thanks for a richly rewarding Refreshing Program. The classroom instruction was most profitable; the opportunity to meet with friends and with the faculty was stimulating; to just be on the beautiful Ambassador College campus was inspiring and the glimpse we had of the vastness of this worldwide Work was exciting and exhilarating.

We are most appreciative of this experience and thank you and your dedicated staff for this valuable educational and socially fulfilling time here at the Headquarters of God's Church.

Bill and Pat Dixon

Dear Mr. Tkach:

My wife and I want to thank you, the Headquarters ministers and staff, and especially Mr. Armstrong for the latest Refreshing Program! The classes and hospitality shown were outstanding. Within the short time we've been back, the positive information and experiences from the program have inspired and encouraged the local congregations.

Rand and Gloria Millich

Dear Mr. Tkach:

Please accept our warmest greetings from San Fernando, Philippines. It was so refreshing to take time off from our usual routine activities week after week and to attend the Refreshing Program for two weeks.

Eling and I were given the opportunity and privilege to attend the 11th session of the second round of the Ministerial Refreshing Program for God's ministry at the Headquarters in Pasadena. We have had the wonderful chance of renewing acquaintances, making new friends in the ministry and having new firsthand experiences....

We thank you very much for the most valuable instruction and profitable experiences you and your staff, together with Mr. Armstrong, have made available and given us to help us become better and able ministers in caring for the the flock in the local congregations. Please extend our high esteem to each and everyone of them, especially Mr. Armstrong.

We do sincerely appreciate your love and concern for us. We were truly refreshed, exactly as the title of the program reveals. We love you and we continually pray for all of you.

Dion and Eling Catchillar

Comments From Monthly Church Reports

FAYETTEVILLE, AR--JOHN R. ELLIOTT: At a recent Church social in the outdoors, 63 brethren gathered around a television on a wagon behind a tractor and watched the first World Tomorrow telecast to be aired in northwest Arkansas! All the brethren are thrilled to have the broadcast in our area. Previously, all we had was the radio broadcast fading in and out late at night.

ROANOKE, VA--ROBERT PERSKY: For the first time in years the Roanoke area is getting good media coverage. The telecast is on a strong local channel every Sunday at 7:00 a.m. There is an eye-catching advertisement each Sunday in the newspaper concerning the telecast. And, because of the winter season coming on, the radio broadcasts from distant stations are coming in stronger and clearer. Brethren are beginning to spot the PT in many locations. We are distributing over 63 boxes of PTs each month. The populace is becoming aware of God's Work.

LAKE OF THE OZARKS, MO--JOE E. DOBSON: Many have commented about how powerful Mr. Armstrong has been on the telecast--really giving this world a powerful witness. We deeply appreciate getting the telecast at a good time on a good station.

COEUR D'ALENE, ID--ROGER FOSTER: I have noticed a decrease in serious marriage problems during the latter half of this year. This is very encouraging. I think that Mr. Armstrong's focusing our minds on our being in training to serve as teachers in the World Tomorrow is a major factor. It's helping people to get their minds off of themselves.

OKLAHOMA CITY, OK--ARNOLD CLAUSON: The realization that time is short has really begun to take root in the brethren. Quality of PMS continues to be much higher than it has been in years past.

JONESBORO, AR--CLYDE KILOUGH: The Feast was a boost to this area in that the brethren were provoked to good works and increased involvement. Several men who have been sitting on the fence joined the Spokesman's Club; others are coming forward asking how they can serve, etc. Much of this positive response based on being inspired, encouraged, prodded and corrected at the Feast.

COLUMBUS, IN--STEVE NUTZMAN: Unquestionably, the Feast this year was most inspiring for the vast majority of the brethren. The people in this area tend to be rather reserved in their personal

remarks, but there truly was greater than normal enthusiasm exhibited by most in the Church following the Feast. The youth especially came back encouraged as they were able to draw strength from others their age who are going through the very same trials they are.

BELLE VERNON, PA--DAVID M. JOHNSON: We have never heard so many positive comments about the Feast. Everyone is commenting on what a great Feast it was spiritually. The phrase "This was the best Feast ever!" is certainly not an empty platitude.

--Joe Tkach, Ministerial Services

MAIL PROCESSING UPDATE

How Members Can Save the Work Money

Due to the recent "belt-tightening" measures the Work has had to take, we thought it would be timely to offer the following suggestions on how individual members can help out. You may want to read these to the brethren at services.

- Please notify us if you change your address. It's a big help if you can let us know in advance.
- Use extra care when preparing tithes and offerings. Make sure checks or money orders are correctly and completely filled out.
- If you contribute to several different funds, enclose a note giving a clear and accurate breakdown of your donation.
- Please use the pre-labeled envelopes we supply for sending tithes and offerings. These are easiest and least expensive to process.
- Bring receipt problems to our attention immediately. Doing so will prevent costly follow up letters or phone calls.

These tips, if followed, will make our processing more efficient and save God's Work substantial expense. If you have any questions or if we can be of further service, please contact us--by letter or WATS line call.

God Our Healer

This week we are featuring accounts of God's miraculous healings. Following are some of the more outstanding letter comments we've received in the past few weeks.

Our son was healed of curvature of the spine, having had one leg shorter than the other. The doctor gave us six months to decide on an operation--in which he would cut the bone in the short leg and add a piece. We knew God would heal so, on the following Sabbath, we had our son anointed. We also had him do exercises.

When our boy went back for a check up, the doctor was amazed. He said, "I'm not even going to bother with x-rays, because he's perfect! I don't understand it." We knew God had healed him!

Mr. & Mrs. H.J. (North Adams, MA)

A little over a month ago, my husband suffered a stroke causing paralysis of his right arm and leg, and distortion of speech. His blood pressure soared to 230/180 which could have caused a massive stroke. But, for some strange reason he only suffered a slight hemorrhage. I called the local minister and requested prayer. God heard and in just five weeks my husband can walk with his walker, and move his arm and hand. His speech is almost as distinct as before. No one can ever tell me God is not alive!

Mrs. M.O. (Childersburg, AL)

A little over a year ago, we decided to have our first child. We had our little son shortly before the Feast....A few days later, I was leaving my son with a sitter for the first time. As soon as I arrived across town, I received a call saying the baby was vomiting, had a temperature of 102 and had trouble breathing. I prayed all the way back, determined not to take him to the doctor. I was trusting God for his healing.

When I reached the babysitter, I called to have the child anointed and then went to check on him. He was sleeping comfortably and his temperature was normal.

S.P. (Omaha, NE)

After hearing our pastor reiterate some of the accounts from the "God Still Works Miracles Today" collection, put together for the Ministerial Refreshing Program, I thought you might be uplifted by a miracle in my family. My nephew was dying from a rare and fatal lung disease called interstitial pneumenitis. When I was first told about it, the doctors had urged him to make out his will because he only had weeks or possibly months to live with his extreme case of the disease.

My sister (not in the Church) gave me this news on a Tuesday morning or early afternoon. I immediately began fasting and praying. I also called our minister, who was out at the time on ministerial business. He returned my call that night around 11:00 p.m. He was very comforting and reassuring, and promised to pray for my nephew.

On Thursday morning, a day and a half later, my sister called that her son was going to be fine....The doctors don't know what happened. We do! God healed him!

The doctors later told my nephew they really hadn't expected him to live through that weekend. They were so amazed at his recovery, they were going to write about his case in some medical journal. They probably won't even give God a byline--YET! Some day they will!

L.O. (South Carver, MA)

--Richard Rice, Mail Processing Center

ON THE WORLD SCENE

POPE JOHN PAUL II: RACING AGAINST TIME TO FULFILL HIS "MISSION"

A very significant insight into the objectives of Pope John Paul II is offered by Kenneth A. Briggs, religion editor of the NEW YORK TIMES. Mr.

Briggs composed a lengthy article in the NEW YORK TIMES MAGAZINE of October 10, 1982 entitled "Using the World as his Pulpit." Here are some key excerpts:

The Pope sees himself primarily as a spiritual figure who transcends racial, regional and ideological boundaries and disputes. He envisions a better world where human dignity is enhanced through the transforming power of faith and by the practical efforts of well-meaning nations. [Church and state, note.]

John Paul II has entered many lands as an evangelist presenting the Christian alternative. He grasps the sober reality that the church has lost much ground to Marxist Communism, Socialism and, particularly in Western nations, the powerful specter of secularism....In response, he has become a crusader with an urgency that suggests that time is running out.

Underlying this urgency is the Pope's acute awareness of the approaching end of the second Christian millennium. Prof. George H. Williams of Harvard's Divinity School, a longtime friend of the Pope who has written a searching book, "The Mind of John Paul II," says the Pontiff has "more of an eschatological view than anyone would suspect," and that by the year 2000 he "believes something decisive will happen in the world."

The substance of eschatology is based on biblical teachings that God will inaugurate His Kingdom through a series of happenings at the close of an age. Such premonitions by the Pope relate to both his mysticism and the business at hand. If he imagines himself as the head of the church in the final days of the world as we know it, then his pressing desire to purify and unify the church before that final judgment has its own logic.

The Pope attributes his survival [after the May, 1980 assassination attempt] to the miraculous intervention of the Virgin Mary....Those near him say he believes he was spared in order to perform a special mission as head of the church....

He is the bearer of a long tradition that has undergone drastic transformation in the modern age. Shorn of all but a few remnants of temporal power, his authority increasingly challenged, the Pope must rely on persuasion rather than overt power.

More On the Pope's "Declaration to Europe"

Just this week we received a complete text of Pope John Paul II's speech in Santiago de Compostela, Spain on November 9. This speech was billed as a "Declaration to Europe." We carried excerpts of it in this column in the November 26, 1982 issue of the PASTOR GENERAL'S REPORT.

Through a Roman Catholic information office in Britain, Mr. Frank Brown, in charge of the Work's operations in the United Kingdom, was able to obtain the text, which was published in the weekly, English-language edition of the semi-official Vatican City newspaper, L'OSSERVATORE ROMANO. It appeared in the November 29, 1982 edition.

Some parts of the speech, of course, will repeat what has already appeared. However, I thought fuller excerpts from the complete text would give a greater overview of how Pope John Paul II sees Europe's role in the future. He delivered the "Declaration to Europe" in the presence of King Juan Carlos I of Spain, selected representatives of European organizations and leaders of the Roman Catholic Church in Europe. (Subheads in the text are as they appeared in L'OSSERVATORE ROMANO.) The speech reveals the pope's deep concern over Europe as it approaches, as he says, "the dawn of the third millennium of Christianity."

At the end of my pilgrimage in the land of Spain I pause at this splendid cathedral, one so closely linked with the Apostle James and with the Spanish faith....

This place, so dear to the people of Galicia, and to all the Spanish people, has throughout history attracted and brought together people from Europe and from among all Christian peoples. This is why I wished that this meeting with the distinguished representatives of European bodies, of the bishops and organizations of the continent, be held here in this place...with you I want to reflect this afternoon on Europe.

At this moment I have in mind the whole continent of Europe: I can see its extensive communications network which unites European cities and nations; and I can still see those roads which, from the Middle Ages, have led and do lead innumerable crowds of pilgrims, moved by their devotion to the Apostle, to Santiago of Compostela....The whole of Europe found itself here at the tomb of James during the same centuries as it was being built up as a homogeneous and spiritually united continent. Therefore, even Goethe would point out that European self-awareness arose out of pilgrimages.

Mutual understanding of European people

The pilgrimage to Santiago was one of the more significant factors which brought about the mutual understanding of such different European peoples as the Latins, the Germans, the Celts, the Anglo-Saxons and the Slavs.

The history of the formation of the European nations runs parallel with their evangelization, to the point that the European frontiers coincided with those of the inroads of the Gospel. It can be said that the European identity is not understandable without Christianity, and that it is precisely in Christianity that are found those common roots by which the continent has seen its civilization mature: its culture, its dynamism, its activity, its capacity for constructive expansion in other continents as well; in a word, all that makes up its glory....

Lack of profound grasp of the faith

I cannot be silent about the critical state which it [Europe] finds itself at the dawn of the third millennium of ChristianityThis crisis affects both civil and religious life. On the civil plane Europe is divided. Some unnatural divisions deprive

its peoples of the right to meet one another in a climate of friendship, and to combine freely their creative efforts....

Civil society is characterized by the effects of secularized ideologies which are based on the denial of God or the limitations of religious liberty and extend to the overwhelming importance attributed to economic success as opposed to the importance given to the human values of work and of production; effects that range from materialism and hedonism which attack the values of a large and united family, of life from the moment of conception, and the moral protection of youth, to a "nihilism" which disarms the will to face crucial problems such as those of the new poor, emigrants, ethnic and religious minorities, the appropriate use of the mass media, while it places arms in the hands of terrorists.

Furthermore, Europe is divided from the religious point of view: not so much nor principally by reason of the divisions which occurred throughout the centuries, as by the fact that the baptized and believers lack a profound grasp of their faith and the doctrinal and moral strength of that Christian vision of life which guarantees a sense of balance to individuals and communities.

Find yourself again

Therefore, I, John Paul, son of the Polish nation which has always considered itself European by its origins, traditions, culture and vital relationships, Slavic among the Latins and Latin among the Slavs; I, Successor of Peter in the See of Rome, A See which Christ wished to establish in Europe and which he loves because of its efforts for the spread of Christianity throughout the whole world; I, Bishop of Rome and Shepherd of the Universal Church, from Santiago, utter to you, Europe of the ages, a cry full of love: Find yourself again. Be yourself. Discover your origins, revive your roots. Return to those authentic values which made your history a glorious one and your presence so beneficent in the other continents.

Rebuild your spiritual unity in a climate of complete respect for other genuine liberties. Give to Caesar what belongs to Caesar, and to God what belongs to God. Do not become so proud of your achievements that you forget their possible negative effects. Do not become discouraged for the quantitative loss of some of your greatness in the world or for the social and cultural crises which affect you today. You can still be the guiding light of civilization and the stimulus of progress for the world. The other continents look to you and also hope to receive from you the same reply which James gave to Christ: "I can do it."

Shaping a new world

If Europe is one, and it can be so with due respect for all its differences, including those of different political systems; if, in the realm specifically that of religion, Europe returns to acting with an appropriate knowledge of and respect for God, on

which is based all right and justice; if Europe again opens its doors to Christ and is not afraid to open up to his saving power the State boundaries, the economic and political systems, the vast fields of culture, civilization and development, then Europe's future will not be dominated by uncertainty and fear; instead a new period of life, both interior and exterior, will open up, benefiting and shaping the world which is continually threatened by the clouds of war and by a possible firestorm of atomic holocaust....

Now there come to mind the names of great personalities [of Europe's past]....The list is too numerous with thinkers, scientists, artists, explorers, inventors, heads of State, apostles and saints to allow abbreviating it...Europe has still in reserve incomparable human energies, capable of sustaining it in this historic work toward a continent renaissance and greater service to humanity.

However, Saint Benedict of Nursia and SS Cyril and Methodius, patrons of Europe, deserve particular mention. From the first days of my pontificate, I have not failed to stress my solicitude for the life of Europe, and to point out the teachings which came from the spirit and work of the "patriarch of the West," and of the "two Greek brothers," apostles of the Slavic peoples.

Benedict knew how to integrate what was Roman with the Gospel, the sense of universality and of law with the values of God and of the human person. Saints Cyril and Methodius...[established] that presence of Christianity among the Slavs which today still remains insuppressible, in spite of the present circumstances and vicissitudes.

Service and love

The Church is, furthermore, conscious of its role in the spiritual and human renewal of Europe. Without reclaiming certain roles which it once held and which the present age regards as completely outmoded, the Church as Holy See and as Catholic community, is at the service to these ends to contribute to the achievement of an authentic material, cultural and spiritual well-being of the nations....

It is thus evident that the current occupant of the Holy See is, despite Europe's visible decline, reluctant to see the church resume a dominant authoritative role on the continent, as in centuries past. But the need for a more assertive policy will become more apparent as time progresses along with the need for a politically unified Europe to implement the Vatican-inspired "spiritual and human renewal" of Europe.

--Gene H. Hogberg, News Bureau