BULLETIN BOARD

—The Editor

Pope Is Misunderstood

Pope John Paul II is often misunderstood and inaccurately portrayed by the press of the United States asserted a Vatican editor on a speaking tour of this country in March.

Fr. Adam Boniecki, M.I.C., is a Marian and the editor of the Polish edition of the Vatican newspaper *L'Osservatore Romano*. He has also written a 900-page book chronicling the life of Karol Wojtyla up to his election as Pope.

Fr. Boniecki charged that the secular press often focuses on sensational items and ignores more substantial things. For example, in Chile while hundreds of thousands gathered to hear the Pope speak on the place of faith in their life, the press drew attention to a small skirmish between some of the audience and government police.

In the United States, Boniecki said, the press tends to see the Pope as an "inspector general" who travels around "putting his house in order." In reality the Holy Father does not interfere with the internal Church affairs of countries. He works in cooperation with local Bishops. His travels provide him with a first-hand view of the needs of the Church spread across the globe. And he takes the time to listen to the poor and lowly as much as to the highest government leaders and those in-between.

The media also seem to fail to recognize that the Pope's responsibility is to present and preserve the faith of the universal Church and the Gospel, not his personal views or the interest of a particular segment of the Church, Fr. Boniecki added. An issue such as the indissolubility of marriage has "nothing to do with this particular Pope but everything to do with the tenets of Catholic faith," he said.

Moreover, the Pope is an intelligent man who deals well with complexity; the press is so often superficial in its analysis. Fr. Boniecki cited the Pope's recent encyclical, *On Social Concerns,* as an example. The press jumped to the conclusion that the Pope considers Capitalism and Marxism as moral equals, but a more careful reading of the entire text would reveal the emphases and distinctions that modify that impression.

A more accurate portrayal of John Paul II, said Fr. Boniecki, would show a man of profound thought and universal love, extending the papal outreach to embrace the concerns of all humanity while maintaining the essentials of the Christian faith, and striving to build a faithful and vibrant Catholic Church.

Marian Year Events

The **National Marian Year Congress** sponsored by the *Militia Immaculatae* and mentioned in previous issues of the *Bulletin* has provided us with an update. The Congress will take place at the University of St. Mary of the Lake in **Mundelein, Illinois,** from August 11 to August 15, 1988. The activities include Liturgy and prayer, ethnic dances, seminars, talks and panel discussions featuring well-known Church people. Presentations center primarily on the Blessed Virgin Mary, but on other topics as well —vocations, the Eucharist, evangelization etc.

The scope of this Congress is by far the largest brought to our attention. Various plans for accommodations, meals and participation are offered. The devotions and talks on Sunday, August 14, are free and open to the public. Other presentations require a fee and registration. For a brochure with all details, write to: Secretariat of Marian Year Congress, 1600 West Park Ave., Libertyville, Illinois 60048 or call 312-367-7800.

From June 6 through 11, the first **American National Rosary Congress** will be conducted at the National Shrine of the Immaculate Conception in **Washington, D.C.** It is a week of intense Eucharistic and Marian prayer for the nation. The Rosary Congress, which originated in Poland in 1979, has proven to be an extremely powerful spiritual weapon against the powers of darkness in our world. Pope John Paul II said of the Rosary Congresses that have spread from his homeland to many other countries, "I know about them, I bless them, I rely on them. Do them on a grand scale!"

Each day of the week will have Masses, prayer, exposition of the Blessed Sacrament, processions and singing and twice-a-day lectures on *Redemptoris Mater*, the Pope's encyclical on Mary. The Rosary Congress is sponsored by Apostolatus Uniti, an affiliate of the Notre Dame Apostolic Catechetical Institute in Arlington, Va. in association with the Marian Movement of Priests. (The latter is not affiliated with us, the Congregation of Marians.)

Entire-week-only accommodations are available at Trinity College: 1-800-833-PRAY. Accommodations for shorter stays can be arranged through the Catholic Travel Office: (301) 657-9762.

Last September at a national **Marian Congress** in St. Mary of Mercy parish, Alexandria, South Dakota, Bishop Alberto Amaral of Leiria-Fatima, Portugal was the featured celebrant and speaker. The Congress was sponsored by the Fatima Family Apostolate which was founded by Father Robert J. Fox.

Another Marian Congress is planned at the new Fatima Family Shrine in **South Dakota** for June 24-26, 1988. Last year the Bishop of Fatima dedicated and blessed the new shrine. Presently an extension is being added to the shrine to include a chapel housing a sculpture of the Holy Family made to the specifications of Sister Lucia, sole living recipient of the Fatima apparitions. Details on the congress, dedicated to the sanctification of family life, may be obtained by sending a long, self-addressed, stamped envelope to: National Marian Congress, Box #1, White Lake, SD 57383.

You do not have to travel to get to this one; it's a Marian Year activity that you can bring to your parish. Described as a Novena/Mission, the program consists of nine segments, each with a video cassette, prayers and hymn books for audience participation. They are meant to be presented in a series of nine days or weeks in the manner of a parish mission. Entitled the **"Be Not Afraid" Novena/Mission,** it features videotaped presentations by leading Church personalities such as Fr. Patrick Peyton, Mother Angelica and the four American cardinals. Mother Teresa of Calcutta speaks in each segment. The themes of penance and reconciliation are accented, with traditional emphasis on Mary and the Pope. A sample version was aired on the Catholic cable networks EWTN and CTNA in May. The program is produced by the Catholic lay organization **Apostolate for Family Consecration.** For further information, write to them at Box 220, Kenosha, Wisconsin 53141 or call 414-652-2600.

Singing of Mary

If you ever find yourself longing to hear some of those ol' familiar hymns to Our Lady, you will be glad to know about *Handmaiden of the Lord.* It's a new audio cassette produced by the Daughters of St. Paul, featuring such favorites as *Ave Maria, Immaculate Mary,* and *Hail, Holy Queen.* Retaining their traditional melodies, the renditions on this tape nevertheless sound fresh and vibrant. There are newer Marian hymns too, such as *Hail Mary, Gentle Woman* and an original by one of the Daughters. All in all, it's a good mixture of traditional and modern, sung and orchestrated with fullness and beauty. If you are interested in obtaining the cassette, send a check or money order for $8.98 plus $1.00 postage and handling to Krystal Records, Daughters of St. Paul, 50 St. Paul's Ave., Boston, MA. 02130 or call (617) 522-4081. Ask for *Handmaiden of the Lord,* cassette KC002.

Open Hearts, Helping Hands

The success of a movie premiere depends on the work of many unseen, unheralded persons. You can hire and pay them or you can mobilize peoples' good will to help as volunteers. We did the latter to prepare for the East Coast premiere of *Divine Mercy — No Escape.*

A campaign to send announcement letters to Marian Helpers and to all Catholic parishes in the New York City area was undertaken. For the task of addressing and stamping these thousands of letters we mobilized Marian Helpers, Boy Scouts, retirees and many other folks of generous heart. Over the course of one weekend 143 volunteers gave their time to the project, ably directed by a committee of special persons. To each and all, our heartfelt thanks and God bless. Couldn't have done it without you!