

The National Catholic Almanac

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BOOK REVIEWS

THE NATIONAL CATHOLIC ALMANAC. *Edited by Felician A. Foy, O.F.M.* Paterson: St. Anthony's Guild, 1956. Pp. 704. \$2.00, paperbound; \$2.50, clothbound.

Reviewed by

REV. FIDELIS O'ROURKE, O.F.M.; A.B.; LL.B.*

If it's Catholic, you will find it in the 1956 National Catholic Almanac! For over fifty years, the Franciscan clerics of the Holy Name province have been compiling information which is of interest to Catholics, particularly to American Catholics. The work gets better with each edition.

It is rather difficult to review an almanac, particularly an edition of one which has been published for fifty years. Like its predecessors, the 1956 edition is a mine of information and a Catholic reference library in one volume. This review will present some of the material of interest to lawyers, and particularly to lawyers who would like to know the Catholic position on many issues.

The Almanac sets out in capsule form the beliefs and practices of Catholics in general. There are also sections on Catholic education: why Catholics support their own school systems; statistics on Catholic school enrollments; listings of United States seminaries, universities and colleges, schools for exceptional children; Confraternity of Christian Doctrine; Pontifical Universities throughout the world; the place of the Catholic Church in the world; its organization, government, hierarchy, congregations, offices, tribunals, commissions of the Holy See, diplomatic representatives of the Holy See, and Vatican representatives abroad.

Current Catholic events are summarized and placed in chronological order. Catholic Action is set forth with its movements; its societies; the National Catholic Welfare Conference; youth organizations; specialized action groups; retreat houses for men and women;

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social agencies; Catholic hospitals; and the most comprehensive single listing of Catholic societies in the country.

The pronouncements and the encyclicals of our Holy Father Pope Pius XII made during the year 1955 are set forth quite fully. One can easily find the stand of the Church on the many-sided problems of the day. In it may also be found the 1955 Statement of the American Hierarchy on existing conditions in the world.

The marriage legislation of the Catholic Church is set out fully in an article covering six pages of the Almanac. Therein one finds the conditions laid down by the Church for entering into a binding marriage and the various impediments to such. The nature of consent, the prescribed form of the marriage and the ceremonies pertaining thereto are also set forth in this article, together with the conditions under which the Church will permit the separation of married people and the Church's attitude on civil divorce. The article concludes with references to the matrimonial courts of the Church and the establishment of the sacred Tribunal of the Rota as the final court of appeals in matrimonial actions.

There is an excellent article on the historical background of the First Amendment by George E. Reed of the legal department of the National Catholic Welfare Conference. This is of importance today because of the many and far-reaching legal questions arising out of the interpretation of this amendment. Among the questions discussed are: the providing of transportation for parochial school children, released time for religious instructions, and the teaching in public schools by religious wearing their religious garb or habit.

There is a brief but interesting article on the freedom of the press and the censorship of moving pictures and indecent literature. There is a new article on zoning legislation affecting Church schools and a discussion of a trend toward the elimination of private schools from residential areas. The subject is timely because it has been the matter of much litigation during the past year or two and there have been attempts to have the courts interpret these zoning regulations to prevent the erection of Church schools in residential areas. The matter has not been brought to a final decision and the final litigation and determination of the whole subject remains for the future. The question is of obvious importance to parents who wish to send their children to parochial schools as well as to the religious orders conducting the schools, but in its broader aspects, it is important to all.

The Almanac contains summaries of the Immigration and Nationality Act and of the amendments to the Refugee Relief Act, pre-

pared by the National Catholic Welfare Department of Immigration. This is also of current interest to attorneys interested in the practice of immigration law.

There is a brief article on Pope Pius XII Memorial Library, wherein will be kept a microfilm record of the entire Vatican Library in Rome. This will be located at St. Louis University.

The format of the Almanac is excellent. It is very compact and this year the book has been reduced slightly in size. Nothing essential has been sacrificed. Some of the general secular information is gone but that is not absolutely necessary in a Catholic almanac. It is well indexed and there is little difficulty in finding the subjects in which one may be interested.

A copy of the Catholic Almanac should be in every law library, whether in the law schools or in the offices, because there will be many occasions on which a lawyer would want to consult it.

ST. THOMAS MORE (*continued*)

ulation of Connecticut, a hospitality not offered by other neighboring communities.²⁶

It is not for the historian to attempt to determine whether this came about through the influence of the late Lord Chancellor or through the intercession of the Saint. The records do not disclose what prompted the Puritans to disregard Tyndale and Foxe

and follow *Utopia* and its author. The La Tours, D'Aulnays, Drouillettes, Thayers, Matignons and others who passed through or came to stay are testimony that this was the case. The credit for so great a step toward religious emancipation properly belongs to him who chose to die rather than forsake his conviction, a conviction which was to become national policy in a new world, St. Thomas More.

²⁶ A New York statute of 1699 declared priests to be "incendiaries" and "disturbers of the peace" and decreed that they must depart. Virginia had banned all clergymen save those of the Church of England in 1643. 1 LAWS OF VIRGINIA 268, 269 (Hening 1810). The law of March, 1663, banning Roman Catholics from Rhode Island,

was not repealed until 1783. 2 RECORDS OF THE COLONY OF RHODE ISLAND AND PROVIDENCE PLANTATIONS, 1636-1792, 36 (Bartlett ed. 1856-65). [The author does not agree with the compilers' statement that the law was spurious and "totally at variance with the uniform policy of the colony from the beginning . . ." 2 *id.*, 37. Ed.]