

Religious leaders praise landing of men on moon

(From combined news services)

The flight of Apollo 11 carrying three American astronauts to the moon was the center of attention at the Vatican, just as it was in the forefront of the thinking and praying of other groups and personages throughout the world during the past week.

Just prior to blast off, Pope Paul VI, during a general audience, discussed the significance of the cosmos and man's attempts to probe it.

The universe exists outside of "and before and after man who observes it," the Pope noted, adding that "man is not the beginning, he is not the cause of the world."

Added to this, the Pope continued, is the fact that man on looking into space finds laws, motion and energy which show that "this cosmos derives from a transcendent principle, from a creating mind, from a secret and superior power, that is, it is created."

All this, said the Pope, should lead men to acknowledge and recognize the Creator. And it should bring to mind the words: "Our Father who art in heaven."

In a later statement the Pope emphasized that "humility is the appropriate attitude of science. 'Humility,' he said, 'based on our knowledge — that is our greatness.' Meanwhile, Vatican Radio broadcast in many languages the full text of a prayer issued by the National Council of Churches of the United States for the Apollo 11 crew.

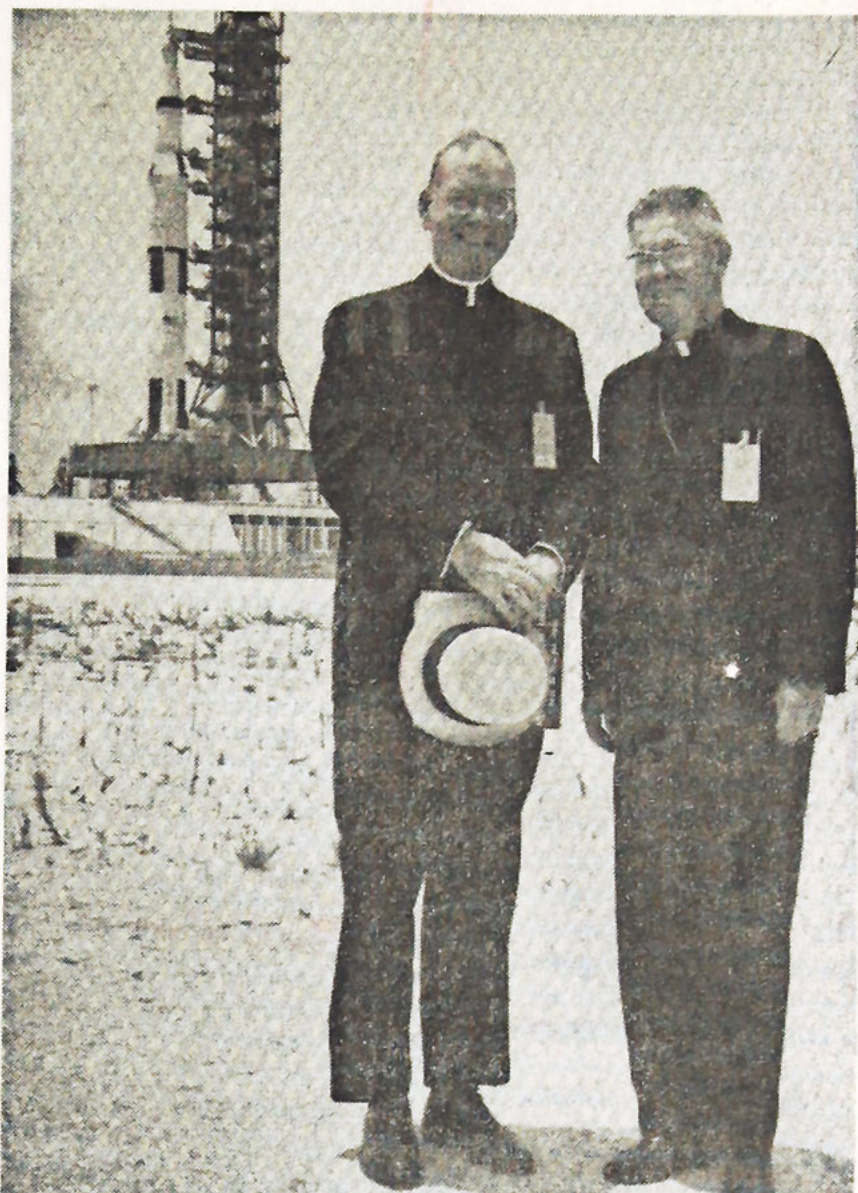
The text of the prayer stated: "Almighty Father, we thank You for the wonders of the creation in which You have placed us, for the capabilities enabling Your children to share so fully in the understanding and use of the universe. We are grateful for the genius that has made possible this enterprise and for the courageous men who will complete it. Bless and protect them and bring them safely home.

"Awaken in us, by their brave example, the awareness that Your love and power are infinite, calling us to ever greater efforts of mind and heart. Help us to understand that as we grow beyond old ways, we may, with the assistance of Your spirit, grow into the better way revealed in Him in whose name we pray, Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen."

In New York, prayerful good wishes were extended to the astronauts by Archbishop Iakovos, Primate of the Greek Orthodox Archdiocese of North and South America.

"We join with all Americans and men of goodwill throughout the world in wishing you Godspeed and a triumphant and safe return into our midst," he said. "We are praying for

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Cardinal at Cape

With a Saturn V rocket in the background, Terence Cardinal Cooke of New York, left and Bishop William D. Borders of Orlando pause in their tour of Cape Kennedy launch facilities on the eve of the July 16 moonshot.

Holyday poll of bishops inconclusive; survey will seek out laity's attitudes

WASHINGTON (NC) The National Conference of Catholic Bishops is seeking to determine what changes, if any, should be made in current Church legislation requiring Catholics in the United States to attend Mass on five holydays of obligation.

In the process, it is sampling the attitudes of bishops, priests, religious and laity on the issue. Since the obligation to participate in Mass on these holydays touches the laity in a particular way, a special effort is being made to determine their feelings in the matter.

A survey of the NCCB in 1969 indicated a majority of U. S. bishops favored some change in the observance of obligatory holydays, but provided no clear pattern.

There are two fundamental choices: either retain the holydays of obligation as they are, or modify existing legislation. If one opts for a change in the law, a decision must be made with regard to each holyday. This choice will mean either to make no change regarding that particular holyday, or to eliminate the obligation requiring participation in Mass on that particular day, or to transfer the celebration of the feast to a near and appropriate Sunday.

Christmas will remain as a holy-

day of obligation, in any event.

The question of change involves five other holydays of obligation — Jan. 1, which now becomes the Solemnity of Mary the Mother of God; Ascension Thursday; the Feast of the Assumption, Aug. 15; All Saints Day, Nov. 1, and the Feast of the Immaculate Conception, Dec. 8.

The NCCB committee is leaving it to the individual Ordinary to determine how he will make the samplings in his See. The results of the samplings are to be tabulated by local personnel and only a general report submitted to the committee.

It is being suggested that while the samplings are being made some teaching on the subject of holydays also be given through homilies of the parish priest. Such catechesis, it is felt could serve as a preparation for the samplings.

Material suggested for possible use in catechesis included the following:

- The obligation to abstain from servile work obviously no longer binds when the feasts of precept fall on working days in the United States.

- Continued emphasis on responsible freedom and the fostering of adult, mature Christian consciences (as in the case of fast and abstinence) should ease the anxiety of those who find it impossible or even fairly difficult to participate in Mass on certain holydays. More and more the laity should be able to make their own decisions about reasons which excuse them from this obligation on a given feast.

- Preachers, while stressing the important value of participating in the Eucharist on holydays, could also point out that any serious inconvenience would exempt from Mass attendance on that day.

- All present holydays in the U. S. are major opportunities for the instruction of God's people. However, time pressures of modern America frequently force the celebrant and congregation to rush through an abbreviated liturgy. Transfer of a

feast to the nearest or most appropriate Sunday might remedy this difficulty.

- The introduction of the Solemnity of Mary the Mother of God on Jan. 1 means that three out of six holydays in the U. S. are Marian feasts.

- In some areas the present holydays of obligation enjoy greater popularity and are better observed than in others.

Will moonshot affect theology?

By Fr. David P. Page
Executive Editor

CAPE KENNEDY — Will the moon landing change our theology? Is it morally right to spend billions on space while millions on earth are hungry? What can the church learn from space technology? If intelligent life is ever discovered on other planets will the Jewish people still be regarded as the chosen race? These were among the questions posed by The Florida Catholic for the score of interfaith leaders who were guests of NASA and the U. S. Air Force at Cape Kennedy for the historic July 16 lift-off to the moon.

"From the viewpoint of the moon," said Terence Cardinal Cooke, Archbishop of New York, "it will immediately become apparent to man that we on earth are really only one family and I think if this only, sinks in it will have tremendous spiritual significance in terms of lasting peace, understanding and brotherhood."

Bishop Arnold M. Lewis, Protestant-Episcopal Bishop for the Armed Forces summed up the feelings of most of the church dignitaries after their extensive pre-launch tour of the Kennedy Space Center:

"I cannot think of a better time in the history of the world to be alive than now. I think many ordinary people are going to find their faith in God will be renewed by these tremendous events despite what some say."

To Dr. Ray Appelquist, executive secretary of the General Com-

mission on Chaplains, Washington, D. C., representing more than 30 Protestant denominations, man's journey to the moon "represents the climax of years of effort to break away from the earth and one more demonstration of man's mandate to

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Only two astronauts church-affiliated

HOUSTON (RNS) — The three men who made the historic Apollo 11 probe to the Moon — two of whom walked for the first time on the lunar sphere — represent a wide range of the American religious and cultural heritage.

Neil A. Armstrong, the first to set foot on the powdery surface of the Moon, is a civilian, born in Wapakoneta, Ohio, on Aug. 5, 1930.

He attended public schools there and was graduated from Purdue University with a B.S. degree in Aeronautical Engineering.

A naval aviator from 1949 to 1952, he flew 78 combat missions during the Korean action. He joined NASA's Lewis Research Center in 1955 and later transferred to the High Speed Flight Station at Edwards Air Force Base, Calif.

As an aeronautical research pilot in the X-15 project, he flew that craft to a height beyond 200,000 feet and at a speed 4,000 miles per hour. Mr. Armstrong was named an astronaut in 1962 and was first in the back-up crew for the GT-5. His first space mission came as command pilot of Gemini 8.

Married to the former Janet Shearon of Evanston, Ill., Mr. Armstrong is the father of two sons, Eric, 12, and Mark, 6.

Known as a loner, he is the only astronaut who is not a member of a church, though he has attended the Seabrook Methodist church of Houston.

The second man on the Moon, Colonel Edwin E. "Buzz" Aldrin, Jr., was born in Montclair, N. J., on Jan. 20, 1930 and was raised in the Congregational church of that city. He received a B.S. from West Point and, in 1962, a doctorate in science from the Massachusetts Institute of Technology.

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Prayer for Apollo 11

(A prayer for the success of the Apollo moon mission was offered at a July 15 Mass at the Patrick Air Force Base Capehart Chapel by Cardinal Terence Cooke, Archbishop of the Archdiocese of New York.)

"Heavenly Father, Whose Almighty Hand fashioned the universe and Whose presence pervades the farthest star, be with us today as we open wide our minds and hearts to think prayerfully of three gallant heroes. Grant, O Lord, that as we honor them, we may also be inspired by their great qualities of mind and spirit — their daring courage, their unselfishness, their strong faith in You. Above all, let us ever gratefully pray to You for their safety in their journey through space to the moon and their return to the good earth.

"Grant, O Heavenly Father, that, in our search into the





HERE MEN FROM THE PLANET EARTH FIRST SET FOOT UPON THE MOON JULY 1969, A. D.

WE CAME IN PEACE FOR ALL MANKIND


NEIL A. ARMSTRONG
ASTRONAUT


MICHAEL COLLINS
ASTRONAUT


EDWIN E. ALDRIN, JR.
ASTRONAUT


RICHARD NIXON
PRESIDENT, UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

The above metal plaque was attached to the descent ladder which Apollo 11 astronauts used to stand on the moon and was left behind after their return to earth.

Reading
The
Florida
Catholic
is
a
good
weekly
habit

Florida Catholic