

NCWC NEWS SERVICE (Foreign)

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YCW FOUNDER CALLS  
FOR 'INTENSE APOSTOLATE'  
AMONG INDIAN WORKERS

CALCUTTA, India, Sept. 26 (NC)--An "intense apostolate" among the working class in India is the need of the hour, Msgr. Joseph Cardijn, founder and chaplain general of the Young Christian Workers declared here.

Afterwards, in Madras, the Belgian priest said the clergy are the "natural leaders" of this apostolate.

The two speeches came during a visit to this country by Msgr. Cardijn. He was in India previously in 1952-53.

Msgr. Cardijn told his Calcutta audience that the Church could not allow the leadership of so many millions to rest with the "forces of materialism and atheism."

In Madras, Father Cardijn spoke to a special conference of priests that had been arranged there to receive him. "Without priests, there is no workers' apostolate," he declared there.

The Calcutta meeting was the archdiocese's gathering of Catholic working class leaders. Archbishop Ferdinand Perier, S.J. and Miss Maria Meersman, Y.C.W.'s international president, were among those who attended it.

Msgr. Cardijn declared the apostolate among workers to be one of the "strong arms" of the modern Church. The worker as Christ's representative in the factory is irreplaceable and neither Pope nor Bishop nor priest nor nun can fill that place, Msgr. Cardijn told the workers' meeting.

The tragedy of our time, he said, is that leadership in this vital field has come to be expected from those least worthy of providing it. The materialists, the atheists and the communists just do not have the philosophy making for signal working class guidance, the priest declared. It is the Church that has that philosophy and it is her clergy that must reach it out to the workers, he said.

He said the priesthood must obtain the technique of "pastoral work" among workers, that discourses and lectures <sup>are</sup> no longer wanted. What is required is a "genuine interest" in the welfare of the workers, said Msgr. Cardijn.

"The Church is a leaven, and therefore must prepare the young workers to act as the leaven in his own world," he said.

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