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## Italian Catholics Organize Crusade to Cast Out Communism from Country

By Robert Ball



**REV. ATTILIO PICINI FIGHTS COMMUNISM**  
Florentine priest aids church crusade

## A Daughter's Wonderful Devotion Is Shown in the Story of Mother's Day

By Alice E. Morgan

Sunday millions of carnations will be seen throughout the country as America pauses to observe Mother's Day.

Selected some years ago by florists who considered it more closely representative of mother-love than any other bloom, the carnation is the one bloom which holds its petals close, no matter how wilted it becomes.

The tenacity of the bloom was thought, by the florists, to compare favorably with the love a mother has for her family—lasting, no matter what they do and enfolding them securely, no matter how old she grows.

Originally, only the white bloom was associated with Mother's Day, and was to honor the memories of mothers. Americans, being what they are, altered plans a little, and gradually the colored blooms came to be worn in honor of mothers who are still with their families.

**THE IDEA OF Mother's Day** came about in 1906 when Miss Anna Jarvis, of Philadelphia, set a day aside to honor the memory of her mother. The following year she invited a friend to join her, and made known her secret desire to have the day become a national event.

During the coming year Miss Jarvis mailed out thousands of letters to people in all walks of life, spreading her idea and enlisting their aid. She began to hear from church and social organizations, saying they were making group observances of Mother's Day.

Through other contacts, Miss Jarvis stressed that the day would be for everyone—it would know no creed, social class or nationality in this country.

In 1913 Texas and Pennsylvania began state celebrations. Texas it became the custom for the governor to issue special pardons to prisoners, in honor of Mother's Day. The Quaker State made it a state holiday with special programs and celebrations.

**AUTHORITIES ARE** not all agreed on the exact date, but in 1912 or 1914 the United States Senate and House of Representatives passed a resolution making Mother's Day a national affair. Their resolution described it as a day "dedicated to the memory of the best mother in the world—your mother."

By this time the idea had spread to England, where it came in for a three-day celebration. The schools have their day of observance on Friday, business houses on Saturday and every church in the land plans special programs for its Sunday services.

Through the years the idea, started by a lonely Pennsylvania young woman, has become not only national, but international. It continues to spread as different nationalities represented here send news of it to their homelands.

**SUNDAY, HUNDREDS OF** thousands of mothers will become the "guests" of their families. Special affairs will be planned for them and they will be showered with gifts.

Most of them will object, loudly, that they do not desire it, but very few will be able to admit she doesn't love it.

## Safety Patrol Boys Leave for Nation's Capital Tonight

Michael Pryce, 928 Smith, will be among the 100 Michigan boys leaving Detroit tonight for Washington to attend the 14th annual safety boys' rally. Their trip is sponsored by the Automobile club of Michigan.

After registration and a physical checkup, the boys will board special pullmans, for their overnight trip to the nation's capital. Tomorrow morning they will see downtown Washington and the capitol on their way to the Willard hotel. In the afternoon they will see Arlington National Memorial cemetery, Mt. Vernon, Tomb of the Unknown Soldier, the Lincoln and Washington memorials and other historic spots.

Saturday morning Michael will march with 30,000 other patrol boys from all over the country, in a parade led by the U. S. Army band.

The boys will leave Washington Saturday evening, arriving home Sunday.

**FLORENCE, Italy**—Probably it's in Italy that conflict between the Communist Party and the Catholic Church is keenest.

In the other countries of the Western community, either the Communist influence is too small to be competitive or the edge of combat is dulled by the presence of a large middle-of-the-road group. In Italy, for practical purposes, one is either for the church or for the Party, and no one on either side believes that in this case the lion and the lamb will ever be able to lie down together.

In order to learn what the Church is doing in this war of ideologies, I called on Rev. Attilio Picini, Don Attilio as he is known in Florence.

Rev. Picini teaches in the Catholic secondary school, and his evening work with Catholic Action puts him in the front line of the propaganda war.

**HE WAS QUICK** with an answer about efforts to win over the Communists.

"We have organized a regular group," he smiled. "In this Holy Year, every member of Catholic Action (that's about 30,000 people here in Florence alone) has promised to seek out and talk to some Communist he knows, trying to get him to come to church or make a pilgrimage to Rome."

"We have had success, but as you know the Communists are strong, and well-organized."

Catholics are not liable to excommunication for associating with Communists, Rev. Picini explained.

**THE EDICT OF Excommunication** is broad in phrasing but has been interpreted only to affect those who are actively working in support of the Communists.

The hottest fight is for the loyalty of the Italian youth, he continued. Here Catholic and Communist youth groups vie for members.

The Catholic "Aspiranti" aged seven to 15 are matched by the Communist "APP"; while the group for ages 15 to 25, the "Gioventu," is set against the FGCI ("Federazione di Gioventu Comunista Italiana").

"The Aspiranti level is the most dangerous," Rev. Picini contended. "That is the age in which young

people become interested in sports and amusements.

"THE COMMUNISTS have wooed them with organized sports for which they supply the equipment, group excursions with expenses paid, and such."

"Now we have struck back with similar measures, including music clubs and free comic books containing religious stories."

He smiled, "I think one has to use methods suitable to the case. It's difficult to win lively young people with theological arguments alone."

Rev. Picini denied that the ideological battles had resulted in violent enmity between the two sides.

"There is one street here in Florence where nearly everyone is Communist," he said. "But when I go there on visits, it is very seldom that I hear any unpleasant comment."

**IN THAT SAME street**, by the way, I knew a family which the father was a Party member, while the 16 year old son, thanks to secret instruction from his mother, was a Catholic.

"One night the father learned that his son was in church, went to the church and dragged the boy home. Two days later, father and son came to church together and now the father is an enthusiastic member of Catholic Action."

He had been proud of the boy all along, and the boy continued him.

"Another case has ended temporarily in truce. For some weeks the son brought home the Catholic newspaper and the father, 'L'Unita' (the Communist daily). This led to arguments. They settled by promising not to buy any newspapers at all, but we still hope to win."

**REV. PICINI** leaned back "Let me see if I can help you by summarizing," he said. "Very few of the Communists here are ideologically convinced."

"Most are members of the Party

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or support it because they believe it is working harder than any other party to help workers and peasants."

He frowned. "If the government could only solve the unemployment problem and carry out the land reform, our job would become much easier."

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