

THE INTRODUCTION OF THE GREGORIAN CALENDAR IN THE PHILIPPINES

By Rev. MIGUEL SELGA, S. J.
Director, Weather Bureau

It is well known that on February 24, 1582, Gregory XIII issued a general proclamation,¹ abolishing the old or Julian Calendar and directing the adoption of a new system of reckoning time, by dropping ten days in the month of October of 1582. Mainly on account of religious rivalry, the change was not made immediately by all nations. Obviously Rome was the first to make the change effective at the appointed time. From the month of October ten days were omitted: Thursday October 4th was followed by Friday October 15th, with no interruption in the days of the week. The Dominical letter had to be changed. Prior to October 1st the dominical letter was G: after October 16th the dominical letter was C. October 1st was on Monday: the following Sunday was October 17th: its letter C remained the dominical letter for the rest of the year.

By an edict of Henry III dated November 3, 1582, in France the day following Sunday December 9, 1582, was called Monday December 20, 1582. In the Catholic states of Germany and the Netherlands, the reformed calendar was introduced by calling January 1, 1583, the day following December 21, 1582: these states therefore had no Christmas Day in 1582. The Protestant states of Germany adopted the improved calendar in 1700, the day following February 18 being called March the first. In Russia the Christian Era was introduced in 1700 and the Gregorian Calendar in 1918. Up to the time of Peter the Great, Russia had used the Era of Constantinople which assumed that the world was created on September 1, 5509 B. C. and therefore September 1, 1699, of the Julian Calendar was called in Russia the first day of the year 7208. In 1699 Peter the Great directed that the Christian Era be adopted in Russia and that the year should begin on the first of the following January. The Gregorian Calendar was introduced by the Bolsheviks by the omission of 13 days, the day following December 24, 1917 to be called January 7, 1918.

Since 1155 the year in England had begun on March 25, but by an Act of Parliament approved on May 22, 1752, the commencement of the year was changed to January 1st, the year 1752 beginning on that date; besides eleven days were omitted in

¹ The Papal Bull was dated "at Tusculum in the year of the Incarnation of our Lord one thousand five hundred eighty-first, the sixth of the calends of March". Whenever mention is made of the *year of Incarnation*, it should be remembered that the *year of the Incarnation* did not begin on January 1st, but on March 25th, when the feast of the Incarnation of the Word of God is celebrated. Accordingly, the date of the Papal Bull is February 24, 1581, *anno Incarnationis Domini*. In the system of computing time, in which the year begins January 1st, the date of the Papal Bull is February 24, 1582.