

6788.2

Baptists Walk With Barth

★ THE BARTHS, father and son, are both in the news this month and both receive attention from us this week. Although we take serious issue with Karl Barth, we applaud his son, Markus, who makes his home in America and teaches at the University of Chicago. Barth *filis* has just completed a commentary on the letter to the Ephesians (Judson, \$3.50) which will receive notice later in our book reviews. One aspect of his venture is deserving of editorial comment: the project is sponsored by the division of evangelism of the American Baptist Home Mission Society. When a Barth writes a manual for American Baptists, that's news! When he chooses the difficult book of Ephesians as a source book for evangelism, he seems to set insuperable obstacles in the way of success. Yet the project comes off. It succeeds in reinforcing the vital point shared by Barth and the Baptists: every Christian is by virtue of his faith also an ambassador for that faith. As detailed in the biblical epistle, this point is the charter for evangelism. Of course, the Baptists are sufficiently independent to assert that the theologian is not speaking officially for them. Nor is Barth consciously confining his exegesis to the interests of one denomination. But congratulations are still in order for the successful mating, and for the assumption behind it: that both clergymen and laymen have homework to do before their evangelistic roadwork is meaningful. This is no easygoing "how to do it" book. But Barth is conscious of his American audience. He speaks of hidden persuasion, organization men, lonely crowds. Sartre and Bardot find a place alongside such principalities and powers of the past as Einstein and Stalin. A salute to the brave souls who dared to match this need with this answer!

Pope John XXIII Plans a World Church Council

★ INTERIM PONTIFICATE is not a term which will be used to describe the reign of Pope John XXIII, whatever may have been in the minds of the cardinals who elected this septuagenarian to his high office. The pope's announcement that he intends to call a Roman Catholic ecumenical council indicates that he hopes to make history. This will be the twenty-first such council. The last two have been concerned with the rise of Protestantism and democracy in the world. Of both the church took a dim view. The promulgation in the 1871 council of the dogma that the pope is infallible when he speaks of faith and morals was the church's answer to the rise of democracy. It placed a stamp of approval on the antidemocratic Syllabus of Errors which had been issued a few years earlier by Pope Pius IX. So effective was it in asserting the supremacy of the pope that it reduced all church councils to the status of rubber stamps and brought many predictions that no such councils would be held in the future. Now that one has been announced—