POPE BIDS ARMIES SPARE HOLY CITY
By EDWARD B. FISKE Special to The New York Times
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Also Calls on Thant to Seek an End to Hostilities

By EDWARD B. FISKE
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ROME, June 5—Pope Paul IV appealed to the United Nations and to the belligerent powers to make Jerusalem an "open city." He also urged Secretary General Thant to make every effort to halt the fighting in the Middle East.

He asked the participants in the hostilities to regard the preservation and safety of the city and its shrines as a "sacred commitment."

The appeals were contained in messages from the Pope to Mr. Thant and from Amleto Cardinal Cicognani, Vatican Secretary of State, to the governments of Egypt and Israel through Papal representatives in Cairo and in the Jordanian sector of Jerusalem.

Messages were also sent through Vatican representatives to King Hussein of Jordan and to the Governments of Iraq, Lebanon and Syria.

The Pope told Mr. Thant that he was "deeply saddened and concerned" by the events in the Middle East.

"While we pray that the divine mercy may preserve that area and the world from suffering and destruction," he said, "we ask you to make every effort that the United Nations organization may succeed in halting the conflict."

The Pontiff then said, "We express in the name of Christianity the fervent hope that in the unfortunate eventuality, which we firmly trust will never occur, that the situation may worsen, Jerusalem may, because of its peculiarly sacred and holy character, be declared an open and inviolable city."

Officials here could recall no instance in which Jerusalem was declared an open city during wartime. Rome was so designated in World War II, which meant that it was spared bombing of other than military targets, such as its railroad yards.

Almost all of the major holy places of Judaism, including the Wailing Wall at the site of Solomon's Temple, are in the Jordanian sector of Jerusalem.

The city is revered by Christians because it was the site of many major events in the life of Jesus.

Almost all of the Christian holy places, including the Mount of Olives and Calvary are in the Jordanian sector. One exception is the traditional site of the Last Supper.

Jerusalem is also revered by Moslems, for whom it is the third most holy city, after Mecca and Medina.

In its more than 3,000 years of existence, Jerusalem has been a prime military objective because of its position on commanding heights. It has been ravaged and reconstructed some 20 times. In the modern period, however, special efforts have been made by Jews, Christians and Moslems to preserve its religious shrines.

During the Israeli war of independence in 1948, the city was the target of heavy shelling and bombardment, but little damage was done to the holy places. One exception was the Church of the Holy Sepulchre, which was somewhat damaged by bombs in its vicinity.

A spokesman for the Israeli Embassy here said today that during the war both sides obeyed an unwritten agreement to "keep away from holy places."

During the Suez Crisis of 1956, Jerusalem experienced only sporadic fighting and sustained no serious damage.

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