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SOCIETÀ PER LA PRODUZIONE E LA DISTRIBUZIONE DI FILM, CORTOMETRAGGI E ATTUALITÀ

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## MONDO LIBERO

FILM GIORNALE D'ATTUALITÀ

### POPE OPENS MARIAN YEAR IN COLORFUL CERIMONIES

Pope Pius XII led 400,000,000 Roman Catholics on both sides of the Iron Curtain yesterday in the joyous opening of a "little Holy Year" dedicated to the Virgin Mary and prayers for peace.

The first Marian Year in the centuries-long history of the Church began officially at 10 a.m.

At that hours, as a bright warm sun broke through an overcast sky, the 77-year-old Pope retired to his private chappel in the Vatican for silent prayer and meditation.

At the Basilica of St. Mary Major, where the Pope went later after a four-mile drive past an estimated 500,000 persons, Clemente Cardinal Micara, pontifical vicar for the city of Rome, said a special mass to mark the start of the year of celebration and dedication.

Radio Vatican broadcasts the morning ceremony around the world, and for the first time in history, television cameras recorded the mass at St. Mary Major.

Rome took on the air of Christian Festivity. The bells of the city's 427 churches, from majestic St. Peter's to the smallest parish church in the Trastevere workingman's district on the banks of the Tiber pealed a medley of joy on his feast day of the Immaculate Conception. The city's streets began to fill at mid-morning with the priests, monks, nuns, Catholic Action members and the faithful who watched the Pope on his historic drive.

In Piazza di Spagna, where the Pope, in his resplendent white robes, descended from his car to bless and incense the 178 foot statue of the Madonna of the Immaculate Conception, several thousand persons had gathered by 10 a.m.

Nuns in their black garments stood on balconies overlooking the square, which is the site of the Spanish Embassy to the Holy See and such commercial offices as the American Express.

A canopy of yellow and white flowers, the papal cohorts, banked the base of the statue in Piazza di Spagna. An honour guard of four Italian Carabinieri in blue swallow-tailed coats and blue hats with red and blue plumes flanked the statue. Catholic Boy Scouts assisted police in patrolling the crowds. The white and yellow papal flag flew from buildings throughout the city. The area around the Vatican was a sea of flags. It was a public holiday in Rome to mark the feast day of the Immaculate Conception. The Italian tricolor hung from business houses and fluttered from the buses bringing the faithful into the center of the city.