

Necedah Cult Breaks Away From Diocese

Lacross, Wis. (RNS) — The long church dispute over a controversial shrine to the Virgin Mary in Necedah, Wis., may be over as far as the Roman Catholic Church is concerned.

Bishop F.W. Freking, head of the Lacross Diocese, said the dedication of the shrine by a man claiming to be an archbishop definitely establishes that Mrs. Mary Ann Van Hoof and her followers are no longer affiliated with the Roman Catholic Church.

The bishop's statement came in response to news reports which said that the Queen of the Holy Rosary Mediatix of Peace shrine had been dedicated May 28 by Edward Michael Stehlik, archbishop and metropolitan of North America, American National Catholic Church, Roman Catholic Ultrajectine.

Bishop Freking categorically denied that Stehlik was an ordained bishop of the Roman Catholic Church. He did not have the authority to celebrate Mass either, the statement said.

Bishop Kelly Backs U.S. On Somoza

Washington (RNS) — A top official of the U.S. Catholic Conference has praised the Carter administration's call that President Anastasio Somoza Debale of Nicaragua step down.

Bishop Thomas C. Kelly, secretary general of the USCC, said that the Catholic bishops also supported the vote of the Organization of American States "to reject any military intervention into that situation."

Bishop Kelly said that the bishops were grateful for the role taken by Secretary of State Cyrus R. Vance in calling for an end to the Somoza regime, a view earlier expressed by the bishops of Nicaragua.

Bishop Kelly pledged that the Catholic Church in this country would do everything possible "to meet the emergency need for food and medicines requested of us" by the bishops of the war-torn Central American country.

Former Abortionist's Book Seen 'Political Bombshell'

Colleville, Minn. (RNS) — A Roman Catholic priest who directs the Human Life Center at St. John's University here has predicted that a call for a Human Life Amendment from one of America's leading abortionists may "sound the death knell" for unrestricted abortions in the United States.

Father Paul Marx said a book by Dr. Bernard W. Nathanson, "Aborting America," scheduled to be published, this fall by Doubleday, is "a political bombshell."

Stehlik, of Milwaukee, reportedly left a priest at the shrine to administer the sacraments to pilgrims.

The shrine is operated by For My God and My Country, Inc., and was founded after Mrs. Van Hoof claimed to have seen religious visions.

But an investigation by the Lacrosse diocese from 1950 to 1955 concluded that the visions and revelations of Mrs. Van Hoof were false and had no supernatural origin.

Another investigation ordered by Bishop Freking in 1969 reported the same conclusion.

The bishop placed leaders of the cult under personal interdict in 1975, which bars them from receiving the Roman Catholic sacraments.

The appearance by Stehlik is being taken as an official break by the Roman Catholic Church.

Bishop Baldwin Retires at 71

Rockville Centre (RNS) — Bishop John R. McGann has announced the retirement of Auxiliary Bishop Vincent J. Baldwin, 71.

Bishop Baldwin, who also has been serving as pastor of St. Joseph Church, Garden City, resigned both positions because of ill health.

Deadline

Deadline for news copy for the Courier-Journal is noon Thursday, the week before the Wednesday publication date.

Pro-Life Unit Blasts-In-Vitro Research Query

Chicago — In vitro fertilization research, the study of human embryonic growth outside of the womb, came under fire last week by the Chicago-based Americans United for Life.

The AUL is organizing a letter-writing campaign to HEW's secretary, Joseph A. Califano, to oppose federal funding of a project of Dr.

"It is bound to have a powerful impact on public and private thinking about abortion because it states explicitly that the abortion movement consists of killing and lying," Father Marx said.

Dr. Nathanson was director of New York's Center for Reproductive and Sexual Health, believed to be the biggest abortion center in the country.

Father Marx said Dr. Nathanson published an article in the New England Journal of Medicine in 1974

Pontiff Pleads Refugees Case

Rome (RNS) — Pope John Paul II has added his voice to the growing number of religious and human rights organizations pleading for the more than 700,000 Indochina refugees.

In a lengthy and impassioned appeal, the pontiff called for a hasty convening of an international conference to find homes for the thousands of Southeast Asian refugees trapped on boats and in temporary camps.

The pontiff said he wished "to raise my voice to invite you to turn your minds and hearts to the drama that is taking place in the countries and on the distant seas of Southeast Asia — a drama that is involving hundreds of thousands of our brothers and sisters. These people are looking for a homeland, because the countries that at first received them have reached the limits of their capacities, while at the same time the offers to accept them permanently in other countries are so far proving insufficient."

Pope John Paul II congratulated Catholic organizations on their assistance to the refugees so far, but said the Church community must do even more. "The pastors in their dioceses will encourage the faithful and will remind them, in the name of the Lord, that every man, every woman, every child in need, is our neighbor."

"Parishes, Catholic organizations, religious communities and Christian families will find the means of expressing their love for the refugees," the pontiff said. "Let each one make a personal commitment to make a concrete gesture, as far as individual generosity and love-inspired creativity will allow."

Pro-Life Unit Blasts-In-Vitro Research Query

Pierre Soupert of Vanderbilt University. Dr. Soupert proposes that monies be given to a program of research which will involve the fertilization of 430 human ova over a three-year period.

AUL quotes Dr. Soupert as saying that the embryos will be destroyed once his research is ended. Califano's address is 330 Independence Ave. S.W., Washington, D.C. 10003.

in which he called himself "deeply troubled by my own increasing uncertainty that I had in fact presided over 60,000 deaths" as director of the clinic.

However, in 1974, Dr. Nathanson "wanted the Supreme Court's pro-abortion decisions left intact," Father Marx said. "Now he wants abortion outlawed. He demands that the Supreme Court reverse itself, and failing that, he advocates a constitutional amendment protecting life in the womb, except when the mother's life is endangered."



A young mother holds her sick baby while awaiting medical treatment at a camp for Cambodian refugees in Khao Lan, Thailand, July 2. Meanwhile, it appeared that during a meeting on the same day with the Association of South East Asian nations in Kuta, Indonesia, the U.S. had apparently made progress in persuading five area foreign ministers to soften their newly announced policy of barring further Indochinese refugees from landing in their countries. Pope John Paul II has supported efforts to help such refugees. (RNS)

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