

People and Events Of the World and Nation

2 Gunmen Storm, Church, Steal St. Lucy Remains

Venice (RNS) — In a caper that left police puzzled, two gunmen stole the 1,600-year-old skeleton of one of Italy's most revered saints from a church here.

They stormed the church of St. Geremia on the evening of Nov. 7, held the parish priest at gunpoint, smashed a glass panel on the coffin containing the remains of St. Lucy, the Fourth Century Sicilian virgin martyr, put the bones in a canvas bag, and made off.

The saint's skull and the silver mask that covered her face were left behind when they became detached.

Police said the gunmen, who appeared to be in their mid 20s, broke into the church as Father Giuseppe Manzato was locking up at night. Their motive is unclear but police speculated that it might be ransom.

Another theory is that the gunmen may be Sicilians, some of whom have been demanding that St. Lucy's remains be returned to the island where she was born and lived.

St. Lucy died a martyr in Syracuse, Sicily, about 304, during the bloody Christian persecution under the Roman emperor Diocletian. Her remains were transferred from Syracuse to Constantinople in 535 and to Venice in 1192.

4 Catholic Weeklies Drop Greeley Column After Cody Reports

New York (RNS) — Four Catholic diocesan newspapers in recent weeks have dropped the syndicated column of Father Greeley.

The latest was The Visitor, the weekly of the Providence diocese. The others are The Advocate of Newark, The Catholic Post of Peoria, and the Catholic Universe Bulletin of Cleveland.

In Providence, Bishop Louis E. Gelineau announced in the Nov. 5 issue that he and the weekly's editor and board of directors decided to drop the column because Father Greeley's "attacks on authorities have, in my view, gone beyond the bounds of constructive criticism."

Bishop Gelineau said that for many years he had been a fan of Greeley, even though the column occasionally took a position different from his own. "Over the past year or so, however, I have been increasingly troubled by Father Greeley's output and its effect on the people of the diocese," he is spreading division and hostility," Bishop Gelineau said.

Father Greeley has been under fire since the publication of his novel, "The Cardinal Sins," last Spring and the more recent publication of excerpts from his diary revealing that he had hoped to engineer the replacement of Cardinal John Cody as archbishop of Chicago.

Maine Church Unit Drops Irish Aid Over Terrorism

Portland, Maine (RNS) — The chairman of a new Irish Northern Aid Committee here said the panel will disassociate itself from "Noraid" because of its alleged ties with terrorist activities.

Mark Carson said the move is a result of charges by English authorities that Noraid is connected with recent bombings in London.

More than \$400 raised for Noraid in a rummage sale in the hall of the Roman Catholic Cathedral of the Immaculate Conception will not be sent to national headquarters.

Lynn C. Lagerstrom, a committee trustee, said he is "devastated" by accusations against Noraid, adding, "I was thinking it was more of a charity for the Protestant and Catholic people."

"If fund-raising is held in a church, you feel it has respectability... none of us wants to support violence in any way."

Carson said that the U.S. Justice Department is suing Noraid to register as an agent of the Irish Republican Army, charging it is a "collection agent" for the IRA.

Diocese, Union Settle Issue of Fired Teachers

Rockville Centre (RNS) — All but four of the striking high school teachers in the Rockville Centre Catholic Diocese's schools are back at work after an eight-week strike, the longest in the diocese's history.

The four were among ten who were replaced after the diocese issued an ultimatum to the teachers on Oct. 19 to return to work or be fired. As part of the settlement with the union, diocesan officials found new jobs for the other six and the four will have the first chance to fill any upcoming vacancies.

The teachers are members of the Lay Faculty Association, Local 1261 of the American Federation of Teachers, AFL-CIO. Under terms of a contract approved Nov. 1, they received salary increases averaging 10 percent each for two years.

Robert M. Gordon, president of the local, said the strike could have been settled sooner except for the issue of jobs of the 10 teachers which the diocese had filled from the applicants who responded to a newspaper advertisement.

Meanwhile, the Lay Faculty Association lost its bid to organize the diocese's elementary school teachers in an election Oct. 29. Of the 1,204 teachers eligible to vote, 703 voted against making the LFA their representative.

"We're delighted with the results," said Superintendent Hugh Carroll, adding that he is looking forward to working directly with the teachers.

Canadian Bishops Criticize U.S. Over Neutron Bomb

Montreal (RNS) — Canada's Roman Catholic bishops have condemned the United States decision to go ahead with the neutron bomb.

The Canadian Catholic Conference urged citizens of their country to unite in denouncing both the bomb and the arms race.

"The neutron bomb offends the deepest sensibilities of humanity," the bishops stated at their annual meeting here. "To describe a bomb as clean because it preserves property and destroys only people demonstrates how morally bankrupt our civilization has become."

Warning of the possibility of a nuclear holocaust in the current return to a cold war climate, the bishops said, "We believe, for the sake of its own citizens and the rest of the world, the Canadian government must take its responsibility to do everything possible to challenge the United States initiatives on the neutron bomb."

"The proliferation of nuclear weapons, especially by one of the superpowers, is a critical problem of global proportions. As a member of NATO and a partner with the Americans in a military alliance, the time has come for Canada to insist that all governments face the moral and political responsibilities of nuclear armament."

DSC Debates Nuclear Arms Haitian Refugee Questions

The Diocesan Sisters Council has moved closer to taking action on the U.S. bishops' pastoral letter on racism, to pronouncing on the Haitian refugee situation, and to issuing a resolution on nuclear weapons and disarmament.

In a report filed last week by Sister Barbara Moore, RSM, president of the council, at the meeting held Nov. 14 at Holy Family Parish, "the plight of the Haitians was discussed and some action steps were suggested particularly as the possibility of their move to Fort Drum becomes a reality."

In addition, "The social concerns committee received approval for its two goals for the remainder of the year. (The committee) will present material on disarmament and nuclear weapons at the January meeting, and each Sister was given a study packet in preparation for that presentation." The committee's second goal, Sister Barbara reported, "will be a follow up on the suggested action steps that flow from the bishops' pastoral on racism."

Also on the council agenda was a report by Sister

Kathleen Natwin, DC, assistant administrator of St. Mary's Hospital who spoke on her ministry. Among Sister Kathleen's affiliations are the 19th Ward Community Association and the Bull's Head Development Corporation.

Msgr. Gerard Krieg, co-vicar for religious, presented the council with new guidelines for regionalism and heard reaction from the assembly.

The Sisters approved a letter by Sister Barbara in response to a column in the Courier-Journal, written by Father Paul Cuddy, "At-

tacking Women Religious," which was in general a panegyric of particularly focused religious congregations and disparagement of others.

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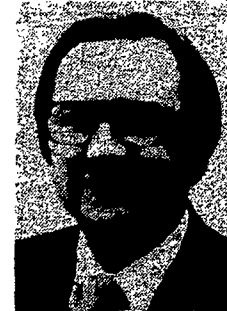
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