

Gospel Lights Way, Pope Tells Padua

By Father Kenneth J. Doyle

Padua, Italy (NC) — Pope John Paul II told the people of Padua Sept. 12 that he could not solve all of the social problems of their region, but two themes — God's fundamentality and man's centrality — could help them to deal with them.

It was a day on which the city of the "whirlwind saint" welcomed the "whirlwind pope."

In his 12 hours in Padua, Pope John Paul II — the first pope to visit the city since 1800 — gave nine separate talks to groups representing a cross section of Paduan society, at sites

ranging from a soccer stadium to the great hall of a 13th century university.

Meeting at the 13th century town hall, called the "Palace of Reason," with 2,000 leaders of government, labor and social groups, the pope told them that the two themes which

should wind through all of their activities are the "fundamentality of God and the centrality of man."

Rejecting materialism, utilitarianism and the use of violence in striving after social goals, the pope urged greater dialogue among the varied groups in Paduan society.

"There does not, in fact, exist any situational conflict," said the pope, "in which the free wills of persons cannot and ought not to intervene, to prevent errors, to fashion realistic means to possible goals, to heal wounds, and to reconcile minds."

Speaking at a soccer stadium to more than 25,000 who were celebrating a regional Catholic youth festival, the pope invited them to be "volunteers for peace."

Many of the youth belong to groups advocating non-violence.

"The Gospel," said the pontiff, "does not present immediate solutions to problems, but illuminates the mind of man to help him find the global sense of life, of the person, of human values such as freedom, love, the family, work, culture, art, sport."

Holiness does not exempt a person from a responsibility to other persons, said the pope, but in fact should deepen the commitment to society.

As though to emphasize this incarnational view of Christianity, the pope began his day in Padua with an early morning visit to a home for physically and emotionally handicapped children. The home, called the Society of Divine Providence, was built by Paduans to carry down to the present day the renowned charity of St. Anthony. Nearly every parish in the diocese supplies volunteer assistance to the children there.

At the home, the pope referred to the observation of Christ, that in his kingdom the last would be first. The church's responsibility, said the pope, is to "the last according to the world's mentality — the needy, the poor, the young, the old, the sick, the emarginated of every kind..."

In his visit to the University of Padua — one of the foremost European institutes of learning, founded in 1222 and counting among its graduates figures such as Dante, Petrarch and Tasso — the pope lauded a broad education as the maker of mature men and women.

Pope, Arafat

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"outrage," Father Romeo Panciroli, Vatican spokesman, said the statement "contains words that are incredible" and "language that shows little regard for the pope."

He recalled Church efforts to save Jews during World War II and commented, "This is a fact that should be well-known to the many Jews who were saved, who now live in Israel and other nations."

He also noted that Pope John Paul II had condemned the Nazi persecution of the Jews "on numerous occasions and especially on his visit to Auschwitz," the Nazi concentration camp in Poland that the pope visited in 1979.

Since his election to the papacy, John Paul has frequently deplored violence and bloodshed in Lebanon and urged a peaceful solution of its problems.

In Jerusalem, Israeli officials in turn expressed surprise and concern at the sharpness of the Vatican response. Israel "is really very disturbed" because of the potential impact on world Catholic opinion concerning the legitimacy of the PLO, a government official said.

The pope was defended in other quarters. Cardinal Joseph Hoffner of Cologne said, "The pope has repeatedly spoken out against violence and terror as means of solving political disputes," said the cardinal who heads the German Bishops Conference. "We are all united in our condemnation of terrorist acts committed by the PLO and other groups."

In the U.S., the Catholic League for Religious and Civil

Rights protested the statement by the unnamed Israeli official. In a letter to Israeli Ambassador Moshe Arens, Father Virgil Blum, league president, called the statement "a deliberate appeal to anti-Catholic bigotry" and "an attempt to intimidate the papacy."

He sent the ambassador a recent league publication which documents humanitarian interventions on the part of the Church for Jews during World War II. Written by Father Robert A. Graham, the booklet details the Vatican's extensive diplomatic efforts to avert shipment of Jews to Nazi concentration camps, its concealment of thousands of Jews in Church institutions and its distribution of thousands of false documents which helped Jews escape the Nazis.

Father Graham also documents many instances of coordination of papal and Jewish rescue action and it includes letters of appreciation from several Jewish organizations and prominent Jewish community leaders.

In an ironical coincidence, as the dispute over Arafat proceeded, Bashir Gemayel, Lebanon's president-elect, was assassinated in a bombing.

The assassination was "a terrorist act," the pope said in a telegram to Lebanese President Elias Sarkis.

"In condemning this senseless act of violence which adds itself to the many others, I express the hope that Lebanon will follow the democratic process which ought to permit it to live in dignity, independence, peace and fraternity among all its citizens and I ask God to help in the realization of that hope," he said.



Bishop Clark accepts symbolic gifts from various regions from appointed DPC members.

RCIA

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II Catholic, she said, was surprised at some things she learned in her classes last year. This year she hopes to get him to attend them as well.

Father John Mulligan, St. Stephen's pastor, said the old system, the convert class, depended on intellectual study, but didn't emphasize the community of Church.

The RCIA program is half study and half discussion of the faith journeys of the program's participants, he said. And when the program's finished, the participants will tell you they gained more from the discussions, he said.

After the candidates have received the sacraments, Father Mulligan said, they are invited to participate in the various activities of the parish, to continue the personal involvement they experienced during the RCIA program. One graduate of their program

was heading a section of the parish's religious education program within two years, he said.

Father Robert Kennedy, Continuing Education director for the diocese, discussed the rites which take place during the RCIA program, including the Rite of Election. The participants are called or elected by the congregation during a Mass, and then asked to leave the church, as a symbol of the fact that they are not yet full members, and must continue their study.

Larry VanEtten, who works in the RCIA program at RIT, described how the college tailors the formal program to the special requirements of a college calendar, noting the possibilities for variation.

Sister Shirley Pilot, a chaplain at RIT, noted the program provides a way for the entire parish to be in-

involved. The parish is asked to pray for the participants, for their sponsors and the leaders. The additional involvement pays benefits for the entire faith community, she said.

The panel was chaired by Father Gerald Appleby, RIT chaplain.

In response to a question about when the various parishes would begin the program, Father Kennedy said he felt it should be the type of program which parishes decide to join, not one which they would all be required to begin.

Father Mulligan said he's spoken to several parishes about the benefits of the formal program, but some have chosen not to start it yet.

The two-hour session was enthusiastically received by the DPC with promises that the word about the program would be spread around the diocese.

Casa Italiana Will Be Home For Patriot

A bronze statue of Italian patriot Giuseppe Garibaldi sculpted by renowned Rochester artist Achille Forgiato, Jr. will be unveiled at Nazareth College at 3 p.m. on Sunday, Sept. 26. The ceremony, to be held in room A-14 of the Arts Center, is open to the public without charge.

The statue is a gift to Nazareth College from Dr. J. Richard Ciccone, associate professor of psychiatry, University of Rochester School of Medicine and Dentistry, in memory of his grandparents Giuseppe and Francesca Ciccone. Presentation of the gift coincides with the 100th anniversary year of Garibaldi's death. Among those representing Nazareth at the dedication will be Robert A. Kidera, president, and Dr. Virginia Otto, director of the Casa Italiana.

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