

# Political Implications of Papal Trip Weighed

By Agostino Bono  
NC News Service

The political interpretations of Pope John Paul II's planned visit to Poland are in the eyes of the beholder. Although the June 16-23 papal schedule is heavy

on religious events emphasizing the Polish-born pontiff's devotion to Mary, politics has become a key public issue as Poland prepares to receive the pope.

The government hopes the trip, the first by a world leader since the declara-

tion of martial law in December 1981, will show its international critics that the country has stabilized and that the Communist government is again firmly in control of national life.

Critics of the government, especially supporters of the illegal Solidarity labor union, are hoping the pope will be a morale booster for them in their struggles against the government.

Polish Catholic officials hope the visit will strengthen the Church's role in national life as an independent critic of government actions and aid the bishops in their efforts to mediate between the government and its critics.

Where they all agree is in the need to avoid public confrontations and anti-government demonstrations during the papal visit.

The government view was presented June 2 by Religious Affairs Minister Adam Lopatka, who said the pope will meet Gen. Wojciech Jaruzelski, Poland's prime minister and the head of the Polish Communist Party, on June 17. He added that the papal visit would pressure Western states to end the economic sanctions imposed on Poland after the declaration of martial law.

"The visit of the pope, as head of the Vatican state, will make it more difficult for them (Western nations) to continue this policy, which is unfriendly to us," Lopatka said in an interview June 2 in the government-controlled journal Polityka.

The pope and Jaruzelski will discuss "international and world issues...and a whole array of problems connected with church-state relations in Poland," said Lopatka.

Critics of the government are hoping the pope will publicly support them through speeches and symbolic actions. They remember the example of Pope John Paul's previous trip in June 1979, when his criticism of government social programs and support for the need of workers to choose their own labor organizations led to the formation of Solidarity, the first independent union in the Soviet bloc.

Lech Walesa, founder of Solidarity, sees the very fact of the coming visit as support for political reform in Poland.

"The visit to Poland of Pope John Paul II, while having a religious character, will be a big political fact because the renewal of a person's morale does not leave the political situation unchanged," he said in an interview published June 3 by the Italian Catholic weekly Il Sabato.

"I wish to say that this pope knows how to uncover for us some things which we in general do not see or see in a confused manner. In this sense his visit will reinforce us, because our labor movement was born more on the intuition of moral values than on the basis of economic motives," he added.

Meanwhile, Poland's Catholic bishops have been trying to steer an even-handed course between the government and its critics. They have supported the need for reforms and an independent labor union while criticizing specific strikes, anti-government protests and confrontational tactics. The policy has caused the church leadership to be criticized by both sides and even by some of its priests who favor a tougher stand against the government. In April, Cardinal Glemp lamented that Church efforts to mediate a reconciliation had fallen on deaf ears. He blamed both sides.

As the papal trip approached, however, the Church's main problems were with the government.

On June 2, during outdoor Corpus Christi ceremonies, Cardinal Glemp criticized the government, saying it is harassing and beating up people who continue supporting the need for an independent union.

"Recently, there have been some painful acts of discrimination against people who remain faithful to the forbidden concept of unions," the cardinal said.

He was applauded by thousands of people when he added that there were too many infringements of "human and civic rights and man's dignity."

## Pope Plans Lourdes Visit Aug. 15

Vatican City (NC) — Pope John Paul II has announced that he plans a one-day visit in August to Lourdes, the French village of St. Bernadette.

The visit is scheduled for Aug. 15, the feast of the Assumption of Our Lady.

The pope said he intended to go to the site in the Pyrenees Mountains where Mary appeared 18 times during 1858 to 14-year-old Bernadette Soubirous.

Pope John Paul had planned to go to Lourdes in

July 1981 to attend the International Eucharistic Congress, but his severe injury inflicted by a gunman in St. Peter's Square two months earlier caused the trip to be postponed.

Mentioning the postponement, the pontiff said he was happy to be able to visit Lourdes during the current Holy Year of Redemption.

"I intend," said the pope, "to pray to Our Lady -- who was associated in a special way with Christ in the mystery of the redemption of the world -- to be for every person the way that leads to her divine Son."

Bernadette, to whom Mary spoke of the necessity of prayer and penance for the conversion of the world from sin, later became a Sister of Notre Dame and was canonized a saint by Pope Pius XI in 1933.

Lourdes, based on the number of visitors, is the most popular of all the world's Marian shrines. It receives more than 5 million visitors yearly, some of whom pray for miraculous cures through Mary's intercession.

An underground church at Lourdes, dedicated in 1958, is one of the largest churches in the world, having a capacity of 20,000.

## CFC Board Named At Annual Dinner

Officers of the board of directors of Catholic Family Center renewed their commitment for another year at the annual meeting of the organization, June 7. Of-

ficers are Mrs. Paula Howk, president; Paul Zielinski, vice president; Susan Kennedy, secretary; and Thomas Hanss, treasurer.

Also, new board members were installed. They are Diane Cecero, Patricia Corcoran, Leon Dixon, Joseph Gillis, Lita Gonzalez, Augusto Manon, Nancy Sarda Murray, and Wayne Uter.

Father John Podsiadlo, SJ, of the Office of the Spanish Apostolate gave the keynote address. Father Charles Mulligan, director of the diocesan Division of Social Ministry, offered the invocation.

Dr. John Walker, executive secretary of the diocesan Office of Black Ministries, pronounced the benediction.

## NFP Class Set in Webster

A Natural Family Planning class, sponsored by NFP Education of Rochester, will begin Monday evening, June 20, at St. Paul's Church, 783 Hard Road, Webster. Enrollment is limited and pre-registration required.

NFP can be used either to achieve or avoid pregnancy. It is not the calendar rhythm method, has no side effects and is effective. Further information is available from NFP Education (716) 464-8705.

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*Some things never change*

POP'S STILL TOPS. HIS DAY IS JUNE 19.