

# Pope at Lourdes Asks End to Persecution

## The Pontiff On Pilgrimage

By Nancy Frazier

Lourdes, France (NC) — Illuminated by the flames of thousands of candles, Pope John Paul II called Aug. 14 for an end to religious persecution throughout the world.

The pope closed the first day of his 30-hour visit to Lourdes and Tarbes, France, by joining in the traditional nightly candlelight procession at Lourdes, one of the world's most famous Marian shrines.

In an address to 200,000 people after the procession, he also pointedly criticized the government of French President Francois Mitterand, with whom he had met earlier in the day.

As examples of those suffering from religious persecution in the form of "permanent restriction of personal freedom or social discrimination," Pope John Paul listed "parents who are refused the possibility of securing for their children an education built on their faith."

The French church and the pope have strongly criticized a plan by the country's Socialist government to nationalize Catholic schools.

"Today, to prisons, concentration camps, hard labor, expulsion from one's own country, have been added other forms of punishment, less remarked upon but more subtle: not a bloody death, but a sort of civil death; not only segregation in a prison or in a camp, but permanent restriction of personal freedom or social discrimination," Pope John Paul said.

"There are hundreds and hundreds of thousands of witnesses to faith, very often ignored or forgotten by public opinion," he added.

"They are believers forced to meet secretly because their religious community is not authorized," the pope said. "They are parents who are refused the possibility of securing for their children an education built on their faith."

The Vatican gave no details about Pope John Paul's hour-long private meeting with Mitterand. The topic of Catholic schools in France was believed to have been a key theme.

Asked about his talks with the pope on Catholic schools, Mitterand said, "the affairs of the state in France are the affairs of the state and each one understands it very well."

He said he and the pope discussed "international affairs: peace and freedom, the problems which have come up since our first meeting in Rome (Feb. 27, 1982), those which have become worse and the rare ones which have improved."

The pope was visiting France at the invitation of church officials and not as a head of state.

The pope's meeting with

Mitterand took place shortly after his 3:15 p.m. (9:15 a.m. EDT) arrival at Tarbes-Ossun airport, about 10 miles from Lourdes. Upon arrival, the pope did not kiss the ground, in contrast to his first trip to France, in 1980, when he kissed the ground.

Pope John Paul said the trip, postponed by more than two years because of the May 13, 1981, attempt on his life, allowed him to "fulfill a desire that has been very dear to me for years: a desire that many Christians long to fulfill in their lifetime, and even more so for a pope."

Pope John Paul, making his 19th visit outside Italy since his election to the papacy in October 1978, became the first pontiff to travel during his pontificate to Lourdes, one of the most popular and widely known of all the world's Marian shrines.

As had his six papal predecessors, Pope John Paul had visited Lourdes before being elected to the papacy.

In his first talk upon arrival in France, Pope John Paul called Lourdes "a gathering place for all those in the world who believe in the Gospel, for all those who pray, for all those who suffer, for all those who seek forgiveness for their sins, for

all those who yearn to re-discover in the church the roots of their communion in faith and charity."

This year marks the 125th anniversary of Mary's appearances in Lourdes and the 50th anniversary of the canonization of St. Bernadette, the local girl to whom she appeared.

In 1858, at the Grotto of Massabielle near the town, Mary appeared 18 times to Bernadette Soubirous, then 14 years old.

When the girl asked the woman to identify herself during the last appearance, the apparition said: "I am the Immaculate Conception."

Mary directed Bernadette to dig in the dry ground, and a spring arose that no one had seen before. Since then, millions have bathed in its waters, which many consider miraculous.

Pope John Paul's first stop after reaching the Marian shrine was at the Grotto of Massabielle, where he drank a glass of the spring water.

"Every country has its famous shrines in which the presence of Mary is particularly honored and invoked," said the pope, who has visited Marian sites in his native Poland and in other countries during his papal

trips.

"It seems to me that there is a special grace here in Lourdes," he said. "It is an exceptional place of grace."

About 100,000 people greeted Pope John Paul at the grotto, with part of the crowd spilling over into the nearby meadow.

A contingent of 3,500 policemen and civil guardsmen handled security for the papal visit, carrying out what officials called "non-systematic checks" with metal detectors.

The security issue had caused a minor clash before the trip between the French church and government officials. The government wanted harsher security measures which the church thought would decrease attendance at papal events.

"The real attack against the pope would be that no one would come," wrote Father Raymond Lavedan, editor of the Journal de la Grotte (Newspaper of the Grotto), Aug. 12.

But church and state seemed to reach an accord about security matters after a bomb exploded at the shrine during the early morning hours of Aug. 12.

The bomb destroyed a statue of Pontius Pilate at the top of the shrine's Holy Stairs, where a small sign asks pilgrims in several languages to "please go up on your knees."

A group called Arret Cures (Stop the Priests) claimed responsibility for the explosion and threatened other "anti-clerical actions" during the visit of the pope. The group called the pope "the chairman of the board

of the Vatican multinational."

Two women and a man were arrested late Aug. 13 in connection with the Lourdes bombing. The three were identified as Sophie Moulay, 25, of Tunis, Tunisia; Jean-Marc Nicolai, 26, of Bonifacio, Corsica; and Christine Bernier, 26, of Toulouse, France.

In Toulouse, about 90 miles from Lourdes, a bomb exploded early Aug. 14 at the offices of Croix du Midi (Cross of the South), a regional Catholic newspaper. Later that morning shots were fired at a building where the monthly bulletin of the Archdiocese of Toulouse is published.

On Aug. 14 Pope John Paul made no reference to the bombing at Lourdes.

In his final talk of the day, the pope said the prayers at Lourdes should be for the intentions of "the whole world and the whole church."

"Let them have a place in our prayer, these men and women throughout the universe who are suffering from hunger or other scourges, from the devastation of war, from the displacement of populations; those who are the victims of political and other forms of terrorism," he said.

The pope also asked prayers for the victims of hatred, oppression and injustices such as being "kidnapped, confined illegally, tortured, condemned with no guarantee of justice."

"May the attitude of leaders change, and may the victims receive comfort and courage," he added.

## Bishops on Labor Day:

# Catholics Must Build Just, Stable Economy

Washington (NC) — The task for Catholics and for all Americans is to build a more just and stable economy, an economy that serves people, Bishop Mark J. Hurley of Santa Rosa, Calif., said in the bishops' Labor Day statement. Labor Day is Sept. 5 this year.

The economic signs of the times call for a new vision based upon fundamental human values and faith in God, said Bishop Hurley, chairman of the U.S. Catholic Conference's Committee on Social Development and World Peace.

"This means constructing an economy that is governed not only by the goals of efficiency, productivity and financial profit, but also by the moral principles of economic justice and human dignity," he said.

American society is entering a new economic era, Bishop Hurley said, citing the high unemployment rate, the decline in productivity growth of U.S. industry and the country's weakened ability to compete in the international market.

The end of the postwar economic boom has had an

especially dramatic impact on the progress of minorities and the poor, he added.

"Who will bear the greatest burden in any economic transition toward recovery? Who will make the basic decisions which involve not only technical competence in various disciplines but also basic justice and ultimately, the fruit of justice, which is peace?" he asked.

"It is here that Catholic social teaching on economic justice has a valuable contribution to make," he continued. "This tradition embodies a coherent set of moral values that can be used as guidelines in making the basic economic choices that face America."

"Reflecting on these values in an explicit way will contribute to building a more humane and just economic future for this nation," Bishop Hurley said.

He listed principles from the 1975 bishops' statement, "The Economy: Human Dimensions," that could provide the framework for building a just, stable economy. The bishops' statement calls for full employment, an equitable taxation system and a government which plays a role in the economic activity of its citizens. Economic development should not be left to the judgment of a few people or groups; the largest possible number of people should have an active share in directing that development, according to the statement.

"These principles flow from the most basic principle of Catholic social teaching — the dignity of the human person," the bishop said. "It is precisely for the purpose of promoting human dignity and safeguarding basic human rights that the Church attempts to delineate these kinds of moral guidelines in the economic sphere. While not providing an actual blueprint for a just economy, such principles can be used to evaluate economic policies and goals."

Bishop Hurley said there can be no economic recovery without a solution to the problem of unemployment. "An economic system which does not have full employment as a major goal is basically flawed."

He also called economic justice for women, which he said will require substantial changes in the structures and practices that bar women from jobs now held by men with similar education, skills and experience. He suggested that special attention be given to developing the necessary support services necessary for wage-earning mothers.

Bishop Hurley concluded that in facing the future, Catholics must "take up the task of measuring our actions against the principles of economic justice that are an integral part of our faith."

"Likewise in the public area it is our task to introduce relevant moral values into the public debate about economic policy. We should insist that the fundamental economic choices which face America must not be discussed without recognition of the values and moral assumptions that are inherent in economic policy decisions."

## Appeal Launched

Continued from Page 1

Commission, a parish for the deaf and the ministry to Hispanics.

The diocese provides services in those areas beyond the financial or geographical reach of the parish structure, including such traditional programs as the Office of General Education, encouragement of religious vocations and training of seminarians.

Serving in leadership roles are: North Region, Mitchell Sepaniak of Webster, chairman, and Father Joseph

Jankowiak, pastor of St. Stanislaus Church, coordinator; Northeast Region, Ellen DeBuono of Penfield, chairwoman, and Father Robert C. Bradler, pastor of St. James Church, coordinator; Northwest Region, Elmer Harnischfeger of Rochester, chairman, and Father Robert Miller, Rector of Sacred Heart Cathedral, coordinator.

Also taking leadership roles are Richard Chapman as chairman of the Southeast Region, and Father Otto Vogt, pastor of St. Paul of

the Cross in Honeoye Falls, coordinator; and William and Kay Spohn, chairpersons of the Southwest Region, with Father William Barrett, pastor of St. Monica's Church in Rochester as coordinator.

Other regional leaders are: Chemung-Schuyler Region, Donald Quick of Horseheads, chairman, and Father James Boyle of St. Mary's in Elmira, coordinator; Livingston Region, Mrs. John (Nancy) Coyle of Geneseo, chairwoman, and Father Jerome Schifferli, pastor of St. Joseph's in Livonia, coordinator; Seneca-Cayuga Region, Mrs. Karen Prave of Union Springs, chairwoman, and Father Edward Zimmer, pastor of St. Mary's in Auburn, coordinator.

In addition: Steuben Region, F.W. (Punt) Bobrick of Painted Post, chairman, and Father Eugene Sweeney, pastor of St. Pius V in Cohocton, coordinator; Tompkins-Tioga Region, Linda Carlton of Lansing, chairwoman, and Father Albert Cason, pastor of St. Patrick's in Owego, coordinator; Yates-Ontario-Wayne Region, Donald McCusker of Geneva,

chairman, and Father William Michatek, pastor of St. Michael's in Penn Yan, coordinator.

Auxiliary Bishop Dennis W. Hickey, is the honorary co-chairman. The appeal coordinator is Father James J. Marvin, pastor of St. Ambrose Church in Irondequoit. Father Peter T. Bayer, diocesan director of Pastoral Planning and Management, is the operations manager.

In his remarks at the leadership luncheon, Bishop Clark expressed his gratitude for the support which has been accorded the Thanks Giving Appeal in the past. "Our people have traditionally responded with open hearts to the needs of the poor and the unfortunate," he said, "as well as to the efforts of the Church to serve the faithful with programs devoted to the teaching and spreading of the Word of God."

"In that sense," the bishop concluded, "the appeal is also a spiritual experience, inviting all of us to be in touch with the deep realities of spiritual value, sacrifice and care which foster the effective proclamation of the Good News."

## Public Schools

Continued from Page 1

become involved in the urban schools as "a right and a responsibility."

He also said that "the racial and cultural context of education in schools is an important ... dimension of quality education." He said that "children who have not been exposed to the experience of Afro-American, Hispanic or other non-white cultures need access to programs of integration to insure that their educational experience is culturally diverse."

To that end, he called for Catholic support for such as the Urban/Suburban program through which students are voluntarily transferred between schools and school districts.

As for non-white students, Bishop Clark said they "need access to quality education in neighborhood schools. This allows for special cultural programs which aim at strengthening self-identity. I recommend that Catholics support this kind of program as a need and a right as well."