

World, Nation, People . . . in Brief

Provided by NC News Service

World

Vatican Strike Looms

Vatican City -- Vatican lay workers are threatening a work stoppage for two hours Dec. 1 unless their demands for higher wages are met, the head of the employee association of Vatican lay workers said Oct. 25. The strike would be the first in Vatican history. The 1,600-member association's vote Oct. 24 in favor of the action was "nearly unanimous," according to Mariano Cerullo, association president. The workers are asking for base wages to be increased, and for yearly wage increases tied to the cost of living, Cerullo said.

'Not Enough Peace Activists'

Rome -- "Catholics in the United States have not been active enough in the peace movement," said Archbishop Angelo Fernandes of New Delhi, India, president of the World Conference on Religion and Peace. U.S. Catholics' efforts for peace fall well behind those of other U.S. churches, he said in an Oct. 23 interview. Calling the peace movement "applied Christianity," Archbishop Fernandes said that it does not have the supporters it should have, because many Catholics have a narrow understanding of religion and of the concept of peace.

Pope Hits Lack of Trust

Vatican City -- The massacres of more than 200 U.S. and French troops in Lebanon and the U.S.-led invasion of Grenada are signs of the distrust among world leaders which can cause wars, said Pope John Paul II Oct. 26 at his weekly general audience. He prayed that world leaders be aware of their duty to search for peace and warned that lack of trust between nations can lead to "catastrophes of war." More details, Page 1.

Nation

Bishops Face Busy Agenda

Washington -- The U.S. bishops will face a packed agenda, including another discussion on trimming the number of holy days of obligation in the United States, when they hold their annual general meeting in Washington Nov. 14-17. They also will discuss whether to begin preparing a pastoral letter on women in the church and society. Several items, including the holy days issue, are on the agenda because the bishops must take action before the church's revised Code of Canon Law goes into effect Nov. 27. More details, Page 5.

Attack 'Act of War'

Washington -- The Beirut airport attack that killed more than 200 U.S. Marines in Lebanon is "an act of war which stands condemned before the world," Archbishop John R. Roach of St. Paul-Minneapolis, president of the National Conference of Catholic Bishops, said Oct. 25. The archbishop urged Americans to pray for those who were killed and wounded and for their families. In his statement, Archbishop Roach also pleaded for "unceasing concern and prayer for that nation and people of Lebanon which have been scarred by continuous tragedy and bloodshed for almost a decade."

Tax Credit Bill Urged

Washington -- Secretary of Education Terrel H. Bell urged members of the Council for American Private Education Oct. 24 to stay united behind one tuition tax credit bill, S. 528. Although Bell said he would be open to changes in the proposed legislation, which would allow tax credits for part of the tuition parents pay to send their children to private schools, he told CAPE members, "My concern now is to get a bill out. For heck's sake, let's get a bill."

Minute of Silence Forbidden

Newark, N.J.-- A federal judge Oct. 24 struck down a New Jersey statute mandating a minute of silence in public school classrooms. The minute of silence at the start of each class was challenged in a suit brought by the American Civil Liberties Union, which contended the legislature had enacted the law as a way of allowing prayer in the classroom. The judge ruled that the law violates the First Amendment guarantee of separation of church and state and called the law "an obvious attempt to cross the forbidden line."

People

Virgil C. Dechant was elected to an eighth term as supreme knight of the Knights of Columbus by the 1.4-million-member society's Board of Directors at its organizational meeting in Rome . . . And in Vatican City, Cardinal Joseph Bernardin of Chicago was re-elected to the council of the General Secretariat of the world Synod of Bishops. The council is responsible for the ongoing work of the 1983 synod and the preparations for the next synod.

Focus on Today's World



Pope John Paul II listens as a couple exchanges marriage vows during a nuptial Mass in St. Peter's Basilica. The pontiff witnessed the marriages of 38 couples from nine countries during the ceremony. (NC Photo)



Former Sen. Edmund Muskie, chairman of the Nestle Infant Formula Audit Commission, holds a copy of the commission's quarterly report as he speaks at a Washington press conference. A Nestle spokesman said the company will meet the World Health Organization code on infant formula by the end of the year, but Muskie added that Nestle will need continued monitoring. (NC Photo)



Auxiliary Bishop Joseph O'Keefe displays the Lebanese Order of Merit awarded Oct. 5 to Cardinal Terence Cooke of New York for his promotion of "peace and justice in the Middle East." Cardinal Cooke died of leukemia the following day and Bishop O'Keefe has been named apostolic administrator until a new archbishop is named by Pope John Paul II. A portrait of the late cardinal is in the background. (NC Photo)



The 32-foot stainless steel statue of Our Lady of Peace is secured on a permanent foundation at Our Lady of Peace parish in Santa Clara, Calif. The statue, commissioned more than seven years ago, was created by sculptor Charles Parks in his Wilmington, Del., studio and was displayed in Philadelphia and Chicago before being trucked to its final home. (NC Photo)

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