

World, Nation, People... in Brief

Provided by NC News Service

World

Concordat Revision Claimed

Rome - A draft version of a new treaty governing relations between the Vatican and Italy specifies that Catholicism will no longer be Italy's state religion, an Italian newspaper reported Nov. 11. Other main modifications of the 1929 concordat (treaty) include optional religious instruction in state schools and the legal review of church-granted annulments before a civil annulment is granted, the newspaper said. The newspaper, La Stampa of Turin, Italy, quoted a "sixth draft" of revisions to the 1929 Lateran Pacts, which include the concordat.

Pope Defines Laity Role

Vatican City - The Catholic laity has a responsibility to exert a Christian influence on secular society, especially regarding social and economic policies, said Pope John Paul II Nov. 11. The pope spoke to a group of Australian bishops making their required five-year visit to the Holy See to report on the status of their dioceses. The "distinctive Christian responsibility" of lay people involves participating in social and economic life, military affairs, science, the arts and the mass media, the pope said.

Pontiff: Grow More Food

Vatican City - All countries must increase their food production and avoid creating situations which "would lessen the capacity to provide needy countries with basic foodstuffs," said Pope John Paul II Nov. 10. The pope noted that "a small number of countries hold almost half of the world grain reserves" and said that developed countries have an obligation to reduce "excessive consumption" and to lower food prices.

Italian Abortions Increase

Rome - Abortions in Italy have become a widespread means of birth control among married women who already have children, an Italian pro-life group said. Assessing five years of experience under a liberal abortion law, the Italian Movement for Life said in a report that since 1978 there had been a million abortions performed in Italy. The figure represents one abortion for every three births in the country, the group said.

Threat to Church Seen

SAN SALVADOR, El Salvador - The Catholic Church in Central America is threatened by totalitarian systems in several countries, said Archbishop Arturo Rivera Damas of San Salvador Nov. 13. "The church is, and will continue to be, persecuted as long as it does not accommodate itself to the caprices of totalitarian systems, whether of the right or the left," he said during a Sunday Mass homily.

'Workshops of Death' Hit

VATICAN CITY - Scientists should "abandon the laboratories and workshops of death" by not engaging in research leading to "war, tyranny and terror," said Pope John Paul II Nov. 12. The pope asked scientists to work instead in "laboratories of life" that help build peace and improve living conditions. The papal plea to "disarm science" came in a speech to the Pontifical Academy of Science. The audience included 15 Nobel Prize winners.

Nation

Media Coverage Criticized

Washington - Archbishop Pio Laghi, apostolic delegate in the United States, on Nov. 14 criticized media coverage of recent papal talks to the U.S. bishops, saying journalists focused on controversies but largely ignored the underlying spirit of "unity and collegiality" between Pope John Paul II and the American hierarchy. Archbishop Laghi made his comments in a 15-minute speech to the U.S. bishops at the end of the first morning session of their Nov. 14-17 meeting in Washington.

'Foolish to Deny Tensions'

Washington - Current tensions between the U.S. church and the Vatican are the growing pains of a maturing collegial relationship, the president of the U.S. bishops told his fellow prelates Nov. 14. In an address opening the annual meeting of the National Conference of Catholic Bishops, Archbishop John R. Roach of St. Paul-Minneapolis said it would be "foolish for me or anyone else totally to deny" the existence of tensions between Rome and the U.S. church. But he said those tensions can in part be traced to the fact that the U.S. church has "an exceptional influence - a ripple effect - on the church in other countries."

Focus on Today's World



Children in a Beirut shelter play with toy soldiers as real fighting between warring Lebanese continues not far away. (NC Photo)



Merchants in St. Stanislaus parish, Brooklyn, love Pope John Paul II as evidenced by the picture prominently displayed in the window of a local bar and grill. The pope, when he was still a cardinal, visited the parish in 1969 and celebrated Mass there. The street outside the church has since been renamed Pope John Paul II Square. (NC Photo)



Sister Emma Ridgeway lifts Lee Kil Woo, 4, in her arms following his arrival to St. Francis Hospital in New York, where he will undergo open heart surgery. The boy was brought to the states by President and Mrs. Reagan on Air Force One for the surgery not available in Korea. (NC Photo)

On The Inside

| | |
|-----------------|----|
| At Your Parish | 10 |
| Bishop Clark | 3 |
| Books | 12 |
| Calendar | 9 |
| Child | 8 |
| Classified | 15 |
| Cuddy | 12 |
| Deaths | 9 |
| Editorial | 13 |
| Liturgy | 10 |
| Opinion | 13 |
| Peace Calendar | 8 |
| Quest for Peace | 14 |
| Rap Around | 11 |
| Recs | 4 |
| Shamon | 14 |

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the Saints *by Luke*

POPE ST. SIRICIUS


ST. SIRICIUS, THE SON OF TIBURTIUS, WAS BORN IN ROME, ORDAINED A DEACON, AND BECAME KNOWN FOR HIS LEARNING AND PIETY.

HE WAS ELECTED POPE IN DECEMBER 384, SUCCEEDING POPE DAMASUS. SIRICIUS' PONTIFICATE WAS NOT PARTICULARLY DISTINGUISHED. SEVERAL OF HIS LETTERS CONTAIN THE "FIRST PAPAL DECREES" LISTED IN OFFICIAL COLLECTIONS.

HE WROTE TO BISHOP HIMERIUS OF TARRASONA ON FEB. 10 385, REQUIRING MARRIED PRIESTS TO DESIST FROM LIVING WITH THEIR WIVES. HE MENTIONS THE FIRST KNOWN COUNCIL OF BISHOPS TO BE HELD IN ROME IN ANOTHER LETTER THAT YEAR.

THE LETTERS HE WROTE ON PASTORAL DISCIPLINE SHOW THE GROWING AUTHORITY OF THE PAPACY. THE LETTERS ALSO SHOW SIRICIUS' AWARENESS THAT AS POPE HE WAS HEIR TO ST. PETER.

POPE ST. SIRICIUS DIED IN ROME ON NOV. 26, 399.
HIS FEAST IS NOV. 26.



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