

World, Nation, People . . . in Brief

Provided by NC News Service

World

Agca Asked Pope's Forgiveness

Rome -- Mehmet Ali Agca, the man who shot and wounded Pope John Paul II in 1981, asked the pope's forgiveness during the first moments of their face-to-face meeting Dec. 27, a videotape of the encounter reveals. "First of all, I want to ask your forgiveness," Agca is heard to say to the pope in Italian, moments after the pontiff enter the cell and just after the two sat down. An unedited version of the tape was made available to NC News Service by the Italian state television network, RAI.

Resume Peace Talks -- Pope

Vatican City -- Pope John Paul II culminated a series of peace pleas Jan. 1 by asking for a resumption of East-West talks on limiting the weapons of war. The pope made his appeal during a New Year's Day Mass in St. Peter's Basilica celebrating the church-sponsored World Day of Peace and the feast of Mary Mother of God. It was the sixth time during the Christmas season that the pope had warned of war and pleaded for peace.

Pope Praises Pertini Talk

Vatican City -- Pope John Paul II has praised a speech by Italian President Sandro Pertini in which Pertini called for total disarmament, a limited Italian role in Lebanon and "banishment" of the Israeli official "responsible for" the 1982 massacres of Palestinian refugees in Beirut, an Italian news service reported Dec. 31. A few minutes after the president's traditional New Year's Eve speech, the news agency ANSA said the pope called Pertini and told him it was the best speech the 87-year-old Socialist president had ever made.

Nation

Diaconal Reaction Sought

Washington -- The National Conference of Catholic Bishops has asked people involved in diaconal ministry -- from bishops to the deacons and their wives -- for reactions to proposed revisions of the guidelines for the formation and ministry of deacons. Bishop John F. Kinney of Bismarck, N.D., chairman of the NCCB Permanent Diaconate Committee, said the revision of the 1971 guidelines "incorporates a deeper understanding of the status of diaconal ministry since implementation of the initial programs during the last 15 years."

Civil Defense Withdrawal

Gethsemane -- The Sisters of Charity of Nazareth and the Trappists at the Abbey of Our Lady of Gethsemane, both in Nelson County, Ky., announced plans to withdraw from a civil defense program proposed for the county by the Federal Emergency Management Agency. The nuns and monks issued statements saying they have notified the government that they do not plan to continue in the civil defense program. Both groups had signed contracts in the 1960s making their facilities available for civil defense programs but with a new Crisis Relocation Program planned they decided to withdraw. "We don't want to be part of planning for nuclear war," said Sister Dorothy MacDougall, superior general of the Sisters of Charity of Nazareth. "We want to be a place of peace."

Bishop Criticizes Guatemala

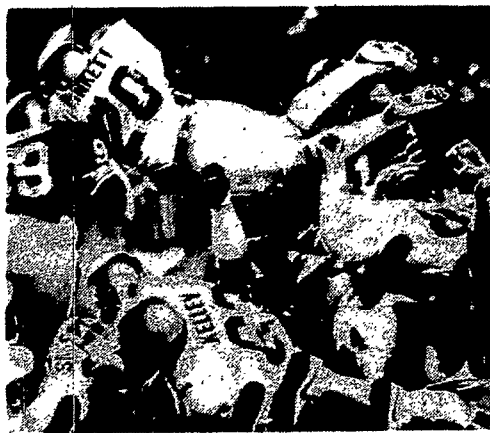
Helena, Mont. -- The Guatemalan government "is oppressive, immoral and every bit as un-Christian as a communist state," said Bishop Elden F. Curtiss of Helena. The bishop commented on his November trip to his diocese's mission in Guatemala in the Dec. 28 issue of WestMont Word, the diocesan newspaper. Bishop Curtiss also accused the U.S. government of having greater concern for U.S. business interests in Guatemala than it has for the rights of the majority of the Guatemalan people.

Diocesan Appointments

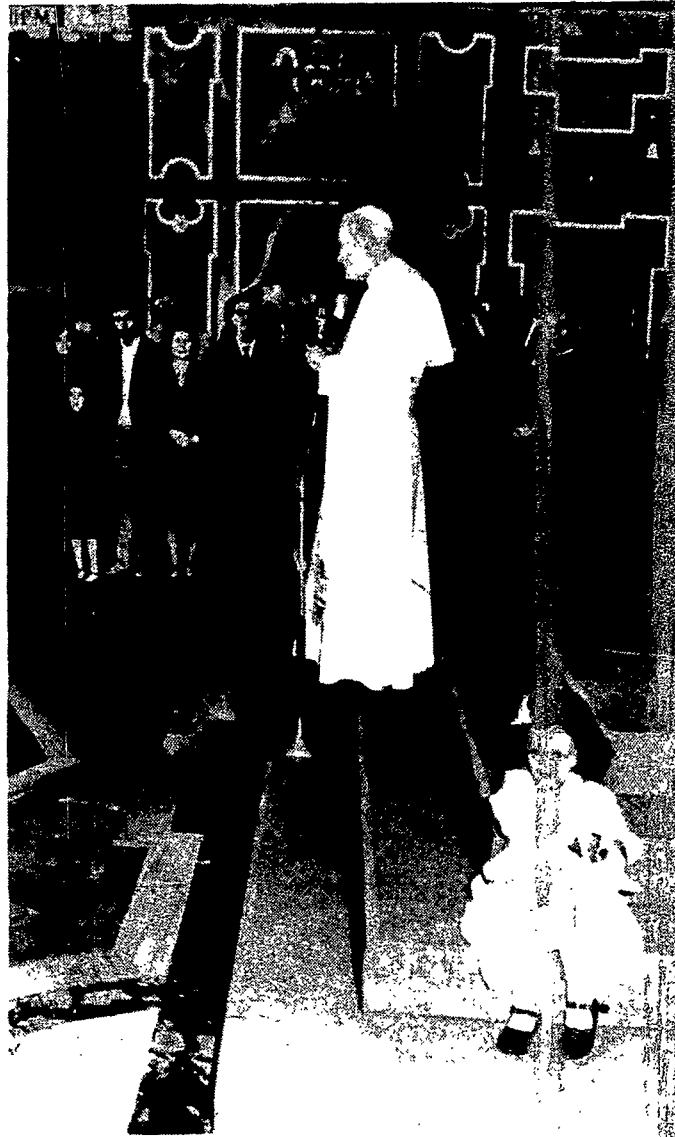


Bishop Matthew H. Clark appoints:
 Rev. Daniel V. Hogan, from associate pastor Church of the Assumption, Fairport, to associate pastor, St. Agnes Parish, Avon, effective, Feb. 1.

Focus on Today's World



Notre Dame tailback Allen Pinkett dives over teammates and opponents for a touchdown in the Liberty Bowl in Memphis, Tenn. The rare bowl match-up between two Catholic schools -- which had been tagged the "Rosary Bowl" by some -- saw the Irish defeat Boston College, 19-18. Notre Dame coach Gerry Faust is hoisted to the shoulders of his jubilant players after the upset victory. (NC Photo)



A little girl, unconcerned that she is sharing a step with impressive company, plays with her doll during an audience for Vatican employees in the Clementine Hall. (NC Photo)



Denin Benavides, a Salvadoran refugee now living in Harrisonburg, Va., is helped by Ella May Miller showing off bread he baked at the Park View Mennonite Church and sold to various ecumenical groups during the holidays. (NC Photo)

the Saints *by Luke*

FELIX WAS THE SON OF HERMIAS, A SYRIAN WHO HAD BEEN A ROMAN SOLDIER. HE WAS BORN IN NOLA, NEAR NAPLES, ITALY. ACCORDING TO EARLY ACCOUNTS, FELIX GAVE HIS INHERITANCE TO THE POOR, WAS ORDAINED BY BISHOP ST. MAXIMUS OF NOLA, AND BECAME HIS ASSISTANT.

ST. FELIX OF NOLA

WHEN MAXIMUS FLED TO THE DESERT AT THE START OF DECIUS' PERSECUTION OF THE CHRISTIANS IN 250, FELIX WAS SEIZED IN HIS STEAD AND IMPRISONED. HE WAS REPUTEDLY RELEASED FROM PRISON BY AN ANGEL, WHO DIRECTED HIM TO THE AILING MAXIMUS, WHOM HE BROUGHT BACK TO NOLA. EVEN AFTER DECIUS' DEATH IN 251, FELIX WAS A HUNTED MAN BUT KEPT HIDDEN UNTIL THE PERSECUTION ENDED.

WHEN MAXIMUS DIED THE PEOPLE UNANIMOUSLY SELECTED FELIX AS THEIR BISHOP, BUT HE DECLINED THE HONOR IN FAVOR OF QUINTUS, A SENIOR PRIEST.

FELIX SPENT THE REST OF HIS LIFE ON A SMALL PIECE OF LAND SHARING WHAT HE HAD WITH THE POOR AND DIED THERE JAN. 14, ABOUT THE YEAR 260. WHEN ST. PAULINUS BECAME BISHOP OF NOLA OVER A CENTURY LATER, HE WROTE ABOUT HIS PREDECESSOR AND IS THE SOURCE OF INFORMATION ABOUT HIM. THE FEAST OF ST. FELIX IS JAN. 14.



On the Inside

1 Year	19
3 Months	5
6 Months	15
12 Months	29
24 Months	15
36 Months	8
48 Months	19
60 Months	14
72 Months	17
84 Months	18
96 Months	15
108 Months	17
120 Months	13
132 Months	8
144 Months	17

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Bishop Matthew H. Clark
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Vol. 95, No. 15 January 11, 1984

Courier-Journal (USPS 135-580)
 Published weekly except week after July 4 and Christmas, by the Rochester Catholic Press Association. Subscription rates: Single copy 35¢. 1 year subscription in U.S. \$15. Canada and Foreign \$20. Offices: 114 South Union St., Rochester, N.Y. 14607. (716) 454-7050. Second Class Postage paid at Rochester, N.Y. POSTMASTER: Send address changes to Courier-Journal, 114 S. Union St., Rochester, N.Y. 14607.