

World, Nation, People . . . in Brief

Provided by NC News Service

World

New Concordat Controversial

Rome -- As the expected signing date of a new concordat governing relations between the Vatican and Italy draws near, the leaders of five Italian political parties have called for a parliamentary debate and the opportunity to make changes in the draft of the treaty. They complained that Parliament has yet to see a final draft of the concordat. In December, Italian Prime Minister Bettino Craxi met Pope John Paul II and told reporters he expected the concordat would be signed by Feb. 11, the 55th anniversary of the signing of the Lateran Pacts.

Were 5 Nuns Kidnapped?

Rome -- Five Franciscan Missionary of Mary Sisters disappeared Dec. 18 from their mission in Cacolo, Angola, and may have been kidnapped by guerrillas, according to Sister Alma Dufault, superior general of the order. The Franciscans learned that the missionaries were missing when contacted by Japanese officials Dec. 21. The Japanese government became involved because the youngest of the five missionaries is a citizen of Japan. Details of the apparent kidnapping, in which two priests and one religious brother, all members of the Society of the Divine Word, also reportedly were abducted, has come from townspeople in Cacolo, said Sister Dufault in an interview Jan. 14 at her Rome headquarters.

Vatican-Poland Ties Next?

Warsaw -- Poland's Cardinal Jozef Glemp of Gniezno and Warsaw said negotiations to establish diplomatic relations between Poland and the Vatican "are going well." He spoke Jan. 16 to the press at Rome's Leonardo Da Vinci Airport after arriving to brief Pope John Paul II on his talks with Polish Premier Wojciech Jaruzelski. "I cannot say when it will be possible to normalize diplomatic relations, but I can say that negotiations are going well," Cardinal Glemp said.

Nation

No Dispensation to Run

Providence, R.I. -- A Rhode Island nun who plans to run again for state office will not get a dispensation from church laws prohibiting priests and Religious in politics, said Bishop Louis E. Gelineau of Providence. "It is certainly incongruous to expect that I should grant a dispensation in such cases when the holy father himself does not do so," said Bishop Gelineau in a Jan. 4 statement after a meeting with Mercy Sister Audrey Violet, who plans to run again for state attorney general. Bishop Gelineau also said sisters cannot abandon religious life temporarily to serve in a public office.

Reagan: Strength Key to Peace

Washington -- In an internationally televised speech Jan. 16, President Reagan said increased U.S. strength "is making the world a safer place" and has made meaningful arms negotiations more likely. "Now there is less danger that the Soviet leadership will underestimate our strength or question our resolve," he said. "I believe 1984 finds the United States in its strongest position in years to establish a constructive and realistic working relationship with the Soviet Union," he said.

Salvadoran Trial Seen Near

Washington -- The Reagan Administration predicted Jan. 16 that the trial of five Salvadoran ex-National Guardsmen accused of the 1980 murders of four U.S. Catholic churchwomen will be completed by mid-1984. The prediction, contained in the administration's new report to Congress on the situation in El Salvador, said completion of the trial this year could hinge on an upcoming appeals court decision on whether the case has properly been elevated to its final stage. A similar appeal last March delayed the trial when the court ruled that more evidence was needed before a trial date could be set. More details. Page 6

People

Names Make News

Msgr. Harrold Murray, a former official of the U.S. Catholic Conference and pastor of St. Rose of Lima Church in Short Hills, has been named director of the National Shrine of the Immaculate Conception in Washington, D.C. Msgr. Murray will take over his duties as the ninth director of the world's seventh largest church May 1. He succeeds Msgr. Eugene G. Bilski, who resigned in September to return to pastoral work in his home diocese of Scranton, Pa.

Focus on Today's World



During an ecumenical service in memory of Rev. Martin Luther King Jr. at Ebenezer Baptist Church in Atlanta, Rev. Otis Moss Jr. of Ohio, Coretta Scott King, Cardinal Joseph Bernardin of Chicago and Atlanta Mayor Andrew Young join hands and sing "We Shall Overcome."



Dick and Ellen Babcock of Framington, Conn., and their children are finding alternatives to watching television during the month of January. The Babcocks have joined other residents of the Hartford suburb in a month-long effort to tune out television.



Robert N.C. Nix Jr., new chief justice of the Pennsylvania Supreme Court, speaks at a vespers service at his parish church, St. Madeleine Sophie, in Philadelphia. Cardinal John Krol of Philadelphia, right, who presided at the vespers, and the pastor, Father John Shellem, listen. Nix is believed to be the first black chief justice of any U.S. court.



William Wilson, U.S. ambassador-designate to the Vatican, bends to kiss the ring of Pope John Paul II in the Regia Hall during the pope's annual audience for diplomats accredited to the Holy See.

Photos provided by NC News Service

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COURIER-JOURNAL

Bishop Matthew H. Clark
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Publisher &
General Manager

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Editor

Rev. Louis J. Hohman
Episcopal Advisor

Vol. 95, No. 17 January 25, 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.

the Saints *by Luke*

BORN IN MAS-DES-SAINTE PUELLES, FRANCE, AROUND 1189, OF A NOBLE FAMILY, PETER INHERITED A FORTUNE AT 15 WHEN HIS FATHER DIED.

HE WENT TO BARCELONA AND USED HIS WEALTH TO RANSOM CHRISTIAN PRISONERS FROM THE MOORS, WHO RULED MOST OF SPAIN AT THAT TIME.

REPORTEDLY IN RESPONSE TO A VISION, PETER DECIDED TO FOUND A RELIGIOUS CONGREGATION DEDICATED TO RANSOMING CHRISTIAN SLAVES FROM THE MOORS. THE ORDER OF OUR LADY OF RANSOM (THE MERCEDARIANS) DEVELOPED FROM THE DECISION. HE WAS HELPED BY ST. RAYMOND OF PEÑAFORT, PETER'S SPIRITUAL DIRECTOR, WHO IS CONSIDERED THE CO-FOUNDER OF THE ORDER. IT WAS APPROVED BY BISHOP BERENGARIUS OF BARCELONA AROUND 1223, WITH PETER AS MASTER GENERAL, AND WAS SUPPORTED BY KING JAMES OF ARAGON. PAPAL APPROVAL CAME FROM POPE GREGORY IX IN 1235.

IN ADDITION TO THE THREE TRADITIONAL RELIGIOUS VOWS, THE MERCEDARIANS TOOK A FOURTH - TO GIVE THEMSELVES IF NECESSARY IN EXCHANGE FOR A SLAVE.

PETER WENT TO MOORISH-DOMINATED SPAIN SEVERAL TIMES AND TO ALGERIA, WHERE HE WAS IMPRISONED FOR A TIME. HE RESIGNED HIS POSITION AS MASTER GENERAL SEVERAL YEARS BEFORE HIS DEATH ON DEC. 25, 1256, AT BARCELONA. HE WAS CANONIZED IN 1628. HIS FEAST IS JAN. 28.

ST. PETER NOLASCO

