

COURIER-JOURNAL

Newspaper of the Diocese of Rochester

Wednesday, June 20, 1984

28 Pages 35 Cents



The Salvadoran refugees, pictured with their interpreter, have their faces obscured at their request.

Salvadoran Refugees Given Sanctuary At Corpus Christi

The first family to be given "sanctuary" by area churches in the local Sanctuary Movement arrived in Rochester last week.

The family was present at a press conference at Corpus Christi Church and the father spoke but direct pictures were not allowed to be taken of the family members, and each of their names had been changed. Allison Clarke, a spokesperson for the sanctuary consortium said the measures were necessary to protect family members still living in El Salvador, the ultimate site from which the family had arrived.

The four-member family is



presently housed at Corpus Christi, but will soon move to apartments at Downtown United Presbyterian Church.

A press release from the Rochester Sanctuary Committee, chaired by Ms. Clarke, stated: "The Sanctuary movement has sprung up in the past two years to urge our government to extend voluntary departure status to Salvadorans, Guatemalans and Haitians, and to bring the unconscionable immigration policy being pursued by the U.S. to the public's attention.

"Its goal is to convince our government that refugees from these countries are truly political refugees who by law (the U.S. Refugee Act of 1980) should be offered asylum until it is safe for them to return to their home countries.

"Sheltering these refugees is an illegal act, and all involved face the threat of fines or imprisonment for their actions. The four congregations declaring Sanctuary are: Corpus Christi, Downtown United Presbyterian Church, Rochester Friends Meeting, and the House Church."

The press conference was called to give the father an opportunity to denounce the present government of El Salvador, and to plead for popular U.S. support of the Democratic Revolutionary Front there.

Speaking in Spanish, translated for Rochester reporters by Leslie Locketz, the father said that "the great people of the United States are unaware that El Salvador now suffers the most bloody persecution of its history. As in my case, 100,000 Salvadorans have had to abandon their country looking for asylum, education for their children and to preserve their lives."

He told reporters that on

June 9, 1983, he was captured by the National Guard of El Salvador and kept imprisoned, in seclusion for 23 days. "My family had no idea where I was. When they asked for me, the security forces denied I was arrested."

He said, "I was tortured by both physical blows and electrical shocks to the ears. Every question was accompanied by torture."

He was not alone, he said. "There was a group of 150 people who were being tortured at the same time. I could hear the screams and blows."

He said also that children of "8, 9, 10 were being tortured" and "old people," and that women were raped. He said, "Torture makes a man lose his sense of free will." He said that did not happen in his case because he was able to resist his inquisitors for 15 days, even enduring round-the-clock questioning. But he did say that he lost memory during the ordeal.

At the end of that month, he was sent to a prison housing 500 political prisoners, some children of 14, others elderly, but representing the entire spectrum of population in El Salvador.

He described a diet of tortillas, beans, rice; a prison population sick and despair-

Continued on Page 4.

Anniversary Mass for Bishop

Bishop Matthew H. Clark has invited the people of the Diocese of Rochester to a celebration of his fifth anniversary of installation 7:30 p.m. June 26, at Sacred Heart Cathedral. The event will include Mass and a reception.

Pope on the Move Pontiff Stresses Ecumenism But Addresses Many Topics During Switzerland Visit

Geneva, Switzerland (NC) -- Pope John Paul II gave a strong stamp of approval to ecumenism June 12 when he visited the World Council of Churches headquarters in Geneva and called for greater cooperation between the Catholic Church and the WCC, especially in efforts for peace and justice.

In other major pronouncements during his visit to Switzerland, the pope:

- Warned scientists to control "terrifying instruments of destruction and death."

- Told theologians that they should not publish private opinions as if they were official Church teaching.

- Surprised an ecumenical group by asking rhetorically whether women enjoyed "the place in society and church which the Creator intended for them."

- And reiterated his opposition to intercommunion until Christian unity is restored.

At the WCC headquarters on the first day of his trip, he said, "We should meet together more and more in all fields where human beings, because of the burden of their environment, experience great difficulties on the social, ethical or religious levels, in living according to the dignity of their vocation," the pope said.

"Despite our separations and the frequent differences in methods of operation, we often meet on the level of social thought and action and we witness to one and the same vision, based on the same reading of the Gospel," he said.

The pope did not say how the Catholic Church and WCC differ on methods of achieving peace and justice. However, in an NC interview earlier this year, Msgr. Basil Meeking, an official of the Vatican

Secretariat for Promoting Christian Unity, said disagreement over means toward social change has been a sore point between the Vatican and WCC.

"There is a tendency of the WCC to make specific statements about specific issues," said Msgr. Meeking, who coordinates Catholic Church relations with the WCC.

"The Catholic Church style is to point out principles of ethical and moral concern without making specific applications of them. The Vatican leaves specific applications to the local church," Msgr. Meeking said.

The pope also praised common points of doctrine. He cited the growth in awareness of a common baptism, an appreciation of Scripture and a growing awareness of the role of the Holy Spirit in the church.

The pope, however, reiterated his opposition to sharing the Eucharist until full unity among Christians is restored. But he called for common prayer although "it is not yet possible for us to celebrate the Eucharist together and communicate at the same table."

The WCC ceremony during the papal visit included a prayer service in which male and female ministers read the Scriptures.

The WCC is an organization of Christian churches representing 386 million people. The Catholic Church is not a member but participates in the work of several WCC agencies.

Unity within the Catholic Church was the theme of the pope's remarks at an outdoor Mass in Lugano in the Italian-speaking region of Switzerland.

Speaking under sunny skies, to an

Continued on Page 6



Photos by Terrance J. Brennan

Beauty Treatment

A workman sandblasts Sacred Heart Cathedral as parish prepares to celebrate its 60th anniversary next year.