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Emanon the Clown (a.k.a. Sister Marcia Foote of Assumption Parish, Fairport) mugs with some of the students that attended her workshop on clowning.



Photos by Terrance J. Brennan

More than 900 students from across the diocese attended.

Pope, Gromyko Confer

Vatican City (NC) -- Pope John Paul II interrupted his annual Lenten retreat Feb. 27 to meet Soviet Foreign Minister Andrei Gromyko for talks on world peace and the situation of Catholics in the Soviet Union, the Vatican announced.

The meeting took place in an atmosphere of unsteady relations between the Vatican and the Communist superpower.

Neither the Vatican nor the Soviet Union provided any more details about what was discussed during the one-hour-and-48-minute meeting.

After the meeting, Gromyko said the issue of a papal invitation to visit the Soviet Union did not arise. Last year the pope announced that he had been denied permission to visit Lithuania, a heavily Catholic republic in the Soviet Union.

It was the second meeting between the two men. The first was Jan. 24, 1979, three months after the election of Polish-born Pope John Paul to head the Catholic Church.

Since then, Vatican-Soviet relations have ranged from unsteady to poor, although there is some common ground on issues of world peace. Papal calls for disarmament talks and an end to the nuclear arms race often parallel Soviet public policy.

But relations have been poor and sometimes stormy over the situation of Catholics in the officially

atheist Soviet Union and in Soviet-bloc countries.

The Soviet-controlled press has waged bitter campaigns against the pope, claiming his support for the Catholic Church in Poland and his calls for religious freedom in the Soviet Union are part of a U.S.-orchestrated anti-Soviet propaganda conspiracy.

Another cloud over relations has been evidence gathered by Italian investigators which could link the Soviet Union, through Bulgarian surrogates, to the 1981 assassination attempt against the pope. Italian investigators plan to test the evidence in a trial later this year of eight Turks and Bulgarians charged with conspiracy in the attempt on the pope's life.

The Vatican and the Soviet Union do not have diplomatic relations, but high-level contacts go back almost 23 years to when Pope John XXIII met Alexei Adzhubei, son-in-law of Soviet head Nikita Khrushchev and editor of the Soviet government newspaper Izvestia, in March 1962.

The Feb. 27 meeting with Pope John Paul was Gromyko's seventh with a pontiff. He had met Pope Paul VI on five occasions.

According to announcements of those meetings, the situation of Catholics in the Soviet Union has always been a prime concern of the Vatican as the Catholic Church

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Ethiopia Challenge

Dioceses have contributed \$182,493 as of Friday, March 1, to combat the famine in Ethiopia, according to the diocesan Missions Office.

Helping the starving in that African country is one of the challenges facing Catholics during Lent, according to a U.S. bishop. Page 16.

Contributions should be sent to Catholic Relief Services-Ethiopia, Diocesan Missions Office, 123 East Ave., Rochester, N.Y. 14604.



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900 + Students Attend Bishop's Day with Youth

More than 900 diocesan high school students attended the Bishop's Day with Youth Sunday at Bishop Kearney High School.

The program was offered throughout the afternoon and featured an hour-long dialogue with Bishop Matthew H. Clark in the auditorium.

Also present, as keynote speaker, was Maggie Wilson Brown, executive director of the National Federation for Catholic Youth Ministry in Washington, D.C.

In her address, she spoke on the severity of a nuclear holocaust and the role that youths must take as the peacemakers of the future.

During the course of the program, over 20 workshops were offered on topics as



Maggie Wilson Brown of the National Federation for Catholic Youth Ministry gave the keynote address.

racism, suicide, communication, sexuality, the handicapped, and the priesthood and sisterhood, among others.

Regan Gives CHA 'Guarded Apology'

St. Louis (NC) -- The Catholic Health Association has received and accepted what it called a "guarded apology" from White House Chief of Staff Donald Regan for reportedly saying that Catholic nuns who run hospitals don't have their heads "screwed on tight."

"I was distressed even more than you by the comments in Newsweek," Regan wrote to CHA President John E. Curley Jr. about the remarks attributed to him in a January Newsweek magazine article. "They reflect neither what I said nor meant."

Regan added, "If somehow, in an unguarded moment in a totally private meeting, I could even conceivably foster an environment where such a misinterpretation could take place, I apologize."

Curley replied Feb. 19 that he accepted what the CHA described in a news release as Regan's "guarded apology."

Portions of Regan's letter to the St. Louis-based CHA and Curley's response were released by the CHA Feb. 22.

Regan, who is Catholic, stirred up an angry reaction from CHA, Catholic nuns and other Catholics when he was quoted in a Jan. 7 Newsweek feature story as saying he does not feel sorry for hospitals, even those run by Catholic nuns, which object to limits on Medicare because "their hearts are big, but their heads aren't screwed on tight. Most of them need new management."

A Treasury Department spokesman Jan. 31 said Regan had apologized for the comments even though he thought he did not make them. But the CHA responded that it was not satisfied because Regan had not apologized directly to it.