

Pope Calls for Evangelization At Start of Tour Through Africa

By Bill Pritchard
Lome, Togo (NC) — Pope John Paul II called for evangelization and Christian renewal as he began his Aug. 8-19 African trip in Lome.

He urged Catholics in the West African country to keep the "healthy, just, true" in their ancient traditions, but he also said the traditional values retained should be "compatible with faith in the one God."

The stop in Togo, the first of seven countries on the pope's itinerary, began a "great missionary journey," the pope said in his speech at the Lome airport.

"I make again, under easy and friendly conditions, the humble and courageous walk which was that of the first five missionaries of the Society of the Divine Word," who went to Togo in 1892, he said in the French-language speech.

The pope praised the "spontaneous religiosity" of the Togolese.

"I meet an African Catholic community strong in number and in vitality," he said.

The pope was met at the airport by Archbishop Robert Casimir Dosseh-Anyron of Lome and Togo's president, Gen. Gnassingbe Eyadema. The archbishop is president of the Togo bishops' conference.

Hundreds of singers, a military band and an artillery salute greeted Pope John Paul as he stepped from his jet into the humid West African climate. He had flown from Rome's airport with his aides and more than 60 journalists.

A variety of government officials and other dignitaries, along with Togo's traditional chiefs -- who wore patterned robes and gold ornaments -- lined a red carpet laid for the pontiff.

From the airport, the pope traveled a motorcade route lined with thousands of singing and cheering Togolese. He rode to February 2nd Plaza in Lome to celebrate Mass.

In his homily, the pope praised traditional African values, but said something new had come to Africa.

He said the people at the open-air Mass were there because of the evangelization which began less than a century ago.

Traditional religions gave Africans "a sense of God's existence," the pope said. In believing the Christian message -- "you have become more conscious" of God's kindness, he said.

"You have chosen to follow Christ, to obey his Gospel, it is true, but because he himself has chosen you," Pope John Paul told the congregation.

"Do you truly wish this renewal in Christ of your mentality, your life, your customs?" he asked.

The pope spoke of a human tendency to return to the old and familiar. He said being renewed might also seem to be unfaithful to the past.

Renewal involves risk and "it demands a certain renouncement, a certain rupture," he said.

But becoming a renewed Christian does not mean leaving everything of the old values behind, the pope said.

Traditional customs should be "prudently examined" for their best aspects so that what is "healthy, just, true, beneficial, compatible with faith in the one God" can be kept, he said.

Pope John Paul said each African country must translate the Gospel "in keeping with the human values of its inheritance."

He quoted his July encyclical on Sts. Cyril and Methodius, who evangelized the Slavs.

"In their evangelization work one finds a model of that which one calls today 'inculturation': the incarnations of the Gospel in native cultures, and at the same time the introduction of these cultures in the life of the church," he said.

U.S. Catholic Leaders Urge End to South African Apartheid

Washington (NC) — The head of the U.S. Catholic bishops Aug. 5 endorsed a demand to end apartheid in South Africa.

In a related development, leaders of U.S. men and women Religious warned the South African government of "the bloodshed which lies ahead" if it continues to deny blacks basic civil rights.

Bishop James Malone of Youngstown, Ohio, president of the National Conference of Catholic Bishops, issued his call for an end to apartheid, or strict racial segregation, in a telegram to his counterpart in South Africa, Archbishop Denis Hurley of Durban.

On July 31 Father Smangalis Mkhathshwa, general secretary of the Southern African Catholic Bishops Conference, had called for complete dismantling of apartheid in South Africa and an immediate end to the state of emergency which the government invoked July 20 to battle growing unrest in the country. About 500 people have been killed in anti-government rioting in the past 18 months.

Bishop Malone called the conference official's statement "courageous" and declared, "The leadership of the churches in South Africa in the struggle for a new social order is a great witness to the Gospel at this time."

In the name of the U.S. bishops, Bishop Malone endorsed the demands made by the South African church leader, which also included release of all political prisoners, an end to police occupation of black townships and residential areas, and the start of "meaningful negotiations" between South Africa's white-minority government and the country's black leaders. Most key black leaders have been jailed under the state of emergency.

The religious witness in South Africa, Bishop Malone said, "calls us in this country to do what is necessary to direct U.S. policy

and actions toward justice for the people of South Africa."

The executive directors of the U.S. Conference of Major Superiors of Men and Leadership Conference of Women Religious wrote a joint letter July 30 to Herbert Beukes, South African ambassador to the United States, protesting recent government actions in South Africa. They released the letter Aug. 5.

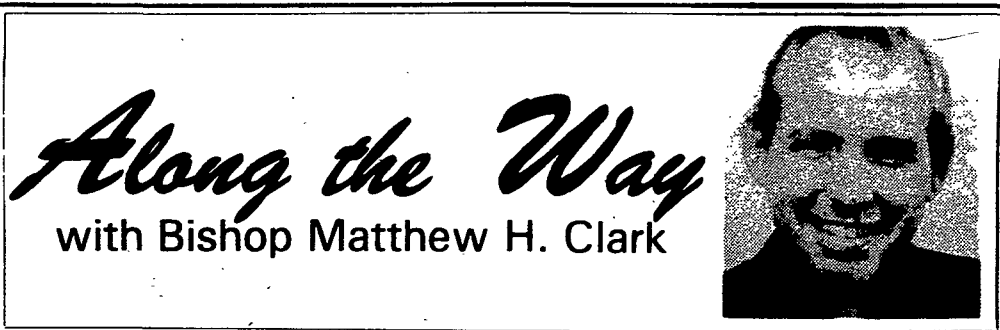
Noting that together they represent some 850 major superiors of U.S. religious communities, the two wrote, "We must state in the strongest terms our rejection of the system of apartheid in your country, the recent declaration of a state of emergency there, with consequent massive arrests, and the refusal to meet with black leadership."

Signing the letter were Divine Providence Sister Lora Ann Quinonez, LCWR executive director, and Father Roland Faley, CMSM executive director and former head of the world's Third Order Regular Franciscans.

They said their protest was prompted most immediately by the recent refusal of South African Prime Minister Pieter Botha to meet privately with Anglican Bishop Desmond Tutu of Johannesburg, who last year won the Nobel Peace Prize for his efforts to bring an end to apartheid without violence.

Botha had said he would meet Bishop Tutu only as part of a delegation including other religious leaders. On Aug. 2 Archbishop Hurley said that he had agreed to be part of that delegation, which is to meet with Botha Aug. 19.

Sister Quinonez and Father Faley urged that leaders of the black opposition to apartheid "be brought into the process of change and reconciliation." They warned that more blood will be shed if South Africa's black majority continues to be excluded from the processes of government.



Thanks for all your prayers and fasting for peace this week. I hope that was a time of personal renewal and rekindled hope for you and that all we shared will somehow heal some of the wounds in the Body of Christ.

The experience of the week — especially knowing that I was joining the observance with so many of you — made me conscious of the many ways in which the word teaches us and calls us closer to Himself in peace through our interaction with other persons.

As I look back on the week I think of several persons who fed the prayer and reflection of those days. I'll mention some of them without explanation of what they meant to me or where they led me. If any of them helps you as they did me or call to your memory others who give you strength, I'll be delighted.

I remember:

Matthew Plouffe, the young server who came in for the 6:30 Mass looking a little sleepy and more serious than he usually does. I thought I would try to cheer him up without being too obvious about it and said, "Matthew, you know this is very early to be getting up during vacation. I'm glad to see you this morning. Thanks for coming."

He looked up at me thoroughly un-cheered and responded, "Well, it is very tiring, but somebody has to do it!"

Mary Heidkamp and the article she did for last week's Courier-Journal in which she wrote so movingly of the lasting impression meeting survivors

of the atomic blast over Hiroshima and visiting that city made on her.

David and Kari Lynn Dougherty and Cathy Crosley who are eleven, seven and ten years of age respectively. These young friends rode with me while I followed Dave and Jeanne Dougherty from Saint Benedict's in Odessa to Saint Pius X in Van Etten.

The kids told me about their favorite songs, singers and groups and didn't seem to mind at all that I hadn't heard of half of them. They sang "We Are The World." They knew all of the words and they were great.

Veneranda and Conrad Mercado who offered me the hospitality of their home before the closing celebration of our Hispanic Mission in Newark on Friday. In doing so they showed an obvious and easy reverence for all who moved about their busy home on that occasion.

A morning walk along the Barge Canal with Maflena Roeger, SSJ, who shared with me something of her experience of God's goodness as she has come to know that more deeply during the six years she has shared her life with the people of Brazil.

Most of all I remember the tireless goodness of Jesus and his call to us to be merciful and forgiving and peacemakers and one with the poor.

He is our food for the journey, our unfailing hope; He is compassionate and kind when we sin.

Our inner peace and the peace of the world will grow the more we become like Him.

Peace to all.

Archbishop Says Circumstances Of Bombings Must be Considered

New Orleans (NC) — Archbishop Philip M. Hannan of New Orleans has urged readers of his weekly column to consider the circumstances which led to President Harry Truman's decision to bomb Hiroshima and Nagasaki, Japan 40 years ago.

"I regret the use of the bombs on Japan," he wrote in the Aug. 8 issue of the Clarion Herald, the weekly newspaper of the archdiocese. "But whether we agree or not on that issue, in justice we must recall the circumstances of the time affecting Truman's decisions."

It is important to remember, he said, that "we did not start the war with Japan."

But, he added, "not a word is said today for the U.S. servicemen and women and civilians in Honolulu killed by the sneak attack of the Japanese which started our war with them... (And) I've not heard a word about the fact that the Nazis and the Japanese were frantically trying to develop an atomic bomb to use against us."

President Truman, the archbishop wrote, was told by "every military authority" that the Allies stood to lose "at least a million men" and the Japanese would have lost even more civilians and servicemen if the United States had not dropped the bomb to end the war.

"I wholeheartedly regret the sufferings of the people of Hiroshima and Nagasaki, as I do of all the millions of civilians who suffered in Europe and whose sacrifices are not even mentioned," he said. "(But) who speaks today of the bombing of defenseless Rotterdam, Coventry and other cities? (Of) the...bombs that rained on London?... (Of) the destruction of Warsaw, Cologne and the whole Rhineland and Saar regions?"

"Nor is a word spoken of the mass slaughter by Japanese forces of our soldiers in the 'death march' from Bataan and the systematic torture of prisoners by the Japanese," he wrote.

Sparetime Tours
"THE GAPE CODDER"
Sept. 19-22
 Departs from Sheraton Canandaigua
 • 3 Nights Hyannis Inn Motel
 • Day tour — Martha's Vineyard with ocean Ferry transfers.
 • Day Tour — Kennedy Memorial, National Seashore visitor center, and Provincetown.
 • 3 Breakfast & 3 Dinners including lobster dinner.
 • Wine & cheese fiesta.
 * \$279 Each — Double Occ. Other accommodations available
Call Now: (716) 394-2315

Let the Courier-Journal assist you in wishing your family, friends and relatives a Happy Birthday or Anniversary, or extending congratulations for a Graduation, Job Promotion, or whatever occasion you may be celebrating:

Just send in a photo (recent, or from days-gone-by), and a few special words you would like to say (30 word limit). The cost is \$25.00.

Send all material to: The Courier-Journal, 114 South Union St., Rochester, N.Y. 14607.

The Courier Journal will return all photos if accompanied with a self-addressed, stamped envelope, and is not responsible for photos damaged in the mail.

Happy Birthday, Father Michael

May the Lord Jesus bless you and watch over you. May he lead you in His paths and keep you always close to Him.