



### Beating the odds

Parishioners at Ss. Peter and Paul Church have overcome some formidable obstacles to revive their community by reaching out to their neighbors. See Page 5.



### Season of uncertainties

McQuaid head coach Tom Sprague's crop of rarely tested players leaves him unsure of what lies ahead this high school football season. See Page 11.

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## World & Nation in Brief from NC News

### World

#### Italian missionaries released

Rome — Two Italian missionaries have returned home unharmed after being held more than three months by anti-government rebels in Sudan. Father Giuseppe Pellerino, apostolic administrator of Rumbek in southern Sudan, and Father Raffaele Cefalo, his assistant, were released by the guerrillas Aug. 15. They returned to the headquarters of their Comboni missionary order in Rome Aug. 22. The priests were captured by rebel troops in April at their mission in Rumbek. The rebels are fighting for regional autonomy and an end to Islamic law in the region.

#### Benedictines return to 'fold'

Rome — A breakaway French Benedictine community has severed its links with rebel Archbishop Marcel Lefebvre and returned to "full communion" with the Catholic Church, church officials said. The monastic community at Flavigny-sur-Ozerain, which since 1976 had followed the dissident archbishop in rejecting changes of the Second Vatican Council, recently declared its acceptance of the council's teachings. Archbishop Lefebvre was suspended from priestly ministry in 1976 after he ordained priests against Vatican orders.

### Nation

#### Chaplain shortage studied

Washington — The House of Representatives has ordered the Pentagon to study reasons for a shortage of military chaplains in some faiths and what to do about it. In an amendment to a defense bill, the House cited an "imbalance" in the chaplain corps. Critics in particular have alleged a shortage of Catholic, Jewish and Orthodox chaplains in the armed forces. The bill, with the chaplains' amendment, must be approved by the Senate and signed into law by the president before taking effect. Proposed by Rep. Robert Borski, D-Pa., the amendment calls on Secretary of Defense Caspar Weinberger to "carry out a complete study of the causes and conditions" of the chaplains' shortage and report "recommendations on how to alleviate the existing faith imbalances."

#### Family requests exorcism

Scranton, Pa. — A Catholic family has asked the Diocese of Scranton for help in ridding a 100-year-old house of what the family says are demons or spirits. Jack and Janet Smurl and their four daughters of West Pittston, near Scranton, reported incidents of personal attacks, levitation and threatening messages at their home. A diocesan official said the diocese has contacted Franciscan Father Alphonsus Trabold, a professor of theology at St. Bonaventure University in New York and expert on demonology, to assist in an investigation. Father Gerald F. Mullally, chancellor of the Scranton Diocese, issued a statement urging caution and restraint and asking that the family's privacy be respected.



### Festival Fantasies

Dorothy Gamble, right, and some of her children watch Father Robert Gaudio, pastor of St. Monica's, Rochester, make balloon animals. The demonstration was part of the parish's Sponsor-A-Child Festival, held Saturday, August 23, to benefit the school's scholarship program.

Jeff Goulding/Courier-Journal

## Father Curran stands his ground

By Teresa A. Parsons

As his supporters expected, Father Charles E. Curran renewed his commitment last week to fight for his right to teach as a Catholic theologian.

Ending several days of silence following the August 18 announcement by the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith that he had been deemed "unsuitable and ineligible" to teach Catholic moral theology, Father Curran appeared at a Washington press conference Wednesday, August 20, and said that he is seeking academic and legal counsel on how best to respond to the Vatican's verdict.

"I will continue to work for the legitimacy of some theological and practical dissent, the need to change some official hierarchical church teachings, the importance of academic freedom for Catholic theology and the need for just structures to deal with the inevitable tensions that from time to time will exist between theologians and pastors," he wrote in a prepared statement. "I believe these are all for the good of the Roman Catholic Church — my Church."

In the meantime, supporters of the Catholic University theologian have been dismayed by mixed signals coming from the Vatican.

On August 21, an Associated Press report quoted Vatican press spokesman Joaquin Navarro-Valls as saying that unless Bishop Matthew H. Clark took disciplinary action against Father Curran, the Vatican's Congregation for the Clergy might suspend the theologian from practicing as a priest. Although Father Curran has taught at Catholic University for nearly two decades, he remains a priest of the Diocese of Rochester.

The AP story also quoted Navarro-Valls as

saying that the Vatican viewed Bishop Clark's August 18 statement as "excessively tolerant."

The following day, Navarro-Valls told National Catholic News Service, "The position of the Holy See on Father Curran was expressed by Cardinal Joseph Ratzinger in his letter. No further steps are contemplated." He did not make further reference to Bishop Clark's statement.

Although he said during a telephone interview Thursday that he had not seen Bishop Matthew H. Clark's August 18 statement in full, Father Curran does not consider it a withdrawal of the bishop's support.

"The way I see it, Bishop Clark made his statement in March," Father Curran said. "We all take up our positions, and when the time comes that a final decision is made, we may decide to go along with what the decision says."

In his own experience, Father Curran said, acceptance of a decision does not always con- note agreement.

Bishop Clark wrote most recently that he accepted the Vatican's decision "in a spirit of collegiality" with the Holy See, but added that the decision did not affect Father Curran's good standing as a priest in the diocese, "where he will always be welcome to exercise his priestly ministry."

Earlier, in his March statement, Bishop Clark urged officials of the Congregation to seek a compromise, warning that censure of Father Curran would threaten American Catholic education and pastoral life.

In last week's statement, Father Curran said he met August 18 with Archbishop James A. Hickey, chancellor of the Catholic University of America. During the meeting, the arch- bishop gave Father Curran the letter from

Cardinal Ratzinger announcing the Congrega- tion's verdict.

Archbishop Hickey also gave Father Curran another letter, which informed him that the archbishop had initiated withdrawal of Father Curran's canonical mission. The letter set Sep- tember 1 as the deadline for Father Curran to file an appeal with the university.

Because he is on sabbatical until January 1, 1987, Father Curran maintains that he is under no obligation to act until then. Neverthe- less, he expects that "our lawyers will be in touch in the very near future."

Jesuit Father William J. Byron, Catholic University president, who spoke at a press con- ference August 19, said Father Curran has not yet been removed from the faculty and would not be until he either declined to use the ap- peal procedures available or went through the procedure and failed to win his case.

Father Curran said he is not ready to enter- tain offers from other academic institutions or to consider whether he would agree to teach in another department at Catholic University.

"I obviously have no answer to that," he said. "First, I believe I have a right to know what all my options are."

Nor was he sure what choices Cardinal Rat- zinger's letter left him with regard to teaching at other Catholic institutions. "It would seem, on the basis of the present canon law, to depend on the mandate of the local bishop. If so, I could find it impossible to get a position in a Catholic institution," he said.

At present, his options appear to include civil legal action as well as the university's grievance procedure. The two are not mutually exclusive," he said, pointing out that he will

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