



Protecting life's origins

In vitro fertilization and surrogate motherhood are among medical advances termed morally illicit by a newly released Vatican document on bioethics. See page 3.



Long and winding road

For McQuaid and Elmira Notre Dame, the long road to the state tournament continued after title wins; DeSales has the lone diocesan girls' team left. See pages 8 and 9.

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World & Nation in Brief from NC News

World

Carmelites' comments sought

Washington — The Vatican is seeking comment from the world's cloistered Carmelite nuns on proposed legislation which, if adopted, would reinstate some of the strict practices of the past. The draft, prepared by the Vatican Congregation for Religious and Secular Institutes at the direction of Pope John Paul II, would have nuns wearing veils over their faces, going to the Sacrament of Reconciliation in the presence of a witness, and following a strict cloister that would rarely allow attendance at conferences or educational meetings.

Pope marks Woman's Day

Vatican City — Pope John Paul marked Italy's celebration of Woman's Day with a call for recognizing women's social and civil rights, as well as "affirmation" of their role in the family. Speaking to a crowded St. Peter's piazza after the regular Sunday Angelus talk March 8, the pope called attention to a nearby meeting of Catholic women's associations marking Woman's Day. "The church is interested in the questions regarding the presence of woman in society," the pope said.

Nation

Family's petition stirs debate

Rockville Centre, N.Y. — A petition by the family of a comatose woman to have her feeding tube removed has spurred a debate among church leaders in the Diocese of Rockville Centre over whether such a tube should be considered ordinary or extraordinary treatment. Florence LaSala, 82, of Great Neck, has suffered three strokes since 1976, the most recent of which occurred in 1983. Comatose for three years, she is in a nursing home. Her family has petitioned the state Supreme Court to order removal of the feeding tube, which the nursing home has refused to do.

Women included in ceremony

Washington — Women can be included in the Catholic Church's Holy Thursday foot-washing ceremony, says a memo sent to the U.S. bishops in March by the bishops' Committee on Liturgy. The inclusion of both men and women in the rite emphasizes Christ's "humble service" to his followers and "the service that should be given by all the faithful to the church and to the world," the memo said. Last year Bishop Anthony Bevilacqua of Pittsburgh provoked a nationally publicized controversy when he told his priests that only men's feet could be washed.

Seattle assessment continues

Seattle — Key church officials of the Seattle Archdiocese and the Pacific Northwest met March 6 and 7 with the Vatican's special commission assessing the church's situation in Seattle following the division of Archbishop Raymond Hunthausen's authority, the commission announced March 8. In a series of meetings at St. Patrick's Seminary in Menlo Park, Calif., the panel separately interviewed eight Pacific Northwest bishops, the seven members of the Seattle archdiocesan Board of Consultors and five key members of the archdiocesan staff.

Refugees stranded at Canadian border



Jeff Goulding/Courier-Journal

Guatemalans Salvador and Rebecca Mayen found a quiet spot in which to share lunch with their three-year-old daughter, Xenia, amid the non-stop activity at Queen of All Saints Refugee Center.

Buffalo churches offer shelter, solace, support

By Teresa A. Parsons

Had he arrived at the Peace Bridge between the United States and Canada three days sooner, a young Guatemalan who calls himself Antonio would be with his brother in Canada by now.

Instead, immigration officials greeted him at the border on Sunday, February 22, with bad news. Antonio will have to put his hopes for finding a safe haven on hold, until a scheduled hearing with Canadian officials on March 31. In the meantime, they sent him to Sister Bonny Butler at Queen of All Saints Refugee Center.



All Saints Parish in Lackawanna, N.Y.

For Antonio and many others, Lackawanna is the latest stop in a seemingly endless search for safety. Some refugees arrived in the United States only a month or two ago; others have lived and worked here illegally for up to five years.

All were hoping that the Peace Bridge would be the last landmark in their search. Beginning in May, 1986, the Canadian government had routinely granted immediate asylum to refugees from 18 countries, including El Salvador and Guatemala. Recently, however, the number of refugees entering Canada burgeoned to 100 or more each day as



Even though immigration officials have issued the refugees temporary permits to remain in the United States, many still fear deportation or reprisals against family members they left behind in their native countries.

word spread of new, stricter immigration laws due to take effect in the United States this coming May.

On February 20, Canadian officials began temporarily turning refugees away, until individual hearings could be scheduled. Initially, such hearings meant only a week's delay in crossing the border. But by last Friday, most hearings were being scheduled a month in advance.

Sister Bonny Butler, SSMN, was on her way out of town when Canadian friends telephoned to warn her that their government was changing its border policy. A long-time advocate for refugees in the Buffalo diocese, Sister Butler immediately began organizing a consortium of church groups to respond with food, clothing and other donations.

Since she had previously sheltered other travelers stranded at the border in Queen of All Saints' vacant three-story convent, Sister Butler considered the building a natural choice for housing the refugees.

By Monday morning February 24,



A vacant convent at Queen of All Saints Parish in Lackawanna, N.Y., has served as a clearinghouse for more than 300 refugees stranded after the Canadian government changed its immigration policy on February 20.

more than 120 men, women and children had arrived at the convent building, which they quickly dubbed "the Casa." During the peak period last week, the center welcomed as many as 53 refugees in a single day.

Organizers have since moved approximately 250 people into the homes of area families, and to such other institutions as convents, seminaries and rectories.

The 30 to 40 people — mostly single

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