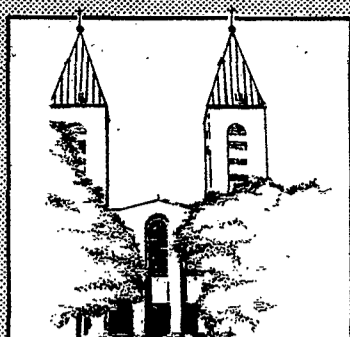




Tug of war
 A forum sponsored by local lawyers' and physicians' guilds explored the tangle of conflicting moral, legal and medical considerations created by surrogate motherhood. See page 7.



Signs and wonders
 Marian apparitions reported at the Church of St. James in Medjugorje, Yugoslavia, have attracted travelers from around the world, including a few from Rochester. See page 16.

COURIER-JOURNAL

Catholic Diocese of Rochester 50 Cents Thursday, July 2, 1987 16 Pages

Pope's meeting with Austrian president puzzles local clergymen

Public remarks dash hopes of papal rebuke

From local and wire service reports
 Jews and Catholics alike are struggling to understand why Pope John Paul II met with and praised Austrian President Kurt Waldheim last week, in the face of allegations that Waldheim is a Nazi war criminal who has lied about his past.

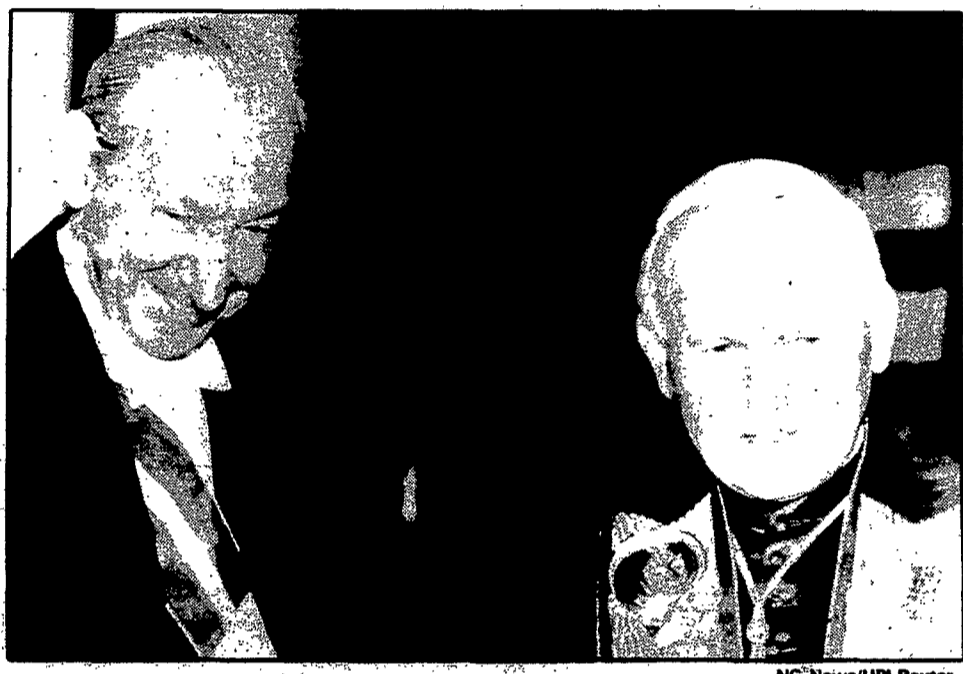
Bewilderment is the reaction Father Joseph Brennan, a member of the diocesan Commission on Interfaith Cooperation, has encountered most frequently among local Jews and more than a few Catholics.

"People are asking why this meeting took place, why the pope agreed to it, especially in view of the almost universal boycott against Waldheim by other world leaders," Father Brennan said. "High-level politics are always mysterious. One never knows what's going on behind the scenes, but it's hard to understand why the pope should have made this move at this time."

Even before the pope agreed to a June 25 audience with Waldheim, national representatives of Jewish groups in the United States had threatened to pull out of a ceremonial meeting with the pope this September in Miami. They have since reconsidered that decision, however, and are now suggesting a more substantive discussion with the pope sometime before September.

Local Jewish leaders were also taken aback by the meeting. Rabbi Judea Miller of Temple B'rith Kodesh in Brighton said he is more disturbed by the pope's reception of Waldheim than by recent disclosures of sexual and financial scandals among television evangelists.

"Those (the televangelists' difficulties) resulted from a personal, moral weakness," he said. By contrast, the meeting with



Austrian President Kurt Waldheim smiles during a private audience with Pope John Paul II at the Vatican. Speeches by the two men following the 35-minute audience did not mention the controversy. The pope praised the diplomatic record of the former U.N. secretary general and asked him to work for human rights and world peace.

Waldheim "was a cynical political decision," the rabbi asserted.

"The Vatican can't have it both ways," Rabbi Miller added. "If (the pope) regards himself as not just the head of another Balkan constituency, but if he instead considers himself the Vicar of Christ on earth, then he cannot make a purely political decision. I am appalled by this decision."

Rabbi Scott Glass of Temple Beth El in Ithaca termed the meeting "unfortunate."

"I understand that as a world leader and not just a religious leader, this pope has

traveled widely and influenced to some extent the practices of world leaders," he said. "I don't understand the political expediency of meeting with Waldheim, particularly at a time when such a furor has been raised about his war record."

Pope John Paul II met privately with Waldheim for 35 minutes last Thursday. No information was released regarding their discussion. After the meeting, the pope praised Waldheim's diplomatic record and asked him to work for human rights and world peace — thus dashing the hopes of

some observers that the pope might take the opportunity to somehow rebuke Waldheim.

"All your activities in international circles as a diplomat and foreign minister of your country and through your difficult and highly responsible activities in the United Nations were dedicated to achieving peace among peoples," the pontiff told Waldheim.

The pope then added that he was looking forward to visiting Austria next year. He did not mention the controversy over Waldheim's war record, nor did he repeat previous condemnations of the Holocaust.

Outside, in the main street leading to St. Peter's Square, an estimated 150 concentration camp survivors and Jews from Europe and the United States sang Hebrew and protest songs. Some demonstrators held up a hangman's noose, while others bore signs inscribed with the names of Nazi war camps.

Waldheim's meeting with the pope was his first state visit since he was elected to the Austrian presidency a year ago. A former United Nations secretary general who served with the German army in Yugoslavia during World War II, he has been accused of deporting Jews and other Nazi victims to death camps, and of collaborating in other war crimes. Waldheim has denied the allegations, saying he was forced to become a Nazi soldier and to follow orders.

Leaders in most Western European countries have been unwilling to receive Waldheim because of the controversy regarding his past. Italy has refused to grant him a state visit during his three-day stay in Rome last week.

The U.S. government has placed Waldheim on a "watch list" of people who should not be allowed into the country. However, the ruling allows U.S. officials to lift the ban if Waldheim visits as the president of Austria, rather than as a private citizen.

Continued on Page 13

Protest at St. Peter's Square

The photograph captures a moment of public demonstration. A central figure holds a large, dark banner featuring a prominent white swastika. Below the symbol, the word "SÜNDER" is printed in large, bold letters. The scene is set in an open square, with other individuals and structures visible in the background, suggesting a significant gathering.

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