

Pope

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On the even of Waldheim's visit to Rome, the Vatican newspaper *L'Osservatore Romano* published an article praising the pope for his "condemnation of the criminal and insane plan of annihilation which the Nazis organized and acted upon."

Other defenders of the pope's action pointed to his historic visit to a Rome synagogue in 1986 as more typical of his support for the Jewish people.

Such Catholic leaders as Archbishop John L. May of St. Louis have also observed that the pope did not initiate the meeting with Waldheim, but that such meetings with political leaders and heads of state are part of his diplomatic and pastoral responsibility.

Archbishop May added that the granting of a papal audience should not be interpreted as a validation of an individual's character.

But Jewish leaders claim that Waldheim's aim in seeking the audience was to vindicate himself as a Catholic in the eyes of Austria's large Catholic population. Indeed,

Waldheim's remarks at the conclusion of the audience last Thursday seemed to lend credence to such concerns.

Telling reporters that he and the pope had briefly discussed the controversy regarding his past, Waldheim said:

"The fact alone that the pope did receive me in such a cordial way speaks for itself."

The prospect that any alleged war criminal's past might be "whitewashed" has a profound effect on those whose lives were scarred by the deaths of six million people, Father Brennan observed. No mere observer could ever understand their feelings on the subject, he said.

He recalled a Jewish friend who once showed him pictures of all her relatives, each of whom died in the gas chambers of a death camp.

"There was just no way that I could begin to understand the heart of a person who's been through an experience like that," he said. "That kind of emotion — when you've seen your own family, your loved ones and buddies killed in a horrible way, and when you yourself have gone through hell — is impossible for those of us who haven't had that experience to understand or to judge in any way."

However, making the effort to understand has been the focus of such recent interfaith projects and programs as the Holocaust memorial, the joint celebration of Martin Luther King Day, and a panel discussion on the movie *Shoah*. In September, a coalition of local groups that includes the Jewish Community Federation and the diocesan Commission for Interfaith Cooperation will sponsor an exhibition at Monroe Community College entitled "Auschwitz: A Crime Against Mankind."

Rabbis Miller and Glass and Father Brennan all expect those kinds of efforts to continue, regardless of the response among Jews to the pope's meeting with Kurt Waldheim.

"I don't see it as threatening activity at the local level, because I think that cooperation between the Christian community — particularly the Catholic Christian community — and the Jewish community is something that's been going on in Rochester for a number of years," Father Brennan said. "It's based on a level of trust and personal knowledge of one another that's not likely to be affected by an incident of this kind."

Surrogacy

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impact of the surrogacy process on the children that result from it.

"What does this do to the child? How does he perceive himself later on? He is a commodity. He is a thing," she said. "And what of the mother? We say that the child is reduced to a commodity, but the mother also is actually sold for a period of 10 months."

"When I think of a woman selling herself contractually for 10 months, I just cringe," she added.

Even less is known about the effect of surrogacy on other family members.

"What if there are other children in the family?" Dr. Fredericks wondered. "What do they think when they see their mother selling off their brother or sister?"

A fundamental principal of medical ethics is violated when a medical procedure such as surrogacy is performed with little or no knowledge of the potential risks for those involved, Monsignor Smith said.

"We are not experimenting, if you will, on a new type of salad oil, where if the experiment fails, you pour it down the sink," he said. "When experiments are taking place in incipient human life, it's not enough not to know the risks... we must know that there are no risks. Otherwise, we are treating other human beings as mere manipulable stuff."

In the conclusion of the Vatican's bioethics document, its writers urged lawyers and phy-

sicians in particular to contribute their specific expertise to public debate on such issues as surrogate parenting and in-vitro fertilization.

Already, members of the St. Thomas More Lawyers' Guild have filed a position paper with the New York State Senate opposing any legislation that would legalize surrogate parenting. Smith expects members of the guild's board to consider whether to support the Luken bill at their next meeting in July.

Dr. Fernando Ona, president of the Catholic Physicians' Guild, said that, although members have not yet adopted a position on the issue of surrogacy, they will probably consider taking such action at their next meeting.

Correction

A Courier-Journal brief on a family and youth day at Darien Lake (C-J, June 25, "Family day offered at Darien Lake"), incorrectly stated that children under 13 years of age will be admitted free and

tickets are good only through July 20. The brief should have stated that children under three years of age will be admitted free to the amusement park and tickets are good only on July 20.

We regret the error.

THOUGHTS TO CONSIDER



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