

World & Nation

C-J Capsules

Vatican to publish morals paper

Vatican City (NC) — In an effort to help guide Catholics through a "changed social-cultural context," the Vatican is preparing a document on the fundamentals of moral theology, Pope John Paul II has announced.

The pope made the announcement in an apostolic letter to the Redemptorist religious order on August 1, the 200th anniversary of the death of the congregation's founder, St. Alphonsus Liguori. The pope praised the saint's attitude toward theological research, and his defense of papal primacy and papal infallibility.

The pope did not say when the document would be completed, nor which Vatican agency was preparing it. A Vatican press spokesman said he had no further information about the expected document or its contents.

Latin bishops offer to mediate

Vatican City (NC) — The Latin American Bishop' Council is offering to mediate the foreign-debt problem between Latin American countries and U.S. and European banks, Vatican Radio has reported.

The Jesuit-run radio station quoted Colombian Bishop Dario Castrillon Hoyos, bishops' council president, as foreseeing a meeting next year between the debtor Latin American nations and their creditors.

Bishop Castrillon Hoyos said the council is offering itself as a neutral mediator. Council experts are working on a document outlining possible solutions and hope to have it finished by the end of the year, he said.

'Processional' is brassy tribute

Washington (NC) — Pope John Paul II is "full of brass and percussion," says jazz musician Dave Brubeck. That's why the music Brubeck has written for the pope's Sept. 18 Mass at San Francisco's Candlestick Park resonates with the blare of trumpets and the boom of timpani.

The work, entitled "Pontifical Processional," is a strong musical statement and includes a fugue Brubeck called "the most triumphant thing I've ever written." The world-renowned composer was commissioned to write the work by the Archdiocese of San Francisco, with funding from the Oblates of Mary Immaculate.

Fate of Lithuanian church unsure

Brooklyn (NC) — Two U.S. observers are hopeful but uncertain about the Soviet promise to return a Lithuanian Catholic church the government confiscated 27 years ago.

"The burden of proof lies with the Soviets," said Father Casimir Pugevicius, executive director of Lithuanian Catholic Religious Aid, a Brooklyn-based relief agency for 4 million Catholics in the Soviet Union.

The official Soviet news agency, Tass, announced July 23 that Our Lady Queen of Peace Catholic Church in Klaipeda, Lithuania, a port city on the Baltic Sea, would be returned to Catholics sometime during the next two years. The church has functioned as a philharmonic concert hall since its seizure in 1960 under former Soviet leader Nikita S. Khrushchev.

Group appeals teaching

Washington (NC) — Members of Dignity, an unofficial organization of Catholic homosexuals, asked the Vatican to reconsider its teaching on homosexuality and said homosexuals can "express their sexuality physically" in a way that "is loving, life-giving and life-affirming."

James Bussen, national president of Dignity, said delegates to the organization's July 23-26 meeting in Miami had passed a resolution saying the organization "emphatically, though respectfully, disagrees with and calls for a re-examination of the magisterial teachings on homosexual activity." The resolution specifically referred to the October 1986 "Letter to the Bishops of the Catholic Church on the Pastoral Care of Homosexual Persons" issued by the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith.

Aquino signs family code

Manila, Philippines (NC) — President Corazon Aquino signed into law in July the New Family Code of the Philippines, which is based on equality between the sexes.

The code, which rules on the legal aspects of marriage and family life, is a revision of the provisions on marriage and the family contained in the 1950 Civil Code of the Philippines.

Among its provisions is a bar against homosexual "marriage."

The new code makes both the husband and wife liable to legal punishment for infidelity; the old law held only the wife liable.

Jesuit Father Ruben Tanseco, head of family ministries of the Loyola House of Studies in Manila, predicts that the new code will strengthen the stability of Filipino family life and deter marital infidelity.

Many of the new code's provisions for legal separation are patterned after canon law, making it a "healthy improvement" over the present civil code which is biased against women, he said.

The grounds for annulment have been expanded to include the psychological incapacity of either party to comply with essential marital obligations.

Among other grounds for annulment are fraud and the affliction of either party with a sexually transmittible disease found to be serious and apparently incurable.

The definition of fraud has been widened to include concealment of a sexually transmittible disease existing at the time of the marriage, drug addiction, habitual alcoholism or homosexuality.

The grounds for legal separation have also been expanded and made equally applicable to both parties. They include, among others:

- Physical violence or grossly abusive conduct against one partner, a common child or the child of the injured partner.
- Physical or moral pressure to compel a partner to change religious or political affiliation.
- An attempt by either partner to corrupt or induce the other or their child to engage in prostitution, drug addiction or habitual alcoholism or homosexuality.
- Entry into a subsequent bigamous marriage whether in the country or abroad.
- Sexual infidelity or perversion.
- Abandonment without justifiable cause for more than one year.



HEAT TOLL — A Greek Orthodox priest protects himself from the scorching sun as he leads a funeral procession for a heat victim in Athens.

UPI-Reuters/NC News

The code also sets the minimum age for contracting a valid marriage at 18 for both sexes.

Minors of both sexes between the ages of 18 and 21 years require the consent of their parents or guardians for the validity of their marriage.

The code also explicitly provides that the contracting parties to a marriage must be male and female.

It also provides that marriages between Moslems or ethnic cultural minorities do not require licenses, provided that they are performed according to their respective rites and customs.

The code defines as the responsibility of both parties the fixing of the family domicile, the support of the family and the management of the household. These prerogatives used to be solely the husband's.

Court nullifies warrants for Vatican officials

By John Thavis

Rome (NC) — An Italian court said it invalidated arrest warrants for three Vatican bank officials because of a 1929 treaty that protects central church agencies from any Italian "interference."

The Court of Cassation, which is equivalent to the U.S. Supreme Court, said the arrest warrants would violate the Vatican state's "sphere of sovereignty."

The court did not examine the question of the officials' guilt or innocence.

The decision, which cannot be appealed, means that the Italian government cannot press criminal charges against the bank officials for their alleged roles in the collapse of Italy's largest private bank in 1982.

The controversial decision prompted immediate calls in Italy for revision or clarification of the Lateran Treaty, which governs relations between Italy and Vatican City, a separate state.

The five-member court published its opinion July 24, a week after it annulled the warrants for U.S. Archbishop Paul C. Marcinkus, Vatican bank president, and bank administrators Luigi Mennini and Pellegrino de Strobel. The warrants charging complicity in fraudulent bankruptcy were issued in February by magistrates investigating the \$1.2 billion collapse of the Milan-based Banco Ambrosiano.

The court said it accepted the Vatican's arguments against Italian jurisdiction in the bank's affairs. The Vatican had based its position on Article 11 of the Lateran Treaty, which states in part that "the central church agencies of the Catholic Church are exempt from any interference on the part of the Italian state."

The court ruled that the bank, known formally as the Institute for Religious Works, is a central church agency. It also said the bank directors had not performed the acts under investigation as private indi-

viduals, but as officials of the Vatican bank.

The Italian state, it said, "cannot invade the sphere of sovereignty of the church, its organizational network and the actions of its central agencies." A public prosecutor had argued that Italy had jurisdiction in the case, in part because the alleged crime involved dealings with an Italian bank.

The arrest warrants had suggested that there was evidence that Vatican bank

directors knew of their bank's involvement in illegal deals that caused Banco Ambrosiano's indebtedness.

The Vatican's study concluded that the Vatican bank was an unwitting victim in the scandal. A joint Vatican-Italian commission could not reach a unanimous conclusion on the matter in 1983, with commission members agreeing that there was no conclusive evidence one way or the other.

Catholics embroiled in Haiti protests

By Barb Frazee

Washington (NC) — Haitian priests were accused of being communists, priests and nuns called for the resignation of Haiti's president, and a bishop denounced government inaction as violence continued in the country.

Religious, civic, labor and political organizations have participated in a nationwide strike since late June, but events escalated after a July 24-26 massacre near the town of Jean-Rabel.

Peasants pushing for land reform clashed with landowners in machete battles near the northwestern Haiti town, and death toll estimates, which could not be confirmed, ranged from 100 to 700.

Bishop Emmanuel Constant of Les Gonaives, Haiti, has denounced the government for failing to prevent the clashes, said Fritz Longchamp, executive director of Washington Office on Haiti, a human rights monitoring agency.

Longchamp, who said he received his information from Haitian news broadcasts, said Bishop Constant stated that during the incident at Jean-Rabel, similar incidents were occurring in Les Gonaives and Gros-Morne. Longchamp said Bishop Constant heads the Haitian bishops' justice and peace commission.

Longchamp said that on July 28, the military entered the cathedral in Cap-Haitien, Haiti, and fired on demonstrators who had taken refuge there. He said that on July 27, about 135 priests and nuns gathered outside the cathedral in Port-au-Prince, Haiti, and at the end of their demonstration called for the resignation of the country's president, Lt. Gen. Henri Namphy.

Namphy placed the blame for the Jean-Rabel incident on Tet Ansanm, a peasant group founded in the late 1970s by Catholic missionaries, Longchamp said. Since Namphy made his charge, "the Catholic priests of the area have been accused of, among other things, inciting violence and of being communists," he added.

Tet Ansanm (Head Together) now includes Catholics, Protestants and even some voodoo priests, Longchamp said. It has grown from a steady membership of 200-300 to more than 1,000 members and has pushed for land reform.

The British news agency Reuters reported from Jean-Rabel that accounts of the conflict varied, but many witnesses said they thought the landowners were aided by members of the Tonton Macoutes, a feared militia disbanded after the ouster of former President Jean-Claude Duvalier.