

World & Nation

Papal visit could be time for reflection

By Jerry Filteau

Washington (NC) — Of the millions of Americans who turn out to see Pope John Paul II in person on his U.S. tour Sept. 10-19, a lucky few may get close enough to exchange a word or a handshake with the pontiff or catch an instant of eye contact and a warm papal smile directed at them.

For many more, the biggest excitement of the papal visit may be seeing the pope from a distance and hearing him speak, or participating in a Mass celebrated by him.

Tens of millions of Americans will probably remember the visit mainly from the times they see the pope on television, either live or on the evening news.

But for Catholics who are looking for a deeper level of moral or spiritual inspiration from the man who leads their Church, the papal visit offers a rare opportunity to share in what could be a kind of nationwide spiritual retreat — a chance to pray and reflect, in the course of 10 days, on many of the most significant aspects of their faith commitment and their life in the Church.

As the holder of the chair of Peter and a source and symbol of worldwide Catholic unity, the pope commands a thoughtful hearing even from those who disagree with him, and perhaps especially on those points where they disagree.

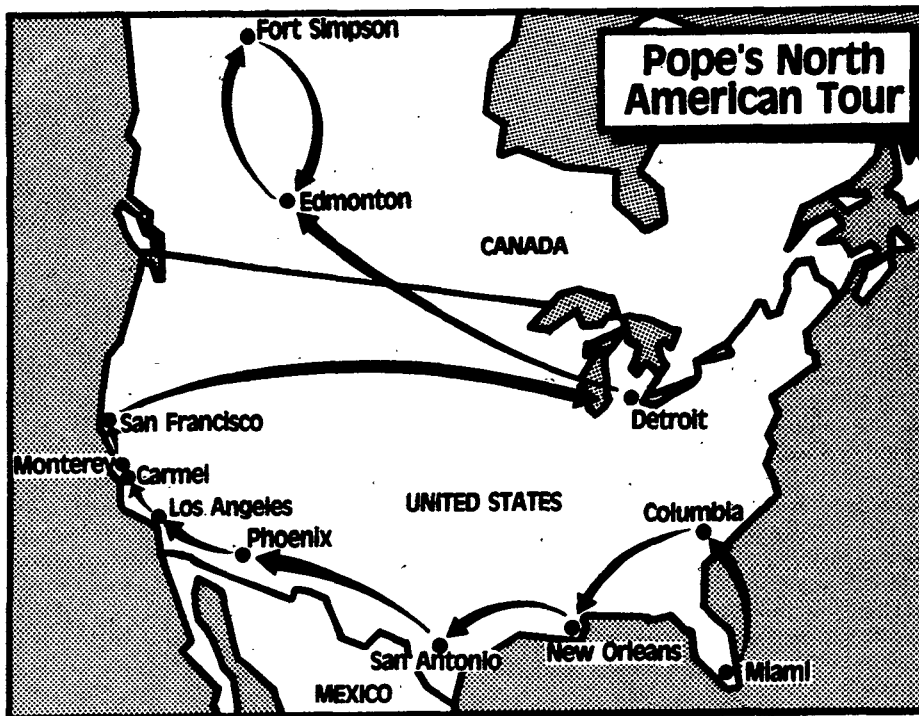
In his dozens of U.S. meetings, addresses and homilies, Pope John Paul can be expected to lay out a panorama of what U.S. Catholic life in the 1980s is and is challenged to be.

Catholics struggling with Christian living in their daily world of work may find special meaning in the pope's homily Sept. 17 in Monterey, Calif., at a Mass for workers.

During his seven hours in Monterey, the pope is also scheduled to give an address on evangelization, or spreading the Gospel — an activity so central to the Church's mission that every Christian is called to participate in it. The Church's mission is also the theme of the papal Mass Sept. 18 in San Francisco.

Catholics trying to deepen their understanding of how they should witness the Gospel through the work of charity, peace, justice and reconciliation will find those themes running through a series of papal events to take place in Miami, San Antonio and Detroit.

The role and vocation of lay people in the Church is almost certain to be the central topic when Pope John Paul holds a meeting specifically devoted to the laity in San Francisco Sept. 18. It is also one of the occasions he could use to address controversial issues concerning the role of women in the Church and in society.



Pope John Paul II will follow this route during his September 10-19 visit to nine U.S. cities and Canada's Fort Simpson.

A Sept. 13 address on Catholic parish life in San Antonio, to be delivered in Spanish, may have particular meaning for the nation's large Hispanic Catholic population, but it also touches non-Hispanic Catholics at the point where they gather as Church most frequently and intimately, in their parishes.

Special groups of lay people will also receive special attention, such as the young, the sick, ethnic and racial groups.

The pope is to meet with black Catholic leaders in New Orleans, with Native Americans in Phoenix and with fellow Poles in the heavily Polish city of Hamtramck, Mich. Hispanic Catholics have no special meeting devoted exclusively to them, but they are expected to figure significantly in events across the Southwest and West.

Agricultural work is expected to receive particular emphasis in the Monterey Mass for workers. In Los Angeles, still the film capital of the world, the pope is to address communications workers. Urban workers and the urban poor and unemployed are expected to receive special emphasis in the address on social justice in Detroit.

Those who work full time or pro-

essionally in Church jobs will naturally be singled out for particular attention during the papal trip. It is through their diverse ministries that the life of the Church takes on shape and form.

In Miami the pope is to speak to priests. In New Orleans he meets with religious educators and teachers in Catholic grade schools, high schools and colleges and universities. In San Antonio Catholic Charities and social action workers are on the agenda, followed by candidates for priesthood or religious life. Health workers are addressed in Phoenix.

The nation's bishops meet with the pope for more than four hours Sept. 16 in Los Angeles. He meets men and women Religious the following day in San Francisco, and permanent deacons and their wives in Detroit Sept. 19.

When Pope John Paul and the bishops meet, an exchange on a wide range of concerns in the Catholic Church in the United States is expected. The meeting itself is closed to the press and general public, but the main papal text, and possibly the texts of four bishops who are to speak to him on various topics, are expected to be released.

C-J Capsules

No offices for brothers

Rome (NC) — The Vatican has overruled a proposal by the Franciscan Order of Friars Minor that would have made a normal occurrence of religious brothers holding governing offices within the order.

Instead, an article prescribed by the Vatican and reluctantly accepted by the Franciscans as part of their new general constitution defines the religious fraternity as "clerical" and makes it clear that priests are ordinarily to be the superiors at local, provincial and general levels. The article is considered a setback for the order's attempt to promote equal rights for its brothers.

The constitution was promulgated Aug. 2 and goes into effect in September.

Vatican alone can bring peace

Milan, Italy (NC) — The Vatican is the only moral power in the world that has shown itself capable of mediating peace, Vatican Secretary of State Cardinal Agostino Casaroli said in an interview with an Italian newspaper.

The cardinal said other world authorities, including the United Nations, were either not strong enough or were unheeded when it came to settling conflicts. The 72-year-old cardinal is the Vatican's chief diplomat, and his job involves frequent discussions with world leaders, often on peace issues.

Women must be policy makers

Los Angeles (NC) — Women must be placed at policy-making levels within the Church, Archbishop Roger M. Mahony of Los Angeles said in a pastoral letter issued August 14. He also urged an end to "sexist" liturgical language and recognition of the "feminine side" of God.

"We need to recover a greater sense of men and women working collaboratively, side by side," Archbishop Mahony said in the 16-page letter. "Women must increasingly be placed in policy formation and decision-making levels within the Church."

Pro-life priest gets parole

Montgomery, Ala. (NC) — Benedictine Father Edward Markley, the former Birmingham diocesan pro-life director who was convicted of abortion-clinic attacks, was released on parole July 17 from the Elmore Correction Facility near Montgomery. The priest remains under probational restrictions that forbid him from protesting near abortion clinics.

Sentenced to two five-year suspended prison terms for a May 1984 sledgehammer attack on an abortion clinic in Birmingham, the priest was arrested in June of 1986 for violating probation by marching at the Birmingham Women's Medical Clinic and the Women's Health Center in Huntsville. As part of his 1984 conviction, Father Markley was also forbidden to speak publicly against abortion for five years.

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