



Continuity of care

As St. Mary's Hospital marks its 130th year, Sister Eileen Kinarney and Patrick Madden attest to the facility's commitment to the inner city. See pages 6 and 7.



Pigskin preview

The 1987 high school football season opens for all diocesan teams next weekend. For a look at what to expect from this year's teams and players, see page 16.

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U.S. tour will test pope's ability to foster unity

By Agostino Bono

Vatican City (NC) — Pope John Paul II's September 10-19 visit to the United States should test his ability to foster unity in a Church and a society marked by pluralism, freewheeling dissent and an organizational genius for protest demonstrations that draw media attention.

The theme for the visit is "Unity in the Work of Service," but the trip is likely to be marked by a variety of protests, as Catholic and other special-interest groups use papal events as platforms for expressing their grievances against the Church.

Trip organizers, both at the Vatican and in the United States, are nevertheless confident that the pope will take protests in stride and rise above them to strengthen the religious identity of U.S. Catholics.

Papal advisers say the pope is aware of the potential for protests all along his nine-diocese route. "The United States is an articulate society. People are used to putting their case out in the open. There is no reason to expect they won't do this during the pope's trip," said Vatican press spokesman Joaquin Navarro-Valls.

Russell Shaw, public information officer for the U.S. bishops, said the possibility even exists that dissenting opinions will be presented directly to the pope during the "structured dialogues" with specific groups.

Under the norms for papal trips, such "dialogues" take place between the pope and spokesmen selected in advance to represent their groups. The spokesmen submit prepared texts of their remarks in advance of the pope's visit, so that the pontiff can respond to specific points during his own speech.

Normally, these texts do not contain criticisms of specific papal positions, but instead raise issues of general concern to the groups involved and ask the pope for comment. But nothing prevents speakers from issuing criticisms in their speeches or from departing from their prepared texts, Shaw said.

"It's an obvious fact that there are a lot of divisions" among U.S. Catholics, he said.

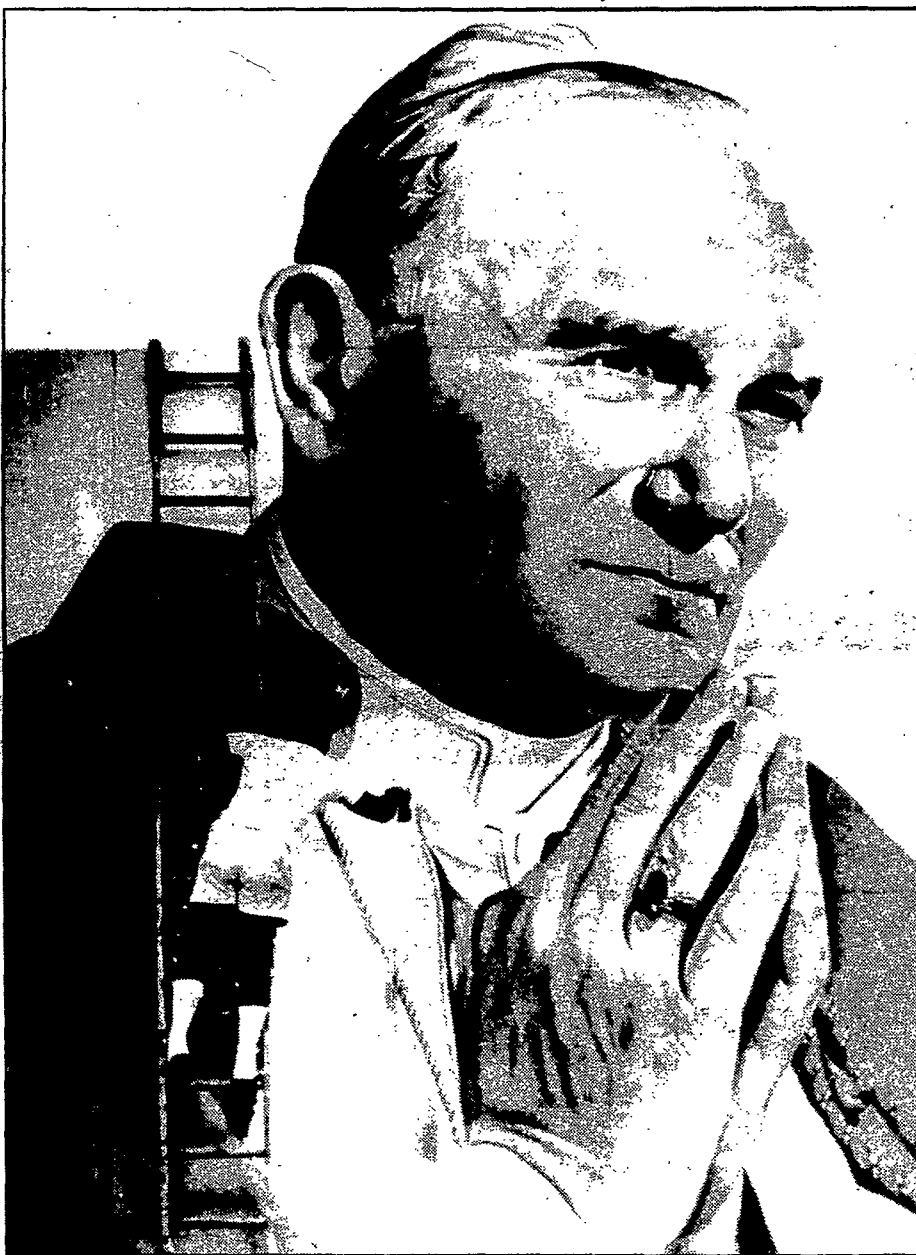
On previous papal trips, speakers have departed from prepared texts in order to air criticisms, but the pope has been unbowed by such remarks. He will not change Church positions to accommodate dissenters, Navarro-Valls observed. "In the past, the pope hasn't tailored his message to protest groups, and he won't (do so) in the United States," the spokesman said. "The pope will preach a Gospel message to Catholics and others who want to listen."

U.S. Catholic officials say a core element of the divisions in the Church is the confusion prevalent among many U.S. Catholics who are trying to live their faith within the context of American society. Confusion exists "in the minds of quite a few good, sincere Catholics over just what it means to be a Catholic, to believe like a Catholic and to live like a Catholic in a wealthy, consumerist, nuclear-armed, secularized country like this one in 1987," said Archbishop John L. May of St. Louis, president of the National Conference of Catholic Bishops.

In comments made a month before the pope's arrival, the archbishop said the pope will encourage Catholics to reaffirm their religious identity as a way of overcoming this confusion.

According to bishops' spokesman Shaw, much of this confusion is the result of Catholics' tendency toward "assimilating like wildfire" into the U.S. mainstream. "Catholics are becoming like everyone else, at a time when everyone else is becoming alienated to religious values," he said.

"It is also a time when within the Church there is a lot of theological dissent," Shaw added. "People who are not theologians pick up



UPI/NC News
Roger Amador touches up the paint on a billboard of Pope John Paul II along the Biscayne Boulevard parade route in Miami. The pope will open his U.S. tour with his September 10 arrival in Miami.

ideas antithetical to Catholic ways of behaving."

The spokesman said that U.S. Catholics can be divided into three groups — one whose members live by U.S. cultural values even when these are in conflict with traditional Catholic values, one whose members live by traditional values as embodied by the pope and other strongly traditional Church leaders, and a third group composed of confused people who are struggling to live as good Catholics and good Americans.

morality, emphasizing or practicing only one at the expense of the other.

"Don't make the Church schizophrenic; social and personal morality are both a part of Catholic life and come from the same values," he said. "When the pope speaks about social issues, he is using the same moral values as when he opposes abortion."

Such a fragmented sense of Church moral teaching is not unique to U.S. Catholics, but has been a problem in many countries and cultures throughout the history of the Church,

For more advance coverage of the pope's upcoming visit, see pages 4 and 5.

Although Shaw said the pope's visit is unlikely to sway people in the first two groups, "the presence, even brief, of an articulate, attractive, persuasive spokesman can make a difference with the third group."

Navarro-Valls argued that U.S. Church divisions also stem from the failure on the part of many Catholics to maintain a sense of unity between Catholic social morality and personal

Navarro-Valls said. "The Church has a double aim. One is the salvation of people; the other is an historical goal — to improve the way of life of people," he said. "Both must be done together. Many Church heresies have emphasized only one."

Divisions among U.S. Catholics also have caused tensions between the Vatican and the U.S. hierarchy. In recent years, the Vatican has

telt the need to take tough disciplinary action against U.S. Church personnel, leaving an impression that the local hierarchy was lax in enforcing Church rules.

At the same time, the U.S. hierarchy has been pressured by American Catholic groups urging them to support positions unpopular at the Vatican. The situation came to be symbolized in the controversy surrounding Archbishop Raymond Hunthausen of Seattle. In an unusual move, the Vatican in 1985 named an auxiliary bishop for Seattle, transferring to him much of Archbishop Hunthausen's authority over diocesan affairs.

The decision came after conservative U.S. Catholic groups petitioned the Vatican for redress regarding what they perceived as the archbishop's failure to follow Church norms in many areas. The groups' criticisms had polarized the archdiocese into pro- and anti-Hunthausen camps, and the Vatican eventually said the transfer of authority was necessary because the archbishop was "lacking the firmness necessary to govern the diocese."

The solution, however, served to further polarize the archdiocese and was criticized by many U.S. bishops. As a result, the Vatican reversed its decision earlier this year. At the suggestion of a fact-finding commission consisting of two U.S. cardinals and one U.S. archbishop, the Vatican restored Archbishop Hunthausen's authority, replacing the specially empowered auxiliary with a coadjutor archbishop.

According to Shaw, it wasn't coincidental that the reversal took place prior to the pope's U.S. visit. The decision cleared the air and "took the pressure off everyone," he added. "It showed that the Holy See is not arbitrary and is willing to take another look at a problem when the original solution doesn't seem to be working in practice."

In yet other attempts to unite U.S. Catholics, the pope is expected to use his visit to stress positive achievements of American Catholicism. "His style is to emphasize the positive elements, (in order) to further stimulate them," Navarro-Valls commented, citing as possible areas for papal praise: a deep respect for human dignity, generosity in providing personnel and material aid to overseas missions, and the extensive domestic social services the U.S. Church provides in such areas as health care and education.

The U.S. trip will also give the pope an opportunity to outline Church social positions applicable to U.S. political life. On the first day of his visit, the Holy Father is scheduled to meet President Ronald Reagan. During previous meetings, the pope has made strong statements on disarmament and the leadership role the United States has in world affairs.

The pontiff also will be in the United States when Congress opens hearings September 15 to consider confirmation of Robert H. Bork as associate justice of the Supreme Court. Bork's anti-abortion stand has become a central issue of debate among his supporters and opponents.

The pope is a strong opponent of abortion and in his travels frequently reiterates Church teachings on the immorality of abortion under any circumstances. "But it would be 100-percent wrong to interpret any abortion statement as a partisan political one," Navarro-Valls cautioned. "If the pontiff mentions abortion, such references will be motivated by 'pastoral criteria and not a political tactic,'" the spokesman added.

"The pope underlines the ethical dimensions of human problems," he said. "Every pope is a predictable man in a way, because he is announcing a message that already exists" in the Gospels and Church teaching. "The surprise comes when a moral message is understood politically by others."

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