

Diverse groups greet pope during San Francisco stop

By Sister Mary Ann Walsh

San Francisco (NC) — During the 22 hours Pope John Paul II spent in San Francisco Sept. 17-18, he addressed members of religious orders as well as representatives of U.S. laity.

But the moment at Mission Dolores when red-haired Brendan O'Rourke, a four-year-old AIDS victim, threw himself into the pope's arms like a favorite grandchild was perhaps the most memorable of the San Francisco visit — the ninth stop on his Sept. 10-19 itinerary.

As the pope's motorcade was arriving at the historic church, which was founded by 18th-century Spanish missionary Father Junipero Serra, about 2,000 people demonstrated nearby, shouting "shame" and "pope go home." It was the largest demonstration during the pope's U.S. visit.

Many in San Francisco's homosexual community had opposed the papal visit because of the Church's position on homosexual activity.

The pope addressed members of religious orders later Sept. 17 at St. Mary's Cathedral and warned the 3,000 nuns, brothers and priests not to stray from official Church teaching when they try to reconcile the Church with American culture.

The pope described members of religious orders as having "an important role in the Church's dialogue" with U.S. culture. But he stressed that "the first law of this dialogue is fidelity to Christ and his Church."

In speeches before the pope's address, a nun and a priest both called for recognition of women in the Church, though neither mentioned ordination of women specifically.

Sister Helen M. Garvey, president of the Leadership Conference of Women Religious, received strong applause when she told the pope that women desire "complete in-

corporation in the Church."

"How can women participate completely in the life of the Church and in the life of society?" asked Sister Garvey, superior of the Sisters of Charity of the Blessed Virgin Mary in Dubuque, Iowa.

The other speaker, Marianist Father Stephen Tutas, president of the Conference of Major Superiors of Men, said religious order priests and brothers look toward the Church's "recognizing the rightful role of women — religious or lay, married or single — in the Church in the United States."

He also asked for equal status for brothers in religious orders with both brother and priest members. The Vatican recently told one order, the Franciscans, that brothers cannot hold top positions.

The next morning, also at St. Mary's Cathedral, Pope John Paul met with 3,000 lay people from across the United States. At that meeting Donna Hanson, chairwoman of the U.S. bishops' National Advisory Council, asked that the Church "be more inclusive of women, our inactive clergy, homosexuals, the divorced and all people of color." She also asked for lay input into Church decision-making.

"Though I know the Church is not a democracy ruled by popular vote, I expect to be treated as a mature, educated and responsible adult," said Mrs. Hanson, associate director of Catholic Charities in the Diocese of Spokane, Wash.

Another lay person, Patrick Hughes, director of pastoral ministry for the Archdiocese of San Francisco, voiced concern over the declining number of priests in the United States. He urged an "ongoing discernment of what is the nature of ordained ministry and who should be called to it."

In his response to both speakers, the pope said the laity must challenge the widespread



The Associated Press
Pope John Paul II motions toward photographers after viewing the fog-shrouded Golden Gate Bridge shortly after his arrival in San Francisco.

secularism, relativism, consumerism and hedonism of U.S. society.

"By these and other deceptions, people often commit themselves to passing fads, or to bizarre beliefs that are either shallow or fanatical," he said.

He also encouraged pastoral programs for divorced and separated Catholics but reaffirmed Church practice of not admitting divorced Catholics who have remarried outside the Church to reception of Communion.

After the meeting with lay representatives the pope went to Candlestick Park, where the home of the San Francisco Giants baseball

team was transformed into a church sanctuary with an altar of California wood set up in the outfield.

In his homily under the hot noonday sun the pope — whose name lit up on the scoreboard as if he were the batter at the plate — told the congregation to become well-educated in their faith.

Be "identified with Christ, not only at Mass on Sunday — which is extremely important — but also in the other activities of life," he said.

Contributing to this story was Agostino Bono.

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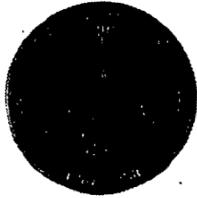
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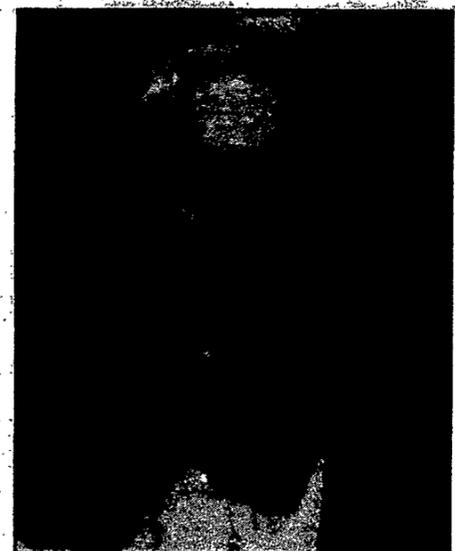
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