

## World &amp; Nation

## Capsules

## Women discuss Church roles

Tampa, Fla. (NC) — Representatives of 33 diocesan women's commissions gathered at the Franciscan Center in Tampa January 12-14 to discuss their concerns about the Catholic Church and their role in it.

Among the issues raised were inclusion of women in decision making, collaborative ministry, pay equity, inclusive language in liturgy and elsewhere, inclusion of minorities, discrimination in employment policies, and ordination of women to the diaconate. Other issues that surfaced included family structure, human reproductive concerns, the sanctuary movement and homosexuality.

## Director wants end to debt crisis

Vatican City (NC) — Michel Camdessus, director of the International Monetary Fund, has called for international collaboration and an "enormous political commitment" to end the world debt crisis.

In a Vatican Radio broadcast aired January 18, Camdessus described the situation in some developing countries as very grave, but also said there is still hope.

A year ago the Vatican's Justice and Peace Commission published a letter on the world debt crisis titled "At the Service of the Human Community: An Ethical Approach to the International Debt Question."

## Firemen neglect AIDS baby

Annapolis, Calif. (NC) — Volunteer firefighters refused to respond to a call from a religious community in the Diocese of Santa Rosa to help an AIDS baby who was choking, said a community spokesman January 12.

The call came from the Starcross Community, a non-canonical religious community that cares for babies with acquired immune deficiency syndrome.

A spokesman for the firefighters said there was never a decision not to respond, but admitted that two of his 13 volunteers who refuse to go to the Starcross Community were on duty the day of the incident.

## Austrian nuncio meets pope

Vatican City (NC) — Pope John Paul II met privately with his chief diplomatic representative to Austria less than two weeks after Jewish groups reacted strongly to an announcement that the pope would meet for a second time with that country's controversial president, Kurt Waldheim.

The pope received Archbishop Michele Cecchini, apostolic nuncio to Austria, January 14. The Vatican released no further details about their meeting.

Vatican Radio reported January 5 that the pope planned to visit Austria June 23 - 27.

## Deaths linked to satanism

Sparta, N.J. (NC) — An apparent murder-suicide by a Catholic school student interested in the occult has led to warnings about the dangers of teenage fascination with satanism and "heavy metal" rock music.

Thomas Sullivan Jr., 14, apparently stabbed his mother to death and then killed himself January 10, according to New Jersey police authorities. Police said a note with references to satanism was found.

He reportedly was influenced by an essay on satanism classmates at Rev. George Brown School in Sparta had written for an assignment on religions other than Catholicism.

## Quintuplets doing fine

Royal Oak, Mich. (NC) — A Catholic chaplain present Jan. 11 at the historic birth of quintuplets conceived by a Catholic couple through in vitro fertilization called the experience "the greatest and most beautiful thing" he had seen.

Michele and Raymond L'Esperance asked Capuchin Father Blase Gitzen, chaplain at William Beaumont Hospital in Royal Oak, to baptize their four daughters and one son as soon as they were born.

According to hospital officials, when Mrs. L'Esperance underwent the in vitro procedure, several fertilized eggs were successfully implanted in her uterus.

Mrs. L'Esperance was offered the option of "selective abortion" to eliminate some of the embryos to increase the survival chances of the others and lessen medical risks to the mother. She agreed to accept all six; one later atrophied.

## UR scientist blasts plans for shroud test

NC News and Local Reports

A University of Rochester physicist was one of two scientists who held a press conference January 15 to criticize an apparent Church limitation on the number of research facilities that will be allowed to test the Shroud of Turin, revered for centuries as Christ's burial cloth.

During a New York City press conference, UR Professor Harry E. Gove and Garman Harbottle of the Brookhaven National Laboratory in Upton, N.Y., questioned use of only three laboratories in the anticipated carbon-14 test process. They also released documents indicating that their laboratories had been excluded from the list of approved test sites.

UR was originally among seven research facilities that had obtained the Vatican's tentative approval to participate in testing the shroud.

An April 9, 1987, *Courier-Journal* article described the technique Gove hoped to use in testing the shroud. The method — which utilizes a nuclear-particle accelerator to determine the age of a substance by accurately measuring its carbon-14 content — requires that only minute samples of the substance be destroyed.

In the article, Gove lamented the fact that the Vatican has delayed its decision so long. "I don't lust to test the shroud," he said. "I think there are some questions that science can answer, and some that might better remain unanswered. I'd just like (the Vatican) to say, one way or another."

The shroud, a strip of linen cloth measuring 14 feet long by 3 feet wide, bears the image of a crucified man. According to local shroud expert Father George Rosenkranz, CSSR, the image — which resembles a photographic negative — is of a Jewish male about age 30; the head, wrists, feet and side are marked by wounds, and the face is bruised.

In their January 15 press conference, Gove and Harbottle argued that mistakes in carbon-14 testing are possible. If only three



UR physicist Dr. Harry Gove posed for this *Courier-Journal* photograph in April, 1987, when he still believed the Vatican would approve his plan to test shroud filaments.

laboratories were to test shroud samples, a mistake by one of them could leave the results uncertain, they stated.

Dating the Shroud of Turin "can probably be done only once, as the archbishop (Turin Cardinal Anastasio A. Ballestrero) intimates," the physicists' written statement said. "No matter what result is obtained, what date, a large group of people will be disappointed."

The two men claimed that the archbishop's plan ignores a protocol adopted at an autumn 1986 scientific workshop, sponsored by the cardinal and by the Pontifical Academy of Sciences, which called for having at least seven laboratories do the tests. Gove and Harbottle were among the

workshop participants.

"The archbishop's plan, disregarding the protocol, does not seem capable of producing a result that will meet the test of credibility and scientific rigor," Harbottle and Gove said. "The protocol was designed to convince all people, for all time, as to the correct date for the shroud."

They also noted that the parts of the shroud now approved to be tested would not include any portions of the image it bears. For this reason, they said, tests might prove the age of the cloth but not the age of the image on the cloth.

The Vatican had inherited the garment from Italian nobility, but the cloth is in the

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## Action draws debate:

## Bishop OKs removal of food, water for coma patient

By Julie Asher

Washington (NC) — A bishop's statement endorsing the cessation of food and water for a Rhode Island woman in an irreversible coma has sparked debate between those who view withdrawal of nutrition as a first step to legalized euthanasia and those who view it as ending extraordinary medical treatment.

Bishop Louis E. Gelineau of Providence, R.I., said January 11 that it would be within Catholic moral teaching to allow nutrition and hydration to be stopped for the woman, Marcia Gray, 48, who has been in a coma for two years.

Gray is being fed through a jejunostomy tube surgically placed in the middle part of the small intestine.

Bishop Gelineau's statement was believed to be the first instance in which a Catholic diocese had approved the discontinuing of feeding.

Boston physician Dr. Joseph Stanton, a spokesman for the International Anti-Euthanasia Task Force, based at the Franciscan University of Steubenville, Ohio, expressed grave concern about Bishop Gelineau's stand. Forty years ago, he said, "the starvation of human persons to death was judged at Nuremberg to be a crime against humanity."

But Laurence O'Connell of the Catholic Health Association said a careful distinction has been made "between food and water in the ordinary sense and artificially administered nutrition and hydration."

"These things have to be case-specific," said O'Connell, vice president for theology, mission and ethics for the St. Louis-based association. "Food and water are no more basic than air, and people find it acceptable to remove a respirator."

Bishop Gelineau's statement supported the opinion of diocesan moral theologian Father Robert J. McManus that Gray had no "reasonable hope for recovery" and that medical treatments, even the use of the feeding tube were, were "disproportionate and unduly burdensome."

The bishop said he asked Father McManus, vicar of education in the diocese, to review the case of Gray, who fell into a coma two years ago after suffering a cerebral hemorrhage.

One Catholic official, Monsignor Orville Griese of the Pope John XXIII Medical-Moral Research and Education Center in Braintree, Mass., said January 13 the issue was "an open question" and not clearly

settled by the Vatican.

Church teaching has traditionally held that ordinary treatments must be provided to dying patients but that treatments that are extraordinary are not required.

A 1980 declaration on euthanasia issued by the Vatican said in caring for the terminally ill it is not necessary to impose a technique "which carries a risk or is burdensome" but said that "normal care is due the sick person." The 1980 statement did not mention specifically nutrition and hydration.

In 1985 the Pontifical Academy of Sciences said if a person is in a permanent irreversible coma "treatment is not required, but all care should be lavished on him, including feeding."

The American Academy of Medical Ethics, which includes Catholic theologians, said in a recent statement it was "never right and ought never be legally permitted" to deny food and water for those permanently unconscious or seriously debilitated "as a

means of securing their deaths."

Monsignor Griese said the presumption has been that food and water are ordinary care and "that human life is never a burden."

He called Bishop Gelineau's statement "surprising" given that other U.S. bishops have been "so clearly on the other side."

Last October, the New Jersey Catholic bishops said they opposed the removal of feeding tubes in "right-to-die" cases, calling it as "unnatural as denying one the air to breathe."

In mid-December the bishops of North Dakota criticized a county court ruling to allow the family of a 62-year-old comatose woman to stop her feeding through use of a bulb-like syringe, a procedure begun when the court ruled earlier that her feeding tube should be withdrawn.

The bishops said it was "an extremely dangerous step in the decline of respect for human life."

## Salvadoran judge denies amnesty bid from killers of three churchwomen

San Salvador, El Salvador (NC) — A Salvadoran judge has rejected the amnesty appeal of five former national guardsmen convicted of murdering four U.S. churchwomen in 1980.

"The court finds the appeal for amnesty to be without grounds and therefore rejects it," Judge Consuelo Salazar Alvarenga de Revelo of the 1st Criminal Court of Zacatecoluca was quoted as saying. The judge also said her January 8 ruling could not be appealed.

The convicted killers had appealed under a political amnesty granted in El Salvador as part of a Central American peace plan. But Judge Alvarenga de Revelo said they were common criminals, not political prisoners.

The five men were sentenced to 30 years imprisonment on May 23, 1984, for the slaying of three U.S. nuns and a lay missionary December 2, 1980.

The bodies of the women were found in shallow graves on the roadside between the national airport and San Salvador, the capital. Each had been shot in the head.

They were Maryknoll Sisters Ita Ford and Maura Clarke, Ursuline Sister Dorothy Kazel and lay missionary Jean Donovan.

An official at the U.S. Embassy in San Salvador said the judge's decision "supports

our position from the beginning."

Former guardsmen Luis Antonio Colindres Aleman, Carlos Joaquin Contreras Palacios, Francisco Orlando Contreras Rencinos, Daniel Canales Ramirez and Jose Roberto Moreno Canjura were given the maximum sentence for aggravated homicide and robbery.

All were enlisted men.

In 1985, Contreras' attorney said his client had been forced into a "conspiracy" to cover up the involvement of high-ranking officers in the case.

The attorney, Salvador Antonio Ibarra, said he did not pursue that angle of the case because "I feared for my life."

The U.S. government rejected Ibarra's claim, citing an independent investigation in 1983 by former New York judge Harold Tyler. Tyler said there was no "credible evidence" that the killers were following superiors' orders when they committed the murders.

In contrast to the decision on the appeal of the women's killers, amnesty was granted late last year to two former national guardsmen convicted as common criminals in the 1981 killing of two U.S. land reform advisers.