World & Nation

Theologians, canonists fault draft on bishops' conferences

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ta, told black Catholics to "share the joy" of his appointment as the nation's first black archbishop. He added that black Catholics were at a spe-

who we are and where we are as African Americans in the Church."

to develop a study on the topic. Two of the Catholic University

theologians who commented in America

magazine on the document — Jesuit Father

Avery Dulles and Father Joseph A.

Komonchak - suggested that its warnings

against the risks of bureaucracy ought to be

taken seriously by bishops' conferences, but

they need to be applied as well to other

organizational structures in the Church.

Father Dulles said the working paper

focused around two main theses: "that

episcopal conferences are not in the true and

proper sense collegial and that they have, as

including the Vatican bureaucracy.

a homily at Mass for participants in a March 25-27 symposium sponsored by the National Office for Black Catholics and the National Black Lay Catholic Caucus.

attended the conference at the Shrine of Our Lady of the Snows. The meeting's focus was developing plans for a lay leadership institute for black Catholics.

have had the appointment of the nation's first black archbishop," Archbishop Marino said. "I did not ask for the assignment; God chose me, and He will give me what is needed to serve

First black archbishop urges blacks to Belleville, Ill. (NC) — Archbishop Eugene An auxiliary bishop of Washington for 14 A. Marino, newly named archbishop of Atlanyears, Archbishop Marino was named the nation's first black archbishop on March 15. He is scheduled to be installed May 5.

such, no mandate to teach.

"Although many readers, like myself, will

find the arguments given for these positions

unpersuasive, the positions themselves need

to be taken seriously" because they represent

views held by Cardinal Joseph Ratzinger,

head of the doctrinal congregation, and some

descriptions of the relationship between

collegiality and bishops' conferences are so

"inconsistent and confusing," he said, that

"one reader wondered if the text was not the

work of several authors who did not agree

But he said the document's different

other top Church officials, he said.

with one another on the point."

'share joy'

In his homily, the archbishop cited as significant events for black Catholics during the past year the publication of a new black Catholic hymnal; the first National Black Catholic Congress of the century, held last May; Pope John Paul II's address to black Catholics in New Orleans during his 1987 trip; the appointment of the nation's 12th black bishop, Auxiliary Bishop Curtis John Guillory of Galveston-Houston; and his own appoint-

But he also told symposium participants that they need not look to "any leader for salvation, black or white," but "to Jesus Christ."

Archbishop Marino reminded the congregation that by living in a secular society, "a selfish society, we have to be wary of letting selfishness instead of self-sacrifice be the norm." He also said he feared black Catholics were getting away from their "spiritual roots as a people?'



1551 Mt. Hope Ave. (1 minute north of W. Henrietta Rd. exit of Rte. 390.) 461-1026

By Jerry Filteau Washington (NC) — Several leading U.S. theologians and Church law experts have

issued sharp criticisms of a proposed Vatican

statement concerning limits on the authority

of bishops' conferences. The draft statement

The 30-page document was sent to the

world's bishops in late January or early

February by Cardinal Bernardin Gantin,

head of the Vatican Congregation for Bish-

theologians and others, and National

Catholic News Service obtained a copy.

The document soon circulated among

In its March 19 issue, America, a Jesuit-

run national magazine, featured critiques of the draft from prominent theologians at

Catholic University of America theologians

and canon lawyers. The scholars said the

document must be taken seriously, but does

not give a balanced picture of the place of

In a Latin-language cover letter to bishops,

Cardinal Gantin emphasized that the draft

was a working paper, not a final document.

He asked the world's bishops to submit

comments and criticisms by the end of this

ences cannot properly be called collegial

bodies, and they should not become power-

ful at the expense of the Church's central

authority in Rome or the individual bishop's

The Vatican working paper calls bishops'

conferences "useful organs for examining,

debating and coordinating important ec-

clesial problems at the national or

But it warns that such conferences "have

no competence to establish doctrinal and

moral contents" and do not in themselves

have the teaching authority that, according

authority in his own diocese.

supraregional level."

The working paper says bishops' confer-

bishops' conferences in the Church.

ops, and was not immediately made public.

was written by top Vatican agencies.

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Archbishop Eugene A. Marino

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352-1400

ment as archbishop.

cial moment as they "continue to reflect on Archbishop Marino made the comments in

"All of you can share the joy now that we

the Church?"

all the world's bishops in union with the pope, and to individual bishops in union with

It particularly warns against "an excessive

bureaucracy" of national committees, of-

fices and staff in bishops' conferences,

bishops, who are then led to see the episconal

conference as a type of supergovernment of

ences since the Second Vatican Council was

one of several issues discussed by the 1985

extraordinary session of the world Synod of

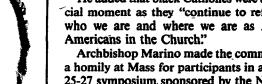
Bishops. Synod members asked the Vatican

The role and authority of bishops' confer-

'coercing the psychological freedom of the

the pope in their own dioceses

the dioceses.



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Dining Around the Diocese

The first issue of each month, the Courier-Journal will be featuring some prime dining spots in and around the Rochester diocese. If you, or someone you know would like to have your restaurant included in our Dining Guide, call the Courier-Journal at 328-4340: Look for our Dining Guide in the upcoming months, and pay a visit to the restaurant of your choice, and enjoy a pleasant evening of "Dining Around the Diocese."

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