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World & Nation

Thousands gather via satellite to discuss sharing 'good news'

By Cindy Wooden

Washington (NC) - Thousands of Catholics gathered at more than 250 sites in more than 85 U.S. dioceses on the eve of Pentecost "to discover the best and most effective ways to share the good news of Jesus.³

Archbishop Robert F. Sanchez of Santa Fe, N.M., welcomed participants - including 380 people gathered at two sites in Rochester and Elmira, N.Y., - to Pentecost '88, a satellite teleconference on evangelization, calling it an opportunity "to nourish and support the faith we have received.'

The May 21 teleconference, which originated in Washington, focused on practical ways to motivate and support Catholic lay people as they share their faith with the 90 million people in the United States -including some 16 million baptized Catholics - who do not attend church regularly.

"This year's presentations zeroed in on really practical help for evangelization," said Sister Mary Jean Smith, an organizer of the Southern Tier site. "A lot of people said they liked this year's (presentation) even better (than last year's.)"

Contacting every household within parish

boundaries is "a must as the foundation of any complete evangelization program," said William J. Bannon, president of Bannon Associates Inc., in Columbus, Ohio.

Bannon told the nationwide audience how conducting a door-to-door census of parish territory can help local evangelizers learn who their neighbors are, whether or not they go to church, and what their needs are.

"It is remarkable that after 2,000 years, we have accepted the importance of face-to-face contact that Jesus himself used," Bannon said.

It is not the role of census-takers to defend the Church or Church practices that may have alienated Catholics, said Father Joseph M. Champlin, vicar for parish life and worship in the Diocese of Syracuse, N.Y.

If they have the gift of listening, they will be a success," said Father Champlin, who supervised a 1987 door-to-door visitation of 400,000 homes in his diocese. "If even one person comes back, it's worth the effort."

·Parish-based evangelization programs must provide "companions for the journey," said Patricia Barbernitz, pastoral associate at St. Joseph Parish in Sykesville, Md.

The need is especially true for "returning Catholics," she said. "The feeling of isola-tion is so magnified when one tries to come home but finds the family so changed.'

Paulist Father Alvin A. Illig, director of Pentecost '88 and founder of the Paulist National Catholic Evangelization Association, dedicated the second annual "satellite celebration" to Mary, "the first Christian evangelizer."

A "Marian model of evangelization," he said, begins with the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, who came upon Mary at the Annunciation and came to the apostles on Pentecost,

enabling them to "go forth and preach to all nations."

Local participation in Pentecost '88 more than doubled over last year's teleconference, which was offered only in Elmira.

Father Ed Palumbos, a Rochester-area organizer, has already arranged to take part in Pentecost '89, and envisions filling the Dome Arena in Henrietta.

"I personally am hoping we can quadruple attendance next year," he said. "From a technical point of view, it was flawless - a wonderful experience of using technology to touch people and bring them together.'

Vatican-Lefebvre agreement stalled

Vatican City (NC) — Despite reports that a reconciliation has been reached with dissident French Archbishop Marcel Lefebvre, the Vatican indicated no "definitive agreement" was concluded as of May

In a one-sentence statement broadcast on Vatican Radio, Vatican press spokesman Joaquin Navarro-Valls said an agreement would be announced as soon as it is



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concluded.

The Swiss news agency ATS reported May 20 that the archbishop said he had reached an agreement with the Vatican May 5 which would implicitly allow him to consecrate bishops.

But he was also quoted as saying he would go ahead with consecrations on June 30 with or without approval by the Vatican."

Archbishop Lefebvre has rejected the reforms of the Second Vatican Council, and has ordained priests against Vatican orders - an activity for which the Holy See suspended him from the ministry.

Some sources said there has been progress in the ongoing discussions between the Vatican and Archbishop Lefebvre.

But, according to one knowledgable account, a final accord is stalled, at least partly on the issue of a successor to the 82-year-old archbishop.

By this account, Archbishop Lefebvre wants to ordain a man from among his followers to inherit leadership of the traditionalist movement. But the Vatican reportedly rejects that plan.

The status of the rebel clergyman's society also remains unresolved, according to the

If Archbishop Lefebvre ordains bishops by the end of June without the Vatican's approval, it would mean automatic excommunication for him and raise the

On May 20, he told journalists that "one thing is sure. Next June 20 at Econe (Switzerland), I will consecrate several bishops, with or without approval by the Vatican. I just hope it will be with Rome's approval."



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