



Crusading Catholics

The Rev. Billy Graham's weeklong crusade has produced a powerful, but as yet unmeasured impact on record numbers of Catholic individuals and diocesan parishes. Pages 8 and 9.



Fresh faces

A multitude of new faces will be seen on the soccer fields this fall, as players and coaches for diocesan girls' teams work toward qualifying for the sectionals. Page 7.

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DPC focuses on pastoral, assemblies

By Teresa A. Parsons

Diocesan Pastoral Council members learned at their first meeting of the year Saturday, Sept. 17, that they will play a major role in organizing a series of regional assemblies this fall to discuss alternate models for parish staffing.

DPC members also learned, by means of a presentation and their own reactions to the U.S. bishops' pastoral draft on women in the Church, that while women are and will continue to be central to parish staffing and ministry, their concerns and roles are at best poorly understood by members of the Church's hierarchy.

"It seemed to me that the bishops were saying, 'Yes, we hear you, but we don't know how to answer,'" concluded one participant in the afternoon's open forum.

During the DPC's morning session, Father Paul Tomasso, secretary to Bishop Matthew H. Clark, outlined diocesan plans for 11 regional assemblies to gather reaction to various options for future parish staffing as the number of active priests continues to decline.

Assembly organizers are asking DPC members to telephone the parish council chairmen in each region, inviting their involvement; to contact staff members at the parishes hosting the assemblies and confirm the necessary arrangements — including audio-visual equipment and refreshments; to host the assembly itself; and to conduct the assembly prayer service.

With the first of the assemblies scheduled for September 24 in the Tompkins/Tioga region, and with at least one region — Livingston County — as yet unrepresented at the DPC despite an October 2 assembly date, many members wished for more lead time, despite diocesan offers of support and assistance.

"When I got home and started to read about all the things I was supposed to do, I started to panic a little bit," said Kathryn Wall, one of two DPC members from the Steuben Region, where an assembly is scheduled October 16.

Newly elected DPC Chairman William Spohn, who took part in planning the assemblies, pointed out that the DPC was given as much notice as possible given other constraints of planning. Spohn also welcomed the chance to contribute to an important diocesan initiative. "This is a golden opportunity to see what the DPC can do for the bishop and the diocese," he said.

DPC members and others who attended Saturday afternoon's open forum on the wom-

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Pope John Paul II blesses the sick during an impromptu walkabout in the National Stadium of Gaborone, before celebrating Mass at the end of his daylong visit to Botswana.

Papal trip marked by unusual, tragic events

By NC News Service

Pope John Paul's mid-September trip to five southern African states was punctuated by unexpected and tragic events.

He repeatedly called for reconciliation and good will in resolving the region's deeply rooted problems. But as he arrived in Lesotho, six people died in a bus hijacking — including the hijackers, who had demanded a conference with the pope.

Pope John Paul excluded white-minority-ruled South Africa from his itinerary at the insistence of that country's bishops, and condemned apartheid, the South African system of racial discrimination. But he briefly found himself at mid-trip the somewhat bemused guest of the South African government.

But Pope John Paul also found hope in Zimbabwe, his first stop, where black and white citizens and contending political forces appear to be working out their differences peacefully.

While he was flying from Rome to Zimbabwe, the pope told reporters covering his September 10-19 trip that apartheid is a "racist vision of human inequality" that "cannot be continued."

He praised imprisoned black anti-apartheid leader Nelson Mandela and said he hoped Mandela would be freed soon.

At the airport in Harare, Zimbabwe, September 10, Pope John Paul — without naming South Africa — said "powerful political, economic and ideological forces endanger the still-fragile stability of countries which are only beginning to consolidate their recently acquired independence."

But he also said that while he understood why the victims of apartheid might turn to violence, "from the moral point of view it is not a solution that one wishes to propose."

The pope also praised the government's program of national reconstruction, begun in 1980 after seven years of war.

He said Africa is looking to Zimbabwe "for a sign of a better future to be built on

the basis of justice and brotherhood under God, without discrimination."

But later that day he took a stand against controversial legislation which would reduce church control over church school policies and hiring.

"Civil law should respect the right of the responsible Catholic authorities to select the heads and the teachers of these institutions, so their Catholic character can be maintained," he told Zimbabwe's bishops.

He returned to the theme of reconciliation on September 12 in Bulawayo, Zimbabwe. The region's turbulent and sometimes bloody history is reflected in the city's name — which means "Place of Massacres."

Pope John Paul noted a recent political breakthrough will make southern Zimbabwe's minority Ndebele tribe a full partner in government with the majority Shona.

"You are trying to bring about the fulfillment of the prophecy of Isaiah, where he tells that people will hammer their swords into plowshares, their spears into sickles," he told participants in a Mass.

Apartheid underlay some of the pope's message in Botswana. In a meeting September 13 with priests, religious and laity in the capital, Gaborone, he praised local church efforts for extending aid to refugees from neighboring South Africa.

"You have witnessed the plight of those who are subjected by law to discrimination," he said. "And I gladly support you in your desire to be close to those who are unjustly deprived of their legitimate rights and lack decent living conditions."

The Vatican press spokesman, in a mid-trip interview, said the pope sought to provide ethical commentary on apartheid and other issues in the region, without becoming directly embroiled.

"The role of the Holy See in the political affairs of the area is not and does not want to be one of mediation in the diplomatic sense of the word," he said September 13. "But with its ethical insistence, the Holy See wants

to help create a climate in which dialogue can be possible."

The next day was one of the most unusual in any of the pope's years of traveling.

Fog and rain forced the papal plane to land at Johannesburg, South Africa, rather than its intended stop, Maseru, Lesotho.

The Vatican, at the urging of the South African bishops, had excluded that country from the pope's itinerary. One of their concerns was the image of the head of the Catholic Church being escorted and hosted by the government which keeps blacks, who make up the majority of South African Catholics, from full political and economic participation.

But the South Africans reacted swiftly to the unexpected arrival of the pontiff on their territory.

Shortly after the pope's Air Zimbabwe Boeing 707 landed at Jan Smuts airport, Foreign Minister Roelof "Pik" Botha was at the scene. Within a couple of hours, he had ordered 100 snacks for the pope, his entourage and the press corps traveling with the pontiff; had met privately with the pope, and had arranged a motorcade, escorted by South African police, to Maseru, 250 miles away.

Meanwhile, in Maseru, four gunmen claiming membership in the rebel Lesotho Liberation Army had taken a busload of Catholics traveling to attend events of the papal visit.

Within minutes after the pope's arrival in Maseru, South African commandos called in to handle the situation shot it out with the hijackers, killing three on the spot. One died later in the hospital. Two passengers also died and 20 were wounded.

Officials said the gunmen had wanted to speak with the pope, but the pontiff was not told of their demand until the incident was over.

At a papal Mass in Maseru September 15, a survivor of the hijacking, 49-year-old

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