

World & Nation

Cardinal says Seattle setup 'going well'

By Erin Van Bronkhorst

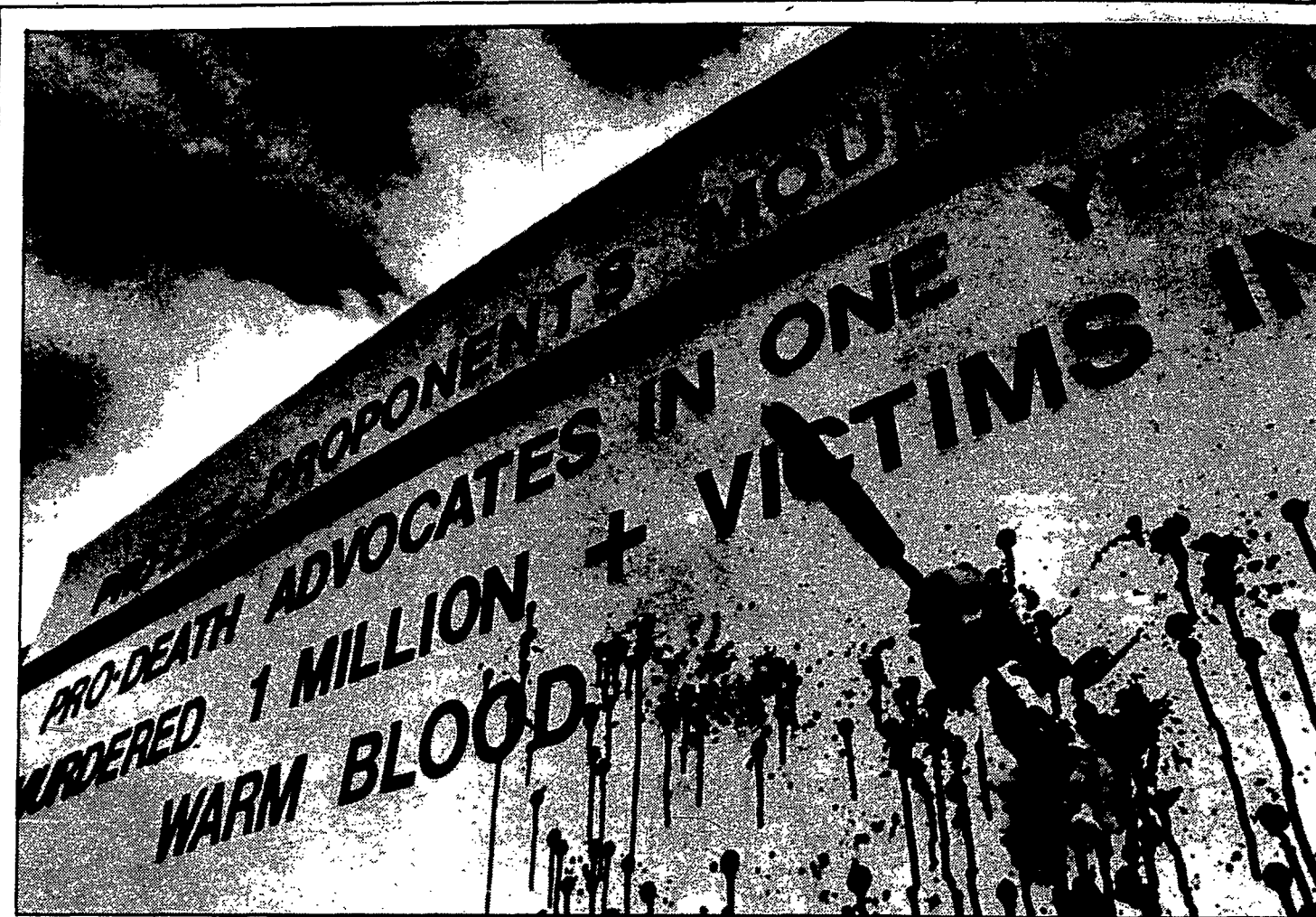
Seattle (NC) — A year after a Vatican-appointed commission began what it said would be a yearlong look at the Archdiocese of Seattle, Cardinal Joseph L. Bernardin of Chicago, the commission chairman, said that "things are going quite well from our perspective."

Cardinal Bernardin and Archbishop John R. Quinn of San Francisco, another member of the commission, met October 31 in Seattle with Archbishop Raymond G. Hunthausen and Coadjutor Archbishop Thomas J. Murphy.

Cardinal John J. O'Connor, the third commission member, was unable to go to Seattle for the commission's fifth meeting with the Seattle archbishops.

"It will be the responsibility of the Holy See to determine when the work of the commission should be terminated," Cardinal Bernardin said in a statement to National Catholic News Service in Washington. Last February the cardinal had said he expected the commission's final report to be completed in October.

The commission was appointed in 1987 to assess the archdiocesan situation. The members had helped resolve the controversy that followed a September 1986 announcement that the Vatican had directed Archbishop Hunthausen to delegate final decision-making authority over several areas of archdiocesan life to his auxiliary bishop.



UPI/NC News
GRAPHIC BILLBOARD — Despite several complaints, the minister of Denver's Lovingway United Pentecostal Church vows to leave this graphic anti-abortion sign standing. The Rev. Maurice Gordon says he used some of his own blood — plus a large knife and a baby doll — to make the sign in opposition to an upcoming ballot initiative on providing public funds for abortions.

Discard Vatican draft statement, report urges U.S. bishops

By Jerry Filteau

Washington (NC) — The U.S. bishops, at their November 14-17 general meeting, will be asked to approve a report urging the Vatican to throw out its first draft of a statement on the status of conferences of bishops — such as the National Conference of Catholic Bishops in this country — and start over.

They also will be asked to approve an extensive paper analyzing and criticizing religious restrictions in Eastern Europe.

The agenda for the meeting in Washington, released October 25, includes 17 other issues awaiting decisions by the bishops, among them:

- a statement on bishop-theologian relations and on guidelines for resolving conflicts between the two.
- guidelines for the use of lay preachers at Catholic services in the United States.
- a call for normalization of U.S. relations with Vietnam.
- a call to expand the U.S. legalization of illegal immigrants and to change laws that penalize employers of undocumented aliens.
- a task force report assessing how the Catholic Church in the United States should be addressing issues of food and agriculture

in the world today.

• a move to make their 19-year-old Campaign for Human Development a permanent part of the bishops' national activities.

• a resolution marking the 10th anniversary of the bishops' 1978 "Pastoral Statement on Handicapped People."

• seven separate actions on liturgical texts or commemorations for particular U.S. feasts or special anniversary occasions.

The four-day meeting in Washington of the NCCB and U.S. Catholic Conference is an annual mid-November event.

Statements and reports that the bishops must vote on take up nearly 450 typed pages. Information reports to the bishops, on which no action is required, are an additional 139 pages of single-spaced typed pages.

The draft Vatican document which the U.S. bishops will discuss was sent out from Rome earlier this year and is on the theological and juridical status of bishops' conferences.

The document takes a negative view of the collegial character and teaching authority of bishops' conferences and argues that such conferences, formed around the world at the urging of the Second Vatican Council, exist

primarily for practical reasons and not because of any theological foundation.

When the bishops met in Collegeville, Minn., last June, Archbishop John L. May of St. Louis, NCCB-USCC president, argued in his presidential address that bishops' conferences do have a collegial character, do have teaching authority and do have a theological as well as practical foundation.

The proposal urging the Vatican to scrap the document comes in a report written by Archbishop May and all former NCCB-USCC presidents, whom he formed into a special committee last June to respond to the Vatican document.

Their report, which requires a two-thirds vote of the bishops, concludes that despite some helpful ideas in the Vatican document, on the whole it is so inconsistent and inadequate that "it is not suitable as a basis for discussion and should be replaced with another draft."

The ex-presidents said they were "following the example" of the bishops at the Second Vatican Council, who threw out initial drafts of several key council documents.

A 64-page "Statement on Religious Liberty in Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union"

has been submitted to the bishops by the USCC Committee on International Policy. A two-thirds vote is required for approval.

The statement spells out Catholic teaching on religious freedom and looks individually at situations of "religious repression and intolerance" in the Soviet Union, Albania, Bulgaria, Czechoslovakia, East Germany, Hungary, Poland, Romania and Yugoslavia.

It says current "breezes of renewal" in that region raise hopes for greater freedom of religion, and it calls for a wide range of "individual and corporate efforts" to support those facing persecution and to improve their legal and factual standing in Soviet-bloc nations.

A much shorter "Statement on Vietnam," also submitted by the USCC Committee on International Policy and requiring a two-thirds vote for approval, focuses on U.S. relations with that Southeast Asian country.

"It is time to come to terms with the tragedy of Vietnam and the U.S. role there," the statement says. It calls for normalization of diplomatic relations as a needed step toward U.S.-Vietnamese resolution of "vital mutual problems."

A proposed statement on bishops' relations with theologians titled "Doctrinal Responsibilities," which was tabled last November when the bishops ran out of time to debate it, has been revised since then in light of written suggestions by the bishops.

Last year Archbishop J. Francis Stafford of Denver sharply criticized the document just before the end of the bishops' meeting, saying that it had serious errors in theology. His motion to require a major rewriting of the whole document was voted down, however.

The document gives a brief overview of the respective rights and responsibilities of bishops and theologians in the Church, suggests different ways that bishops and theologians should work to promote mutual understanding and cooperation, and offers guidelines for approaching situations in which a bishop and a theologian may find themselves in potential conflict.

A two-thirds vote is needed for approval of the 57-page document. It is being presented to the bishops as primarily a practical, pastoral guide while their Committee on Doctrine works on a larger, more systematic theological document on "The Teaching Mission of the Diocesan Bishop."

In addition to other issues, the bishops must vote on a proposed 1989 NCCB-USCC budget of \$30.6 million — up about \$1.2 million from 1988 — and a proposed diocesan assessment of 15.7 cents per Catholic in 1990 to help fund NCCB-USCC activities.

Proposed guidelines will retain ban on lay homilies

By Cindy Wooden

Washington (NC) — Guidelines for lay preaching to be voted on by the U.S. bishops give examples of situations where lay preaching would be permitted, but retain the centuries-long ban on lay people giving homilies at Mass.

The U.S. bishops are scheduled to vote on the guidelines during their November 14-17 general meeting in Washington.

According to the proposed guidelines, lay people may preach at prayer services, Communion services and other liturgies outside of Mass, especially when a priest or deacon is not available.

The guidelines also describe circumstances when lay people may preach during Mass, as long as they do not give the homily — a function reserved to bishops, priests and deacons.

The guidelines were prepared by the bishops' Committee on Pastoral Research and Practice in consultation with their committees on liturgy, laity and canonical affairs. Passage of the guidelines requires approval by two-thirds of the bishops and confirmation by the Vatican.

The Code of Canon Law authorized bishops conferences to develop guidelines for times when it is "necessary" or

"advantageous" for a lay person to preach. Permission for a lay person to preach must come from the diocesan bishop or his delegate, the guidelines state. Individual dioceses would develop more specific policies based on local needs and resources.

With a shortage of priests and the growing number of parishes administered by a deacon, religious or lay person, many U.S. dioceses have communities where Sunday worship services have been held without a priest presiding.

The "Directory for Sunday Celebrations in the Absence of a Priest," issued in 1983 by the Vatican Congregation for Divine Worship, allowed that in such cases a lay person who reads the Gospel and the homily may give the homily. The homily must be approved by the bishop or his delegate.

The proposed guidelines state that lay preaching should be limited to the reading of the Gospel and the homily. The homily should be approved by the bishop or his delegate. The guidelines also state that lay preaching should be limited to the reading of the Gospel and the homily.

Cases where lay preaching is allowed to preach during Mass include: when a priest is not available; when a priest is unable to preach; when a priest is unable to preach; when a priest is unable to preach.

children, when a priest is unable to preach; when a priest is unable to preach; when a priest is unable to preach.

In liturgical situations outside of Mass, the preaching would take place at the time designated by the liturgical text, usually after the Gospel reading.

"The preaching is a continuation of the Word of God in the liturgy, and should not be considered as a separate event," the guidelines state.

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