

## World &amp; Nation

## Aid imposes 'contraceptive imperialism,' bishops charge

By John Thavis

Vatican City (NC) — At a two-day meeting on Catholic teaching on birth control, bishops from around the world charged wealthy nations with "imposing" contraceptive policies as the price for financial aid to the developing countries.

The bishops said foreign aid policies represented a type of "contraceptive imperialism" harmful to Third World families, according to a statement released by the Vatican during the November 7-8 meeting.

The statement said development aid was often "contingent on massive programs of contraception and sterilization, (thus) damaging family life, undermining the health of women and violating human rights."

A U.S. participant, Auxiliary Bishop James T. McHugh of Newark, N.J. — a leading Church expert on family issues — said most of the complaints on contraceptive programs came from Third World bishops. He said they asked U.S. bishops to raise the issue of "coercion" with U.S. and international aid agencies.

"They don't want demographic goals to be set as conditions for aid," Bishop McHugh said in an interview. He said the aid programs were hurting the effectiveness of the Church's marriage and family programs in the developing nations.

Bishop McHugh said some of the complaints were directed against the U.S. Agency for International Development, as well as the World Bank, the International Monetary Fund and the International Planned Parenthood Federation.

In a talk at the meeting, Bishop McHugh said it was true that major international finance agencies and the most affluent countries are still making fertility control a "first step" to aid. Although this attitude has lessened among U.S. government agencies in recent years, it has not altogether disappeared, he said later.

Bishop McHugh also challenged some of the assumptions behind population control. In his speech he cited a demographer, Roger Revelle, who asserts that the world's agricultural resources are capable of supporting a population of 40 billion people.

This could be done by expanded use of agricultural lands and improvement of yields, Bishop McHugh said.

Major international development agencies, such as the World Bank, and research groups such as the Washington-based Worldwatch Institute, promote population control as vital to development programs.

While temporary food problems are caused by poor distribution, wars or natural disasters, "mass starvation is not a prospect," the bishop said.

A paper by Cardinal Joseph Cordeiro of Karachi, Pakistan, which was read at the meeting, accused multinational drug companies of using poorer countries as "dumping grounds for contraceptive drugs and abortifacients of various kinds."

He also questioned whether seminary programs worldwide are adequately stressing the Church's birth control teachings.

Cardinal Jean Margeot, bishop of Port-Louis on the Indian Ocean island-nation of Mauritius, described to participants his diocese's natural family planning program, considered one of the most effective in the world.

Cardinal Margeot said it was a "paradox" that while the Church was fighting to protect the dignity and health of women, it also had to face the "heavy artillery" of women's liberation movements.

In fact, he said, the Church is on the side of women — those who are pressured to take birth control pills, who are sterilized under government programs, who are forced to undergo the trauma of abortions, and who are badgered by husbands to "sort it out with your doctor, but don't become pregnant."

Bishop McHugh said the problem of dissent from "Humanae Vitae" ("Of Human Life"), the 1968 encyclical on birth control, was raised at the meeting, but not in a big way. For one thing, he said, bishops from many parts of the world, such as Africa, do not experience much dissent on the issue. Their problem, he said, is to give their faithful a "pastoral solution to family planning" — through marriage preparation programs that include natural family planning instruction.

Natural family planning techniques rely on a period of sexual abstinence in order to avoid conception.

Bishop McHugh said no one at the meeting had suggested that the Church needs to take

a new look at its teaching on birth control, or the theology behind it. The idea now, he said, was to expand the "philosophical and theological base of our teaching" so that the norms are seen in a broader context.

The Church's point of view, he said, is better understood now than 20 years ago. But in promoting its teaching, the Church is "barely holding its own" because of increasing secularism, consumerism, an emphasis on the individual and "worldwide sexual permissiveness."

The Vatican meeting was sponsored by the Pontifical Council for the Family, and included representatives from about 60 bishops' conferences.

## Jesus didn't say 'Lord's Prayer'

By Cindy Wooden

Washington (NC) — A group of biblical scholars has concluded that the Lord's Prayer contains four phrases similar to things Jesus would have said, but the prayer as a whole was not composed by Jesus.

Only the use of the Aramaic word "Abba" (Father) in reference to God can be traced directly to Jesus, said members of the Jesus Seminar, a group of biblical scholars and early Church historians who met in Atlanta last month.

The scholars, who come from various religious traditions, said the four petitions in the prayer which are paraphrases of what Jesus said are: "hallowed be thy name," "thy kingdom come," "give us this day our daily bread," and "forgive us our debts."

Calling God "Father" or "Abba," the seminar members agreed, "probably represents the strongest direct verbal link we have with Jesus' native tongue," said Robert W. Funk,

founder and co-chairman of the seminar, in a statement issued after the meeting.

The scholar's opinion should not have an adverse effect on Christians, said another seminar member, the Rev. Hal Taussig, who teaches part time at Jesuit-run St. Joseph's University in Philadelphia.

"Of course, the prayer that has been used liturgically over the centuries is found nowhere in the Bible," Rev. Taussig, a Methodist minister, told National Catholic News Service October 28.

Versions of the prayer appear in the sixth chapter of Matthew's Gospel and in the 11th chapter of Luke. Neither version contains the concluding lines: "For thine is the kingdom, the power and the glory now and forever."

The scholars believe Luke's version of the prayer was first formulated in Christian communities between the years 40 and 70. Matthew's enlarged version was probably written 20 years later.

## Mother Teresa expected to launch mission in South African township

Cape Town, South Africa (NC) — On her first visit to white-ruled South Africa, Mother Teresa of Calcutta visited Khayelitsha, an impoverished black township erected by government order near Cape Town, where she is expected to establish a hostel run by members of her Missionaries of Charity nuns.

The diminutive missionary turned aside press questions on South African racial segregation — apartheid — and the country's political turmoil.

"I never mix in politics," Mother Teresa said November 8 at the beginning of her visit in South Africa. Her schedule includes meetings with church workers in major cities and a visit to another black township near Pretoria.

"To tell the truth, I don't know anything about politics," the 78-year-old nun said. "What is important is that we love one another."

She said the purpose of her trip was to "give tender loving care to the poorest of the poor."

She said she would need a week to study the situation in Khayelitsha before deciding what services it could use from her order.

Mother Teresa was accompanied to Khayelitsha by four of her missionary sisters and Archbishop Stephen Naidoo of Cape

Town. Sister Bethany, one of the four nuns traveling with her, was born and raised in a wealthy white neighborhood of Cape Town called Rondebosch, but later moved to England.

Archbishop Naidoo said the missionaries' visit capped a 10-year effort by the archdiocese. It took a decade from the time the archdiocese first extended an invitation to Mother Teresa to obtain permission from the governments of India and South Africa for her visit, he said.

"All this has come together over the past few days," Archbishop Naidoo said, according to the New York Times.

Khayelitsha is a settlement of approximately 250,000 on a sandy, treeless plain 22 miles from Cape Town — one of South Africa's major cities and site, in 1652, of its first white settlement.

The township was created by government order in 1983 as a location for the residents of several squatter camps in the Cape Town area.

Mother Teresa was born in Yugoslavia, became a missionary in Calcutta, and founded her order in 1950. In 1979, she was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize for her work among the world's destitute.

There are Missionaries of Charity in 84 countries, including 40 African nations.



AP/Wide World Photos  
Mother Teresa, the Nobel Peace prize-winning nun, arrived Tuesday, Nov. 8, on her first trip to racially divided South Africa. She said she hoped to steer clear of political controversy during her one-week visit as she plans to establish a mission in Khayelitsha, an impoverished black township outside Cape Town.

Joanne Curran, LPN, with Loretta Fritsch




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