

IN BRIEF

Hope for Mother Teresa

VATICAN CITY (CNS) — The doctor of Mother Teresa of Calcutta has expressed "great hope" that her health will improve.

"The situation leaves plenty of room for hope, in that for two days she has not had a fever and as a result her cardio-circulatory situation has improved," Dr. Vincenzo Bilotta said Sept. 18. Bilotta, Mother Teresa's heart specialist, traveled to India to advise her Indian doctors.

Mother Teresa's fever has been brought under control with medication, said Bilotta, who noted that Mother Teresa has survived and returned to good health after previous ailments, including a severe heart problem in 1983.

However, in Calcutta, a Sept. 18 medical bulletin issued by Woodland Nursing Home said Mother Teresa's fever had been controlled, but added that "her continuing chest pains remain a cause of anxiety."

The 79-year-old nun, foundress of the Missionaries of Charity, was well enough to receive a visit from her niece, Agi Gilda Dauro, who arrived from West Germany.

Mother Teresa was admitted to the nursing home Sept. 5, and doctors said she would have to remain there at least until the end of the month.

Bishop: 'Cuomo caved in'

CAMDEN, N.J. (CNS) — Camden Bishop James T. McHugh said New York Gov. Mario M. Cuomo has "caved in to the political pressure" by making remarks that favor a woman's right to abortion.

Cuomo, a Catholic, said Sept. 9 that abortion "must be a matter of the woman's conscience" and that it was "presumptuous" for a man to make judgments about abortion.

Bishop McHugh — a member of the U.S. bishops' Committee for Pro-Life Activities — said Cuomo's latest remarks on abortion are a result of abortion rights groups' use of "money, media and threats of political retaliation to intimidate candidates for public office, and to some degree they are succeeding."

Bishop McHugh said, "It has become increasingly fashionable for Catholics, and others presumed to be Catholic, to hide behind the separation of personal conscience from public responsibility. They lack the courage ... to sacrifice political position and even to die for their faith."

Collection generates grants

WASHINGTON (CNS) — Nearly \$23 million in grants has been distributed by the Retirement Fund for Religious to 484 congregations of men and women religious. Another \$2 million in supplemental grants will be given in December. The funds come from the Retirement Fund for Religious campaign conducted last December in parishes across the United States.

The campaign collected \$25.4 million. The collection was the first of a 10-year appeal by the Tri-Conference Retirement Office.

Caucus offers to mediate

SPRINGFIELD, Mass. (CNS) — The vice president of the National Black Clergy Caucus has urged Father George A. Stallings Jr. to enter into a process the caucus designed to unite the priest with Cardinal James A. Hickey of Washington. "The longer we wait, the more complex the issue becomes," Father Warren J. Savage said, adding that the caucus was hoping Father Stallings would respond within a week to the caucus' mediation offer.

Gains seen in relations with Soviets

By Bill Pritchard
Catholic News Service

WASHINGTON — The Vatican apparently made another gain in its diplomatic campaign in the politically turbulent East bloc, as Hungary announced in mid-September that it is ready to establish formal relations with the Holy See.

Hungary would be the second Warsaw Pact nation, after Poland, to exchange ambassadors with the Vatican city-state. The Vatican and Poland, which elected its first non-communist government in more than 40 years, announced on Aug. 26 that they had exchanged ambassadors for the first time since 1945.

Meanwhile, Soviet President Mikhail Gorbachev said he wants to meet with Pope John Paul II when he visits Rome this November, according to the Soviet ambassador to Italy.

In other Catholic news from Eastern Europe, celebrations were held in Poland on the installation of a Ukrainian Catholic bishop assigned to the pastoral care of his co-religionists in that country. Across the border in the Soviet Union, Ukrainian Catholics continued a campaign to legalize their Eastern-rite church.

In East Berlin, newly ordained Bishop Georg Sterzinsky wondered out loud about the motives of thousands of East Germans who took advantage of a Hungarian policy to emigrate to the West.

Hungary's diplomatic move toward the Vatican was the subject of commentary by officials of the two states. The commentary appeared to signal that an exchange of ambassadors might take place in the near future.

A Hungarian government spokesman said in Budapest Sept. 14 that Prime Minister Miklos Nemeth had written Vatican Secretary of State Cardinal Agostino Casaroli, asking for diplomatic relations. The two states have been in formal dialogue for 25 years.

The same day, the Vatican newspaper, *L'Osservatore Romano*, said in an editorial marking the quarter-century of talks that the Vatican is prepared to begin discussions leading to official links.

In an editorial, it supported Hungary's "new initiatives in political, cultural and social life inspired by the demands of fundamental human rights." It also praised the country for showing "special sensitivity in defense of the principle of religious freedom."

A Vatican official, who asked for anonymity, said of the Hungarians, "If they



For the first time in some 40 years, celebrations of the feast of St. Stephen in Budapest, Hungary, included a formal outdoor procession, with the golden shrine containing relics honoring the medieval saint.

ask, we would like to have diplomatic relations."

"The Holy See has declared that it is ready to begin the necessary negotiations," *L'Osservatore Romano* said.

Although there is no hint yet of the Vatican and the Soviet Union establishing formal relations, Gorbachev has expressed an interest in talking with Pope John Paul about nuclear war and other issues.

The Soviet leader had written the pope in August about face-to-face discussions during his visit to Italy, the Associated Press reported, quoting an unidentified Vatican official.

Asked about Gorbachev's interest in meeting the pope, Soviet ambassador to Italy Nikolai Lunkov said it is necessary "to interest oneself in the actions favoring peace and detente undertaken by the more than 800 million Catholics." Lunkov confirmed the Soviet leader's wish to confer with the pope in an Italian radio interview Sept. 10.

The Vatican made no immediate com-

ment on Lunkov's remarks nor on the AP story, but last January, Cardinal Casaroli said Pope John Paul is "always available" to meet when Gorbachev comes to Rome. The cardinal also predicted that prospects for furthering Soviet-Vatican relations are good.

Lunkov said in commenting on the Gorbachev visit that it would be premature to predict diplomatic relations would be established very soon.

"In everything, we must be realistic," the ambassador said.

If the meeting between the two leaders takes place, it will come at a time of increasing pressure on the Soviet government from Ukrainian Catholics for legalization of their church.

That church marked a milestone, Sept. 16, with the installation of the first Ukrainian Catholic bishop to publicly take office in the East bloc in 43 years.

Bishop Ivan Martyniak was installed as pastoral head of the estimated 500,000 Uk-

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Bishops condemn killing of South African activist



Protestant clergymen the Rev. Peter Storey (left); Rev. Frank Chikane (center), secretary general of the South African Council of Churches; and Bishop Duncan Buchanan lead about 10,000 protesters Sept. 15 through the heart of Johannesburg to a police headquarters where countless activists have been detained and interrogated.

PRETORIA, South Africa (CNS) — The Southern African Catholic Bishops' Conference has condemned the assassination of Anton Lubowski, an official of the South-West Africa People's Organization.

Lubowski, a white lawyer-activist for SWAPO, was shot dead outside his home in Windhoek, Namibia, Sept. 12.

"Namibia can ill afford the loss of persons of the quality of Mr. Lubowski, committed as he was to the establishment of justice, peace and democracy," the bishops said in a statement Sept. 14.

"We pray that the Lubowski assassination will not deter all those working for justice and freedom in Namibia from continuing to do so," the bishops said.

The bishops called on Namibia's administrator general, Louis Pienaar, and the United Nations to take precautions to ensure prevention of similar acts.

The Southern African Catholic Bishops' Conference includes bishops from South Africa, Namibia, Botswana and Swaziland.