

# Pope plans to issue social encyclical in 1991

By Agostino Bono  
Catholic News Service

VATICAN CITY — Pope John Paul II plans to issue a social encyclical in 1991 updating church teachings "in the light of the new issues and problems of our time."

The pope announced his plans Jan. 1 and said the new encyclical would commemorate the 100th anniversary of *Rerum Novarum*, Pope Leo XIII's landmark social encyclical that formed the foundations of modern church teachings.

No date was given for publication of the new encyclical. Pope Leo's encyclical was

published May 15, 1891.

The pope also declared 1991 as the "year of the social teaching of the church" and asked Catholics to study, develop and spread the church's social doctrine.

The announcements were made during the pope's New Year's homily at a morning Mass in St. Peter's Basilica.

Through its social teachings the church "strives to clarify with the light of the Gospel the everyday life of men and women within the different communities to which they belong — from the family to international society," the pope said.

The formulation of social doctrine is "assisted by the Spirit and sustained at the same time by the judgment of theologians and specialists in the social sciences," he said.

*Rerum Novarum* was "the first social encyclical of modern times," and the new encyclical "will endeavor to appropriate its heritage" and update it in the light of contemporary problems, he added.

The pope did not mention the specific issues to be contained in the new encyclical. During his 12-year pontificate, he has stressed:

- The need for a new world economic order to close the widening gap between rich and poor nations.
- Governmental respect for human rights, especially religious liberty.
- An end to the arms race based on viable nuclear and conventional disarmament agreements.

mament agreements.

- Greater government protection and promotion of family life.
- Opposition to artificial birth control programs as a means of stemming population growth.

The new encyclical also would give Pope John Paul an opportunity to detail his ideas for reconstructing Europe in the wake of the collapse of communist rule through most of Eastern Europe. The pope often has called for an end to the ideological barriers dividing Europe and for unity based on the continent's Christian heritage.

Pope Leo's encyclical was written primarily about the condition of workers at a time when the Industrial Revolution was deeply changing European society, especially through the development of a large, unorganized, urban industrial working class subject to exploitation.

## Apparitions

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judgment on Medjugorje, it is recognized that visitors will continue to arrive there and need closer pastoral guidance.

"It's almost impossible to stop the pilgrimages, but we need to take care of these people," he said.

Bishop Pavao Zanic of Mostar-Duvno, the diocese that includes Medjugorje, has been one of the strongest critics of events there. He said long ago he did not believe the apparitions were authentic, and he denounced the way local Franciscan priests

guided the young "visionaries" and promoted Medjugorje as a place of pilgrimage.

Bishop Zanic has said he is especially upset by the way in which the authority of Mary's "messages" has been asserted against his own episcopal authority.

A Vatican doctrinal official, who asked not to be identified, said the bishops' cautionary statement against defining the apparitions as supernatural should be accepted by the faithful around the world.

"The meaning is clear. The bishops have reached this conclusion at this point in time, based on the research performed," he said.

## Audit

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Bishop Lyke said.

The audit was conducted by Coopers and Lybrand, an independent auditing firm, under the direction of an independent investigating commission chaired by Coca-Cola Co. President Donald R. Keough. Bishop Lyke established the commission last August with instructions to investigate any possible use of archdiocesan or parish funds for Long's benefit.

According to the Keough commission, the auditors spent 1,500 hours reviewing more than 30,000 checks and other financial records of the archdiocese and the

three parishes that were audited.

In the third parish — St. Jude's in Sandy Springs, which was audited for a 14-month period during which Father Woods was pastor there — no parish funds were spent on Long's behalf.

Ironically, the audit itself cost the Atlanta Archdiocese \$84,000, although Coopers and Lybrand charged only half the firm's standard rate.

"While this is a large sum of money and while this represents monies that I would have rather used for the many needs we have in the archdiocese and for our ministries to the poor, I consider it a comparatively small amount in comparison to maintaining our integrity and credibility," Bishop Lyke said.

## Gulf

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San Francisco Archbishop John R. Quinn said in a Jan. 1 homily that when applying the just-war theory to the Persian Gulf crisis, "persons can with a correct conscience conclude that as of now all reasonable means have not been exhausted."

Catholic high school students do not have a grasp of Catholic moral teaching on war, according to a survey by the Boston-based Center on Conscience and War.

War is the "socially approved and expected method of conflict resolution," the report said, adding that students have an "almost universal assumption" that "in

time of war the citizen must be prepared to render unquestioning obedience to the nation's political and military leaders."

More than 130 members of the Catholic Campus Ministry Association, though, sent a letter to President Bush and Speaker of the House Thomas S. Foley, D. Wash., urging them "not to take the country into war against Iraq."

The letter, dated Jan. 3, said, "We who stand as witnesses to the Gospel of Jesus Christ express our concern for all those who will lose their lives and who will suffer if we go to war."

And a growing number of U.S. soldiers are seeking conscientious objector status even as the military mandates that soldiers seeking the status change must be deployed before their application is reviewed.

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