

Seattle's controversial archbishop to retire

SEATTLE (CNS) — Seattle Archbishop Raymond G. Hunthausen, the object of a controversial Vatican-ordered investigation, has announced plans to retire on his 70th birthday in August.

Archbishop Hunthausen is retiring to allow his successor "to chart the course of long-range archdiocesan programs," according to a June 18 statement from the Seattle archdiocese. The mandatory age of retirement for bishops is 75.

Pope John Paul II has accepted the archbishop's resignation, according to the statement.

"It's my own decision made after long and prayerful deliberation," Archbishop Hunthausen said in the statement. "No one was asking me to retire."

Archbishop Hunthausen, reportedly in good health, said he decided to retire early because it was time for a new leader with a new vision to head the local church.

He will be succeeded by Coadjutor Archbishop Thomas J. Murphy of Seattle, 58, who was named to assist Archbishop Hunthausen in 1987.

The prelate called Archbishop Murphy his "trusted co-worker and dearly loved brother" and said "boundless energy" and "love for the Lord" characterize his leadership.

Controversy has plagued the Seattle prelate since 1983, a month after he allowed Dignity — an organization of homosexual Catholics — to celebrate Mass at Seattle's St. James Cathedral. Following that de-



File photo

Archbishop Raymond Hunthausen cision, the Vatican sent Archbishop James A. Hickey of Washington to Seattle to investigate complaints about Archbishop Hunthausen's leadership.

Two years later, the Vatican cited problem areas in Seattle, including failure to follow the sequence of first confession before first Communion; unauthorized Catholic-Protestant eucharistic sharing; use of general absolution; and lack of clarity about church teaching on homosexual ac-

tivity and contraceptive sterilization.

Archbishop Hunthausen responded that he was "firmly committed to dealing with each and every one" of the concerns expressed.

In 1986, however, the Vatican ordered the archbishop to turn over authority in several areas of his ministry to Auxiliary Bishop Donald W. Wuerl, now head of the Diocese of Pittsburgh.

After priests of the Seattle Archdiocese and other supporters called for restoration of full authority to Archbishop Hunthausen, the Vatican named a commission of three U.S. bishops to review the Seattle situation.

On the commission's recommendation, the archbishop's faculties were restored in 1987. Bishop Wuerl was reassigned to Pittsburgh and Bishop Murphy was named coadjutor archbishop of Seattle with the automatic right to succeed Archbishop Hunthausen.

In a 1988 statement to the Holy See, Archbishop Hunthausen said that the way the Vatican had intervened in archdiocesan life had led to "pain and severe tension."

He warned that the same experiences could occur in other dioceses if the Vatican gave credibility to "mean-spirited criticism, from a small cadre of people ... bent upon undoing the fabric of unity" in the church.

National attention first focused on him in 1981 when — during a regional gathering of Lutheran church leaders in Seattle — he

urged unilateral nuclear disarmament and "tax resistance" as a way to reverse U.S. arms spending.

The archbishop continues to hold back taxes and has had his wages garnished by the Internal Revenue Service.

Church observers have said that as the U.S. bishops were writing their pastoral letter on nuclear deterrence in 1981-83, the pacifist actions of Archbishop Hunthausen and Bishop Leroy T. Matthiesen of Amarillo, Texas, were an important catalyst in forming the hierarchy's views on the issue.

He has espoused stronger roles for laity in the church, the exercise of greater church leadership by married couples, and a greater role for women in the church.

In 1990 he chose not to continue the archdiocese's all-male diaconate training program until, he said, women's role in the church is more adequately addressed.

Raymond G. Hunthausen was born in Anaconda, Mont., on Aug. 21, 1921, and was an all-around athlete as a youth. He rejected a professional sports career to enter the seminary. In 1946 he was ordained a priest of the Diocese of Helena, Mont.

Assigned after ordination to teach mathematics and chemistry at Carroll College in Helena, his alma mater, he also became head football coach and athletic director at the Montana college.

He was president of the college from 1957 to 1962, when he was made bishop of Helena. He was named archbishop of Seattle in 1975.

World's bishops urged to approve Tridentine Mass

By John Thavis
Catholic News Service

VATICAN CITY — A Vatican commission has asked the world's bishops to follow more liberal guidelines in granting permission for use of the Tridentine Mass.

In a letter sent to bishops in several countries, the Pontifical Commission *Ecclesia Dei* said it was trying to implement Pope John Paul II's call for a "wide and generous application" of a Vatican directive allowing the Latin-language Tridentine rite.

A Vatican official said one purpose of making the old rite available is to attract followers of the late Archbishop Marcel Lefebvre back to the church. The archbishop broke with the church in 1988 over his refusal to accept the Second Vatican Council.

The new guidelines issued by *Ecclesia Dei* retain only of the conditions previously set forth for the use of the Tridentine rite: that those seeking the old Mass form must also accept the validity of the newer rite, which was developed following Vatican II.

Commission members said the new guidelines aimed at clearing up misunderstandings in certain dioceses.

The commission said the Tridentine rite can now be celebrated in parish churches, should be done on a regular and convenient basis where needed, and could rely on retired priests as celebrants where diocesan clergy is in short supply.

The commission said it had the authority to approve requests for the old rite, but would "prefer" that local bishops do so.

The guidelines were contained in an undated letter signed by Cardinal Paul

Mayer, president of the commission. Copies were sent to all U.S. bishops April 19 through the National Conference of Catholic Bishops.

The centuries-old Tridentine Mass, which was updated in 1970 by approval of Pope Paul VI, was taken out of service after Vatican II until Pope John Paul's 1984 decision to allow it in carefully defined circumstances.

Under that 1984 directive, such Masses were to be said only for small groups; ordinarily were not to be performed in parish churches; were to be scheduled only on specific days or situations; were to be reported to Rome on a case-by-case basis.

The 1984 directive also called for "unambiguous, even public" evidence that petitioning groups had no ties with those who had rejected the post-conciliar Mass.

The pope created the *Ecclesia Dei* commission in 1988 in an attempt to bring back followers of the late Archbishop Lefebvre. At that time, he also asked for "wide and generous application" of the 1984 directive on the Tridentine Mass.

According to a staff member of the *Ecclesia Dei* commission, the new guidelines were aimed at clarifying the meaning of "wide and generous."

Cardinal Mayer, who will retire from his position this month at the age of 80, said the guidelines were aimed at encouraging bishops to "facilitate" the celebration of the Tridentine rite "wherever there is genuine desire for this on the part of priests and the faithful."

At least 50 U.S. dioceses currently schedule weekly Tridentine Masses, according to the staff member of *Ecclesia Dei*.

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Overriding veto, Louisiana enacts nation's strictest anti-abortion law

BATON ROUGE, La. (CNS) — The Louisiana Legislature overrode a gubernatorial veto to enact the nation's strictest abortion law June 18. The law is to be tested in a federal court, however, before it can take effect.

The new legislation outlaws abortion except in cases of rape, incest or a pregnancy endangering a mother's life.

U.S. District Judge Adrian Duplantier of New Orleans met June 19 with abortion-rights activists and state Attorney General William Guste, setting a July 23 trial date for a challenge to the law's constitutionality by the American Civil Liberties Union.

Since the law could not take effect until late August or early September, the July trial bypasses the legal maneuvers surrounding an injunction against enforcement, which ordinarily accompany a constitutional challenge to a law.

Gov. Buddy Roemer had vetoed the abortion law June 14. The Senate overrode his veto four days later by a vote of 29-9, three more than the two-thirds majority needed. A few minutes after the Senate voted, the House overrode with a 76-25 vote, six more than needed. It marked the

first time this century that the Louisiana Legislature passed a law over a governor's veto.

The state's Catholic bishops had urged the veto override.

Doctors who perform illegal abortions could face up to 10 years in prison and \$100,000 in fines if the law survives constitutional challenges. Women who have abortions would be exempt from prosecution.

To qualify for an abortion under the law's rape provision, a woman would have to submit to a medical examination within five days after the rape and report it to police within seven days.

State Rep. Louis "Woody" Jenkins of Baton Rouge said he would introduce a resolution to remove the exceptions of rape and incest, making abortion legal only for life-threatening pregnancies. Such a resolution, which needs only majority approval in both houses and is not subject to veto, would have the force of law.

Among other U.S. jurisdictions, only Utah and Guam have comparably strict abortion laws, but neither is currently enforced because of court challenges.