

# Publications profile controversial prelate

NEW YORK (CNS) — Milwaukee Archbishop Rembert G. Weakland, whose stated willingness to ordain married men and whose archdiocese-wide hearings on abortion have spurred controversy, was profiled in *The New Yorker* magazine and the *Wall Street Journal* in July.

*The New Yorker's* two-part, wide-ranging profile of the Milwaukee prelate refers to Archbishop Weakland's training as a concert pianist and his 10 years as abbot primate for the Benedictine order worldwide, explores his feelings about loneliness and falling in love, and details a 1990 trip to El Salvador he took with a delegation of church leaders.

The profile, a 40-page piece written by Paul Wilkes and published in two parts in the July 15 and 22 issues of the magazine, includes comments from Archbishop Weakland on why he thinks he has provoked the ire of Vatican officials.

Last fall Vatican officials blocked an honorary degree the theology department of the pontifical University of Fribourg in Switzerland wanted to bestow on the candid 64-year-old Milwaukee archbishop.

The degree was meant to honor Archbishop Weakland for his role as chairman of the U.S. bishops' committee that wrote the 1986 pastoral letter on the U.S. economy.

According to *The New Yorker*, Archbishop Weakland, who was appointed archbishop by Pope Paul VI, said he agreed with Pope John Paul II's assessment that since the Second Vatican Council the church had gone "too far," but disagreed with the pope's position of "clamping down on dissent wherever he senses it." Such an approach, he said, "doesn't really clarify or help."

The article said Archbishop Weakland sees "a natural tension built into Christianity. The church has always struggled to preserve the purity of the Gospel in the light of a changing world. It is the age-old struggle to combine human truth — wherever it is found — with the revealed truth that comes from God."

Archbishop Weakland said that the pope — at the beginning of his papacy — looked to the United States and "found that all these popular, pastoral bishops, appointed before his time, were going off in various directions and were not in step with Rome."

"The American conference of bishops had begun to practice the principles that we

are used to in a democratic society. But the church is not a democratic institution, and the pope wanted to restore control to the Vatican," said the archbishop.

In the article, Archbishop Weakland described the National Conference of Catholic Bishops as a "strange group" that, as "the prime teachers, come together to discern how best to lead our people. And then there is a little of the Mafia in it, too ... Conspiracy of silence. Never criticize each other in public."

He said if he were the president of the bishops' conference, "I think I would have a profound feeling that these men do not have their hearts in it — that they want to go home and run their dioceses as they darn well please. And why not? You quickly learn that these public, (annual national bishops') meetings are not the place to make policy. You make policy at home, quietly. You try to move things there, not in Washington," he said.

Asked to comment on loneliness, sometimes cited as a reason priests leave clerical life, Archbishop Weakland said the problem "comes down to celibacy."

"The trick in dealing with celibacy is to understand that there is no true substitute for the intimacy of marriage," he said.

"I'm over 60 — for me, it's not about sex. When it hits me hardest is not when I'm in trouble or want to pour my heart out because I'm depressed. It's when I have a great idea that I'd like to share with someone, when I've heard a new piece of music and want someone to sit down and listen with me," he said.

"Men who leave the priesthood because of the loneliness are not weak. They are simply good men who have fallen in love with good women," he said. "If we are alive, we are continually falling in love."

The July 11 *Wall Street Journal* article, which quotes the Milwaukee archbishop's friends as well as his foes, says Archbishop Weakland "manages to broach almost every topic that orthodox Catholics say shouldn't be discussed."

The article quotes an anti-abortion activist who contends the archbishop listens to far too many who challenge church authority.

But it also says Cardinal Joseph L. Bernardin of Chicago sees his neighbor to the north as a loyal churchman who understands ecclesiastical obedience.



AP/Wide World Photos  
**REFUGEES IN WAITING** — Two refugee children wait for their mother to return for dinner July 26 at the Friendship House in Lackawanna, a suburb of Buffalo. Hundreds of Somalian refugees who fled civil war and famine in Africa are jamming Buffalo-area shelters while the Canadian government delays admitting them for fear of passport fraud.

## Students cleared of rape against St. John's co-ed

By Tracy Early  
Catholic News Service

NEW YORK — Three male St. John's University students were acquitted July 23 of oral sodomy and other sex charges involving a female student but still faced university disciplinary procedures.

"Suspensions of each of the indicted students have been in effect pending resolution of the criminal charges," said a university statement released by communications vice president Martin J. Healy.

"Now that the charges against three of these students have been resolved, hearings on the pending disciplinary charges against the three will soon be held."

Healy said the proceedings would be conducted by the St. John's Hearing and Deciding Committee, which is chaired by Edward Fagan, a professor and acting dean of the law school.

After six days of deliberation, a jury of six men and six women, announced July 23 that they had reached verdicts of acquittal on all charges against Walter Gabrinowitz, Matthew Grandinetti and Andrew Draghi.

Jury Foreman Michael Fahid was quoted as saying, "There were just so many inconsistencies and too many lies in everyone's testimony. There were just too many doubts."

He reported that the initial vote was 9 to

3 for acquittal, and the remaining days were spent hearing portions of testimony read to convince the three of the inconsistencies.

Six men were charged with pressuring the woman into drinking vodka and orange soda and then subjecting her to sexual abuse.

One of the six, Joseph Reilly, pleaded guilty to reduced charges as part of a plea bargain and testified as a prosecution witness.

Queens District Attorney Richard A. Brown was quoted as saying he intended to proceed with the case against the other two — Michael Calandrillo, who took the woman to the house where the abuse allegedly occurred, and Adam Gerber.

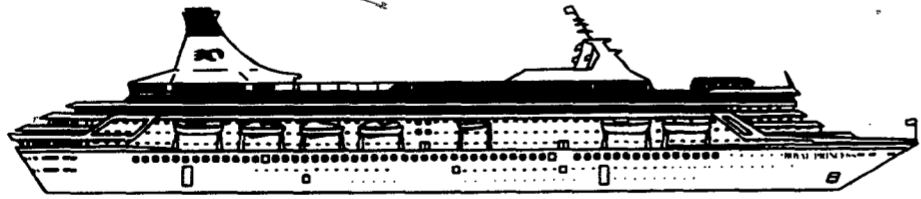
Because the men were all white and the woman was black, a Jamaican, the case took on racial overtones.

Following the acquittal verdicts, Mayor David N. Dinkins, who is black, was quoted as saying, "Based upon my reading of the evidence presented in this case, I am shocked and dismayed."

U.S. Rep. Charles B. Rangel, who represents the Harlem district, was quoted as saying he would demand that the Justice Department prosecute the men for violating the woman's civil rights.

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