



The Zugaj family mourns the death of their son and nephew in Slak, Yugoslavia. The two young Croatian guardsmen were killed in Petrinja Sept. 18 during battles with Yugoslav federal forces.

## Pope criticizes leaders for breaking cease-fire

By Agostino Bono  
Catholic News Service

VATICAN CITY — Pope John Paul II has criticized Yugoslav political leaders for breaking their cease-fire accords and called the fighting "unworthy of man and unworthy of Europe."

Meanwhile, the Yugoslav ambassador to the Vatican said signing cease-fire pacts is no guarantee in his country. He said the country needs strong European political and economic sanctions to stop the fighting.

"With profound sadness we must recognize that the word given for the cease-fire has not been maintained," the pope said

Sept. 22 during his mid-day Angelus talk from his apartment balcony overlooking St. Peter's Square.

The pope renewed his call for international mediation to stop the fighting in the breakaway Croatian republic and to "put an end to the fratricidal violence bloodying a defenseless people."

Efforts by West European nations to mediate an end to the fighting have been supported by the pope, but a string of cease-fire agreements between Croatian and federal Yugoslav officials has not been adhered to.

However, Ivica Mastruko, Yugoslav ambassador to the Vatican, said mediators have taken the wrong route by insisting on cease-fire accords.

"A strong pressure at the economic and political level leading even to the adoption of sanctions would be more effective," he said in a Sept. 21 interview with *L'Unita*, Rome newspaper of the former Communist Party.

The current fighting between predominantly Catholic Croats and mainly Orthodox Serbs is a nationalistic conflict and not a religious one, said Mastruko.

"Above all, there is not a contrast among religious faiths, but rather the affirmation of a secular religion with its own liturgy, rites and hymns. It is the religion of nationalism," he said.

Mastruko criticized the United Nations and the United States for not getting involved in mediation efforts.

"In contrast to Kuwait, there is no oil" in Yugoslavia, he said.

"Everyone thinks that this is an affair that involves only Europe," he said.

## Patients informed of HIV-positive doctor

By Lou Baldwin  
Catholic News Service

PHILADELPHIA — Philadelphia's Mercy Catholic Medical Center has begun notifying 1,050 patients that an orthopedic surgeon who treated them has tested positive for HIV, the virus that causes AIDS.

The medical center — which operates Fitzgerald Mercy Hospital in Darby, Pa., and Misericordia Hospital in West Philadelphia — voluntarily began the notification and is offering free confidential counseling and HIV testing to the patients, according to a Sept. 18 statement.

"The most current medical evidence indicates that risk of contact is extremely low," the statement said.

The center is a division of Mercy Health Corporation of Southeastern Pennsylvania, operated under the sponsorship of the Religious Sisters of Mercy.

Center spokeswoman Patricia Bathurst said the hospital was not releasing the doctor's name because doing so would violate

a Pennsylvania law on the confidentiality of HIV-positive people.

In July, the doctor notified the medical center that he had tested HIV-positive, but refused to give permission for patient notification. Mercy filed a petition in Delaware County Court Aug. 8 for permission to notify patients.

The county court granted the hospital's petition, but the ruling was immediately stayed pending appeal. On Sept. 13, the Pennsylvania Superior Court vacated the stay.

"We weighed this very carefully," Bathurst said. "We want very much to protect a person's privacy and confidentiality; however, as long as there is a risk, however minuscule — and I would stress it is minuscule — we had to inform our patients. Our first concern is always our patients."

In a registered letter to the 1,050 former patients who have been identified so far, Dr. Thomas F. Toomey Jr., Mercy's sen-

ior vice president for professional affairs, said that because of "normal and established precautions against infection observed with all surgical procedures, the chance of transmission of the HIV virus is considered extremely remote."

Toomey also said the surgeon was "voluntarily no longer participating in patient care activities at Fitzgerald Mercy/Misericordia." But John DiPietro, an attorney representing the doctor, said Sept. 19 that the doctor had been suspended from the staff of the two hospitals against his will on Sept. 18. He said the doctor would sue for reinstatement.

DiPietro said the surgeon remains on the staff of Graduate Hospital in Philadelphia and planned to resume a scaled-down practice there when he returned from vacation.

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