

Pontiff, NCCB officials meet to discuss letter on women

VATICAN CITY (CNS) — Pope John Paul II and the leaders of the National Conference of Catholic Bishops met at the Vatican Nov. 26 and discussed progress on the bishops' proposed pastoral letter on women.

Archbishop Daniel E. Pilarczyk of Cincinnati, NCCB president, said they told the pope that work on the pastoral was "coming along nicely" and that a Vatican-sponsored international consultation on the U.S. bishops' pastoral had been "helpful."

A second draft of the letter was released in 1990 and work on a third was well under way when the Vatican consultation was held last May.

Archbishop Pilarczyk told a press conference then that the U.S. bishops were advised to "walk cautiously and go slowly." Many participants suggested the document should not carry

the weight of a pastoral letter, but be a pastoral statement with "a lesser value of authority."

Also present at the Nov. 26 meeting with the pope were Archbishop William H. Keeler of Baltimore, NCCB vice president, and Monsignor Robert N. Lynch, conference general secretary.

The NCCB officers and those of other large bishops' conferences have regularly scheduled meetings with Vatican officials and the pope. Officers of the Canadian bishops' conference made their visit earlier in November.

Bishop Matthew H. Clark is a member of the bishops' ad hoc Writing Committee for the Pastoral on Women in Society and in the Church. He is also chairman of the conference's committee on Women in Society and in the Church.

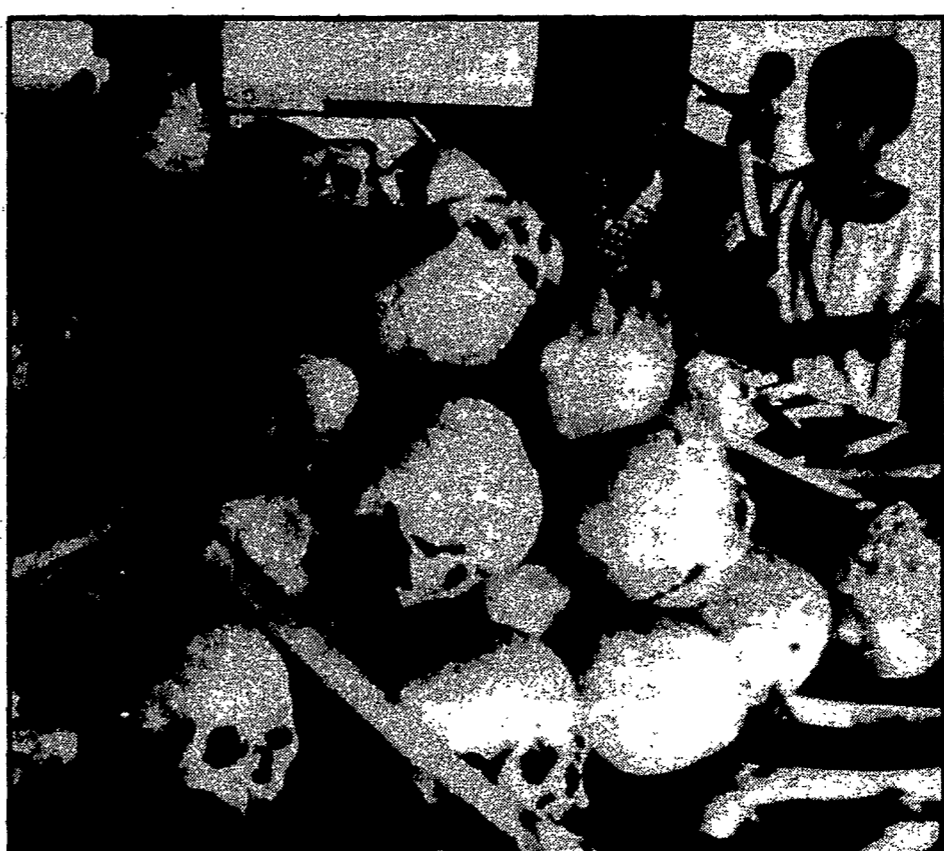
Cardinal Ratzinger appointed to third term

VATICAN CITY (CNS) — Pope John Paul II has named Cardinal Joseph Ratzinger to a third five-year term as head of the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith, the Vatican said.

The Vatican, in an unusual step, announced the extension Nov. 25, the very day Cardinal Ratzinger's term expired. Three-term appointments are rare these days at the Vatican; Cardinal

Ratzinger's curial tenure is the longest of any current head of a congregation.

The Vatican announcement put an end to speculation that Cardinal Ratzinger might retire because of ill health. The 64-year-old German prelate was hospitalized for tests in August and later received treatment for an undisclosed illness.



AP/Wide World Photos
MUSEUM OF DEATH — Children play with the bones of people killed during the Khmer Rouge regime at a war museum in the southern Cambodian village of Kampot Nov. 26. There are no guards at the museum so the village children wander in and out. In the largest public rally in Phnom Penh in 16 years, more than 10,000 students protested Nov. 26 the impending return of Kieu Samphan — an architect of the Khmer Rouge's reign of terror.



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