

Prelate to pass on buying house



AP/Wide World Photos
FORMER PRETTY TOWN — A crucifix stands riddled with bullet holes in this March photo showing the devastated center of Vukovar, a former Croatian town conquered by Serbian-led troops in November. Hundreds of thousands of shells have marred this formerly picturesque town on the Danube River.

HARTFORD, Conn. — Archbishop Daniel A. Cronin of Hartford has decided against buying a \$430,000 home after news of the proposed purchase drew criticism.

In a statement issued March 27, Archbishop Cronin called it "regrettable" that a controversy surrounding his choice of a prospective home had proved "a distraction" that kept "many of us from addressing the serious issues facing the people of our archdiocese."

The archbishop said that despite the fact that many people "believe that this purchase is still fitting," he had decided it wasn't an appropriate time to buy the house.

Archbishop Cronin said he had directed that the purchase not be made and that archdiocesan personnel "give further study to suitable housing for the archbishop."

The home Archbishop Cronin had planned to purchase was a two-story frame house in a residential neighborhood in West Hartford that had seven bedrooms, two fireplaces and an in-ground swimming pool.

After news of the purchase had been reported in the *Hartford Courant* daily newspaper, archdiocesan officials urged diocesan priests and deacons to preach on the topic at weekend Masses to avoid a backlash that could undermine this year's \$4 million archdiocesan appeal.

A "fact sheet" sent to all priests and deacons emphasized that "in the present real estate market, the property is considered an outstanding buy and investment."

It also pointed out that most of the

diocesan bishops in the country, including all those in neighboring dioceses, live in separate residences.

It noted that five unrelated adults — the archbishop, his priest-secretary, and three sisters on his residential staff — would live in the house. The other two bedrooms would have been used as guest rooms.

"The swimming pool is not a requirement of the archdiocese. It happens to come with the house. The pool was installed for the benefit of the present owner's seven children and their friends," the fact sheet said.

It also argued that home ownership "can be a less expensive way to live than in a rented accommodation."

Archbishop Cronin was installed as head of the Hartford Archdiocese Jan. 28. He currently resides at the cathedral rectory.

His predecessor, Archbishop John F. Whealon, had lived for 22 years at St.

Mary Home for retired priests and had sold the previous bishop's mansion for \$288,000 in 1974. The mansion had been bought 10 years earlier for \$107,000.

The fact sheet said that all funds for the new house would have come from a 65-year-old archdiocesan property fund into which Archbishop Whealon had put proceeds from the sale of the former bishop's house. No monies would have been taken from the Archbishop's Annual Appeal or from contributions made by people of the archdiocese, it said.

In his statement, Archbishop Cronin said that since his appointment to the Hartford archdiocese he has tried to make service to the people the "driving force of my ministry."

His goal, he said, has been "to reach out to all people in a spirit of friendship and to work cooperatively for the good of all."

Pope set to announce trip to U.S. for youth day; Buffalo in running

By John Thavis
 Catholic News Service

VATICAN CITY — Pope John Paul II is set to announce a trip to the United States for a World Youth Day rally in 1993.

A Vatican spokesman, Monsignor Piero Pennacchini, said the pope would announce the place, date and theme of the visit during a Palm Sunday Mass April 12.

Monsignor Pennacchini would not say where the pope would travel, but other Vatican sources said the decision has been made to hold the event in the United States.

Several American church leaders also say the pope is coming.

Sources said three cities were in the running to host the papal visit and the youth rally: Denver, Minneapolis-St. Paul and Buffalo. In recent years, the pope's meetings abroad with youths have been held in August.

After the Palm Sunday Mass at the Vatican, which marks this year's World Youth Day, Polish youths are expected to hand over a ceremonial cross to a group of 12 young people from the United States, a Vatican source said. The pope celebrated World Youth Day in his native Poland in 1991, when more than a million

people attended a prayer vigil and an outdoor Mass.

World Youth Day is an annual event begun by the Vatican in 1986 and celebrated locally on different dates. The Vatican generally observes it on Palm Sunday. Every second year so far — 1987, 1989 and 1991 — the observance has included a meeting of young people with the pope in a foreign country.

In 1987, the pope met with youths in Buenos Aires, Argentina, on Palm Sunday; in 1989, the encounter took place in Santiago de Compostela, Spain, a major pilgrimage site, on Aug. 19; and in 1991, it was held in Czestochowa, Poland's most important Marian shrine, on Aug. 14-15.

The church in the United States has previously celebrated World Youth Day in late October.

The trip would be Pope John Paul's third major visit to the United States. He has made two pastoral visits, in 1979 and 1987, and has also stopped briefly in U.S. territory during trips in 1981 and 1984.

Sites in Africa, Asia and Australia also were considered for the 1993 youth day rally, a Vatican official said. He said the Vatican wanted to move it out of Europe next year because it had already been celebrated twice there.

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