

# Priest in Texas worried about more bloodshed

By Carol Zimmermann  
Catholic News Service

WASHINGTON — When Father Isidore Rozycki finished celebrating Mass Feb. 28, he heard helicopters flying overhead as federal agents stormed the compound of a heavily armed religious cult outside Waco, Texas.

"It came as a surprise," said Father Rozycki of the overhead sounds. But he said some of his parishioners must have known something was going to happen, because "some sheriff's deputies were at Mass, but they left early."

That morning, more than 100 federal law enforcement agents raided the compound of the cult, known as the Branch Davidians, to search for guns and arrest David Koresh, the group's 33-year-old leader.

Cult members, reportedly tipped off about the raid, immediately fired upon the agents of the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms. And in the shootouts that followed, four agents and two cult members were killed and more than a dozen agents were injured. As of March 9 the two sides remained at a standoff.

"I hope it gets resolved soon," Father Rozycki told CNS in a phone interview March 1. The priest from the Diocese of Austin, Texas, is pastor of St. Joseph's, a mission church located in the town of Elk, just two miles from

the cult's compound.

He said the town, 15 miles east of Waco, comprises the Catholic church, a general store and a few houses, including the fenced-in compound where 75 members of the Branch Davidians reportedly live.

"I've gone by (the compound) several times. I always wave at the guard and he waves back. I've also seen some of the members stop by and get groceries at the store," he added.

The priest described the cult as a "fanatical group that has such a tremendous hold on people." Formed in the 1930s, the cult claims to be an offshoot of Seventh-day Adventist Church although the denomination denounces any connection to it.

Following the Feb. 28 shootouts, the group's leader, Koresh, was interviewed over the phone by CNN and various radio stations. He said he would release two children from the compound building each time a lengthy statement of his beliefs was broadcast.

On the air, Koresh claimed that he was Jesus Christ and said he was frustrated that people didn't believe his doctrines.

The priest added that Koresh's "hold on people" reminds him of Jim Jones, the cult leader who led a mass suicide in 1978.

## Israeli unrest



AP/Wide World Photos

### Victim of violence buried

Members of a Jerusalem burial society lift the shrouded body of Yehoshua Weisbrod before transporting it to Jerusalem's cemetery March 3. Weisbrod was stoned and shot to death in the Occupied Gaza Strip that day.

# Disconnection of tube ends debate over woman's coma

WASHINGTON (CNS) — Three months after a Missouri judge enabled her father to have her feeding tube disconnected, Christine Busalacchi died March 7, ending nearly six years of debate about the comatose woman's care.

"Nobody won. We all lost," said her father, Peter Busalacchi, in a statement issued after her death at Barnes Hospital in St. Louis.

Ms. Busalacchi was transferred to Barnes Hospital Feb. 18 after her father won a legal battle allowing him to move her from a state-run hospital. Regulations forbid state hospitals from removing feeding tubes, but the rules do not apply to private hospitals.

Cause of death was listed as cardiac arrest resulting from dehydration. The hospital refused to say when the feeding tube was removed.

Father Joseph Naumann, coordinator of the St. Louis Archdiocesan Pro-Life Committee, said he was saddened by the events leading up to Ms. Busalacchi's death and questioned whether her family had received a broad enough perspective about the ethics of their decision.

Father Naumann said Peter Busalacchi, who is Catholic, seemed to take appropriate steps in researching the medical and moral ethics of the decision to withdraw the feeding tube.

Tube feeding is common for patients with a variety of serious but not necessarily fatal conditions, Father Naumann noted.

"Why should a means considered

ordinary for one patient be considered extraordinary for someone who is otherwise disabled?" he questioned.

Father Naumann said he was confident the Busalacchi family thought their actions were in Christine's best interests.

But the Catholic Church should be doing more to encourage conservatism when considering matters of life and death.

"I think as a church we need to be saying 'take a more conservative course' in terms of protecting life and then lavish support on families in assisting them with handling the situation," he suggested.

When Ms. Busalacchi was severely injured in a 1987 car accident, physicians classified her condition as a persistent vegetative state from which she would never recover.

She was cared for at the Missouri Rehabilitation Center in Mount Vernon, the same state-run hospital that cared for Nancy Cruzan stayed until her family won a Supreme Court decision allowing them to cut off her feeding so she could die.

When Ms. Cruzan died in December 1990, Ms. Busalacchi's father tried to move her to Minnesota, where state laws would have allowed doctors to remove her feeding tube.

The hospital obtained a court order blocking his efforts and the case was played out in Missouri courts until January, when newly elected Attorney General Jay Nixon decided not to pursue the state's case.

## High court refuses to hear case

WASHINGTON (CNS) — For the second time in five months, the Supreme Court has refused to hear appeals of a lower-court decision overturning state abortion regulations.

The March 8 action left Louisiana's 1991 abortion law invalid. In November the court let stand a lower-court ruling overturning another abortion law in Guam.

Without comment, the court let stand a September decision by the 5th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals rejecting the statute, which prohibited abortions except to save the life of the mother or in limited cases involving rape or incest. Doctors who violated the law would have been subject to 10-year prison terms.

The Louisiana Catholic Conference was among organizations asking that the law be upheld, but conference director Emil Comar said he was not surprised by the court's action.

Abortion opponents, including the state Catholic conference, are working

on strategy for new legislation they hope to introduce during the state's next legislative session, which begins March 29, Comar said.

In a June 1992 ruling, the Supreme Court upheld some state regulation of abortion but said outright bans would be unconstitutional. The Louisiana and Guam laws already were in the appeals process at the time of the June decision in the Pennsylvania case of *Casey vs. Planned Parenthood*.

When Guam's governor appealed to the court to uphold the territory's law, Louisiana Attorney General Richard Ieyoub initially said that if the Supreme Court refused the case, "it could sound the death knell for prohibitory anti-abortion statutes."

But the day after the Guam case was rejected, Ieyoub announced he would ask for review of Louisiana's law, saying the differences between the statutes were significant. Neither statute had been enforced.

**Pysanky**  
UKRAINIAN  
EASTER EGGS

Beautifully Decorated Finished Pysanky

- Supplies to make your own Pysanky Kits, Stands, and Electric Styluses.
- Pysanky Puzzles & Napkins
- Butter Lamb Mold
- Easter Basket Covers
- Easter Cards in Many Languages
- Learn a Language Tapes

Write or Call - For Our New  
SPRING CATALOG

**HANUSEY MUSIC & GIFTS**  
244 WEST GIRARD AVE  
PHILADELPHIA, PA 19123  
(215) 627-3093  
Orders shipped promptly

**Leewards**  
Where Something Special Always Happening!

10 DAYS ONLY

COUPONS GOOD THRU 3 20 93

◆ CRAFTS ◆ FLORAL ◆ FRAMING ◆

**SPECIAL OFFER FOR CATHOLIC COURIER PATRONS ONLY!**

**33% OFF**  
THE REGULAR PRICE  
OF ANY 1 EASTER ITEM  
WITH THIS COUPON

**Adult T-Shirts**  
4 for \$10.00  
WITH THIS COUPON  
Regularly \$4.99 ea.

**Silk Spring Bushes .50¢**  
WITH THIS COUPON Regularly 99¢  
A huge variety of spring blooms in bright, natural colors and soft satins. 7 big blooms per bush.

• SPRING FLORALS • STITCHERY DESIGNS

ROCHESTER HENRIETTA PLAZA, 1100 Jefferson Rd., 272-9310

STORE HOURS: Mon-Fri 9:30-6, Sat 9:30-6, Sun 12-5  
1100 Jefferson Rd., Rochester, NY 14609

• EASTER ITEMS • SPRING DESIGNS