

Pope says Spain needs truer values

By John Thavis and Agostino Bono
Catholic News Service

SEVILLE, Spain — Pope John Paul II, in Spain for a six-day visit, said the country's increasingly secular society needs to rediscover traditional religious values — starting with love for the Eucharist.

Leading ceremonies in Seville June 12-13 to close the 45th International Eucharistic Congress, the pope said the church's social work is inseparably linked to celebration of the Mass.

Love for the Eucharist inevitably leads to acts of charity and justice, he said.

"One cannot receive the body of Christ and feel distant from the hungry and the thirsty, from the exploited, the outsiders, the imprisoned or the sick," he told some 300,000 people at a Mass June 13.

To illustrate his point, the pope later traveled to Dos Hermanas outside Seville to bless a new church-run home for the aged, where he hugged the elderly residents and chatted with them briefly. The center, built on the grounds of a Jesuit rectory, houses 48 poor people who had nowhere else to go.

"These people are so happy. They never dreamed the pope would come to see them," said a woman religious who works at the residence.

The pope stressed that the social projects connected with the Eucharistic Congress — including a drug rehabilitation program and centers for the sick — were not merely symbolic add-ons.

"These works of charity are not something superfluous and incidental,



AP/Wide World Photos
Pope John Paul II closes his eyes in prayer during a June 13 Mass in Seville, Spain. The visit marked the pope's fourth trip to Spain, where large crowds greeted him warmly.

but represent the very demand of the sacrament," he said.

The Eucharist is an "action" sacrament that orients Catholics toward love, he said, and leads to a recognition that modern society must better respond to the needy in its midst.

The pope cited in particular Spain's growing unemployment, estimated at 22 percent of the work force. The lack of jobs "is placing many families in situations of anguish" and raises basic ethical questions about the economic system, he said.

It was the pope's fourth trip to Spain, and he was greeted warmly — first by King Juan Carlos I and Queen Sofia, then by large crowds that turned out in the southern Spanish city to cheer the papal motorcade.

Nominee found niche in discrimination cases

By Patricia Zapor
Catholic News Service

WASHINGTON — Supreme Court nominee Judge Ruth Bader Ginsburg started her law career in the 1960s as a legal secretary, later making a name for herself as a champion of women's rights, arguing five Supreme Court cases over gender-based discrimination.

Her advocacy on behalf of women's causes worries leaders of the National Right to Life Committee, who said she would invalidate all limits on abortion.

President Clinton nominated Ginsburg June 14 to replace Justice Byron White, who will step down at the end of the current term in July.

The 60-year-old Ginsburg, who is Jewish, has served as a judge of the Washington-based U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals since she was appointed in 1980 by President Jimmy Carter.

Criticizing her as a nominee even before the announcement was made official during a Rose Garden ceremony, Douglas Johnson, legislative director of the National Right to Life Committee, said Ginsburg wrote in 1985 that limitations on abortion are a form of sex discrimination.

According to National Right to Life, Ginsburg wrote in the North Carolina Law Review in 1985 that the court went too fast in one step with *Roe vs. Wade*. But she was only questioning

the court's tactical judgment and legal rationale in its 1973 decision legalizing abortion, the committee said.

"More importantly, she also argued that the court should have ruled that restrictions on abortion violate constitutional sex-equality principles," it said.

Johnson said Ginsburg's doctrine would invalidate limits such as prohibitions on public funding of abortions, third-trimester abortions, and parental consent laws.

A native of Brooklyn, Ginsburg graduated from Cornell University, attended Harvard Law and graduated from Columbia University School of Law in 1959.

Upon graduation she worked first as a legal secretary before going on to be a research assistant at Columbia University, then taking a teaching job at Rutgers University Law School. She later taught at Columbia and headed the Women's Rights Project of the American Civil Liberties Union.

It was from that position that she presented oral arguments six times to the Supreme Court, winning five cases during the 1970s. They included challenges of policies for distributing benefits to women serving in the armed forces and to widowers whose benefits differed from those of widows. She also successfully challenged state laws exempting women from jury service upon request.

Bishops to discuss child abuse, health care reform in New Orleans

By Jerry Filteau
Catholic News Service

WASHINGTON — The U.S. Catholic bishops will discuss major issues ranging from clergy sexual abuse of minors to national health care reform when they meet in New Orleans June 17-19.

Most of their second day, June 18, will be devoted to an extended discussion and series of workshops on men and women religious.

More than 120 of the bishops will stay on after the meeting is over for a daylong workshop June 20 on implementing the new "Catechism of the Catholic Church" in their dioceses. About 400 diocesan, school and parish religious education leaders from around the country are also expected to attend.

The meeting of the National Conference of Catholic Bishops and U.S. Catholic Conference will also include a presentation and discussion on the International Commission on English in the Liturgy.

Action items to be decided by the bishops are:

- The age of confirmation in U.S. dioceses.
- A revamping of the Catholic Telecommunications Network of America, expanding its services and making it available directly to parishes.
- Approval to spend an additional \$2 million from NCCB-USCC reserves

for this summer's World Youth Day in Denver, which will feature a visit by Pope John Paul II.

- A formal request to the Vatican for authorization to write two original English-language eucharistic prayers for eventual approval and use in U.S. churches.

- Approval of a proposed theme, purpose and format for the bishops' 1994 special assembly.

They also are to elect a new conference secretary to complete the remaining year and a half of the term of Archbishop Robert F. Sanchez, who resigned as archbishop of Santa Fe, N.M., after allegations of sexual misconduct.

Public business of the NCCB-USCC is to be completed in the meeting's first two days. The final day is devoted to meetings in executive session, with reporters and staff excluded.

The meeting is to close with a concelebrated Mass at St. Louis Cathedral Saturday afternoon, June 19, marking the 200th anniversary of the establishment of New Orleans as a diocese.

The bishops have had at least five closed-door sessions in recent years on sexual abuse of minors by priests, and last fall they approved a brief resolution condemning such abuse and expressing concern for the victims.

But the New Orleans meeting will mark the bishops' first general treatment of the issue in a public forum.

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