

Bishops meet under shadow of abuse allegations

WASHINGTON (CNS) — Working under the shadow of sex abuse allegations against one of their top-ranking members, the U.S. bishops opened their annual fall assembly Nov. 15 with preliminary looks at new documents on peace, the American family, parish social ministry and the permanent diaconate.

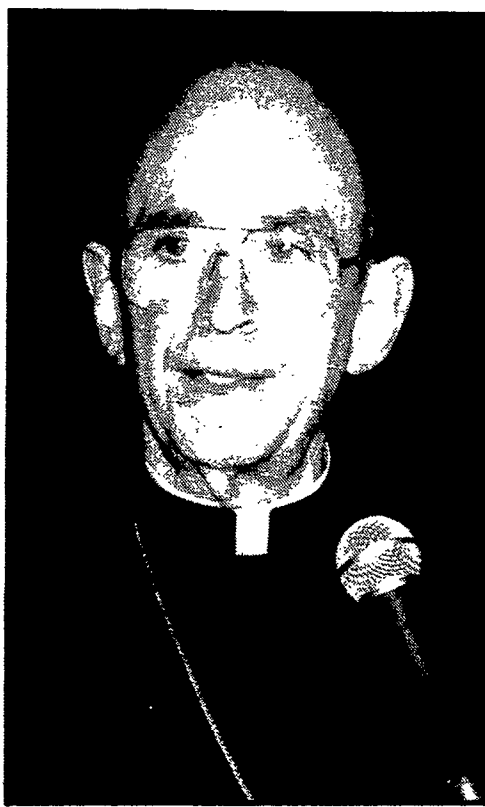
Also coming before the bishops on the first day of their Nov. 15-18 meeting in Washington were a number of liturgy matters and consideration of a \$41.7 million budget for 1994.

Archbishop William H. Keeler of Baltimore, head of the National Conference of Catholic Bishops, opened the meeting with a presidential address that contrasted the crime problems of Washington with the weeklong calm that took over Denver when 186,000 youths from around the world met there this summer for World Youth Day.

But much attention centered on a second talk by Archbishop Keeler that morning — this one stating the bishops' "full support" for Cardinal Joseph L. Bernardin of Chicago, who has been accused of sexually abusing a teen-ager in the 1970s.

Archbishop Keeler said the cardinal's "distinguished career of service to the church provides a firm foundation for confidence in his categorical denial of the allegations made against him in recent days."

At an impromptu press conference later the same morning, Cardinal Ber-



AP/Wide World Photos
Cardinal Joseph L. Bernardin of Chicago is one of four clergy named in a suit alleging sexual abuse. The suit was filed in federal court in Cincinnati on Nov. 12.

nardin repeated his denial of ever having abused anyone. On Nov. 12, a \$10 million lawsuit was filed in Ohio charging the cardinal and a Cincinnati archdiocesan priest with sexually abusing Steven Cook, now of Philadelphia, when he was a student in a pre-seminary program in Cincinnati in

the 1970s.

After giving Cardinal Bernardin a standing ovation to show their support, the bishops got down to work on the documents before them, including one offered by the Committee on Marriage and Family chaired by the Chicago cardinal.

The document, called "Follow the Way of Love: A Pastoral Message of the U.S. Catholic Bishops to Families — On the Occasion of the United Nations 1994 International Year of the Family," is designed as a Catholic contribution to the year, which has as its theme, "Family Resources and Responsibilities in a Changing World."

"Implicit in this theme is a sense of confidence in the future of the family and a challenge to leaders, like ourselves, to help families recognize and use their own resources and responsibilities," Cardinal Bernardin said.

"One way we can do this is to offer words — supported by actions — that encourage, challenge, show compassion, pledge support and instill hope in families," he added. "This is the spirit which infuses 'Follow the Way of Love.'"

Introducing a new statement on war and peace prepared to mark the 10th anniversary of the bishops' landmark peace pastoral, "The Challenge of Peace," Archbishop John R. Roach of St. Paul-Minneapolis said that "deadly violence and harsh injustice still haunt our world" despite the end of the Cold War.

"A decade later, the challenges of peacemaking are much different, but no less urgent or complex ... This day people are being killed in Bosnia because of their ethnicity and religion. Wars we barely hear about continue their deadly march in Africa," he said.

The 60-page draft statement Archbishop Roach presented is titled "The Harvest of Justice Is Sown in Peace." It says that to work for real peace, the United States needs to avoid the temptation of isolationism and make substantive new commitments to international justice, Third World development, human rights and nonviolent conflict resolution.

Also receiving a first look from the bishops Nov. 15 were documents thanking the more than 10,000 U.S. permanent deacons for their 25 years

of service to the church and describing the social mission of the Catholic parish.

Auxiliary Bishop John H. Ricard of Baltimore said the statement on the parish's social mission is intended to be "a modest, but useful tool for those seeking to shape and strengthen parish social ministry." The document is a product of both the bishops' Domestic Policy and International Policy committees.

All four documents were scheduled for further debate and a vote Nov. 17.

Also due for a Nov. 17 vote were liturgy changes that took up more than 300 pages in the pack of reading materials sent to the bishops a month before the meeting. They include:

- The first segment of the new Sacramentary, a massive translation updating project for all the prayers of the Mass, to be dealt with in seven segments over the next two years.

- A vote on procedures for approving the Sacramentary over the next two years.

- A revised inclusive-language version of the Grail Psalter for liturgical use.

- The "Ritual de Exequias Christianas," the Spanish text for the Order of Christian Funerals.

The bishops voted Nov. 15 to add to their agenda a statement from the Committee on Migration designed to offset what Archbishop Theodore E. McCarrick of Newark, N.J., said was an anti-immigration sentiment in many parts of the country.

In his opening talk, Archbishop Keeler said that while news coverage allowed millions of people to share in some of the World Youth Day events in Denver, the media was less refined when trying to describe the American Catholic Church in general.

They missed the bigger story of the role religion plays in people's lives, according to the archbishop. Around their coverage of the enthusiasm and love of the youth for the Holy Father were wraparounds of "the predictable caveats that many Catholics do not agree with him," he said.

Contributing to this story were Nancy Frazier O'Brien, Jerry Filteau, Mark Pattison, Patricia Zapor and Carol Zimmermann in Washington.

Pope John Paul II appoints new bishops for Ogdensburg, Tulsa

WASHINGTON (CNS) — Pope John Paul II has accepted the resignation of Bishop Stanislaus J. Brzana of Ogdensburg, N.Y., and appointed Auxiliary Bishop Paul S. Loverde of Hartford, Conn., to succeed him.

The pope also appointed Father Edward J. Slattery, president of the Chicago-based Catholic Church Extension Society, as bishop of Tulsa, Okla.

The appointments were announced Nov. 11 in Washington by Archbishop Agostino Cacciavillan, apostolic pronuncio.

Bishop Brzana reached age 75, the customary retirement age for bishops, on July 1, 1992. A native of Buffalo, N.Y., he was ordained a priest for the Buffalo diocese in 1941. He was appointed auxiliary bishop of Buffalo in 1964, and then bishop of Ogdensburg in 1968, serving 25 years.

Bishop Brzana's episcopal tenure reflected a concern on moral issues.

In 1972 he tried to convince his fellow bishops to issue a pastoral letter on sex, saying that "an unsalutary silence has been maintained by our shepherds and pastors" on sexual ethics.

Bishop Brzana, in a 1984 pastoral letter, said a person "affected by homosexuality has the responsibility to take steps to overcome it or, at least, to hold it in check."

In 1982, he asked his fellow bishops to consider taking more action against offensive films and television shows. "It seems that some of our separated Christian brothers and sisters show more alertness and zeal than we Catholics do," he said then.

By 1986, he had joined the executive committee of Christian Leaders for Responsible Television, a position he still holds. The Protestant-dominated group had 100 Catholic bishops among

its 1,600 Christian clerical and lay leaders in 1986.

In 1969, Bishop Brzana noted the "desperate" financial condition of New York's Catholic schools in asking then-Gov. Nelson Rockefeller for state aid.

He has been, since its beginning in 1984, the Roman Catholic co-chairman of an official theological dialogue with the Polish National Catholic Church.

Bishop Loverde, 53, was born in Framingham, Mass. He was ordained to the priesthood for the Diocese of Norwich, Conn., in 1965, and afterward obtained his licentiate in canon law from The Catholic University of America, Washington.

He served in a number of Norwich chancery posts, as well as canon law instructor at Holy Apostles Seminary, Cromwell, Conn., until his appointment as auxiliary bishop of Hartford Feb. 9, 1988.

Bishop Loverde is a member of the National Conference of Catholic Bishops' Vocation Committee, Committee on the Selection of Bishops, and Committee on Boundaries of Dioceses and Provinces.

Bishop-designate Slattery, born in Chicago Aug. 11, 1940, was ordained for the Chicago Archdiocese in 1966, where he served as associate pastor and pastor of parishes in the archdiocese.

He was named vice president of the Catholic Church Extension Society in 1971, and has been its president since 1980.

The society raises funds to assist church projects throughout the rural United States and missionary efforts in U.S. territories.

In Tulsa he succeeds Archbishop Eusebius J. Beltran, now of Oklahoma City.

Protesting policy



AP/Wide World Photos

Somalis blame U.N. for lack of aid to victims

A crowd of mostly women Somalis chant anti-U.N. slogans during a march to take food to injured relatives in central Mogadishu's hospitals Nov. 12. The women blame the casualties on the United Nations, which they claim has refused to provide any humanitarian assistance.