

Pope plans traditionally busy series of activities

By Cindy Wooden
Catholic News Service

VATICAN CITY — Pope John Paul II, his right arm freed from a sling, is planning a traditionally busy series of Christmas season meetings, greetings and celebrations.

With the United Nations' celebration of the International Year of the Family scheduled for the new year, several of the events on the papal schedule have a special focus on the family.

The schedule was published by the Vatican Dec. 7. Among the activities:

- On Dec. 24 the pope celebrates midnight Mass in St. Peter's Basilica. The Mass is televised to millions of viewers around the world.

On Christmas morning, the pope celebrates Mass in St. Peter's Basilica before his traditional noon blessing "urbi et orbi" ("to the city and the world") and a speech from the balcony of the basilica.

On the Dec. 26 feast of St. Stephen, the pope is scheduled to recite the Angelus with visitors gathered in St. Peter's Square.

The pope will hold his normal weekly general audience Dec. 29.

The traditional papal Mass of Thanksgiving marking the end of the year will be held Dec. 31 at the Jesuits' St. Ignatius Loyola Church in Rome. The Mass usually is celebrated in the Jesuits' main Roman parish, Gesu Church, which is now filled with scaffolding for a renovation and repair project.

The pope will celebrate a morning Mass Jan. 1 in St. Peter's Basilica marking the feast of Mary Mother of God, the World Day of Prayer for Peace and the beginning of the International Year of the Family.



Pope John Paul's theme for World Peace Day 1994 focuses on the family as the birthplace of peace among peoples.

On Jan. 6, feast of the Epiphany, the pope will celebrate Mass in St. Peter's Basilica and ordain new bishops. Several U.S. bishops-designate are expected to be included.

On Jan. 9, feast of the Baptism of the Lord, the pope will, as usual, celebrate Mass and baptize infants. This year, to highlight the Year of the Family, the Mass and baptisms will take place in St. Peter's Basilica rather than in the Vatican's Benediction Hall.

The Christmas-season schedule ends with the pope's Jan. 15 meeting and speech to the diplomatic corps accredited to the Vatican.

Hallmark writer picks religious ornament for collector's item

By Michael Flach
Catholic News Service

ARLINGTON, Va. — A writer associated with Hallmark has recommended that a religious Christmas ornament created by an Irish woman living in Virginia become a collector's item.

Clara Johnson Scroggins, who does ornament collectors books for Hallmark, picked the "Mary Queen of Peace, Pray for Us" ornament created by Mary Hewson of Fairfax, Va.

Designed to commemorate Pope John Paul II's visit to Denver for World Youth Day 1993, the solid brass ornament with a 24-carat gold finish features an image of Mary holding white rosary beads. Behind her are 12 white flames representing the Apostles. A small cross with a crown of thorns represents the crucifixion.

A yearning for her home of Limerick, Ireland, first led Hewson to design ornaments. She came to the United States in 1990 to teach pre-school. Shortly after she arrived her mother died of cancer but she was unable to return home.

Not only did she miss her country but she felt guilty for missing her mother's funeral, Hewson told the *Arlington Catholic Herald*, newspaper of the Arlington diocese.

As a way to ease her pain, she created an ornament with a map depicting every county of Ireland in November 1992, and a friend who owns

a local Irish gift shop urged her to have it manufactured.

"I missed home," she said. "The Ireland ornament gave me something to look at."

Her idea for the Christmas ornament came out of wanting something to represent the season's significance. She said she found the first Christmas after her mother's death especially difficult and felt no emotion when she would look at a decorated tree.

Her designs are not limited to religious themes, though she does plan a series of them with the next one on the Holy Family — scheduled to be due out in October 1994.

She has designed an ornament of the United States and will do a series of state ornaments, making five a year until the series is complete. Each one will include an outline of the state and a colored version of the state flower.

The time it takes to finish each design differs. The Marian ornament, for example, took five months.

"I know it's finished when it's something that I'd like to have for myself," Hewson said.

Her pieces are sold at her friend's shop in Alexandria, Va., as well as local religious gift shops in Virginia, Connecticut, Wisconsin, Texas and Massachusetts, as well as in Ireland.

EDITORS' NOTE: Hewson's ornaments may be ordered through the Irish Walk in Alexandria, Va., 703/548-0118.

Kids' Chronicle Answer key

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Luke 3:6

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