

Pope says church teaching supports women's equality

By John Thavis
Catholic News Service

VATICAN CITY — Pope John Paul II said June 25 that Catholic teaching strongly supports women's equality and apologized if the church has not always lived up to that ideal.

He said modern recognition of women's equal rights was a great triumph of civilization and was due in part to the efforts of organized women's movements.

The pope made the remarks during Sunday blessing as his top aides were

preparing for the Fourth World Conference on Women in Beijing. Vatican officials have said the church wants to take a predominantly positive message to the Beijing conference, which will take place in September.

In line with the teaching of Christ, the pope said, the church is a "convinced bearer" of the message that women and men have equal rights.

"If, at times, in the course of centuries and under the burden of history, some of its children have not been able to live out this message with equal consistency, this is a reason for great regret," he said.

He added that such historical failings were one reason he highlighted the theme of women's dignity in an apostolic letter in 1988.

"The respect for the full equality between men and women, in every area of life, is a great victory of civilization," the pope said.

"Women themselves have contributed to this with their difficult and generous daily witness, and also through organized movements that, especially in our century, have brought the theme to universal attention," he said.

Despite these efforts, some women today still get second-class treatment, which needs to be urgently remedied, he

said.

The pope emphasized that the biblical account of the creation describes men and women as equal beings made in the likeness of God.

He said the words and gestures of Christ can be seen as a protest against the discrimination suffered by women of that era. While Christ did not choose women as apostles, he valued them greatly in his work and established a relationship of "great freedom and friendship" with women, the pope said.

He said the greatness of women's dignity was exemplified by Mary, whom he called the "reflection and measure of true femininity."

Walesa decries anti-semitism expressed in pastor's sermon

By Jonathan Luxmoore
Catholic News Service

WARSAW, Poland — Responding to criticism of a homily by his former parish priest, Polish President Lech Walesa repeatedly denounced anti-Semitism and defended his pastor.

However, Walesa was criticized for waiting nearly 10 days before issuing his first reaction to the sermon.

"As Polish president, I have done everything in my power that the memory of the Jewish Holocaust will remain alive in Polish society and that the long presence of people of Israel on Polish lands will provide the basis for good relations, now and in the future," Walesa said in a June 21 statement.

"I am convinced that all manifestations of anti-Semitism in Poland and in the world should meet with universal disapproval and condemnation," he said. "The memory of the terrible crime to which millions of sons and daughters of the Jewish nation fell victim in World War II is still fresh. As a Pole and Christian, I consider the Star of David the great sign of Jewish faith and community, which should be fully esteemed."

Walesa was present for the sermon preached June 11 in a Gdansk church by Father Henryk Jankowski. Father Jankowski said Poles should "no longer tolerate governments by people who have

not said whether they come from Moscow or Israel," adding that the Star of David was "inscribed on the swastika and hammer and sickle."

Presidential spokesman Andrzej Ananicz said Walesa's late reaction to the priest's sermon was due to the fact that the sermon was "long and poorly amplified," the spokesman said.

Walesa still believes that Father Jankowski did not make the remarks during the sermon, and the president would have left the church if he had heard them at the time, said the spokesman.

Addressing Polish-Americans June 25 after arriving for the U.N. anniversary in San Francisco, Walesa reiterated that he was against anti-Semitic statements. However, he added that he wished to speak to Father Jankowski about the incident.

"I knew him as a person who was not anti-Semitic," the president added. "But people can change."

Several Polish church leaders, including the bishops' Commission for Dialogue with Judaism, criticized the priest's remarks. International Jewish and Christian leaders also reacted strongly.

In a brief statement issued during the Polish bishops' June 16-18 plenary meeting, the Commission for Dialogue with Judaism said it was "asking forgiveness" for Father Jankowski's remarks and expressed hope that Catholic-Jewish dialogue would not be harmed.

Kansas bishops issue statement restricting Communion services

KANSAS CITY, Kan. (CNS) — In a pastoral letter to Kansas Catholics concerning the centrality of Sunday Mass, the state's four bishops said they are restricting the use of Sunday Communion services in the absence of a priest "to emergencies only."

They described emergencies as "unforeseen circumstances when a priest is not available." The four-page letter, entitled "Sunday Eucharist — Do This in Memory of Me," was issued June 18, the feast of Corpus Christi.

In another statement June 23, Archbishop James P. Keleher of Kansas City said the pastoral "indicates that Communion services are not to be substituted for Sunday Mass, outside of emergency situations, and was issued with the intention of helping the faithful avoid any confusion on the difference between the two rites."

The archbishop also said the bishops' statement "in no way addressed the guidelines for weekday Communion services already in place in various dioceses."

In their pastoral, the bishops called the Eucharist "a priceless gift, essential to our identity as Catholics, and central to our life as church."

In noting that "the priest will always remain essential to the Eucharist," the bish-

ops acknowledged changed conditions, such as declining numbers of priests and population shifts, that have prompted many dioceses to study ways to ensure wide availability of Sunday Eucharist celebrations.

But they said they "have come to judge that Holy Communion regularly received outside of Mass is a short-term solution that has all the makings of becoming a long-term problem."

The practice has disturbing implications, they said, such as blurring the differences between celebration of the Eucharist and reception of Communion; between a priest or deacon and a nonordained minister presiding at a Communion service; and between pastoral and sacramental ministry.

Distribution of Holy Communion outside Mass could obscure the need for priests and consequently vocations, they said. Additionally, the practice could blur the connection between the Eucharist and works of charity and justice, or blur the link between the local church and the diocesan and universal churches as embodied by the parish priest.

In sum, they wrote, "Such practice could well contribute to the erosion of our many-sided belief in the Eucharist."



RNS/Reuters

Voting process hampers Haitians

Haitian voters in the capital of Port-au-Prince waited in line June 25 to enter polling stations that opened two hours late. Haitian citizens were electing parliament members and local officials in the first democratic elections to be held since the 1991 military coup. Many voters have been angered by widespread confusion and disorganization in the election process.

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JULY BINGO CALENDAR

SPECIAL PAID ADVERTISEMENT ■ CALL FOR HOLIDAY CANCELLATIONS

BINGO

SUNDAY			
2:00 p.m.	Holy Rosary Church	420 Lexington Ave., Rochester	716-458-4422
2:00 p.m.	St. Margaret Mary Church	400 Rogers Parkway, Rochester	716-342-2100
6:15 p.m.	St. Stanislaus Church	1150 Hudson Ave., Rochester	716-544-9951
7:30 p.m.	Holy Family Church	899 Jay St., Rochester	716-328-3110
7:30 p.m.	St. Boniface Church	15 Whalin St., Rochester	716-271-1468
7:30 p.m.	St. Rita School	1008 Maple Dr., Webster	716-671-1100
MONDAY			
7:30 p.m.	St. Mary Lyceum Hall	15 Clark St., Auburn	315-252-9545
7:30 p.m.	St. Michael	401 S. Main St., Newark	315-331-2297
7:45 p.m.	St. Charles Borromeo Church	3003 Dewey Ave., Rochester	716-663-3230
TUESDAY			
7:30 p.m.	Holy Apostles Church	6 Austin St., Rochester	716-254-7170
7:30 p.m.	St. Stanislaus Church	1150 Hudson Ave., Rochester	716-544-9951
7:30 p.m.	St. Helens School	150 Lettington Drive, Rochester	716-235-1210
WEDNESDAY			
7:30 p.m.	Guardian Angels Church	2061 E. Henrietta Rd., Rochester	716-334-1412
7:30 p.m.	Holy Family Home School Assoc.	899 Jay St., Rochester	716-328-4800
7:30 p.m.	Our Lady of Perpetual Help Church/St. Andrew School	923 Portland, Rochester	716-226-6458
8:00 p.m.	Aquinas Institute	1127 Dewey Ave., Rochester	716-254-2020
THURSDAY			
7:30 p.m.	St. Anne Church	1600 Mt. Hope Ave., Rochester	716-271-3260
7:30 p.m.	St. Michael Church	869 Clinton Ave. N, Rochester	716-325-4040
7:30 p.m.	St. Stanislaus Church	1150 Hudson Ave., Rochester	716-544-9951
8:00 p.m.	Holy Cross Church	4488 Lake St., Rochester	716-225-8363
FRIDAY			
8:00 p.m.	St. Mark Church	54 Kuhn Rd., Rochester	716-225-3710
SATURDAY			
1:00 p.m.	St. Michael Church	320 S. Main St., Newark	315-331-2297
7:30 p.m.	Good Shepherd Church	3288 E. Henrietta Rd., Rochester	716-334-3518
8:00 p.m.	St. Thomas the Apostle Church	41 Colebrook Dr., Rochester	716-226-2943

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