

WORLD & NATION

Pro-life coalition expands list of drugs targeted in continuing RU-486 boycott

WASHINGTON — A coalition of pro-life groups has expanded its drug boycott related to the French abortion pill RU-486 to include such well-known products as Cardizem, Seldane and Nicoderm. The addition of new drugs to the boycott list resulted from the merger of U.S. drug manufacturer Marion Merrell Dow and European pharmaceutical makers Hoechst AG of Germany and Roussel Uclaf of France. The new company is known as Hoechst Marion Roussel. RU-486, used in a two-drug chemical abor-

tion procedure, was developed by and is named for Roussel Uclaf. The original boycott, announced in 1994, was aimed at U.S. subsidiaries of Roussel Uclaf and its then-parent company, Hoechst AG. Roussel Uclaf signed over U.S. rights to RU-486 to the New York-based Population Council, which began clinical trials of the drug in U.S. cities in October 1994. Approval by the Food and Drug Administration is required before RU-486 can be prescribed in the United States.

Cardinal Bernardin withdraws hospital's Catholic identity

CHICAGO — Cardinal Joseph L. Bernardin of Chicago has moved to withdraw recognition of the Catholic identity of St. Elizabeth's Hospital because it violated archdiocesan policy in joining the Chicago Health System, which is non-Catholic. An archdiocesan statement Feb. 19 expressed "sadness" that the

Poor Handmaids of Jesus Christ, who own the hospital, went ahead with the deal despite archdiocesan opposition. "This is a very sad day for the archdiocese and for the ministry of Catholic health care," said Father Michael Place, research theologian to the archdiocesan curia, at a press conference Feb. 19.



An Israeli policeman passes the covered bodies of four people who died in a powerful bus explosion in Jerusalem Feb. 25. Hamas militants claimed responsibility for the blast, which killed 24 and left dozens wounded.

Pope condemns violence; urges peace talks in Israel

By John Thavis
Catholic News Service

VATICAN CITY — Pope John Paul II condemned two deadly terrorist attacks in Israel and urged people not to lose hope in the peace process.

The pope's words came hours after explosions ripped through a crowded commuter bus in Jerusalem and a soldiers' station near the coastal city of Ashkelon Feb. 25. At least 25 were killed and dozens injured in the attacks, reportedly carried out by extremist Palestinians.

In central Jerusalem, angry Israeli demonstrators gathered at the bombing site and jeered Prime Minister Shimon Peres, calling him a "traitor" for his continued negotiations with Palestinians.

Peres and Palestinian leader Yasser Arafat condemned the attacks and said the peace process must go forward. But Peres announced the temporary suspension of all contacts with the Palestinian side during a period of mourning.

The pope, speaking at an Angelus blessing from his apartment window at the Vatican, said his thoughts and prayers were with the victims and their families.

"I strongly condemn this new, cruel return to violence. Once again, I turn to all those who believe in dialogue and ask them not to lose hope," he said.

Members of the Palestinian resistance movement, Hamas, claimed responsibility for the blasts. Authorities believed they were carried out by "suicide bombers," who perished in the explosions.

Professor challenges universities to emphasize Catholic heritage, identity in campus activities

WASHINGTON — The Catholic character of a Catholic university ought to be a pervasive, palpable part of campus life, theologian Monika K. Hellwig said Feb. 22. She expressed concern that younger Catholic scholars in the sciences, social sciences and humanities lack the necessary formation in their Catholic heritage to contribute effectively to a much-needed dialogue of Catholic theology with culture. A uni-

versity's Catholic identity should come through clearly not only in its academic program or theology curriculum, but in the whole "shape of life on a Catholic campus," she said.

Hellwig, a professor of theology at Georgetown University, spoke at The Catholic University of America on the future of Catholic universities in light of the 1990 papal document *Ex Corde Ecclesiae* on Catholic higher education.

U.S. Supreme Court leaves 'Right to Die' rules to states

WASHINGTON — In one of three cases involving issues of interest to the Catholic Church, the Supreme Court Feb. 20 declined to hear the appeal of a "right-to-die" case from Michigan. The court also let stand a ruling allowing an old monument engraved with the Ten Commandments to remain in a Colorado public park and agreed to hear a California case about deporting illegal

immigrants. The Michigan case involved the wife of a man on a feeding tube who said her husband would want to end all medical efforts to keep him alive. Without comment the high court let stand a ruling by the state Supreme Court saying it lacked clear evidence necessary to permit Mary Martin to authorize physicians to discontinue life support for her catastrophically injured husband.

Social ministry leaders encourage biblical approach to justice

WASHINGTON — Following the biblical approach to justice is an appropriate — and dramatically challenging — goal for social ministry, said the kick-off speaker at an annual social ministry conference. "If God's brand of justice is not operative, social and political and religious chaos follows," said Dominican Sister Sarah Ann Sharkey, a theologian from San Antonio's

Oblate School of Theology. She was the opening speaker at the Feb. 25-28 Catholic social ministry gathering, sponsored by 11 church organizations. Sister Sharkey used the biblical stories of the Exodus from Egypt to illustrate the differences between contemporary definitions of justice and those established by God in the treatment of the people of Israel.

BILLY GRAHAM

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