

WORLD & NATION

Bishops' committee studies Promise Keepers

By Nancy Hartnagel
Catholic News Service

WASHINGTON — A U.S. bishops' committee says the evangelical-style men's ministry known as Promise Keepers is "the proverbial wake-up call to the (Catholic) Church to encourage and offer more ministry suited to the needs of men."

In an 11-page background paper, the Committee on Marriage and Family Life recommends that Catholic pastors and leaders be "proactive" regarding men's ministry and not just "reactive to what Promise Keepers is offering."

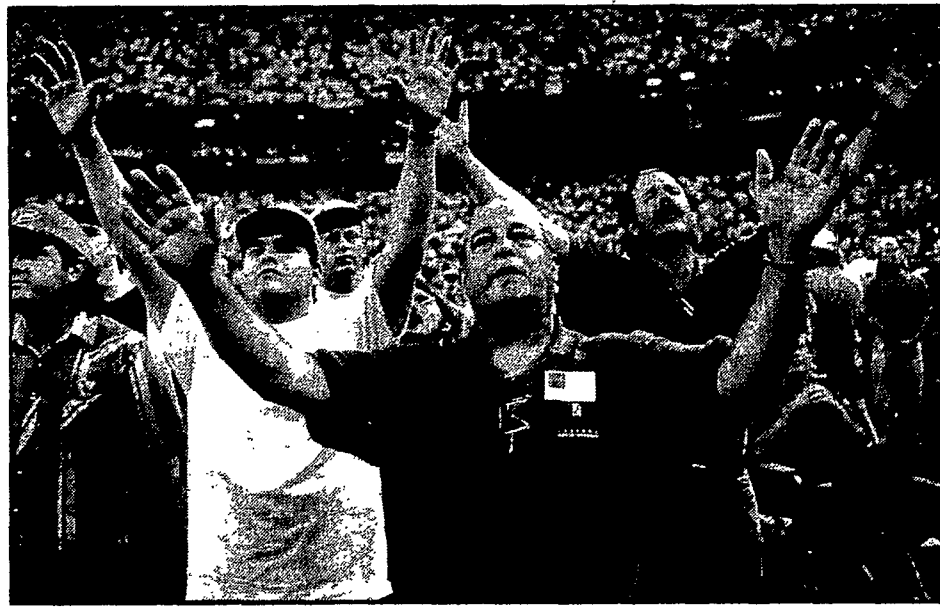
The paper, titled "A Perspective on Promise Keepers," was issued June 7. It is not an official statement but was prepared as a resource.

In it, the committee, which is chaired by Bishop Joseph L. Charron of Des Moines, Iowa, describes the organization's founding, structure, core message and appeal. It also offers guidance to Catholics who "are observing the PK (Promise Keepers) phenomenon and wondering what attitude and response to adopt in light of it."

Promise Keepers, begun in 1990 by a former college football coach, considers itself a Christ-centered, nondenominational ministry, according to the paper. At its two-day rallies held in sports stadiums around the country from April through October, men are invited to renew themselves spiritually through seven promises.

The organization has estimated that 70,000 of the 720,000 men who attended its 13 rallies last year are Catholics. In 1996, Promise Keepers expects more than a million men to participate in 22 rallies.

"Promise Keepers has taken off quickly," said Richard McCord, associate director of the bishops' Secretariat for Family, Laity,



Thousands of men pray during a Promise Keepers crusade last year in Seattle. In light of Catholic involvement in the movement, the U.S. Bishops' Committee on Marriage and Family Life has offered some guidelines concerning it.

Women and Youth. "The rate of its growth is really remarkable, but the fact of the growth is less surprising."

Its appeal is multifaceted. Promise Keepers' use of a sports mythology or metaphor with emphasis on team effort is highly effective with men, McCord told Catholic News Service June 13.

"But, at a deeper level, PK seems to connect with spiritual and psychological needs being felt by many men, especially at this time in history and as they themselves are passing through midlife," the paper reports.

The committee acknowledges that the Promise Keepers message is Christ-centered, direct and accessible, but points out

that Promise Keepers is rooted in the Protestant evangelical tradition that "places heavy emphasis on the authority of Scripture and on the necessity of personal salvation achieved through 'faith alone.'"

Some Catholics may be drawn to Promise Keepers, the paper says, for its evangelical style or emphasis on traditional values, or because they "may be finding in Promise Keepers something they are not finding in their own church, namely, a viable and attractive ministry to men."

The Catholic response to Promise Keepers should be "proactive in the sense of trying to create men's ministries that flow out of the Catholic faith tradition," McCord said.

Les Fetchko/CNS

Vatican blocks 'official' visits to Medjugorje

VATICAN CITY (CNS) — Confirming an earlier statement, the Vatican said "official" pilgrimages should not be made to the popular Marian site of Medjugorje in Bosnia-Herzegovina.

The Vatican position, which also reflects the opinion of local bishops in the former Yugoslavian republic, was outlined in a letter by Archbishop Tarcisio Bertone, secretary of the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith.

Archbishop Bertone cited a 1991 report by Yugoslavian bishops that said that after much study, it could not be confirmed that supernatural apparitions were occurring at Medjugorje.

It follows that official pilgrimages to Medjugorje, understood as a place of authentic Marian apparitions, should not be organized, Archbishop Bertone said.

A similar pronouncement against pilgrimages was made in 1990 by Cardinal Joseph Ratzinger, head of the doctrinal congregation.

On June 17, Bishop Ratko Peric of Mostar-Duvno, the diocese that includes Medjugorje, said he was pleased by the Vatican statement.

Bishop Peric has said the alleged apparitions have stirred confusion and division in the local church. The reports of Marian appearances to six children have drawn millions of people to the tiny village, many in groups organized by parishes and priests.

CALENDAR

Monroe County

Adult education

■ **JUNE 26, 27 — Workshop:** "The Goals of Adolescent Faith Formation"; featuring Tom Zanzig, author and editor at St. Mary's Press; 9:30 a.m.-4 p.m.; Wednesday at St. John of Rochester, Fairport; Thursday at St. Mary's Church, Watkins Glen; \$25; call Jeannie Raisbeck, 716/328-3210.

■ **SUN, JUNE 23 — Lecture:** "War as Part of the Consistent Life Ethic"; by Fr. Paul English, OSB; 1:30 p.m.; Grace Bevin Lounge, Colgate Rochester Divinity School, 1000 S. Goodman St., Rochester; call Vivian Rightmyer, 716/293-3299.

Social Activities

■ **MON, JUNE 24 — Farewell reception:** for Sister Carolyn Knipper; Holy Cross School, 4488 Lake Ave., Rochester, on lawn between church and convent, or auditorium if rain; 7 p.m.; 9 p.m. prayer service in church.

■ **FRI, JUNE 28 — Luncheon:** "Last Friday Series"; sponsored by Catholic Leadership Forum for young Catholics; 11:45 a.m.-1 p.m.; University Club, 26 Broadway, Rochester; Father Lee P. Chase, speaker; "What It's Like To Be a Young Priest Today"; \$10; call Nancy Nash, 716/328-3210.

■ **SAT, JUNE 22 — Festival:** 21st annual Hispanic Cultural Festival; sponsored by St. John the Baptist Committee in cooperation with Lewis Street Center and City of Rochester; 10 a.m. Mass at Mount Carmel Church, 60 Woodward St.; 11:45 a.m. parade from Mount Carmel to City Recreation, 700 North St.; noon festivities at City Recreation including domino and softball tournaments, children's and family activities; Spanish cuisine.

■ **FRI, JUNE 28 — Reservations due:** for 23rd annual Whackers and Hackers Invitational Golf Tournament July 12; sponsored by St. John Fisher College alumni; Shadow Pines and Shadow Lake golf clubs, Penfield; \$68 registration fee; car and cash prizes awarded for hole-in-one contest; for information call Ann-Marie Sturtz, 716/385-8001.

■ **FRI, JUNE 28 — Reservations due:** for July 13 softball tournament at Gary Beikirch Veterans Park, Long Pond Road, Greece; men's, women's divisions; \$125 fee per team; to benefit Journey Home, Inc., comfort-care home planned for Greece; sponsored by Bartolomeo Funeral Home; call Bill Padulo, 716/254-5400.

■ **SAT, JUNE 29 — Buffalo Zoo Day:** sponsored by St. Thomas More Singles' Club for ages 21 and over; 9 a.m.; meet at Southtown Plaza, Henrietta, under sign; for information call Anne, 716/482-5656.

■ **UNTIL JULY 15 — Con-**

test applications: accepted for Sept. 28 Miss Polonia Contest at St. Stanislaus Auditorium, Hudson Avenue and Norton Street, Rochester; sponsored by Polonia Civic Centre Inc. of Rochester; seeking candidates 15-20 years old, of Polish ancestry and living in Monroe County; call Valenteen Palis at 716/266-3144 or Irene Peters, 467-3398; prizes of \$1,000, \$500 and \$200.

■ **TUE, JUNE 25 — Bus trip:** to Buffalo; sponsored by Catholic Golden Age Association Prince of Peace Chapter; 9:30 a.m.-8 p.m.; call Irene, 716/467-3398.

■ **TUE, JUNE 25 — Day at the races:** sponsored by Catholic Women's Club; Finger Lakes Race Track, Canandaigua; call clubhouse, 716/482-0095, 9:30 a.m.-2:30 p.m. Friday or Monday.

Fundraisers

■ **JUNE 21-23 — Spring rummage sale:** sponsored by St. Monica's Centennial Committee; 9 a.m.-6 p.m.; St. Monica's gym, 841 Genesee St., Rochester; to benefit 100th anniversary events in 1998; hot dogs available.

■ **SAT, JUNE 22 — Golf tournament:** First Annual Irish Children's Program Benefit Golf Tournament/Dinner; sponsored by Irish Children's Program of Rochester; 1 p.m. shotgun start; four-man scramble; Marvin's Country Club, Macedon; to defray costs of bringing 20-30 children from Belfast to Rochester for July.

For information or registration, call Randy Peters, 716/223-1393.

■ **MON, JUNE 24 — Men's Golf Tournament:** sixth annual, to benefit School of the Holy Childhood; Green Hills Golf Club, Mendon; 11 a.m. barbecue; noon start; call Holy Childhood, 716/359-3710.

■ **MON, JUNE 24 — Golf tournament:** Hillside Children's Center's Eighth Annual Skins Challenge; featuring professionals John Daly, Jeff Sluman, Joey Sindelar; Blue Heron Hills Country Club, Macedon; \$35; tickets at participating Wegmans and by calling 716/244-4455; proceeds to Emergency Shelter Program.

Seneca Cayuga

Religious Activity

■ **TUE, JUNE 25 — Ninth annual prayer service:** honoring Our Lady, Queen of Peace; sponsored by Queen of Peace Apostolate; St. Mary's Church, 25 Center St., Waterloo; 6 p.m., with Mass at 7:15 p.m. followed by healing service; Fr. Paul Bonacci, celebrant; refreshments, religious books and articles available; for information call David, 315/539-9010.

Social Activities

■ **JUNE 27-29 — Summer festival:** St. Patrick's Church,

97 W. Bayard St., Seneca Falls; 5 p.m. dinners, 6 p.m. festival opens with food, family games, entertainment available; disc jockey Bob Bachman 7-10 p.m. Thursday; Karvel the Magician 6:30 p.m., Community Band 8 p.m. Friday; Finger Lakes Rhythm Cloggers 7 p.m. Saturday followed by Country 5 Plus 1 8-11 p.m.

■ **FRI, JUNE 28 — Divorced/Separated/Bereaved:** Group of Greater Seneca County; 6 p.m.; St. Paul's Episcopal Church Parish House, 101 E. William St., Waterloo; call Carl and Alma, 315/539-2284.

Yates Ontario Wayne

Religious Activity

■ **FRI, JUNE 21 — Day of prayer:** "Jesus in Junk"; Notre Dame Retreat House, Canandaigua; 9 a.m.-3 p.m.; Fr. Arthur Wendel and Meg Byrrie, presenters; bring a bag of junk; suggested offering \$15; for information or reservations call 716/394-5700.

Social Activity

■ **TUE, JUNE 25 — D/S/B Group:** breakfast; Wagners Restaurant, 124 Elm St., Penn Yan; 9 a.m.; call John, 315/536-3629, or Dolly or Bill, 315/536-3582.