

WORLD & NATION

Bishops, victim's father fight death for McVeigh

WASHINGTON (CNS) — A number of U.S. Catholic bishops restated the church's opposition to capital punishment as a federal jury in Denver was deciding that convicted bomber Timothy J. McVeigh should pay with his own life.

The same jury that June 2 found McVeigh, 29, guilty in the April 1995 bombing of the Oklahoma City federal building that killed 168 people recommended June 13 that he should die by lethal injection.

U.S. District Court Judge Richard P. Matsch will officially sentence McVeigh at a later date for what prosecutors called the worst act of domestic terrorism in U.S. history.

The bishops acknowledged the tragic suffering many people experienced, but also upheld the sacredness of all human life and the need to end the "cycle of violence."

"The question turns on what does capital punishment do to us as a society, rather than what does it do to the perpetrator of the crime," said Boston's Cardinal Bernard F. Law June 8 on ABC-TV's "This Week."

The cardinal, who chairs the bishops' Committee on Pro-Life Activities, stressed the importance of "recognizing the value of every human life" and realizing that the "possibility of change and conversion is always there."

In a June 10 letter to the people of the Archdiocese of Oklahoma City, Archbishop Eusebius J. Beltran said as a fellow citi-

zen he had shared in the city's and nation's anguish over the bombing.

"I have felt as though we stand much like those who stood at the foot of the cross and gazed upon profound suffering," he wrote. But in recalling Christ's suffering, it is important to remember that he forgave those who harmed him, the archbishop added.

"Indeed his entire life was a message of healing and reconciliation," he said. "As men and women who place all our hope in that same compassionate mercy of God, we must never fail to acknowledge that we too are called to mercy and forgiveness."

After a nine-year moratorium, the U.S. Supreme Court upheld the death sentence in 1976, allowing states to reinstate it.

The bishops stated their opposition to capital punishment in 1974, 1978 and 1980. And Pope John Paul II argued against capital punishment in his 1995 encyclical *Evangelium Vitae* ("The Gospel of Life").

In his column in the June 13 issue of the *St. Louis Review* archdiocesan newspaper, Archbishop Justin F. Rigali said only God has "sovereignty over the lives of each one of us whom he has created."

"If, as God has revealed in Jesus Christ, every human life is sacred, then it cannot be for us to make the choice to deprive another person of his life," he wrote, not even as punishment for such a crime.

The father of one bombing victim, Bud Welch, who lost his 23-year old daughter



Oklahoma City Police Chaplain Jack Poe embraces Priscilla Slayers (left) and Karen Evans near the Oklahoma City bomb site after hearing June 13 that a Denver jury sentenced Timothy McVeigh to death for his role in the April 1995 bombing. Poe worked in the rescue operations following the tragedy. Slayers, an employee of the U.S. customs office, survived the bombing.

Julie-Marie, also does not favor execution.

In a column in the June 16 issue of *Newsweek*, Welch said his Catholicism teaches him that even McVeigh "has a soul, and we must at least try to save him — and even try to forgive him."

"Killing McVeigh won't bring my daughter back," he wrote. "The only way I can go on is to continue to believe in the sanctity of life — even a mass murderer's."

However, in Oklahoma City, some survivors who had gathered at the site of the blast with family members of victims praised the jury's recommendation.

Kathleen Treanor, who lost her daughter, mother-in-law and father-in-law in the bombing and who had testified during the

penalty phase of the trial, said McVeigh "got what he justly deserves."

"When he made the conscious decision to kill these people and to maim and destroy others," she said, "he ceased being human."

After the jury's decision was announced by Judge Matsch, McVeigh reportedly mouthed the words "It's OK" to his family members who were in the courtroom.

It remains unclear when a death sentence would be carried out. McVeigh's attorneys indicated they would appeal, a process that could take several years.

Also, Oklahoma officials have said they will try McVeigh in state court on murder charges that also carry the death penalty.

CALENDAR

All Dioceses

Fundraisers

■ **THU, JUNE 19** — **Golf Classic:** to benefit Catholic schools; Greystone Golf Course, 1400 Atlantic Ave., Walworth; 10 a.m. shotgun start, 4:30 p.m. skills challenge, 6 p.m. dinner; for more information call Sr. Anne Guerin, 716/328-3210.

Meetings

■ **SUN, JUNE 22** — **Workshop:** sponsored by Catholic Golden Age; St. Jude the Apostle Church, 4100 Lyell Rd., Rochester; 2 p.m.; Sr. Beatrice Ganley, SSJ, presenter; call 716/467-3398.

Monroe County

Meetings

■ **THU, JUNE 19, 26** — **Seminar:** "Care of Older Adults"; presented by the Mercy Center with the Aging, 327 Warrington Dr., Rochester; 7-9 p.m.; call 716/244-5190.

■ **JUNE 24, 25** — **Workshop:** on long-term care issues and options; Assumption Church Hall, 20 East Ave., Fairport; Tues. noon; Wed. 6:30 p.m.; for reservations call 716/475-8400 or fax 716/292-1569.

■ **WED, JUNE 25** — **Informational meeting:** for March 1998 Southern

Caribbean cruise; sponsored by the Sisters of St. Joseph; SSJ Motherhouse, 4095 East Ave., Rochester; 7 p.m.; for more information call Sr. Carole Proia, 716/865-9861.

Religious Activities

■ **THU, JUNE 19** — **Centering prayer:** Guardian Angels Church, 2061 E. Henrietta Rd., Rochester; 7:30-8:30 p.m.

■ **THU, JUNE 19** — **Evening of prayer:** reflection, and sharing; Mercy Prayer Center, 65 Highland Ave., Rochester; 7:30-9 p.m.; for anyone impacted by HIV/AIDS; call 716/473-6893.

■ **FRI, JUNE 20** — **Registration deadline:** for vacation Bible school; July 7-11; New Jerusalem Church, 890 N. Goodman St., Rochester; 9 a.m.-noon; call 716/288-0030.

■ **SAT, JUNE 21** — **Mass:** in conjunction with Hispanic cultural festival; Mt. Carmel Church, 60 Woodward St., Rochester; 10 a.m.

■ **SAT, JUNE 21** — **Liturgy:** followed by spiritual sharing; sponsored by St. Francis de Sales Association; Basilian House, 3497 East Ave., Rochester; 1:30 p.m.; for all lay Catholic women; for more information call Beth, 716/482-3636, Dora, 716/663-7309.

■ **JUNE 21-28** — **Holistic retreat:** Sisters of St. Joseph Spirituality Center, 402 Rogers Pky., Rochester; for more information call 716/336-4370.

■ **SUN, JUNE 22** — **Celebration:** in gratitude for 15 years of service by Sr. Mary Alice O'Brien; St. Andrew's Church, 923 Portland Ave.,

Rochester; 11 a.m. Mass; reception immediately following.

■ **SUN, JUNE 22** — **Afternoon of Psalms:** and hymns; Blessed Sacrament Church, 534 Oxford St., Rochester; 3 p.m.

■ **SUN, JUNE 29** — **Field Mass:** for deceased members of the Knights of St. John International & the Ladies' Auxiliary; All Saints Mausoleum, Holy Sepulchre Cemetery, 2461 Lake Ave., Rochester; 10 a.m.; Bishop Dennis Hickey, celebrant.

■ **SUN, JUNE 29** — **Caribbean Mass:** St. Monica Church, 831 Genesee St., Rochester; 12:30 p.m.; guest celebrant, Fr. Joseph Anathasa, Holy Cross Church, Brooklyn; for more information call 716/328-3210 or 716/235-3322.

Social Activities

■ **JUNE 19-21** — **Carnival:** St. Charles Borromeo Church, Dewey Ave. & Maiden Ln., Greece; Thu. 4-11 p.m., Fri. 4 p.m.-midnight, Sat. noon-midnight.

■ **JUNE 20-22** — **Greek festival:** Greek Orthodox Church of the Annunciation, 962 East Ave., Rochester; Fri. & Sat. 11 a.m.-10 p.m., Sun. noon-10 p.m.

■ **SAT, JUNE 21** — **Hispanic cultural festival:** sponsored by St. John Baptist Committee, Lewis St. Center, City of Rochester; City Recreation, 700 North St., Rochester; food, ethnic music.

■ **SAT, JUNE 21** — **Dance:** "End of School" celebration; Holy Redeemer/St. Francis Xavier Church, 316 Bay St. (school hall), Rochester; 7 p.m.-midnight; \$3 per person; all

welcome.

■ **JUNE 21-22** — **Flea market:** "Our Lady's Market"; Our Lady of Perpetual Help, 1089 Joseph Ave., Rochester; 9 a.m.-4 p.m.; arts & crafts, antiques & collectibles; Empire Statesmen concert 10 a.m. Sat.

■ **MON, JUNE 30** — **Registration deadline:** for July 8 bus trip to Buffalo Cathedral and Niagara-on-the-Lake; sponsored by Catholic Golden Age; \$30 per person; for more information call 716/716-3398.

Sports Benefits

■ **SUN, JUNE 22** — **Triathlon:** to benefit Big Brothers/Big Sisters of Rochester; Harborfest, Ontario Beach Park; call 716/454-2292 or 716/223-2170.

■ **MON, JUNE 30** — **Men's golf tournament:** to benefit the School of the Holy Childhood; Penfield Country Club, Penfield; call 716/359-3710.

Seneca Cayuga

Fundraisers

■ **SAT, JUNE 21** — **Car wash:** to benefit The Wounded Healers' Bereavement Support Group, Inc.; Auburn Walmart; 10 a.m.-2 p.m.

Religious Activities

■ **SUN, JUNE 22** — **Mass:** featuring "Scholares Minores Pro Musica Antiqua"; a Professional Children's Choir from Poland; St. Hyacinth's Church, 61 Pulaski St., Auburn; 10:30 a.m.

Social Activities

■ **JUNE 21, 22** — **Coffee hour:** to honor Fr. Robert J. Downs; St. Patrick's Church, 51 Grove St., Moravia; following 5:15 p.m. Mass Sat, 8:30 a.m. Mass Sun. Also at St. Bernard's Church, 2841 Center Rd., Scipio Center; following 10:30 a.m. Sun. Mass.

■ **AUG 1-3** — **Reunion:** of graduates of the Holy Family High School, Auburn; organizers also are collecting memorabilia for an archive; contact Judy Janusz, 315/252-0123.

Tompkin Tioga

Social Activities

■ **SUN, JUNE 29** — **Pancake breakfast:** sponsored by St. Pat's Youth Group; St. Patrick's Church Hall, 300 Main St., Owego; 8 a.m.-noon.

Yates Ontario Wayne

Social Activities

■ **SUN, JUNE 22** — **Golf:** with Divorced/ Separated/ Bereaved Support Groups; sponsored by Finger Lakes Social Ministry; Big Oak Golf Course, Packwood Rd., Geneva; 3:30 p.m., every Sun.; call Les, 315/789-9419, Carl and Alma, 315/539-2284, or Claire, 716/394-6722.