

# WORLD & NATION

## Bishops adopt youth, communications plans

By Jerry Filteau  
Catholic News Service

KANSAS CITY, Mo. — Meeting in Kansas City June 19-21, the U.S. Catholic bishops took action on youth ministry, major liturgical texts, a pastoral communications plan, a new home missions collection and restructuring their national conference.

They left the meeting one prayer short of approving a new Sacramentary, the book of some 3,000 prayers used at Mass. In executive session they approved 159 of the 160 remaining prayers.

Their inconclusive vote on the remaining prayer will be decided in coming weeks by a mail ballot of the 50 or so active Latin-rite bishops who were not at the Kansas City meeting. They have worked on the new Sacramentary — their first in 25 years — at every national meeting since 1992.

In other actions the bishops:

- Unanimously approved "Renewing the Vision — A Framework for Catholic Youth Ministry," a statement on the goals and elements of ministry among young people.

- Unanimously adopted a "Pastoral Plan for Church Communications" setting key goals and directions for church engagement with today's media.

- Took their first concrete steps towards restructuring the National Conference of



CNS photo  
Missouri Catholic school students (from left) Katie Bishop, Sarah Nagel and Heather Stone look at messages on a giant greeting card for youth June 19 at the bishops' annual spring meeting. The bishops unanimously approved a statement on ministry to young people.

Catholic Bishops and U.S. Catholic Conference into a single conference.

- Decided that in the future unified conference only bishops will be allowed to be members of committees — ending a long tradition of some nonepiscopal members serving on current USCC committees.

- Debated and voted — inconclusively — on establishing a new Collection for the Home Missions on the last Sunday of April

each year.

- Debated and voted — again inconclusively — on acceptance of a compromise text of a new English-language Lectionary for the United States, the first in 25 years.

- Unanimously consented to the plan of the Archdiocese of Hartford, Conn., to begin the sainthood cause of Father Michael McGivney, a 19th-century priest who founded the Knights of Columbus.

The home missions collection vote was inconclusive because it required a two-thirds vote of all heads of dioceses and not all of them were at the meeting. In accord with long-standing conference procedure, absent bishops eligible to vote will be polled by mail and a final vote on the home missions collection should be released before the end of July.

The compromise text of a new English-language Lectionary was worked out this spring by a joint working group of Vatican officials and three U.S. archbishops, after a five-year impasse over Vatican objections to inclusive language in the Lectionary the U.S. bishops approved in 1992.

There was clear, widespread support for an amendment, introduced by Archbishop Rembert G. Weakland of Milwaukee and modified by Archbishop Justin F. Rigali of St. Louis, that told Rome the bishops regard the compromise Lectionary only as an interim text, in need of review and updating within a few years.

Despite the addition of that amendment, the vote was inconclusive. About 210 of the 260 active Latin-rite U.S. bishops were at the meeting. Vatican rules for votes on liturgical matters require approval by at least two-thirds of all such bishops in the country, not just those at the meeting, so a mail ballot will be taken to complete the vote.

## High Court permits federal remedial aid in private schools

By Patricia Zapor  
Catholic News Service

WASHINGTON — The Supreme Court June 23 overturned its own 1985 ruling and said that tax-funded remedial education programs may be held on the grounds of religious schools.

In a 5-4 decision, the court reversed its previous rulings that required tax-supported education programs to be conducted off the site of parochial schools to avoid excessive entanglement between re-

ligion and the state.

The ruling should have the effect of allowing public school districts to put teachers directly into religious schools for the Title I remedial education programs for poor children, allowing the districts to save millions of dollars now spent on mobile classrooms and other systems for avoiding such "entanglement."

"Our establishment clause law has 'significantly changed' since we decided *Aguilar*," said the opinion, written by Justice Sandra Day O'Connor and joined by Chief Justice William Rehnquist, and Justices Antonin Scalia, Anthony Kennedy and Clarence Thomas Jr.

The New York City Title I program that was the subject of *Agostini vs. Felton* "does not run afoul of the three primary criteria we currently use to evaluate whether government aid has the effect of advancing religion," O'Connor wrote.

*Agostini vs. Felton* arose as a rehearing of a case the court decided in 1985, *Aguilar vs. Felton*. In that 5-4 ruling, the court concluded government became excessively entangled with religion when remedial education programs were operated in classrooms on the grounds of religiously run schools.

Because poor students who attend parochial schools still are entitled to the benefits of the Title I remedial programs, public school districts turned to alternatives such as using mobile classrooms parked just outside the church-run schools to bring the classes to students.

The opinion was hailed by the general counsel for the U.S. Catholic Conference as an important shift in the court's approach to considering church-state separation questions.

Mark Chopko, who submitted a friend-of-the-court brief for the USCC urging the court to overturn *Aguilar*, said the ruling represents a healthy change for the court.

Chopko said *Aguilar* and other cases put obstacles between interaction of government and religious institutions based on presumptions of how such activities would be interpreted, rather than upon facts, such as how New York City teachers actually interacted with parochial school students in the Title I program prior to 1985.

In writing for the majority, O'Connor said in cases decided since *Aguilar*, the court has shifted its presumption to expect teachers will not act in ways that are inappropriate for state-paid employees

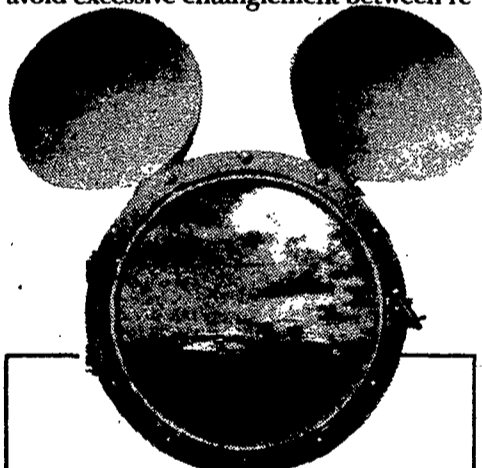
when they work at religious schools.

Joining the New York Board of Education in urging the Supreme Court to reverse its *Aguilar* ruling, the U.S. Education Department argued that the hundreds of millions of dollars spent by the New York schools alone to meet the requirements of the *Aguilar* ruling could be better spent to make Title I services available to more students.

Several of the groups with an interest in the outcome of *Agostini*, including the U.S. Catholic Conference, said in friend-of-the-court briefs that the case presented the court with the opportunity to overturn yet another church-state separation case, 1971's *Lemon vs. Kurtzman*.

The *Lemon* ruling established a three-pronged test of whether a law inappropriately confers a special benefit on religion. Under *Lemon*, laws are weighed as to whether they have a secular purpose, neither advance nor inhibit religion, or foster excessive entanglement between church and state.

The *Agostini* ruling did not throw out or chip away at *Lemon*, but Chopko said the interpretation of *Lemon* that O'Connor applied changed the emphasis of how its three-pronged test is used.



Coming soon to an ocean near you!  
**SAIL ON DISNEY MAGIC!**

The magic of Disney is coming to the deep blue sea! *Disney Magic* is part of an unforgettable 7-day Walt Disney World and Disney Cruise Line vacation. Stay at a Walt Disney World Resort hotel, visit the Disney Theme Parks, and come aboard for an unforgettable cruise to Nassau and to Disney's very own private island. Onboard there's more space for kids than on any other ship afloat. You'll experience Broadway-style shows and the Disney quality you expect. Reserve your stateroom for our August 28, 1998 sailing by August 28, 1997 and save up to \$500 per stateroom.

 **Disney CRUISE LINE**  
DISCOVER UNCHARTED MAGIC™

**HILTON TRAVEL SERVICES**  
(716) 392-1343

In appreciation, \$200 per stateroom will be donated to the Catholic Courier/Catholic Charities Annual Christmas Appeal.

b i s h o p  
s h e e n  
e c u m e n i c a l  
**HOUSING**  
f o u n d a t i o n

### HOME OWNERSHIP

- provides housing counseling and monies for closing costs for first-time home ownership.

### EMERGENCY HOME REPAIR

- provides emergency home repairs to low income home owners.

FOR MORE INFORMATION,  
CALL:

(716) 461-4263

935 East Avenue  
Rochester, New York 14607

(716) 396-1880

2520 County Road 28  
Canandaigua, New York 14424

## Don't miss out on summer fun!

- Expert instruction
- Gymnastics for boys & girls (ages 1 year to adult)
- Beginners to highly advanced
- Competitive teams
- Cheerleaders welcome
- Ballet
- Half day and full day camps.
- Prime time nursery school

Our motto . . . "Safety first, last and always!"



2051 Fairport Nine Mile Pt. Rd.  
Penfield • Gym: 388-8686