

WORLD & NATION

Pope, patriarch beseech U.N., U.S. to avoid war

NEW YORK (CNS) — In a message delivered Feb. 15, Pope John Paul II urged the secretary-general of the United Nations to visit Iraq "as soon as possible."

The pope told Kofi Annan, "It seems that your personal visit will be of great help toward the solution of the present crisis."

Archbishop Renato R. Martino, Vatican nuncio to the United Nations, told Catholic News Service Feb. 16 that he delivered the pope's message to Annan verbally.

The nuncio said Annan attended a World Day of Peace Mass celebrated by Cardinal John J. O'Connor Feb. 15 at St. Patrick's Cathedral in New York. In the homily, Cardinal O'Connor also encouraged Annan to visit Iraq in an effort to prevent war, Archbishop Martino reported.

Archbishop Martino said he met with Annan privately in the cardinal's residence behind St. Patrick's Cathedral after the Mass, and conveyed the pope's message.

In an interview with Vatican Radio Feb. 16, Archbishop Martino said the pope's main concern is "to avoid a war."

"The situation is so aggravated that this danger truly exists," he added. "The Holy Father has received alarming requests from various parties, and for this reason wanted to share them with the secretary-general encouraging this visit to Baghdad which could defuse the situation."

At the time the papal message was given to Annan, the possibility of a visit by the U.N. secretary-general to see whether he could resolve the impasse over free movement for U.N. inspectors was under discussion. But no decision had been made, and Annan had indicated he was reluctant to make the trip unless there was some firm possibility of success.

In another recent appeal, the leader of Iraq's Chaldean-rite Catholics, Patriarch Raphael I Bidawid of Baghdad, implored the United States not to attack Iraq and said new military action would only hurt the people of his country.

Instead, he urged a lifting of the economic embargo that he said has left 1 million babies dead from lack of food and medicine since it was imposed in 1990.

Patriarch Bidawid made the comments in an interview published Feb. 16 by Fides, a news service of the Vatican's Congregation for the Evangelization of Peoples. Chaldean-rite Catholics are part of the minority Christian community in Iraq, and are estimated to number around 400,000.

Appealing to the U.S. people, the patriarch said: "Bring pressure on your government so that it does not attack my people. An attack would do no honor to a great nation like the United States of America."

The patriarch, a strong critic of the 1991 Gulf war against Iraq, said he had the impression that "history is repeating itself" in the current crisis. He said he had



CNS/Reuters

Iraqi women pray for peace and prosperity to prevail in Iraq at a Catholic church in Amman, Jordan, Feb. 15. Catholic leaders in many countries have urged the United States not to attack Iraq over President Saddam Hussein's failure to allow U.N. weapons inspection teams free access in the country.

written to U.S. President Bill Clinton advising him against new military action, saying that the last war had only strengthened Iraqi President Saddam Hussein's hold on power.

He said most Iraqis were not aware of the scope of the current threat, mainly because "in a regime like the one we live in, the people are not the protagonist of politics, but suffer the choices made by their leaders and receive the information given them."

He said Saddam was determined to

bring to the world's attention the plight of Iraqis suffering under the embargo, and the Iraqi people support him on that.

"No people can accept being humiliated to this point. The people in Iraq think it's better to die fighting than to continue to suffer misery and humiliation," he said.

He cited a continual lack of adequate food and medicine in Iraq, and noted that international relief organizations have estimated that some 4,500 children are dying each month as a result.

CALENDAR

All Dioceses

Religious Activities

FEB. 20-22 —

Presentation: centering prayer and study of the Holy Shroud of Turin; Notre Dame Retreat House, 5151 Foster Rd., Canandaigua; registration Fri. 4-8 p.m.; 716/394-5700.

FEB. 20-22 — Retreat:

"Terminally Complacent or Dynamically Compassionate"; Notre Dame Retreat House, 5151 Foster Rd., Canandaigua; 716/394-5700.

MON, FEB. 23 —

Registration deadline: for Feb. 27 Catholic Leadership Forum luncheon with Dr. Joseph Kelly of Nazareth College; Genesee Valley Club, 421 East Ave., Rochester; 11:45-1 p.m.; call Mary Consler, 716/328-3228, ext. 281 or 800/388-7177.

SAT, FEB. 28 —

Workshop: Women in Leadership; sponsored by the Women's Commission Leadership Committee; St. Louis Church, Reddington Hall, 64 S. Main St., Pittsford; 9 a.m.-noon; to register call Barbara Swiecki, 716/248-2427.

MON, MAR. 2 —

Registration deadline: for Mar. 8 "Where is the Spirit of God? An Afternoon of Prayer, Activity, and Fun for Families"; St. Catherine Parish Center, 26 Mendon-Ionia Rd., Mendon; 12:45-5 p.m.; call Karen Rinefierd, 716/328-3228, ext. 255 or 800/388-7177, ext. 255

or e-mail: krinefierd@dor.org.

Chemung Schuyler

Fundraiser

FRI, FEB. 27 — Fish fry: by Ladies Ancient Order of Hibernians; the Hibernian Center, 701 Kinyon St., Elmira; 5-8 p.m.; take-outs available; every Fri. through Good Friday.

WED, FEB. 25 — Pancake

supper: sponsored by the Horseheads Council of the Knights of Columbus; St. Mary's School gym, 811 Westlake St., Horseheads; 4-8 p.m.

Religious Activities

TUE, FEB. 24 —

Registration deadline: for Feb. 28 retreat "Beyond the Fences"; Dominican Monastery, 1310 W. Church St., Elmira; 9 a.m.-3 p.m.; call 607/733-0300.

Social Activities

TUE, FEB. 24 — Mardi

Gras: celebration; Our Lady of Lourdes Parish Center, 1100 W. Church St., Elmira; 6-9 p.m.; call 607/732-6261 for reservations.

Monroe County

Education

FRI, FEB. 20 — Lecture: "Extraordinary Politics and the Polish Transition"; University of

Rochester, Harkness Hall 329; 3:30 p.m.; with Amanda Rose of Indiana University; 716/275-9898 or 716/275-1677.

WED, FEB. 25 —

Lecture: "Jewish Identity in Today's Poland"; University of Rochester, Dewey Hall 1-101; 7:30 p.m.; with writer Joanna Wiszniewicz; 716/275-9898.

Fundraisers

SUN, FEB. 22 —

Concert: to benefit Catholic Family Center Elder Services; St. Louis Church, 60 S. Main St., Pittsford; 2:30 p.m.; donation \$5/person, \$10/family; 716/381-1226.

THU, FEB. 26 — Annual

dinner: to benefit Family Service of Rochester, Inc.; Crowne Plaza, Rochester; Capt. Gerald Coffee, speaker; 716/232-1840, ext. 217 or 261.

FEB. 27, 28 — Dance for

Love: to benefit Camp Good Days and Special Times; St. John Fisher College gym, 3690 East Ave., Rochester; call 716/385-7307.

Religious Activities

FRI, FEB. 20 — Mass:

to begin Renew Season IV at area churches; 7 p.m.; St. John the Evangelist Church, 55 Martha St., Spencerport.

FEB. 23-26 — Parish

retreat: "Losing and Rediscovering God"; St. John of Rochester Church, 8 Wickford Way, Fairport; with Fr. Simeon Gallagher, OFM Cap.; 716/248-5993.

TUE, FEB. 24 —

Program: "Scriptures Sandwiched In"; Sisters of St. Joseph Spirituality Center, 402

Rogers Pky., Rochester; 12:15-1:15 p.m.; every Tues. through Apr. 7; call 716/336-4370.

TUE, FEB. 24 —

Registration deadline: for "Eucharist and Dining in Luke"; Mar. 3, 10, 31; Sisters of St. Joseph Spirituality Center, 402 Rogers Pky., Rochester; 7:30-9 p.m.; call 716/336-4370.

TUE, FEB. 24 —

Presentation: "Revisiting Vatican II"; with Msgr. William Shannon; Sisters of St. Joseph Motherhouse, 4095 East Ave., Rochester; 1-3 p.m.; presented by St. Bernard's Institute.

FRI, FEB. 27 —

Reservation deadline: for March 6 "World Day of Prayer"; sponsored by Church Women United; Corpus Christi Church, 864 E. Main St., Rochester; 1:30 p.m.; child care free with reservation; call 716/342-2790.

MON, MAR. 2 — Book

of the Month: Club; "Gift of Peace, Personal Reflections" by Cardinal Joseph Bernardin; Mercy Prayer Center, 65 Highland Ave., Rochester; 7:30-9 p.m.; Maureen Flood, RSM, presenter; 716/473-6893.

TUE, MAR. 3 —

Registration deadline: for March 10 Lenten Day of Reflection: Sacred Time to Share Mary's Sorrow and Ours; Mercy Prayer Center, 65 Highland Ave., Rochester; 9:30 a.m.-2:30 p.m.; \$12 (brown bag lunch); call 716/473-6893.

Social Activities

FEB. 20, 21 —

Performance: "Do Black Patent Leather Shoes Really Reflect Up?"; Theatre Arts Playhouse, 2106 Five Mile Line Rd.,

Penfield; 8 p.m.; for reservations call 716/383-9060.

FEB. 20-22 — Play:

"Dancing at Lughnasa"; Nazareth College Arts Center, 4245 East Ave., Rochester; 8 p.m. Fri. & Sat., 2 p.m. Sun.; tickets at the box office or by calling 716/389-2170.

SAT, FEB. 21 — Mardi

Gras: celebration; Immaculate Conception Church, 50 Glasgow St., Rochester; 7 p.m.-midnight; for advance tickets call 716/325-3893.

Tompkin Tioga

Fundraisers

SAT, FEB. 28 — Chicken

barbecue: to benefit St. Patrick School; St. Patrick's Church Hall, 300 Main St., Owego; noon-6:30 p.m.; for ticket information call the school office, 607/687-1770.

Yates Ontario Wayne

Meetings

SAT, FEB. 28 —

Breakfast meeting: of the Divorced/Separated/Bereaved Group of Macedon; Log Cabin Restaurant, Rt. 31F, Macedon Center; 9 a.m.; for information call Eleanor, 315/597-9558.