



Reuters/CNS
Labor Party leader Ehud Barak waves to supporters at a news conference May 18 in Beersheva, Israel, after being elected Israel's new prime minister.

Barak sweeps election

By Judith Sudilovsky
Catholic News Service

JERUSALEM — Latin-rite Patriarch Michel Sabbah sent a congratulatory message to Israeli Prime Minister-elect Ehud Barak and other newly elected parliament members, saying he hoped they would "answer the people's expectations for peace."

"The hopes are many. Their realization needs wisdom and courage," Patriarch Sabbah said in his May 18 message. "May the voice of the prophets guide the new leaders of Israel so that they may fulfill their own vocation as stewards of the temporal order. May they found their policies on justice, mutual respect, the equality of

all God's children in their dignity as well as in their rights and duties in their respective societies.

"We hope and pray for an end to the long conflict," said the patriarch, who was in Lebanon at a meeting of Middle East church leaders. "May it be replaced by a new vision which will ensure security and complete freedom to all."

Barak won a resounding victory against Benjamin Netanyahu in the May 17 national elections, with early polls giving him almost 58 percent of the votes, while Netanyahu had 41 percent.

Barak's alliance, One Israel, was given between 29 and 33 seats in the 120-seat parliament, while Netanyahu's Likud was
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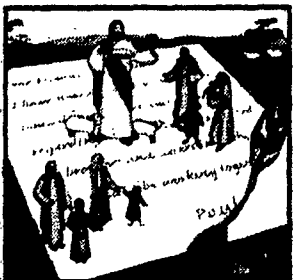
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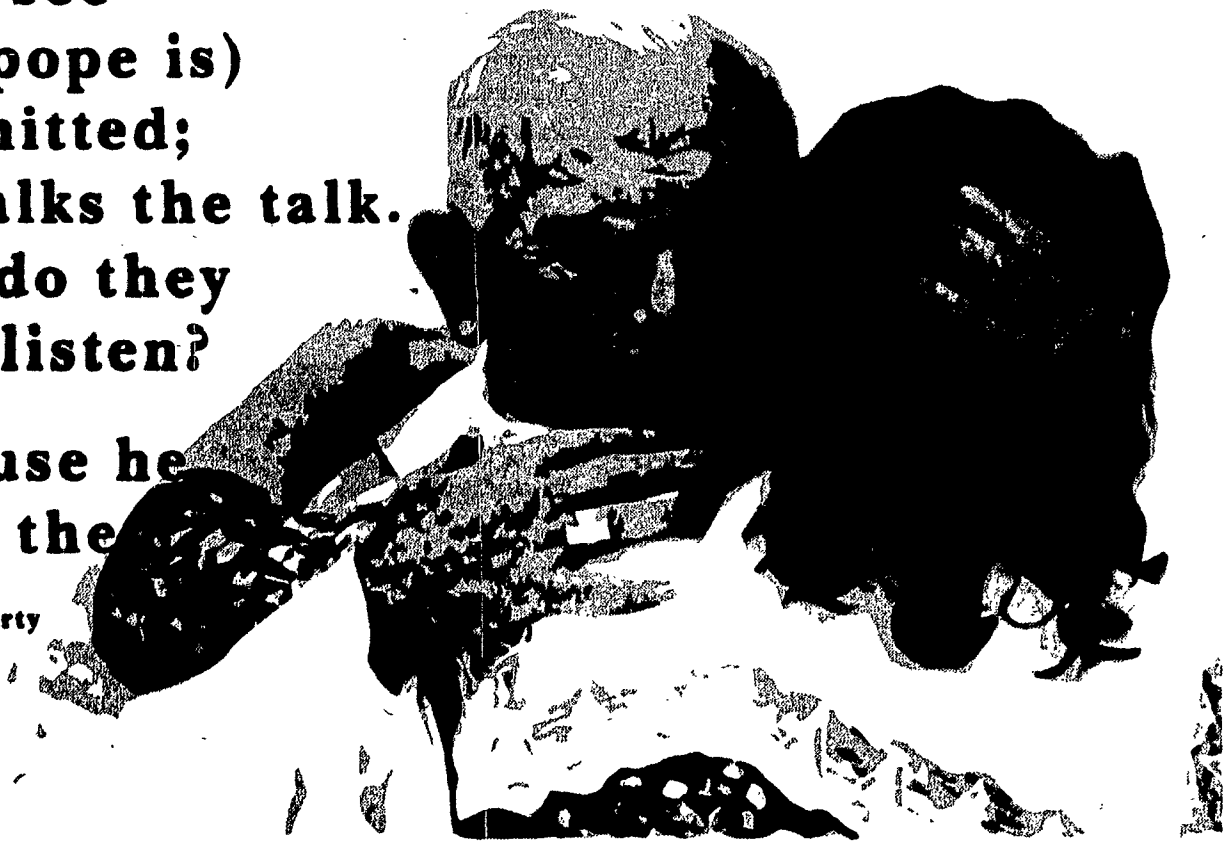


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They see
(the pope is)
committed;
he walks the talk.
Why do they
even listen?

Because he
loves the

- Tom McCarty



Young adults seek acceptance

Facing more than 250 catechetical leaders, priests and diocesan officials — including Bishop Matthew H. Clark — Mary Echter spoke candidly about what she requires from the church.

"The first thing I most need from the church is a place of welcome," said Echter, 18. She explained that many of her peers don't feel accepted by their faith communities and leave, carrying the notion that the Catholic Church is "only a place for good people."

Echter, a parishioner in Rochester's Roman Catholic Community of the 19th Ward, added that today's young people also seek a loving attitude from the church, saying she has friends from broken homes "who aren't even loved by their own parents."

The theme was "New Generations Challenge the Catholic Church: Who Needs Evangelizing?" for the



May 12 diocesan Ministry Day, held at Geneva DeSales High School. Speakers agreed that church leaders must do a better job of reaching out to young adults.

Chris Hood labeled as a fading stereotype the notion that young adult Catholics will drift from their faith during college, but return to the church when they seek such sacraments as marriage for themselves and baptism for their

children.

"The church started taking the young adults for granted," said Hood, 26, who serves as pastoral associate and young adult coordinator at Rochester's Blessed Sacrament Church.

Today's young Catholic adults, Hood and Echter added, feel that for spirituality they have other options than the institutional church.

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STORY BY MIKE LATONA