

WORLD & NATION



Reuters/CNS

Pope John Paul II greets Palestinian President Yasser Arafat Sept. 5 at the pope's summer residence in Castel Gandolfo. The pope expressed hope that a new accord between Israel and Palestine would bring peace.

Pope meets with Arafat; expresses hopes for peace

CASTEL GANDOLFO, Italy (CNS) — In a meeting with Palestinian leader Yasser Arafat, Pope John Paul II expressed satisfaction at the West Bank land-for-security accord that gave new life to the Palestinian-Israeli peace process.

After signing the breakthrough agreement in Egypt Sept. 5, Arafat traveled to Italy, where he met for more than an hour with the pontiff at his summer villa outside Rome to discuss details of the accord. The Vatican said the pope was pleased at the progress.

"The Holy See, in expressing satisfaction and hope at this advance, encourages both sides to continue the process and emphasizes the importance that peace holds for the two peoples," said a Vatican statement issued after the encounter.

It was the eighth time Arafat had met with the pope. The Palestinian leader afterward held talks with the Vatican secretary of state, Cardinal Angelo Sodano.

On a separate issue, observers said Arafat's visit indicated that the Vatican and the Palestine Liberation Organization might be close to an agreement on legal aspects regulating church activities in Palestinian-controlled areas.

The Vatican statement expressed satisfaction at progress on these legal questions, which have been explored by a PLO-Vatican commission since 1998. Sev-

eral important holy places lie in Palestinian territory.

After the meeting with the pope, Arafat gave the pontiff a small model of the Bethlehem grotto, held by tradition as the birthplace of Christ, and expressed his hope that the pope would visit there in 2000.

"I hope so, I hope so," the pope replied.

Vatican officials have said the pope wants to visit Jerusalem and Bethlehem in late March to celebrate the feast of the Annunciation and mark the jubilee year in the place of Christ's birth. Bethlehem is in Palestinian territory, and Arafat has made it clear that Palestinians are eager to host the pope.

Vatican sources said that while the pope's visit to the Holy Land has not been officially decided, prospects appeared to have improved with the latest PLO-Israeli agreement.

The agreement, signed by Arafat and Israeli Prime Minister Ehud Barak, revises the Wye accords of 1998. It calls for an initial land transfer of 7 percent of the West Bank and release of Palestinian prisoners and paves the way for talks on an eventual Palestinian state and the question of Jerusalem.

The agreement was to be reviewed by the Israeli Cabinet and Parliament in mid-September.

Surgeons remove tumor from Cardinal O'Connor

By Tracy Early
Catholic News Service

NEW YORK — Cardinal John J. O'Connor of New York had a small tumor removed from the surface of his brain, but doctors "determined that no other areas of the body were affected," according to a statement released Sept. 4 by the cardinal's spokesman, Joseph Zwilling.

The statement said the cardinal had been released earlier that day from Memorial Sloan-Kettering Cancer Center in Manhattan, and was "looking forward to returning to the full and vigorous schedule which he has followed since becoming the archbishop of New York."

But it also said the cardinal would begin radiation therapy shortly and continue it "over the next several weeks."

On Sept. 5, a statement was read on behalf of Cardinal O'Connor at the Sunday Mass he normally celebrates at St. Patrick's Cathedral.

That statement expressed gratitude for the prayers of people "of all religious persuasions" and for the Masses said for the cardinal.

It said he expected to celebrate the Labor Day Mass at St. Patrick's scheduled for the following Sunday, Sept. 12.

"He is in no hurry to leave office, nor is he in any hurry to reduce his work load once he has completed the recuperative period," the statement concluded.

Zwilling said Pope John Paul II was notified, through the nuncio in Washington, at the time the cardinal entered the hospital for tests. But Zwilling said he did not know what if any messages the pope may have sent to the cardinal.

Cardinal O'Connor, who will be 80 on Jan. 15, entered Memorial Sloan-Kettering, one of the nation's foremost cancer treatment centers, for tests Aug. 25 after suffering from weakness and nausea while working at his residence the previous two days.

The Sept. 4 statement by Zwilling said the cardinal was given "complete results" of the tests Sept. 3. But it did not say when the tumor was removed, who were the doctors performing the surgery, whether the tumor was found to be malignant or how the doctors assessed the prospects for recovery.

Announcement of plans for radiation would normally imply the presence of cancer, however.

In a telephone interview Sept. 5, Zwill-

ing said that he had not talked with the doctors involved or with Cardinal O'Connor. Members of the cardinal's staff did not provide medical details for his statement, Zwilling said.

These staff members also said the doctors did not want to speak about the case for publication, he said.

Dr. Kevin M. Cahill, Cardinal O'Connor's personal physician, recommended that he go to Memorial Sloan-Kettering for tests, and he and Dr. Thomas J. Fahey, an oncologist on the hospital staff, led a team that carried out the tests, according to Zwilling.

He said Cardinal O'Connor was able to walk out of the hospital and travel to his residence in his own car. On arriving back home, his first act was to celebrate Mass in the chapel in his residence, Zwilling reported.

By coincidence, Cardinal O'Connor went to Memorial Sloan-Kettering the day after Coadjutor Bishop James T. McHugh of Rockville Centre, N.Y., was released from the same hospital. Bishop McHugh had undergone surgery there a week before for cancer found in his liver and gall bladder.

While in the hospital, Cardinal O'Connor wrote his regular weekly column for publication in the Sept. 2 issue of *Catholic New York*, the archdiocesan weekly.

"As I write these words, uncertain of the outcome of tests I will be undergoing early tomorrow morning, I find myself in unutterable peace, a peace born of the grace of God and of the goodness of God's people," he told his readers.

"Life is such a gift, and after almost 80 years of living it, I have no sentiment so strong as gratitude," he continued. "But faith is an equal gift, most particularly the faith to believe unconditionally that one's life, everyone's life, is ultimately in the hands of a loving God."

Cardinal O'Connor said he hoped "I will be privileged to serve God's people of New York and elsewhere in whatever capacity God and our holy church should design for me for many years to come."

But he also commented that "God writes straight with crooked lines, and only he knows what the next moment will bring."

Cardinal O'Connor has appeared to enjoy generally good health, and has maintained stamina enough to carry out a full schedule, despite advancing years.

However, he has had a number of medical problems. In 1992, he was hospitalized briefly after he fainted at the reception preceding the Al Smith dinner. The following year, he had surgery for an enlarged prostate. Last year, Cardinal O'Connor had a growth removed from his nose, but Zwilling said it was not cancerous.

St. Bernard's on the Road Fall 1999 Calendar

Area	Topic	Presenter(s)	Date	Day	Time	Location
Brighton	<i>I Believe in God the Father...</i>	Rev. Joseph Brennan	10/21	Thurs.	7:00pm	Our Lady of Lourdes
Brighton	<i>I Believe in Jesus Christ</i>	Rev. George Heyman	10/28	Thurs.	7:00pm	Our Lady, Queen of Peace
City	<i>Searching for God</i>	Iman Muhammad Shafiq, Kartien Bach, RSM, a Jewish Scholar	10/27	Wed.	7:15pm	St. Mary's
City	<i>Why Aren't My Children & Grandchildren going to Church? What Did I Do Wrong?</i>	Deacon Thomas Driscoll	11/16	Tues.	7:15pm	Blessed Sacrament
N/NE	<i>Linking Liturgy & Social Justice</i>	Joan Workmaster	10/26	Tues.	7:00pm	Annunciation
N/NE	<i>What Happened to the Sacraments of My Youth</i>	Rev. Robert Kennedy	11/03	Wed.	1:30pm	St. Ann's Home
NW	<i>Millennium Matters</i>	Rev. John Colacino, C.P.P.S.	10/13	Wed.	7:30pm	Holy Cross
PPM	<i>Preparing for Christmas with the Prophets</i>	Rev. George Heyman	11/04	Thurs.	7:30pm	Resurrection
SE	<i>Are We as Just as We Think We Are?</i>	Chris Wilkins	10/13	Wed.	7:30pm	St. Joseph's, Rush
SW	<i>The Challenge of Being Catholic Today</i>	Bishop Matthew Clark	11/10	Wed.	7:30pm	St. Pius Tenth
SW	<i>Linking Liturgy & Social Justice</i>	Rev. Robert Kennedy	11/17	Wed.	7:30pm	St. John's Spencerport
Tri-County	<i>From Reading to Living the Scriptures</i>	Rev. Sebastian Falcon	10/12	Tues.	7:30pm	St. Mary's, Waterloo
Tri-County	<i>I Believe in Jesus Christ...</i>	Rev. George Heyman	10/19	Tues.	7:30pm	St. Mary's, Waterloo
Wayne	<i>Preparing for Christmas with the Prophets</i>	Rev. George Heyman	11/09	Tues.	7:30pm	Epiphany, Sodus
Wayne	<i>From Reading to Living the Scriptures</i>	Rev. Sebastian Falcon	11/17	Wed.	7:30pm	St. Anne's, Palmyra

Please note: Registration forms for these events are available from the collaborating parishes or St. Bernard's Institute. Some lectures have registration fees.

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