



A Catholic nun leads a group in prayer in front of the destroyed residence of Bishop Carlos Filipe Ximenes Belo in Dili, East Timor, Sept. 20. Reuters/CNS

U.N. troops reach Dili

By Stephen Steele
Catholic News Service

NEW YORK — When the first ship of U.N. peacekeeping troops arrived in Dili, East Timor, at 4:15 a.m., it wakened nuns and refugees residing at a Salesian convent.

"It's earlier than we normally get up, but everybody in the house woke up smiling. Our lives have been saved," said Salesian Sister Marlene Bautista, the only U.S. nun who remained in Timor throughout several weeks of anarchy and violence.

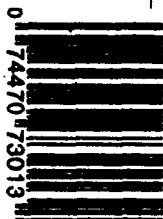
"I feel safe and I feel confident. Now there are people here who can protect us, and we feel confident that they will protect us," she said.

The first batch of international troops

landed at dawn Sept. 20. The peacekeeping force, led by Australia, will eventually number about 7,500 troops from more than 20 nations. The force was created with a U.N. mandate to use "all necessary means" to assist distribution of humanitarian aid and to end the killing that began after 78 percent of voters in East Timor favored independence from Indonesia.

As the troops moved in, new details emerged on the number of casualties suffered among the clergy and church workers. Father Francisco Barreto, the head of Caritas East Timor, reported dead Sept. 9, is alive and residing in the hills surrounding Dili, said Sister Bautista. The announcement reduces the number of con-

Continued on page 11



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75c

12 PAGES

Inside This Week



National black leaders assemble
Conference draws top administrators
— Page 3

Elmira's Eastside provides homes
Churches worship in vacated property
— Page 4



Holy Cross laity see broader roles
Ovid parishioners respond to the call
— Page 12

Parishes face growing pains

St. Lawrence Church was founded as a 400-family parish in 1959, when open fields were still prevalent in the town of Greece.

Father Frank Falletta encountered a much different situation when he arrived as pastor in 1984. The parish had increased fourfold in its first quarter-century — and its growth was just beginning to heat up.

Today, St. Lawrence has swelled to a 3,000-family community. A new church building went up in 1989 and an extension was added only six years later, increasing the seating capacity from 850 to 1,150. A parish center was built in recent years as well to serve St. Lawrence's swarm of young families; the religious-education programs serve nearly 700 children and the last two first Communion classes have averaged more than 150 each.

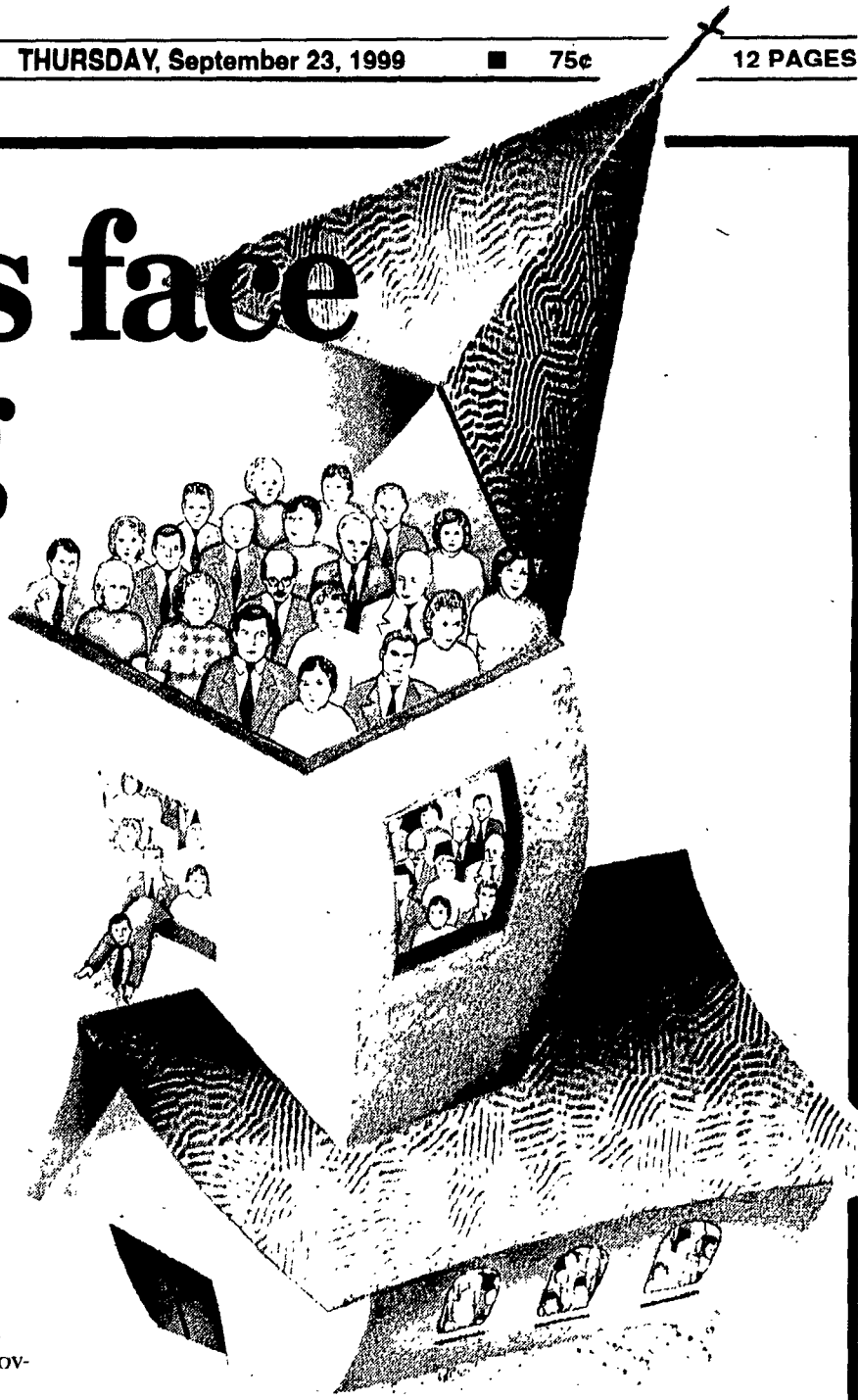
And the expansion around St. Lawrence continues. Father Falletta said housing developments are still going up within blocks of the church — and he no longer knows where he'll put the Catholics moving into his parish boundaries.

"We've maxed out as far as architecture goes," Father Falletta said.

Just north of St. Lawrence is St. Mark's Parish, which had 300 families around the time of its founding in 1964. That number had increased to 1,100 by 1993, and is currently at 1,400-plus.

"The expansion is phenomenal," said Donald Meminger, a musician at St. Mark's for 22 years. He added that several fields near the corner of Flynn and Kuhn roads — where St. Mark's is located — are targets for new housing tracts.

Robert Prorok, a St. Mark's parishioner, said that more of the same can be expected in the near future. Much of Greece's existing open land is zoned residential, and Prorok — chair of the northwest Monroe County group for dioc-



san Pastoral Planning for the New Millennium — predicted that Greece will be virtually devoid of farms in less than 20 years.

William Pickett, diocesan director of the Office of Planning, said that northwest Monroe County is one of two areas in the Rochester Diocese that will see markedly continual growth. According to studies by the Center for Governmental Research, the other area of rapid growth is in east and southeast Monroe County, extending into Wayne and Ontario counties.

Continued on page 10

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