



Reuters/CNS

Refugees in Mozambique reach for food at a camp in the village of Chlaqualane in mid-March, shortly after the U.S. announced it would forgive all debt owed by the flood-stricken country.

Bishop urges aid for Mozambique

CAPE TOWN, South Africa (CNS) - A South African bishop said it was crucial "that there is the political will to keep aid flowing" to Mozambique so that people there can rebuild their lives after severe flooding.

"There is concern that, when the cameras go, the help will stop," said Bishop Kevin Dowling of Rustenburg, who heads the Southern African Catholic Bishops' Conference's justice and peace commission.

He said many of the land mines laid in Mozambique during a 16-year civil war that ended in 1992 might have been displaced by rushing floodwaters, increasing the danger to people returning to their homes.

Maps had been drawn showing the position of the mines, but "until the water goes down, there won't be any way of determining where they are now," he said.

Floods swept through Mozambique from mid-February into March, killing nearly 500 people and forcing 450,000 from their homes.

"It will be a very difficult and dangerous job finding

the mines," Bishop Dowling said, noting that there are at least a million mines still in Mozambique.

"People trying to farm the land again will be in danger. Also, there's the threat of playing children having their legs blown off," he said.

The Mozambican government's disaster management team said a four-month emergency program will include the identification of densely populated areas, the collection of data relating to the possible effects of the floods on mine location, raising awareness among the affected population and the establishment of teams to identify and destroy displaced land mines.

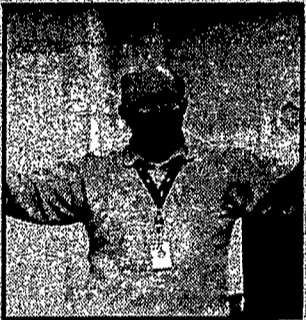
Bishop Dowling said he thought the South African military should help Mozambique locate and detonate the mines, because it has the expertise and experience.

Vast stretches of Mozambique's main roads have been washed away in the floods, with secondary roads submerged. Projects to rebuild the country include the planting of new crops, reconstruction of schools and shops, and the rebuilding of railways and roads.

Catholic Courier

DIocese OF ROCHESTER, NEW YORK ■ VOL. 111 NO. 26 ■ THURSDAY, APRIL 6, 2000 ■ 75¢ ■ 16 PAGES

Inside This Week



Church counts on Census 2000
Deacon Datz urges parishioners comply — Page 3



Rochelle Cherry shoots for stars
Shines on and off court at high school — Page 7

Kids' Chronicle: Search for Jesus
— Page 16

Muchos Hispanos en la iglesia



From left, Pedro Nuñez, Santa Aponte and Luis Labrador sing in the choir during the Spanish Mass at Our Lady of Mount Carmel Church on April 2.

Hispanics have joined the U.S. Catholic Church in such numbers that they accounted for 71 percent of church growth since 1960.

This statistic was among findings the U.S. Catholic bishops announced March 7 as part of a report intended to help guide pastoral planning in the church.

"Hispanic Catholics in the United States have gone from virtual anonymity to the very center of Church life," observed Bishop Arthur N. Tafoya of Pueblo, NM, chairman of the bishops' Committee on Hispanic Affairs. The committee commissioned the report.

Thirty to 38 percent of U.S. Catholics are Hispanic, according to the report. The largest increase in Hispanic population, more than 50 percent, occurred in the episcopal region comprising Oregon, Washington, Idaho, Alaska and Montana. The smallest increase among the country's 13 episcopal regions, 14 percent, was in region 2, the state of New York.

That's not to say the Hispanic presence in this region is insignificant — the New York Archdiocese had the third-largest Hispanic population of any diocese as of 1996, with at least 860,000 Catholics out of a total Hispanic population estimated at 1.23 million. Many professionals believe the current U.S. census will more accurately reflect the Hispanic population, which they believe is larger than

was previously estimated. The bishops' study was based partly on the last census.

Kathleen Cannon, director of diocesan Parish Support Ministries, which includes the Office of the Spanish Apostolate, noted that a recent Finger Lakes Health Systems Agency survey projected 40 percent growth in the Hispanic population from 1990 to 1999.

A closer look

Hispanics in the Rochester Diocese are concentrated in urban areas, so Hispanic ministries within the diocese have been based in Rochester, Brockport, Geneva and Newark. It is a particular challenge for the church to reach Hispanics, noted Father Laurence Tracy, parochial vicar at Community of Hope, Rochester. He estimates the diocese has more than 40,000 Hispanic Catholics, most of them from Puerto Rico.

"I'd say close to 50 percent of baptized Catholics within some parts of the city are Hispanic," he said. "That doesn't mean they are going to church. They are baptized Catholics who live in the city. I'd say only 10 percent go to church, which presents a challenge for us."

Continued on page 13