



Reuters/CNS

Juan Miguel Gonzalez hugs his son Elian at Andrews Air Force Base April 23.

Clergy plead for calm in Miami

MIAMI (CNS) — Miami Archbishop John C. Favalora appealed for "restraint and calm" in the Miami community in the wake of the April 22 seizure of 6-year-old Elian Gonzalez by federal authorities.

"As the community is observing solemn holy days, it would be appropriate to take today's events to pray for healing and reconciliation," the archbishop said.

In a pre-dawn raid, federal agents took the boy from the home of his relatives and flew him to suburban Washington for a reunion with his father, Juan Miguel Gonzalez.

"Our city has faced crisis in the past with reasoned reaction," Archbishop Favalora

continued. "It is time once again to call forth our best efforts for the good of everyone in the area."

On Easter Sunday clergy in south Florida launched a healing effort in the wake of reaction to the seizure, and the *Miami Herald* daily newspaper reported that the effort is expected to involve a broad range of community leaders, public gatherings and discussions in the weeks ahead.

In his statement, Archbishop Favalora called upon all Catholic churches to "pray for the entire Gonzalez family and for a peaceful period of healing and reconciliation."

On Easter Sunday in Little Havana,

Masses at St. John Bosco Church, where Elian's relatives are parishioners, were packed.

In an interview with Catholic News Service April 24, the pastor, Cuban-born Msgr. Emilio Vallina, also expressed his wish for a return to peace among Miami's Cuban exiles and reconciliation among all members of the Gonzalez family.

"We are asking the exile community to continue being nonviolent. Violence begets violence," Msgr. Vallina told CNS.

But Msgr. Vallina, who described himself as a close friend of the Miami Gonzalez family, said he remained skeptical about

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Catholic Courier

0 14470173013 2
DIocese OF ROCHESTER, NEW YORK ■ VOL. 111 NO. 29 ■ THURSDAY, APRIL 27, 2000 ■ 75¢ ■ 24 PAGES

Milestones

This week's issue is a salute to priests, religious and married couples celebrating significant anniversaries of their vocations and to priests retiring from active ministry. It also highlights people of all ages approaching milestones in their service to the church.

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Chaplaincies take on new look

Based on his experience as a pastor, Father Daniel Holland sees plenty of room for improvement in pastoral ministry at Rochester-area health-care facilities.

"I think of how much more we could be doing if we were properly organized," said Father Holland, pastor of St. Theodore's Church in Gates. "There's a wide range of spiritual care in hospitals and nursing homes that we, as a church, have not been organized to offer."

One big need, he said, is to better educate people about the sacraments and the role of pastoral ministers. Father Holland said, for example, that he often has administered the anointing of the sick more times than necessary because patients, their families and caretakers were not aware that the sacrament is to be given only once during a serious illness. In addition, he has frequently been called upon to give the anointing — which is only to be given to a living person — after a patient has died.

Education may be more crucial at this time because pastoral health-care ministry is undergoing many changes. Whereas in previous generations Catholic chaplaincies were filled almost exclusively by priests, that area of ministry is now handled by deacons, women religious and other lay people as well. This change has taken place, in part, out of necessity due to the declining number of available priests in the Rochester Diocese.

In addition, the ministry is becoming more complex due to health-care trends that limit patients' time in hospitals, said Sister Elaine Hollis, RSM, chaplain at Mercy Health in Hornell.

"You used to stay two weeks in the hospital, and now you're in and out in a day," Sister Hollis said, acknowledging that patients have become harder to track for ministerial purposes.

Sue Shady, Catholic lay chaplain at Monroe Community Hospital in Rochester, said parishes and health-care facilities will need to collaborate better to cope with the growing diversity in health-care delivery.

"Health care has moved out into the community" and out of the



Sue Shady, a lay chaplain at Monroe Community Hospital, gives Communion to an Alzheimer's patient at the hospital on April 17. Shady says even people with progressed Alzheimer's respond amazingly well to prayer and ritual.



hospital, Shady said.

Father Holland also contended that pastoral ministry at nursing homes in the Rochester area is "very sketchy." "I can't possibly visit them all, nor can the staff here (at St. Theodore's)," he said.

"There are literally dozens of facilities where there's no direct link" to a chaplain or parish, said Betty Mullin-DiProsa, chairman and CEO of St. Ann's Community in Rochester. In such places, the only pastoral care is received by "the occasional resident who may have a strong relationship with a pastor," she said.

These concerns and others have been raised during the past year by a task force formed in early 1999 at Bishop Matthew H. Clark's request. The health-ministry team, chaired by Mullin-DiProsa, reviewed diocesan policy on pastoral care at hospitals, long-term care facilities and in-patient treatment centers in Monroe County.

The team submitted numerous recommendations to Bishop Clark March 20 after having surveyed parishes, hospitals and nursing homes, and health-care ministers. Bill Olsen, diocesan director of human resources, said he is not sure if and when the bishop will approve the plan, but remarked that "there may be aspects of it starting later this year."

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