

WORLD & NATION

Bishops address election, Sudan, jails

By Jerry Filteau
Catholic News Service

WASHINGTON — Bishop Joseph A. Fiorenza of Galveston-Houston said Nov. 16 that he hoped the country would come together once the still-contested U.S. presidential election was resolved.

He made his comments at a press conference concluding the U.S. bishops' four-day meeting in Washington.

Answering a question about the elections, he said, "My words would be words of prayer, first of all that however this is resolved, it will be resolved for the common good of the whole nation."

"I also hope that it will be ended sooner rather than later and that once a president is elected, this country will come together and overcome personal preferences," he said.

He urged the members of Congress to "work in a bipartisan way" worthy of "our unique position as the most powerful nation in the world."

Among concerns of the bishops he highlighted in a review of their actions over the previous four days were their statements on the 16-year civil war in Sudan and on U.S. immigration reform.

On Nov. 14 the bishops unanimously ap-

proved a statement, "Sudan's Cry for Peace," lamenting the "indifference of the international community" to the "slavery, torture, executions, religious persecution" and "endless death and destruction" of a war that has caused an estimated 2 million deaths and displaced 4 million people.

"The genocide that is going on in Sudan has not captured the attention of the world," Bishop Fiorenza said. "We hope that this statement first of all will bring greater attention to the terrible violence in that civil war."

He added that the bishops hope to move the U.S. government "to be actively involved in trying to bring about a resolution to the conflict in Sudan" and bring an end to "the persecution of Christians" there.

Bishop Fiorenza said the resolution urging reforms in immigration law and policy, which the bishops passed unanimously shortly before the press conference, reflects their concern with an "ongoing problem."

"We have now over 300,000 people who are in a legal limbo" through a combination of law changes in 1996 and "a misinterpretation of the law by the Immigration (and Naturalization) Service," he said.

"These people need to have their status recognized and legalized because they have been in this country for a long time," he

said.

"They are hard-working people, they pay their taxes, they are contributing in many ways to the welfare of this country," he added. "And they have fallen in a legal limbo in a way that is unjust and unfair — and this country should not stand for it."

Bishop Fiorenza said most of the bishops' work during the meeting fell into three general categories — issues related to the church itself, U.S. social issues and international justice and peace concerns.

Among church issues, he said the bishops adopted a new document on church art and architecture, discussed final steps in implementing church norms for Catholic higher education and reviewed possible changes in their ethical and religious directives for Catholic health care.

He also spoke about their pastoral statement on the multicultural character of the U.S. church and the need to welcome new immigrants fully into the life of the church.

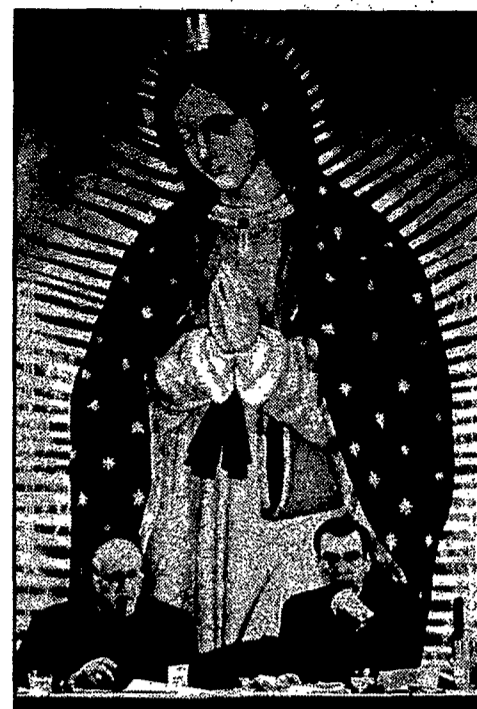
Tensions arise in parishes over "differences in mentality, differences in culture, differences in customs and language, but before God these differences don't make any difference," he said.

"And they shouldn't make any difference to us," he added. "The challenge is to continue to see these cultural differences as a richness and not as a problem."

On international affairs he cited the bishops' statement on the new crisis in the Middle East and their statement on Sudan.

On U.S. social issues, he said, along with their immigration reform resolution the bishops approved a major statement addressing "reform of our criminal justice system."

"I don't think anyone would disagree that it's in terrible disarray," he commented. "Everyone says it's bad, but no one is



Nancy Wiehac/CNS

Bishops' conference president Bishop Joseph Fiorenza (left) and general secretary Msgr. Dennis Schnurr lead the U.S. bishops in their annual fall meeting in Washington Nov. 15.

doing anything about it. We hope our document will be a strong impetus, at least in the Catholic community, to get organized about this and begin to study it in our parishes."

He said the document will serve as a basis for more intense church advocacy in legislatures "so that we can bring about, slowly but surely, much-needed reform of the criminal justice system in the United States and hopefully work for the abolition of capital punishment."



Catholic Family Center

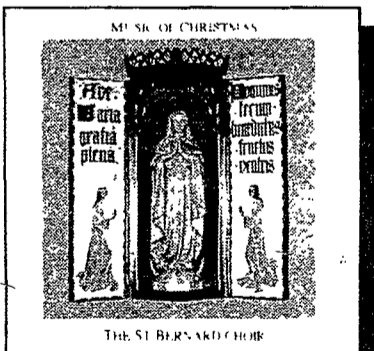
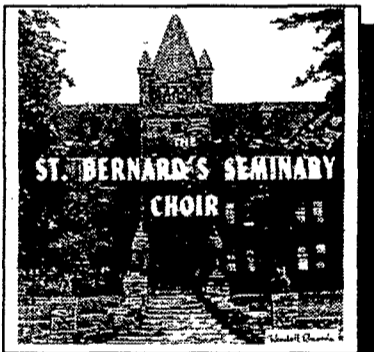
Pregnant? Need Help?

Catholic Family Center's Pregnancy Hotline

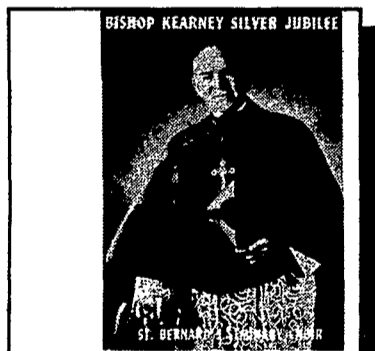
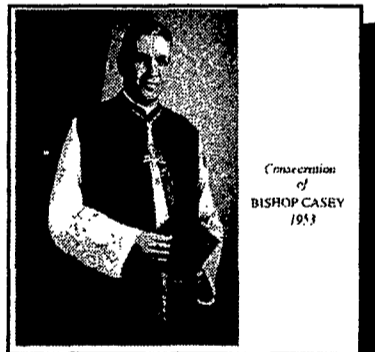
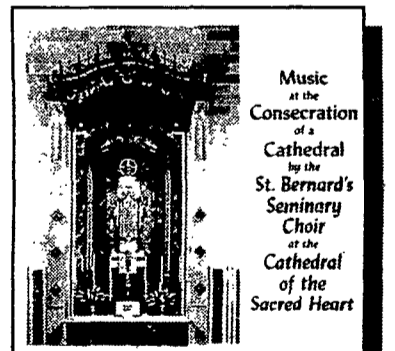
CALL 1-800-CARE-002

25 Franklin Street • Sibley Tower Building, 7th Floor
Rochester, New York 14604-1007 • 716-546-7220
www.cfcrochester.org

Archival recordings of the Saint Bernard Seminary Choir



Now on Compact Disc



Order Blank

Name _____

Each CD is \$15.00.

Shipping and Handling is \$1.50 each.

Address _____

Name of recording	quantity	price
1 Seminary	_____	\$ _____
2 Christmas	_____	\$ _____
3 Cathedral	_____	\$ _____
4 Bishop Kearney	_____	\$ _____
5 Bishop Casey	_____	\$ _____
Shipping & Handling	_____	\$ _____
TOTAL	_____	\$ _____

Make check payable to and send completed form to

Saint Anne Productions
1600 Mt. Hope Avenue
Rochester, NY 14620-4598
Allow several weeks for delivery.

Order elects superior

Sister Clare Pratt will lead the Religious of the Sacred Heart as of Nov. 21. She is the first woman from the United States to lead the society, and was elected superior general in August at a general chapter in Amiens, France, where the international congregation was founded.

The Religious of the Sacred Heart taught in Rochester Catholic schools from 1855 to 1969, including at the former Academy of the Sacred Heart at 8 Prince Street. Their first school was on north St. Paul Street, Rochester.

Sister Pratt was born and raised in Washington, D.C.

VOLUNTEERS NEEDED

Research study of investigational PNEUMONIA VACCINE

- Age 65 and older
- Have never had a pneumonia vaccine
- Payment up to \$325.00
- Parking will be paid

FOR MORE INFORMATION PLEASE CALL

273-3990