

WORLD & NATION

'God' No. 1 for this pope

VATICAN CITY (CNS) — When he writes encyclicals, Pope John Paul II's favorite word is "God."

Pope Paul VI's was "church," while Pope John XXIII used "life" the most. Pope Pius XII favored all three of the above, along with "Christ."

It had to happen sooner or later: Church statisticians have scanned the encyclicals of the last four popes, identifying the frequency of more than 1,400 significant words ranging from "abortion" to "zeal."

The results have just been published by the Vatican in a 300-page volume full of analytical tables, pie charts and lots of words. Although not headed for the best-seller charts, it reveals some interesting historical trends in how pontiffs pontificate.

All four popes share a similar "top 10" lexicon that includes "God," "church," "Christ" and "life."

"Spirit," "truth" and "faith" are near the top, too.

Among the least-used "significant" words on the long list are "success," "friend," "profit" and "reform."

Pope John Paul, however, has often strayed outside the traditional papal vocabulary, using a great number of words in his encyclicals that his predecessors never or almost never chose to employ. Among them are "abortion," "Jews," "slavery," "ethics," "embryo," "exploitation" and "sexuality."

He has other favorites that were used less frequently by previous popes, including "mystery," "sin," "revelation," "holy," "dialogue" and "women."

The charts show that Pope John Paul has been less inclined to use some words popular with his predecessors, like "heart," "body" and "charity."

Pope Pius had a monopoly on particular words, too. According to the study, he was the only one of the four to use "enemy," "dogma," "heresy" and "music" in his encyclicals.

Not surprisingly, the Polish-born Pope John Paul has used the term "solidarity" much more than any of his predecessors. But the word "Poland" appears only seven times in his encyclicals, compared to 22 times in those of Pope Pius.

The study also showed that Pope John Paul's encyclicals are considerably longer than those of other recent popes. They average nearly 25,000 words, compared to around 5,000 for Pope Pius, 9,000 for Pope John and 8,000 for Pope Paul.

Mutual fund stresses value, values

By Bill Howard
Catholic News Service

DALLAS — Aquinas Growth Fund ranked first among all religious-based mutual funds in its five-year return rate, according to a report by a leading financial analyst.

In a report on performance through the end of 2000, Wiesenberger, a fund-tracking division of the global company Thomson Financial, placed all four Aquinas Funds among the top 15 in the category. Also prominent in the top 15 were seven Lutheran Brotherhood funds.

The Dallas-based Aquinas Funds group describes itself as "America's first Catholic values mutual funds."

It says its socially responsible investment policy "includes the general guidelines of the National Conference of Catholic Bishops and also reflects issues of social justice that are shared with other religious orders and other denominations for accomplishing social change."

The Wiesenberger report said the Aquinas Growth Fund, formerly called the Aquinas Equity Growth Fund, topped the list in five-year returns at 19.65 percent per year. It ranked third in three-year returns at 15.49 percent.

The next-best in five-year performance was Lutheran Brotherhood's Fund A at 15.01 percent. That fund topped the list for best one-year return at 12.01 percent and three-year performance at 22.81 percent.

Among other religiously based investment groups, the Mennonite-run MMA Praxis and the conservative Christian Timothy Plan each had two funds ranked high on the list.

Ramy Shaalan, senior fund analyst for Wiesenberger, said religious-based growth and fixed income funds ranked well compared to their secular counterparts over the last three years.

The Aquinas Growth Fund ranked in the top 30 percent in the growth category. Its Fixed Income Fund ranked in the top 25 percent of global fixed income funds.

"Basically, they have done well in relation to their nonreligious counterparts," Shaalan said.

Both funds posted positive gains in 2000, when the Dow Jones average dropped 6.2 percent and the NASDAQ composite lost 39.3 percent.

Aquinas Funds president Frank Rauscher said the rankings confirm that religious-based funds can be profitable without compromising morals.

"People want to put their money where their values are, and the organizations associated with the religion want to be consistent that the money reflects their values," he said.

Rauscher said Aquinas Funds takes an active approach, using its voice as a share-

holder to promote positive change within companies.

He said that strategy is in compliance with the bishops' document, "Socially Responsible Investment Guidelines."

It lists seven core areas of concern when investing: abortion, affordable housing, contraception, gender discrimination, military spending, racial discrimination, and South Africa — the last a reflection of the regime of strict racial segregation that prevailed in South Africa at the time the document was developed.

Aquinas Funds collaborates with the Interfaith Center for Corporate Responsibility, a coalition of 275 Catholic, Protestant and Jewish institutional investors with combined portfolios worth an estimated \$100 billion.

"It's like an army of ants," Rauscher said. "A lot of these groups come in and say (to a corporation in which they have investments), 'We think you should consider this. We just bop them on the head.'"

A recent small victory came with AT&T, which has received nationwide criticism for a decision to add the Hot Network, a hardcore adult channel, to its cable roster. Aquinas Funds used its stockholder standing to protest, and after several months received a letter stating that the Hot Network

will be excluded indefinitely from AT&T's Dallas-area package.

Aquinas Funds says it has also made an impact in gender discrimination by influencing large companies such as General Electric, PNC Bank and Luby's Cafeterias to promote more women. It was involved in persuading Teva Pharmaceutical to not produce the abortion pill RU-486 and in getting several large corporations to quit donating to Planned Parenthood.

It teamed with other religion-based investors to put heat on the Walt Disney Company for sweatshop allegations, to monitor its adherence to the new television ratings system and to prevent the production of movies that defame religion.

Rauscher said Aquinas Funds likes to give a company at least three years to show changes in controversial policies.

Sometimes, however, it pulls its stock from a company, such as American Home Products. The pharmaceutical and health care giant would not budge on its position to produce abortifacients, so Aquinas Funds blacklisted it last year.

"You try to see how responsive they are. Like AT&T, we've accomplished our short-term mission but not our long-term mission," he said.



Michael Hoy/CNS

Irish eyes are smiling

Molly Coleman and Cassidy Kelty show their Irish pride during the annual St. Patrick's Day Parade in Washington March 11 — the weekend before the Irish saint's actual feast March 17. Both girls and their families attend Catholic parishes in Virginia.

Reaching Out In Faith and Friendship

ST. SALOME'S CHURCH
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Census 2001

Sunday, March 25, 2001 • from 1:00 to 5:00 p.m.

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The parish borders Lake Ontario on the north, Irondequoit Bay on the east, Titus Avenue on the South, and Willow Creek Lane on the west.

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