

WORLD & NATION

Cardinals' consistory calls for global efforts

By John Thavis
Catholic News Service

VATICAN CITY — In the largest gathering of its kind at the Vatican, more than 150 cardinals drew up a list of pastoral priorities for the third millennium, including new ways of strengthening holiness, unity and missionary energy in the church.

Pope John Paul II, who celebrated Mass to close the May 21-24 consistory, called it a "moment of communion" that produced deep analysis and some well-thought-out proposals.

"The church finds itself today facing enormous challenges, which put to the test the trust and enthusiasm of those who proclaim (the Gospel)," the pope said. He said he planned to make use of the cardinals' suggestions across a broad range of pastoral topics.

It was the sixth time the pope has called the cardinals together in a special consultative meeting and the first time since 1994. For more than half the 155 participants, it was a new experience.

Cardinal Roger M. Mahony of Los Angeles said the consistory had "shrunk the earth in a good sense" by allowing prelates from all continents to listen to each other.

He and many other cardinals said that, beyond specific issues related to church structures and policies, an overriding theme was holiness — its central place in the life of every Christian. As one prelate put it, the church's program should be "the globalization of holiness."

Related to that was how the church can proclaim the Gospel to people in pluralistic societies where religion is no longer automatically passed on from generation to generation.

"You've got to preach the Gospel with authority, but somehow you also have to help people understand that the message of the Gospel is good for them," said Australian Cardinal Edward I. Cassidy, summing up a key challenge for modern evangelization.

The consistory featured introductory speeches by three cardinals, short talks — generally under 10 minutes — by about half the participants, and small-group discussions. In the final working session, small-group reports were read aloud, along with a 17-page document that summed up the main points of the meeting.

Other than two cursory briefings, the Vatican did not make information available on the contents of the discussions or the fi-

nal reports. Some individual cardinals were willing to talk to reporters, however.

They said a main concern of many speeches was improving collegiality, especially through reform of the Synod of Bishops. A number of cardinals criticized the current synod format, which features two weeks of speeches followed by group discussions, as unproductive and unwieldy. Belgian Cardinal Godfried Danneels of Mechelen-Brussels said the church needs a forum that allows for sharper debate and fewer "homilies."

Others, like Cardinal Cormac Murphy-O'Connor of Westminster, England, called for raising the profile of the synod, by making its secretariat a permanent Vatican office at the level of other congregations. Boston Cardinal Bernard F. Law suggested an annual synod with an open agenda as one way to increase communication between the church's center and the bishops around the world.

While the pope generally did not comment on the cardinals' proposals, he made two pointed remarks in support of the Synod of Bishops on the final day of the consistory, calling it a "very valid form" of collegiality.

On other issues of collegiality, several of the discussion groups talked about the possibility of more flexibility by local churches in translating liturgical texts, in light of a recent Vatican document that emphasized universal norms. One Vatican cardinal said more authority might be shared with local churches in the selection of bishops and some tribunal cases, and another asked for more cross-consultation when Vatican documents are being prepared.

The papal ministry was also discussed, though not in as much detail as some had foreseen. Cardinals were careful to make clear that strengthening the role of local churches did not necessarily mean weakening the role of the papacy.

"The solution cannot be to dance on one leg, but to reinforce both roles: papal primacy and collegiality," said Cardinal Danneels.

U.S. Cardinal Avery Dulles, a Jesuit theologian, noted that, while papal primacy often is seen as an ecumenical impediment, non-Catholic churches have sometimes suffered because of the lack of a strong central authority.

Other main topics in the consistory discussions were:

— Missionary outreach. Formation of



CNS/Reuters

Praying with the pope

Pope John Paul II watches a child during the closing Mass of a four-day special meeting of the College of Cardinals May 24. More than 150 of the world's 183 cardinals participated in the consistory.

church personnel was a chief concern, and some suggested that a concise version of the Catechism of the Catholic Church be prepared for the agents of evangelization.

Cardinal Mahony proposed that a "Directory on the New Evangelization" be prepared, to serve as a pastoral guideline and help better explain the term "new evangelization" in the context of local church communities.

Cardinal William H. Keeler of Baltimore spoke on better use of the mass media as an evangelizing tool and pointed to the advantages the Internet offers as a direct channel to people around the world.

— Marriage and family life. Some cardinals spoke of ethical problems posed by new developments in biology and genetics

and about the changing viewpoints on sexuality. In that regard, a Vatican official announced that his agency was at work on a "lexicon" of modern sexuality and marriage terms like "sexual health" and "gender."

Cardinal Anthony J. Bevilacqua of Philadelphia, noting the higher percentages of cohabitating couples and out-of-wedlock births, said the very concept of marriage was under challenge. Others spoke about the gap between church teachings and the actual practice of Catholics on these subjects; several cardinals said the answer lies not in changing the teaching but in presenting it more clearly.

— Globalization and economic justice. Cardinal Theodore E. McCarrick of Washington said the church needs to show it cares for the poor by helping to build "globalization with a conscience." The need for charity as a defining element of the church's activity was underlined, too. French Cardinal Roger Etchegaray, president of the Vatican's jubilee committee, said the church's call to poverty was the most provocative and urgent question for modern evangelization.

— Ecumenism and dialogue. Several cardinals praised the recent Vatican document *Dominus Iesus*, which emphasized Christ as the unique savior, and said it should guide the church as it tries to balance proclamation with dialogue.

But other cardinals made strong calls for ecumenical progress. Cardinal Murphy-O'Connor asked that the idea of a pan-Christian meeting, which could not be pulled off in the jubilee year, be resurrected.

Before ending their meeting, the cardinals issued a short message to all Catholics, asking them to keep their attention focused on Christ through Scripture reading, prayers, participation in the Eucharist and confession.

As they left Rome, some cardinals predicted many of the same issues would resurface in October, when about 250 bishops will meet in a monthlong synod to discuss the role of the bishop in the church.

Archbishop's, Stallings' weddings criticized

VATICAN CITY (CNS) — Zambian Archbishop Emmanuel Milingo's participation in a New York wedding provoked statements of regret and sadness from Vatican and church officials.

Vatican spokesman Joaquin Navarro-Valls said Archbishop Milingo, 71, had placed himself outside the church by participating in the wedding ritual and that formal canonical penalties would be announced against the archbishop.

"Obviously, the Holy See has noted with deep regret the gesture taken by Archbishop Emmanuel Milingo," Navarro-Valls said in a written statement May 28.

Archbishop Milingo, a former Vatican official internationally known for his healing ministry, was among 60 men, many clergy, who were married May 27 in a New York ceremony officiated by the Rev. and Mrs. Sun Myung Moon.

"By participating in the public rite of marriage conducted by the 'Moon' sect, he has placed himself outside the Catholic Church and inflicted a serious wound on the communion that bishops, above all, should show with the church," Navarro-Valls said.

"Therefore, he cannot be considered a bishop of the Catholic Church, and his followers are invited to draw the necessary consequences of his behavior and his actions," he said.

Speaking with reporters, Navarro-Valls added that many in the Vatican felt sorrow that the archbishop would take a step at the age of 70 that contrasts so profoundly with a lifelong vocation.

In a statement from Lusaka, Zambian bishops said they were "deeply saddened and pained by the defection of Archbishop Milingo."

The archbishop "betrayed his vows by attempting marriage while still under his priestly commitments," the bishops said.

They said they had tried to reach the archbishop before the wedding, but he "unfortunately rejected our regular and honest advice."

Archbishop Milingo married Maria Sung, a 43-year-old Korean acupuncturist, whom the archbishop said was chosen for him by Rev. Moon May 25.

Also married in the same ceremony was Archbishop George A. Stallings Jr., a former priest of the Archdiocese of Washing-

ton excommunicated in 1990 after establishing an African-American Catholic Congregation and declaring it independent from Rome.

Franciscan Father James E. Goode, president of the National Black Catholic Clergy, told Catholic News Service it was "very painful" to him and other African-American clergy to see leading figures such as Archbishops Milingo and Stallings abandon the work of helping blacks feel that they have a place within the Catholic Church.

In a written statement the day before the wedding, Archbishop Milingo said he would not "deny or abandon my Catholic faith," and that he would "continue to celebrate Mass every day of my life."

Navarro-Valls said the archbishop would be informed of the church penalties against him before they were made public. The archbishop holds no church office at present, but he was expected to be suspended from the active priestly ministry. Church law also says that an apostate — one who abandons the faith — incurs automatic excommunication. In the case of clerics, additional penalties can be formalized.