

# WORLD & NATION

## Group bikes to Toronto to show love of vocations

By Jean M. Schildz  
Catholic News Service

ST. LOUIS — A group of seminarians and priests left St. Louis July 13 for World Youth Day with the hope their pilgrimage of 1,000-plus miles by bicycle to Toronto would illustrate their love of the Catholic Church and the joy they have found in their vocation.

After 5 a.m. prayers at the city's Basilica of St. Louis, King of France, which is near the Gateway Arch, 17 current students and three graduates of Kenrick-Glennon Seminary in the St. Louis Archdiocese took off for Canada.

Their 13-day trek was to take them from Missouri through Illinois, Indiana, Ohio, Pennsylvania and New York. Two in the group were driving a support vehicle, and 18 were on bikes.

Church officials expected more than 350,000 youths — including about 350 teens from the St. Louis Archdiocese — to attend the international youth day events July 23-28.

There were, of course, "a lot of easier ways of getting there," said Father Michael T. Butler, director of the archdiocesan Office of Vocations. "What we're trying to say is that it's not about being easy, it's about showing our love for Christ and his church."

Father Butler and two seminarians talked about the trip in a recent interview with the *St. Louis Review*, the archdiocesan newspaper.

Seminarian Chris Martin, a 23-year-old parishioner of Incarnate Word Parish in Chesterfield, said he was looking forward to going "just to get out there and just show people we're healthy, happy, young guys who are excited about our faith and the priesthood and the future of the church. ... We want to share that with people we meet and invite others to join us."

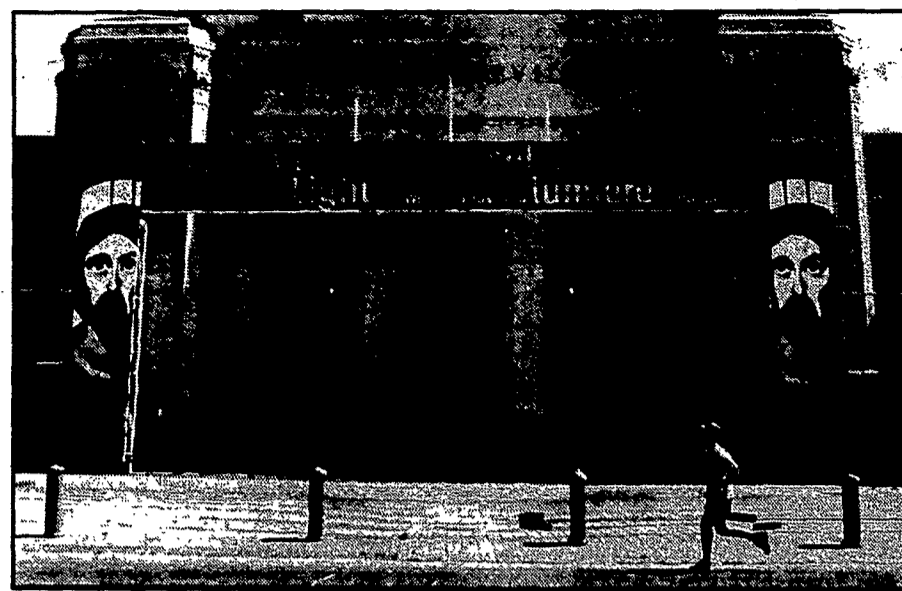
Martin will be entering his second year of theology at the seminary this fall.

Fellow seminarian Kevin Schroeder, who helped plan the excursion, noted it was important "to maintain the idea of a pilgrimage throughout and to remember our focus, which is fidelity to the holy father and to the church and to the priesthood."

The 20-year-old parishioner at St. Barnabas in O'Fallon said that it was equally important "just to share the joy that I've found in my vocation, to share that with the young people who we'll meet along the way. To show them that whatever you're called to, if you respond generously, you will be joyful."

Father Butler and seminarian Joe Baldassare came up with the idea for the pilgrimage about two years ago after the priest heard about a pilgrimage on foot to Rome undertaken by youths from northern Italy. The St. Louis seminarians will use the trip to spread "the good news about our own fidelity," Father Butler said.

The riders displayed their motto — *Ad Petrum fidelis semper* ("Always faithful to Peter") — on their shirts. Images of the American and Canadian flags and the World



Reuters/CNS

### Counting down to World Youth Day

Banners with images of Christ and the theme of World Youth Day hang from the Automotive Building at Exhibition Place in Toronto July 12. Toronto was putting final touches on its preparations for the youth gathering July 23-28.

Youth Day logo were put on the shirts, along with a message on the collar that read, "Priests in training."

About a month prior to their departure, participants intensified their training, cycling an average of 140 miles a week.

The riders hoped to average 82 miles a day using 27-speed touring bikes to ensure their arrival in Toronto July 25. Stops were set up each night at parishes along the way for meals and a place to sleep. The seminarians also were going to have opportunities to talk about their vocation to parishioners, particularly other youths, and join in prayer together.

"We're having a holy hour at each of the parishes to pray, specifically, for vocations" and for an openness to them, Father Butler said.

Schroeder, Martin and Father Butler noted with some relief that they would be riding back from Toronto to St. Louis on a bus with the archdiocesan youth group.

Do they plan to continue biking for fun upon their return? Responding for all three, Schroeder joked, "Get back to us after the trip."

The archdiocese's vocations Web site — [www.stlvocations.org](http://www.stlvocations.org) — was keeping track of the group's progress.

## U.S. bishops' official urges Senate to ban human cloning

WASHINGTON (CNS) — A U.S. bishops' pro-life official has asked the Senate to follow the majority recommendation of the President's Council on Bioethics by favoring at least a temporary legal ban on all human cloning.

Without federal legislation, "the most irresponsible of researchers will create our national policy by default," said Richard Doerflinger, deputy director of the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops Secretariat for Pro-Life Activities.

A majority on the bioethics council recommended outlawing human cloning for reproduction and favored a four-year moratorium on human cloning for biomedical research.

The moratorium would provide time to debate and review the state of human embryo research with the goal of proposing "an ethically acceptable public policy to govern these scientifically and medically promising but morally challenging activities," said the majority recommendation in the July 11 council report.

A minority recommendation agreed with the ban on reproductive human cloning but supported federally regulated use of cloned embryos for biomedical research.

A July 12 statement by Doerflinger rejected human cloning for research, saying it involves the destruction of human embryos.

"No one has succeeded in crafting a feasible, enforceable and morally sound ban that covers only 'cloning to produce children' but does not give government endorsement to the destruction of cloned embryos," he said.

"Without further delay, the U.S. Senate should join President Bush, the House of Representatives, and the President's Council on Bioethics in supporting at least a temporary ban on all human cloning," said Doerflinger.

He called "morally unacceptable" any proposal that creates cloned human embryos but prohibits their survival.

The bishops' official said any four-year moratorium should be used for public dis-

cussion on forming public policy.

Vatican and U.S. church officials have opposed all human cloning because it involves reproduction outside of sexual intercourse by a married couple. But church leaders have added that, if cloning occurs, the human embryos or babies formed have the rights and dignity of human beings.

Supporters of human cloning for research say it could open the door to cures for a variety of diseases.

Several pro-life groups support a temporary moratorium as a better-than-nothing policy.

"We strongly favor a permanent ban on all human cloning," said Douglas Johnson, legislative director of the National Right to Life Committee. "However, we could support legislation to temporarily ban human cloning."

Ken Connor, president of the Family Research Council, said that, "in an environment where that which is not prohibited is permitted, a temporary moratorium on human cloning is better than no ban at all."

Connor favored funding of "alternative and ethical avenues of research" which could lead to medical cures.

The bioethics council report highlights the political divisions on the human cloning issue. President Bush favors a ban on all human cloning and said he would veto legislation that does not include a total ban. The House has passed a total ban bill. The Senate is considering rival bills ranging from a total ban to limited bans that would allow research cloning.

Currently, researchers cannot use federal funding for human embryo research. Any further legislation would apply to privately funded research.

Ten members of the 18-member bioethics council favored the majority recommendation and seven supported the minority position. One member did not vote. The council was appointed by Bush to advise him on bioethical issues.

The council membership includes scientists, lawyers, doctors, philosophers and bioethicists.

Immaculate Conception Church and School announces the

# POT OF GOLD

"Reverse Raffle"

\$15,000 Grand Prize. Over \$18,000 total in cash and prizes.

Saturday, August 31, 2002 / 6 p.m. BBQ, with 7 p.m. Drawing  
BBQ/Drawing festivities will be held at Cass Park Rink, Ithaca

\$100 donation includes a BBQ dinner for two

No more than 500 tickets will be sold.

BBQ/Drawing conditional and winners need not be present. For more information call 607-273-6121 or visit the George Green Parish Center, 113 North Geneva Street, Ithaca, NY.