Site offers virtual World Youth Day experience

WASHINGTON (CNS) – People unable to attend World Youth Day in Toronto can have a virtual experience of events through the eyes of six U.S. young adults attending the event, according to the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops' Department of Communications.

Beginning July 22, the U.S. bishops' World Youth Day staff planned to post a daily online journal of articles and photographs compiled from reports by the six participants on the Web site *www.wydusa.org*.

Pope John Paul II was scheduled to attend some of the main events of World Youth Day, being held July 23-28.

A similar online journal was provided for the previous two international youth events in Paris and Rome.

"Parents, particularly, have commented how reading the online journal has helped them stay in touch with their children at World Youth Day and to appreciate what the experience means for them," said the USCCB in an announcement.

Also, as a follow-up, the U.S. bishops' Subcommittee on Youth and Young Adults has posted on the Web site a post-World Youth Day resource manual to help leaders of young-adult ministries keep the spirit of the event alive in their parish communities.

"This resource manual was designed to assist young adult ministry leaders build upon the energy and enthusiasm of World Youth Day (WYD), especially for those young adults who had the opportunity to attend the event in Toronto," says its introduction. "A full range of reflections, discussion questions, group activity suggestions and further links can be found here."

The USCCB said the manual was compiled and edited under the supervision of Ana Villamil, associate director of the bishops' Secretariat for Family, Laity, Women and Youth.

It incorporates ideas from diocesan and parish staff members as well as original material written by Dominican seminarian Dominic Langevin as a project for his pastoral internship.

Noting World Youth Day can be a "peak experience followed by a let-down," Villamil said in a statement that the resource was developed "to help people convert a short-term pilgrimage into a lifelong journey in the grace of Christ."

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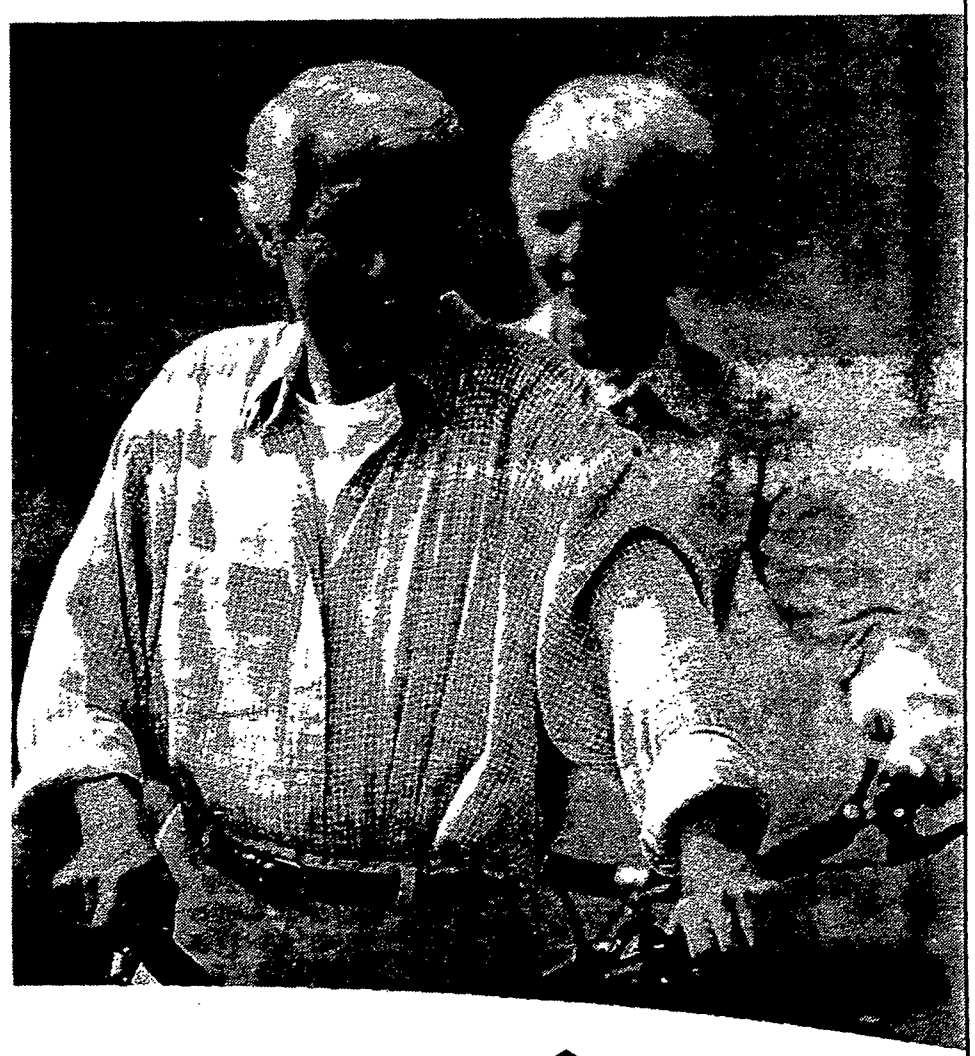

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