

Meeting highlights families

MANILA, Philippines (CNS) — The Fourth World Meeting of Families closed with an emphasis on the duty of Christian families to evangelize and with a celebration of their struggle to witness to Christ today.

The Jan. 22-26 gathering included two events held simultaneously during its first three days: the International Theological Pastoral Congress and the Sons and Daughters Congress for young people, reported UCA News, an Asian church news agency based in Thailand.

The highlight of the meeting was a Jan. 25 satellite link with Pope John Paul II in Rome. About 500,000 people were present for the pope's remarks.

A vigil that followed the satellite link helped prepare for a closing Mass early the next morning at Luneta Park in downtown Manila.

Cardinal Alfonso Lopez Trujillo, president of the Pontifical Council for the Family and the pope's legate to the world meeting, preached at the closing Mass, which coincided with the feast of the Holy Child.

The cardinal called on families to protect their children and surround them with tenderness.

"Poverty, against which we have to fight courageously in the midst of widespread injustice in this world, becomes a bitter tragedy when children are abandoned or become victims and (are) made to pay for the irresponsibility of parents who have promised to love one another until death," the cardinal said.

He also urged governments to respect life and oppose abortion, which he said destroys families.

"There is no better investment for the government, for legislators, than to favor the families, strengthen their unity, support them, (and) not to obstruct the mission and rights of



Reuters/CNS

Filipinos carry signs of support for Pope John Paul II during the Fourth World Meeting of Families in Manila, Philippines, Jan. 25, and raise a banner in opposition to possible U.S. war in Iraq.

spouses," he said.

The cardinal also urged doctors not to be "accomplices in assaults against the human person" by performing abortions and instead to work against disease and pain.

In an apparent reference to human cloning, he said, "Seduced by science and technology, many presume that they are arbiters of life, in all kinds of dangerous manipulation that can even become nightmares to humanity."

Speakers at the theological pastoral congress discussed cloning and other technology related to fertility medicine and birth control.

Speaking in various languages, the cardinal thanked families for their participation and said, "See you in Valencia, Spain," site of the 2006 world meeting of families.

Cardinal Lopez also reminded families of their mission to evangelize and proclaim to the world "the mercies of God, the permanent miracle of his love in your marriage, in your community of life and love, in the family."

The same call was echoed in the statement "The Christian Family Is Good News for the Third Millennium," prepared by the theological congress and read at its closing Jan. 24.

More than 6,600 delegates — including five cardinals and 88 archbishops and bishops from 64 countries — participated in the world families meeting. More than 4,000 delegates were lay people.

Sr. Anne Elizabeth Cooney, SSJ

Sister of St. Joseph Anne Elizabeth Cooney, 94, died on Dec. 28, 2002.

A native of Rochester, Sister Cooney entered the congregation from St. Augustine's Parish in 1928. She taught primary grades in diocesan schools in Rochester, Elmira, Canandaigua and Ithaca for 59 years. She also taught piano lessons and presented many music recitals and plays. She especially enjoyed instructing converts and helping people return to active participation in their faith.

Sister Cooney is survived by her brother, Donald; sisters, Rosella

Hartman and Sister Dorothy Cooney, SSJ; nieces and nephews; and her sisters in the congregation of St. Joseph.

Sister Cooney's funeral liturgy was celebrated Dec. 28 in the motherhouse chapel by Father Kevin McKenna, assisted by Msgr. Emmett Murphy and Father Bruce Ammering. Burial was at Holy Sepulchre Cemetery. Memorial contributions may be made to St. Joseph Convent Infirmary, 150 French Road, Rochester, NY 14618.

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THEOLOGY ON TAP BEGINS TO FLOW

Catholic young adults interested in sharing their faith while nursing their brews can do both at Johnny's Smoke-Free Irish Pub, 1382 Culver Road, Rochester, every Wednesday night through Feb. 26.

The Wednesday night sessions mark the return of the Diocese of Rochester's popular "Theology on Tap" series which brings speakers into the pub to discuss topics with young adults. The series consists of a presentation by the speaker followed by an open and free-wheeling discussion. Shannon Loughlin, newly appointed diocesan director of young adult and campus ministry, encouraged Catholics in their 20s and 30s to attend.

"Theology on Tap is a chance to share good conversations, meet other young adults and explore the relationship between faith and everyday life," Loughlin said. "We'll share news of upcoming events and other information of interest to young adults."

Each session begins at 7:30 p.m., and the topics are as follows:

- Feb. 5: "How do I get to heaven?"
- Feb. 12: "Putting God in the driver's seat"
- Feb. 19: "Talking with God"
- Feb. 26: "How does God impact my life choices?"

The series is cosponsored by Guardian Angels Parish, Henrietta. For information, call Loughlin at 585/328-3210, ext. 1218.

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