

# WAR

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city in the U.S., Australia or Sweden."

At the Army Reserve Center in Denver, 20 men and women in camouflage fatigues called on their Catholic faith to strengthen them as they prepared to meet the greatest challenge of their young lives.

Benedictine Father Ed Kucera advised them to "bond together and help each other through" when they are deployed to a war zone, and to "look to each other for solace and comfort."

Brandon Nye, who attends Spirit of Christ Parish in Arvada, said he knows the people of his parish are praying for him and for all the soldiers.

"I joined the Reserves so I could go to college," he said. "It sure wasn't my intent to go to war, and it's hard because I'm a pacifist and a strong Catholic. But I made a promise to defend my country and I'll keep my promise."

Marie Dennis, director of Maryknoll's Office of Global Concerns, chose a different path when she and more than two dozen others were arrested for demonstrating in front of the White House without a permit March 19 following a prayer service for peace.

"Personally, a decision to risk arrest is a small step more deeply into the pain and violence of war," she said. "As people are losing their lives, it seems the least we can do."

In Baghdad, members of Voices in the Wilderness, a group opposed to economic sanctions against Iraq, planned to stay there throughout the coalition's campaign, according to VITW co-founder Kathy Kelly, a Catholic from Chicago. Kelly and other VITW members were staying in a hotel on the Tigris River.



U.S. soldiers transport a wounded comrade to the U.S. airbase in Ramstein, Germany, March 24. U.S. and British troops heading toward Iraq's capital, Baghdad, were hit by surprise counterattacks and resistance in the cities of Basra and An Nasiriyah after the areas were thought to be secured.

In a March 19 phone interview with the *Catholic Courier* prior to the outbreak of war, Kelly said she and other members of the group plan to document any damage to Baghdad's civilian infrastructure by coalition bombs. She added that she and other VITW members did not consider themselves traitors to the coalition cause.

"Even if U.S. officials were to indict us as criminals, we strongly believe we retain the right to practice the works of mercy rather than endorse the works of war," Kelly said.

One of the first to die in the conflict was Capt. Ryan Anthony Beaupre, 30, a Marine Corps pilot who was killed when his helicopter crashed in Kuwait, nine miles from the Iraqi border.

Hundreds from his home town of St. Anne, population 1,300, gathered for a Mass in honor of Beaupre at St. Anne's Church March 21, just hours

after his death was reported.

"He was the kind of kid that when he came home he would visit every single relative and friend," Father James Fanale, pastor of St. Anne's,

told The Associated Press. "He was just a kind of ray of light, a ray of sunshine."

The pope himself continued his calls for peace as the war began.

"When, as in Iraq these days, war threatens the fate of humanity, it is even more urgent to proclaim with a strong and decisive voice that peace is the only path for building a society which is more just and marked by solidarity," he said March 23.

French Cardinal Paul Poupard, president of the Pontifical Council for Culture, said Pope John Paul's efforts for peace cannot be considered a failure because "he touched the heart of the world."

"He made the same appeals against the first war in Iraq in 1991, and then he was desperately alone," the cardinal said. "Today he is interpreting the anxiety of humanity, even the nonbelievers, and this will bear fruit."

Contributing to this story were Denis Tracy in Boston, Laurie Dunklee in Denver, Christopher Gaul in Baltimore, Cindy Wooden in Rome and Rob Cullivan in Rochester.



"If we want a free and peaceful world, if we want to make the deserts bloom, and all peoples grow to a greater dignity as human beings - we can do it."

-Eleanor Roosevelt

## PRAYER FOR OUR TIMES

The Sisters of Saint Joseph

invite you to share in a monthly evening prayer for peace.



This month on: Tuesday, April 1, 2003  
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### GENERAL

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