

## IRAQ

Continued from page 1

"Now, from what I am seeing and hearing, I think it's going to drag on for months, and it will be very harsh for both sides, but the main victim will be the Iraqi civilians," he told *The Michigan Catholic*, archdiocesan newspaper of Detroit.

Catholic leaders in Poland have been divided over the war, despite the presence of Polish special forces alongside U.S. troops.

Cardinal Franciszek Macharski of Krakow told KAI, Poland's Catholic news agency, that "war cannot be a way of achieving peace," while Archbishop Jozef Zycinski of Lublin said he understood the motives of U.S. leaders who chose not to be indifferent to potential threats. "We must ask ourselves whether indifference is the highest virtue in international contacts," he said.

Bishop Michael A. Saltarelli of Wilmington, Del., acknowledged that the war has put many Catholics "in a place of tension" as they try to stay faithful to their church and loyal to their country.

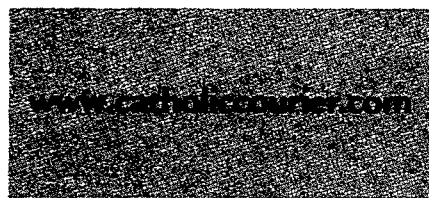
"Deep down we know that the Holy Father is right," the bishop told *The Dialog*, diocesan newspaper of Wilmington. "Nevertheless, we are all Americans, and we are all aware of the horrors imposed on the Iraqi people for 30 years."

"Through prayer, we must remain in solidarity with our own armed forces. We continue to pray for peace, for those who serve and for the innocent people of Iraq," he added.

"Intense, directed prayer is needed now more than ever," Bishop William E. Lori of Bridgeport, Conn., said in a letter to diocesan priests asking them to keep their churches open for extended hours, to conduct special prayer services or novenas for peace, extra hours for confession and special intentions at Mass for peace and the safe return of soldiers.

Meanwhile, several churches across the country were busy with funeral services in April for soldiers who have died during the war.

At Holy Family Church in Enfield, Conn., parishioners and family members mourned the death of Marine Gunnery Sgt. Phillip Jordan, 42, who died March 23 in an ambush outside An Nasiriyah with eight other Marines when Iraqi sol-



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Iraqis watch as a U.S. military convoy from the 2nd Battalion passes through the town of Karbala, 70 miles southwest of Baghdad, April 7.

diers feigned surrender before opening fire.

Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary Parish in New Chicago, Ind., held a funeral for Army Spc. Greg Sanders, a 19-year-old tank gunner who was hit by sniper fire about 70 miles from Baghdad.

At St. John the Baptist Catholic Church in Winslow, Maine, the pastor said the war in Iraq has "come right up to our doorstep" at the funeral of Maj. Jay Thomas Aubin, a 36-year-old Marine helicopter pilot who died March 20 in Kuwait with three other Marines and eight British soldiers in a helicopter crash.

Marine Staff Sgt. Kendall D. Waters-Bey, one of the other Marines who died in the March 20 helicopter crash, was remembered in an April 5 funeral that began with a Muslim prayer at St. Matthew's in Baltimore.

In Los Angeles, the Guatemalan community offered a Mass for Marine Lance Cpl. Jose Gutierrez, a 22-year-old Guatemalan immigrant who came to the United States as a teenager and had recently written to his foster mother in Los Angeles asking her to pray for him and all the soldiers. Gutierrez died in battle March 21 when he was struck by enemy fire near Umm Qasr in southern Iraq.

Many parishes that have not held funerals are still very close to the war, either through their parishioners who have been deployed or



A U.S. soldier destroys a portrait of Saddam Hussein in the town of Karbala April 5.

through parish support groups for military families.

Nancy Manzie, a parishioner of St. Raphael Parish in Naperville, Ill., organized her own yellow-ribbon campaign in her town, hoping to send a message to the troops, including her son — Marine Cpl. Brent J. Lewis — that Americans support them.

"I made tons of bows in the beginning," she told *The Catholic Explorer*, diocesan newspaper of Joliet. "The fact that I am not making as many bows now — and I see bows

that had nothing to do with me — tells me that it's a success."

At St. John the Baptist Parish in Whiting, Ind., a small group of military family members attend a weekly support group. The group was formed by Tom and Diane Puplava, whose son is serving with the 82nd Airborne Division in Kuwait.

"Our feeling was, rather than sit back and feel sorry, we wanted to do something to reach out, through our common fears, our common concerns, to help each other," Tom Puplava said during the first meeting.

Joyce Nabb, the mother of Marine Sgt. Brian Nabb, who was assigned to the Middle East in January, also started a military support group.

The hardest part, she said, is not being able to "reach out and touch my son, not being able to talk to him," said Nabb, a parishioner at St. Polycarp Church in Smyrna, Del.

She also said spiritual support will become even more critical for her and other military families as the war continues.

"This is a time in our lives that we have to fall back on our faith," she said. "God is going to get us through this."

Contributing to this story were Carol Zimmermann in Washington, Amisu M. Estrada in Naperville, Steve Euvino in Whiting and Gary Morton in Smyrna.

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