

College of Cardinals increased by 30

John Thavis/CNS

VATICAN CITY — In ceremonies that combined solemn tradition and the cheers of the faithful, Pope John Paul II created 30 new cardinals and asked them to preach the Gospel "to all people, without exception" on every continent.

The liturgies Oct. 21-22 highlighted the international mix of the College of Cardinals, the group that will one day elect a new pope. New members from 22 countries were added, including Cardinal Justin Rigali of Philadelphia.

The pope said the new cardinals reflected the "multiplicity of races and cultures that make up the Christian population." He also created one cardinal "in pectore," or in his heart, withholding publication of his name.

The pope formally inducted the cardinals in a consistory held in a sunlit St. Peter's Square Oct. 21. The next day, he presented them with rings, sealing their special bond with the pontiff, during a Mass in St. Peter's Basilica.

In his sermon and prayers, the pope emphasized the cardinals' special duty to preach the Gospel and serve others.

"Only if you become the servants of all will you complete your mission and help the successor of Peter to be, in turn, the 'servant of the servants of God,'" he said in his consistory sermon, which was read by an aide.

Throughout the consistory ceremony, the 83-year-old pontiff looked pleased and alert. From an altar area decorated with thousands of red and yellow tulips, he gazed out and waved to a crowd dotted with flags and banners from many countries.

But because of his increasing difficulty in speaking, the pope let others speak for him at several key



Reuters/CNS

New cardinals wave to well-wishers during the Oct. 21 consistory in St. Peter's Square. Pope John Paul II elevated 30 prelates from around the world to cardinal during the ceremony.

points, including the reading out of the new cardinals' names.

"All of us were pleased to be here today, although there was a hint of sadness with the manifest decline of the Holy Father," Australian Cardinal George Pell said after receiving his red hat.

The liturgy included several time-honored traditions. After pronouncing a profession of faith and an oath of obedience to the pope, the cardinals came forward and knelt one by one before the pope, who handed them a four-cornered red biretta. The cardinals placed the birettas on their own heads.

The pope explained to the cardinals that the red color signified that "You must be ready to act with strength, unto the spilling of blood, for the building up of the Christian faith, for the peace and tranquility of the people of God, and for the

freedom and growth of the holy Roman church."

Pope John Paul also gave each cardinal a scroll assigning titular churches in Rome, symbolizing the cardinals' status as members of the clergy of Rome and their relationship with him as bishop of Rome.

Each of the cardinals had a rooting section of well-wishers in the square, who applauded and cheered as their favorite received the red hat.

The new cardinals included seven Vatican officials, 19 resident archbishops from around the world and four theologians over the age of 80 with personal ties to the pope.

Their induction left the College of Cardinals with 194 members — a new record. Of these, 135 were under the age of 80 and therefore eligible to vote in a conclave; that matched a record high set at the last consistory in 2001.

In his sermon, the pope told the cardinals he was counting on their collaboration and prayers. He asked them to preach the Gospel "with words and with example" and to serve the church humbly, "refusing every temptation of career or personal benefit."

Selfless service is a difficult ideal to realize, he said, but "the Good Shepherd assures you of his help."

Seated apart on his throne, the pope appeared to share in the joy experienced by the cardinals as they greeted each other following distribution of the red hats.

"In this square today ... shines the church of Christ, ancient and always new, gathered around the successor of Peter," he said in his sermon.

At the "ring Mass," held in the basilica because of rain, the pope presided over the liturgy, but the main celebrant was Cardinal Joseph Ratzinger, dean of the College of Cardinals. Once again, the pope's sermon was read in its entirety by an aide, and so were some of the prayers the pontiff was scheduled to recite.

The pope struggled to pronounce the formula for the bestowing of the rings, asking the cardinals to "accept this ring from the hand of Peter and know that, with the love of the prince of the Apostles, your love for the church is strengthened."

Then the pontiff slipped a gold ring on the right hand of each new cardinal as they knelt before him, one by one. Cardinal Rigali said afterward the ring was a natural sign of unity.

"Like a wedding band, it is a sign of union, a link to the pope and to the Diocese of Rome," Cardinal Rigali said.

The first prayer of the faithful was offered "for our most beloved Pope John Paul II":

"May the Lord fill him with wisdom and the consolation of the spirit, and may his cry always resound in the church and the world, a cry made 25 years ago from this place: 'Open wide the doors to Christ.'"

In the text of his sermon, the pope spoke of the power of prayer and its ability to support people and instill great courage.

"I myself have been able to experience this comfort," he said.

Prayers also were offered in Swahili, Vietnamese, Arabic and Hindi — another sign of the international atmosphere that reigned at the ceremonies.

Between the liturgies, the new cardinals found time to host receptions in various rooms and hallways of the Vatican. Thousands of dignitaries, fellow prelates, pilgrims and interested Romans converged on the receptions, as the new cardinals good-naturedly chatted and posed for pictures.

Food-stamp outreach planned

Catholic Charities of the Finger Lakes has received a grant from Nutrition Consortium of New York State Inc. to conduct food-stamp outreach in Seneca County.

The goal of the outreach program is to promote awareness of and participation in the U.S. Department of Agriculture Food Stamp Program by providing information about guidelines and pre-screening services and helping to reduce barriers to participation.

The most recent U.S. census estimated that only 18 percent of eligible Seneca County seniors partici-

pated in the food-stamp program during 2001. Low program enrollment by all groups has resulted in Seneca County losing \$418,956 in federal funds.

Catholic Charities of the Finger Lakes has a 14-year history of providing nutrition outreach to Ontario County and currently administers the Geneva Free Lunch Program, which is sponsored by the Geneva Inter-Faith Council. Residents of Seneca County may receive more information on the program by contacting Ginny Skinner, program coordinator, at 877/777-2686, ext. 334.

