

# Pope prays for lasting peace

Cindy Wooden/CNS

## OFFICIAL DECRIES CONTRACEPTION IDEA

WASHINGTON (CNS) — A Dec. 16 recommendation to the Food and Drug Administration to make emergency contraception available without a prescription was described as a “reckless experiment” by a spokeswoman for the U.S. bishops.

“A drug which destroys human embryos and puts women at greater risk of ectopic pregnancy does not belong on the shelves of a drugstore,” said Cathy Cleaver Ruse, director of planning and information for the pro-life secretariat at the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops.

The FDA is expected to act on the recommendation in February.

## PARTIAL-BIRTH BAN UPHELD IN OHIO

WASHINGTON (CNS) — The U.S. bishops’ pro-life spokeswoman, Cathy Cleaver Ruse, hailed a Dec. 17 federal appeals court decision upholding Ohio’s partial-birth abortion ban as “a stamp of approval” for the state’s effort “to rein in this extreme and careless practice.”

A three-judge panel of the 6th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals ruled 2-1 to reverse a lower court’s ruling against the law banning partial-birth abortions. Last year, a U.S. District Court judge ruled that the partial-birth abortion ban was unconstitutional because it would not allow the procedure to be performed even when it was considered the safest option for a patient.

## THIS WEEK’S READINGS

**Sun., Jan. 11:** Isaiah 42:1-4, 6-7; Psalms 29:1A, 2, 3AC-4, 3B, 9B-10; Acts 10:34-38; Luke 3:15-16, 21-22.

**Mon., Jan. 12:** 1 Samuel 1:1-8; Psalms 116:12-19; Mark 1:14-20.

**Tue., Jan. 13:** 1 Samuel 1:9-20; (Ps) 1 Samuel 2:1, 4-8; Mark 1:21-28.

**Wed., Jan. 14:** 1 Samuel 3:1-10, 19-20; Psalms 40:2-5, 7-10; Mark 1:29-39.

**Thu., Jan. 15:** 1 Samuel 4:1-11; Psalms 44:10-11, 14-15, 25-26; Mark 1:40-45.

**Fri., Jan. 16:** 1 Samuel 8:4-7, 10-22A; Psalms 89:16-19; Mark 2:1-12.

**Sat., Jan. 17:** 1 Samuel 9:1-4, 17-19, 10:1A; Psalms 19:8-10, 15; Mark 2:13-17.

VATICAN CITY — Ongoing conflicts in the Middle East, Africa and other parts of the world show the need for a new international order able to settle disputes peacefully, protect human rights and promote solidarity, Pope John Paul II said.

Presiding over a Jan. 1 Mass in St. Peter’s Basilica marking World Day of Peace, the pope prayed, “May God help us to build the ‘civilization of love’ together. Humanity will be able to enjoy an authentic and lasting peace only when love has been victorious.”

While Pope John Paul led the first part of the liturgy and read his entire homily without difficulty, the Liturgy of the Eucharist was celebrated by Cardinals Angelo Sodano, Vatican secretary of state, and Renato Martino, president of the Pontifical Council for Justice and Peace.

In his homily, the pope said, “In the face of situations of injustice and violence that oppress various parts of the globe, before the continuation of armed conflicts frequently forgotten by public opinion, it becomes ever more necessary to build paths for peace together.”

For Christians, he said, working for peace includes proclaiming salvation in Christ, the source of true peace, and calling all people to be peacemakers.

Pope John Paul said Irish Archbishop Michael A. Courtney, the nuncio to Burundi who was shot and killed Dec. 29, was a witness to the Gospel of peace, working for dialogue and reconciliation in the nation torn by ethnic violence.

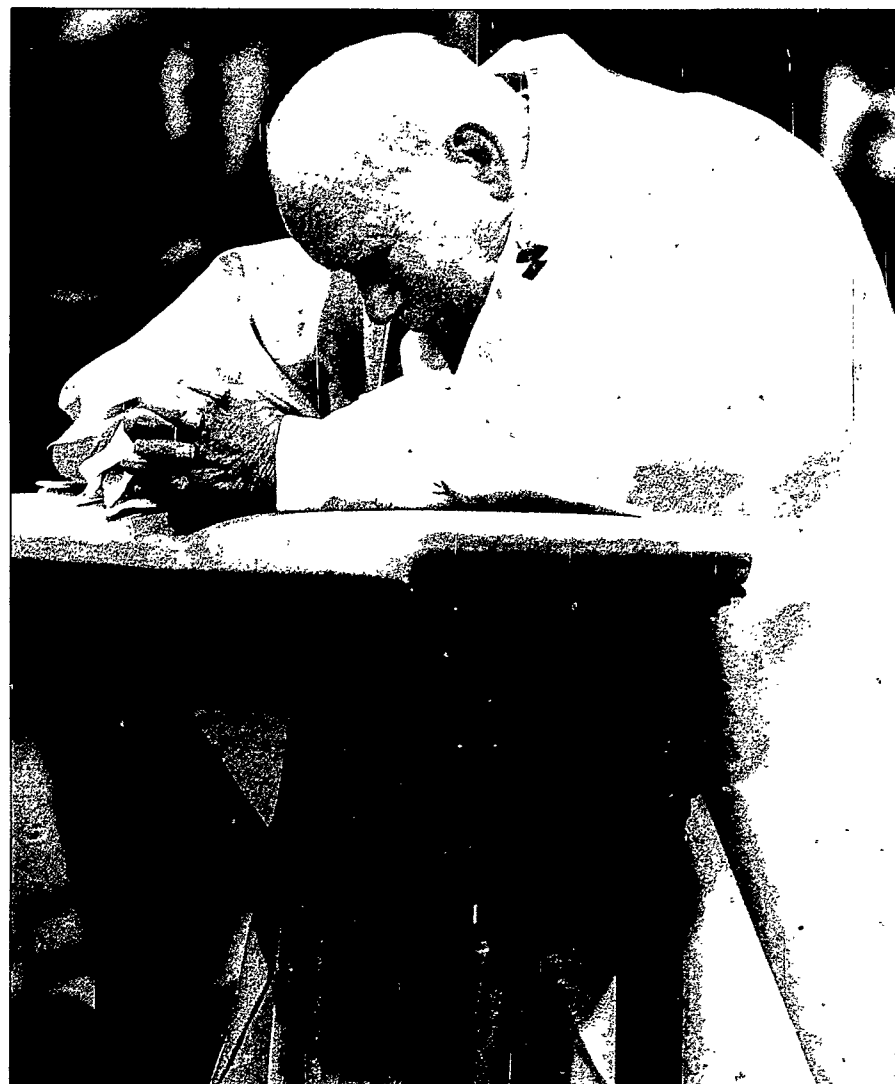
Burundi’s president has called for an investigation into the shooting. While some observers believe his car was caught in the crossfire of rebel fighting, others, like Xaverian Missionary Father Claudio Marano, said it would be difficult to believe it was accidental.

“In this ambush, most of the bullets ended up hitting a person wearing white — and therefore recognizable — in a car which also was recognizable” by the Vatican flag on the front, the missionary told Vatican Radio. “To say it was not intentional seems a bit exaggerated to me.”

In his homily, Pope John Paul also prayed for “the land where Jesus was born,” which continues to be a land marked by violence.

Despite the conflicts in the Middle East and in other parts of the world, he said, “one must persevere without giving into the temptation of mistrust.”

The pope said people must commit themselves to respecting the rights



Catholic Press Photo/CNS

**Pope John Paul II prays during his first Mass of the new year at St. Peter’s Basilica Jan. 1. The pontiff prayed for peace and a “civilization of love.”**

of others and to educating people for peace.

“Increasingly,” he said, “one sees the need for a new international order which makes fruitful the experiences and results obtained over the years by the United Nations.”

The pope said new structures and processes are needed that are “based on the dignity of the human person, on the integral development of society, on solidarity between rich and poor countries, on the sharing of resources and on the extraordinary results of scientific and technical progress.”

During the Mass, a prayer was offered asking God to remind those who are tempted to resort “to the unacceptable instrument of terrorism” of the value of each human life.

The prayers of the faithful also included a plea that God would help everyone see the value of forgiveness, understanding and reconciliation.

The pope ended the prayers by asking the “God of peace, lover of life,” to grant “peace to those near and far, peace today and throughout

the new year.”

Reciting the Angelus afterward with visitors in St. Peter’s Square, including thousands of participants in a march for peace sponsored by the lay Sant’Egidio Community, the pope offered an Old Testament blessing “to the whole world.”

“May the Lord make his face shine upon every man and woman and give all peoples peace,” he prayed.

Peace is a gift of God, he said, but it is also a “project that requires the contribution of everyone.”

The pope also offered New Year’s greetings in six languages.

“With warm greetings at the beginning of this new year, I invoke upon the English-speaking visitors God’s blessings of joy and peace,” he said.

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