

# Stem-cell debate rekindled

Agostino Bono/CNS

WASHINGTON — The death of former President Ronald Reagan after his long struggle with Alzheimer's disease has rekindled debate over government funding of human embryonic stem-cell research.

Under scrutiny is President Bush's policy, announced Aug. 9, 2001, which allowed funding for those embryonic stem-cell lines already developed but prohibited federal funding for future stem-cell lines. The policy does not prevent private funding of embryonic stem-cell research.

Supporters of relaxing current policy — including Reagan's wife, Nancy — said that such research is needed to develop cures for Alzheimer's and other debilitating diseases and conditions.

Opponents of human embryonic stem-cell research, such as the U.S. bishops, argue that such research involves the destruction of human life and that alternative research is available using adult stem cells.

On June 14 the Bush administration rejected the calls to change the policy.

"The president came up with a

policy that will allow us to explore the promise of stem-cell research, and do so in a way that doesn't cross a certain moral threshold," said Scott McClellan, White House spokesman.

After Ronald Reagan's June 5 death, Massachusetts Sen. John F. Kerry, the likely Democratic presidential nominee, endorsed Nancy Reagan's position and asked Bush to soften his policy on funding human embryonic stem-cell research.

Kerry also was one of 58 senators who signed a letter to Bush a few days earlier that asked for a relaxed policy. Among the signers were more than a dozen Republicans, several of whom oppose abortion.

"We would very much like to work with you to modify the current embryonic stem-cell policy," said the letter.

A similar letter was sent to Bush in April by 200 members of the House of Representatives.

The House letter was immediately criticized by Richard Doerflinger, deputy director of the U.S. bishops' Secretariat for Pro-Life Activities.

"Besides demonstrating a lack of respect for developing human life, that letter also relies on demonstra-

bly false factual claims," said Doerflinger in a letter to House members released April 29.

Doerflinger added that human embryonic stem-cell lines "may develop genetic abnormalities" thus "preventing their use in humans for the foreseeable future."

U.S. patients have limited access to some new treatments "in part because the U.S. fixation on embryo research has let other countries take the lead in groundbreaking adult-cell therapies" for juvenile diabetes, spinal-cord injury and cardiac repair, he said.



File photo/CNS

President Ronald W. Reagan meets with Pope John Paul II at the Vatican June 6, 1987.

## Bishop makes pastoral-leadership appointments

Bishop Matthew H. Clark has announced the following pastoral-leadership appointments, effective June 29 unless otherwise noted:

- **Father William Coffas** to parochial vicar, Blessed Trinity/St. Patrick, Owego. Father Coffas was ordained June 12, 2004.

- **Father William Darling** to part-time parochial vicar, St. Charles Borromeo, Greece.

- **Father Robert Etta** to parochial vicar, St. Lawrence, Greece. Father Etta is newly arrived from Nigeria.

- **Father Robert Gaudio** to pastor, St. Christopher, North Chili, from pastor, Catholic Communities of St. Ann, Palmyra, and St. Gregory, Marion, effective Feb. 2.

- **Sister Marie Susanne Hoffman** to pastoral administrator, St. Augustine, St. Monica, Ss. Peter and Paul and Our Lady of Good Counsel, Rochester, from pastoral administrator, Church of the Annunciation, Rochester.

- **Father James Jaeger** to pastor, Catholic Communities of St. Ann, Palmyra, and St. Gregory, Marion, from pastor, Our Lady of the Valley, Hornell.

- **Father Stephen Kraus** to senior vicar pro-tem, St. Theodore, Gates, from pastor, Holy Family Catholic Community (Dansville, Wayland, Perkinsville and Cohocton), and Groveland Correctional Facility.

- **Father Scott Kubinski** to parochial administrator, Holy Cross, Dryden, and St. Anthony, Groton, with concurrent duties at All Saints, Lansing, and Ithaca College.

- **Father Steven Kung'u** to sacramental minister, St. Augustine, St. Monica, Ss. Peter and Paul and Our Lady of Good Counsel, Rochester.

- **Father Frank Lioi** to pastor, St. Mary, Auburn, and sacramental minister, Sacred Heart, Auburn, and St. Ann, Owasco, from pastor,

Holy Cross, Freeville, and St. Anthony, Groton.

- **Father Michael Mayer** to pastor, Church of the Annunciation, Rochester, with concurrent duties as pastor, St. Andrew, Rochester.

- **Father Joseph McCaffrey** to sacramental minister, St. Mary, Waterloo.

- **Father Frank McNamara, SJ**, to sacramental minister, St. Joseph, Rush.

- **Father Bernard Munjalu** to parochial vicar, All Saints, Lansing, Holy Cross, Dryden, and St. Anthony, Groton.

- **Father Thomas Nellis** to pastor, Holy Ghost, Gates, from sacramental.

- **Sister Kathleen O'Connell** to pastoral administrator, St. Mary, Waterloo.

- **Father Robert Schrader** to pastor, Winton/Culver Catholic Community (St. Ambrose, Rochester, St. James, Irondequoit, and St. John the Evangelist, Rochester), from pastor, St. Mary, Auburn.

- **Father Michael Schramel** to pastor, Sacred Heart of Jesus, Perkinsville, St. Pius V, Cohocton, St. Mary, Dansville and St. Joseph, Wayland (which are consolidating into the new Holy Family Parish), from pastor, St. Ambrose, Rochester.

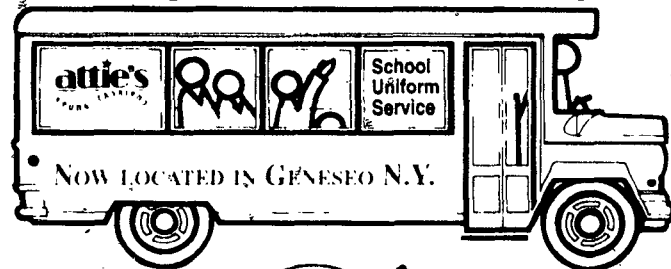
- **Father William Spilly** to pastor, St. Elizabeth Ann Seton, Hamlin, from pastor, St. John the Evangelist, Rochester.

- **Father Patrick VanDurme** to pastor, Our Lady of the Valley, Hornell, from parochial vicar, Blessed Trinity/St. Patrick, Owego.

- **Father Robert Werth** to parochial vicar, Winton/Culver Catholic Community (St. Ambrose, Rochester, St. James, Irondequoit, and St. John the Evangelist, Rochester), from pastor, Roman Catholic Community of the 19th Ward, Rochester.

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