

Eucharistic focus encouraged

Cindy Wooden/CNS

VATICAN CITY — National, diocesan or parish initiatives for celebrating the Year of the Eucharist simply need to open a space for prayer, reflection and celebration, and God will do the rest, said the Congregation for Divine Worship and the Sacraments.

"The initiatives do not need to be anything other than open paths because grace, offered always by the Spirit of God, will flow with abundance," the congregation said in a note on celebrating the eucharistic year.

"The Year of the Eucharist: Suggestions and Proposals," signed by the congregation's head, Cardinal Francis Arinze, was released in Italian Oct. 14 in anticipation of the Oct. 17 formal opening of the yearlong celebration.

The 33-page document, filled with suggestions for celebrating Mass, promoting eucharistic adoration, educating the faithful and encouraging the production of new art, said that in the end a positive result will depend on "the profundity of prayer."

"We are called to celebrate the Eucharist, to receive it and adore it with the faith of the saints," the note said.

The congregation said that even if the only things a parish did to promote the Year of the Eucharist were to take more care in how it celebrated Sunday Mass and encourage eucharistic adoration the year would be a success.

But it also suggested that parishes put a special focus in the coming year on developing "a more intense catechesis about the Eucharist," using Scripture, the writings of early Christian theologians, the *Catechism of the Catholic Church* and stories about the lives of saints who were particularly devoted to the Eucharist.

A guided visit to one's parish church with an explanation of the symbolism and the history of the altar, ambo, tabernacle and art would be another occasion to educate parishioners on the centrality of the Mass and of the Eucharist in the Catholic faith, it said.

One suggestion contained in the

CORRECTION

Due to incorrect information provided to the *Courier*, the parish affiliation of a Vita Award winner was listed incorrectly in the October monthly edition. Geraldine Oftedahl is from St. Thomas the Apostle Parish in Irondequoit.

VATICAN RENEWS PUSH TO BAN ALL CLONING

UNITED NATIONS (CNS) — The Vatican has renewed its effort to get the United Nations to develop an international convention that would ban all forms of human cloning.

Speaking Oct. 21 to a committee of the U.N. General Assembly, the Vatican's U.N. nuncio, Archbishop Celestino Migliore, said both reproductive and therapeutic cloning "involve disrespect for the dignity of the human being."

N.J. BISHOPS CRITICIZE NEEDLE-EXCHANGE LAW

NEWARK, N.J. (CNS) — New Jersey's Catholic bishops have criticized legislation approved by the state Assembly that would allow intravenous drug users to obtain sterile needles in exchange for their old needles.

Proponents said it is a way to stem the spread of HIV and AIDS, but the New Jersey Catholic Conference said it "fails to treat people who are addicted to drugs in a compassionate, dignified and comprehensive manner."

UNABOMBER'S BROTHER GIVES SPEECH ON ETHICS

ROME, N.Y. (CNS) — In an address to high-school students, David Kaczynski, brother of Unabomber Ted Kaczynski, spoke about the moral and ethical dilemmas he and his wife faced when deciding whether to turn Ted in to the FBI.

"I'm not here looking for validation or to convince you I did the right thing," he said. "You have to make your own decisions."

STUDY FINDS GIVING TO CHURCH INCREASED

CHAMPAIGN, Ill. (CNS) — U.S. Christians contributed more per person to their church in 2002 than in 2001, but the rate of increase was less than the rate of their income growth, an Empty Tomb study found.

The average contribution in 2001 was \$674.72 and the average in 2002 was \$685.86. When per-member giving was analyzed in terms of U.S. per capita disposable income, the study found that church members gave an average of 2.64 percent of their disposable income in 2001 and 2.62 percent in 2002.



Gregory L. Tracy/CNS

A monstrance stands in the chapel of St. John's Seminary in Boston. A new papal document released Oct. 8 says devotion to the Eucharist can help transform the world.

document was that each parish hold a special Mass in the coming year on the anniversary of the dedication of the parish church.

The congregation asked parishes to make special efforts during the year to ensure that the sick and the homebound receive Communion and that those who take the Eucharist to them do so with an attitude of dignity and prayer.

As a clear sign that everything the church believes and does flows from the Eucharist, the document encouraged every diocesan office and ministry to hold at least one special eucharistic event during the year.

In celebrating the Eucharist, the suggestions emphasized the need for moments of silence, but also a true climate of celebration and communion among members of the congregation.

"The joy of the eucharistic celebration reverberates on Sunday, teaching us to rejoice in the Lord always; to taste the joy of a fraternal encounter and of friendship; and to share the joy received as (a) gift," it said.

While Christian joy does not deny the presence of suffering and pain, "it would be a countersign for one participating in the Eucharist to let himself be dominated by sadness," it said.

The document also called for a greater awareness of what postures communicate in relation to the Eucharist.

Standing is a profession of "the filial freedom given to us by the paschal Christ, who raised us out of

the slavery to sin; sitting expresses the cordial receptivity of Mary, who sat at the feet of Jesus and listened to his words; kneeling or bowing deeply says that we make ourselves small before the most high, before the Lord."

Genuflecting when one enters a church and when one passes the tabernacle, it said, "expresses faith in the real presence of the Lord Jesus in the sacrament of the altar."

Catholics also must be reminded that "the Eucharist is the sacrament of the paschal sacrifice of Christ" and that just as Jesus offered himself totally to the Father each Christian is called to offer his or her life to God, it said.

While the sacrament of penance should not be celebrated within the context of a Mass, the Eucharist also is a stimulus "to conversion and the purification of a penitent heart," it said.

The document also said that the rosary could be an appropriate prayer to recite during eucharistic adoration if it were recited in the spirit of "contemplating the mysteries of Christ with the eyes and heart of Mary, in communion with her and her example."

However, the document said, other devotions to Mary or the saints should not take place during eucharistic adoration. Those who usually recite a Marian litany in conjunction with the rosary should substitute a Christological litany — such as the litany of the Sacred Heart of Jesus — if the recitation occurs during adoration, it said.