

Bishops share global concerns

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Tshumbe, Congo.

"Our laity is extremely active," Djomo said. "We are blessed with an abundance of vocations. Our churches are filled to capacity each Sunday."

Cardinal Jean-Baptiste Pham Minh Man of Saigon, Vietnam, who was installed just last month, led a group of clergy from Asia home to more than 107 million Catholics.

More than 5 million Catholics live in Vietnam, making the religion the nation's second-largest after Buddhism, and Man said the number is growing significantly every year.

Man said his country desperately needs Vietnamese translations of religious books to help train local clergy and laity.

Etsou, of Congo, said his Kinshasa archdiocese has

created a program that trains lay people as administrators to help run the growing number of parishes.

But he said his country also needs Bibles translated into native languages and improved education for "agents of evangelization."

The church in developing countries faces competition from Islam and evangelical Protestantism, and a pope from one of those areas could help Catholicism throughout the Third World.

With Pope John Paul II's health in decline, many in the church have speculated about a number of "papabile" candidates from Latin America and Africa, though, following tradition, none of the Asians, African or American bishops at the Washington conference would voice an opinion about whom the pope's successor should be.

However, Man of Vietnam

said he thought it was important to someday elect a Third World pope. He hopes the next pope will "pay attention to Asia and help the Asian people to do their pastoral work and evangelization."

Third World cardinals comprise about 38 percent of the College of Cardinals, which elects the pope, the same as in 1978 when John Paul II was elected, according to the Rev. Tom Reese, editor of the Jesuit magazine America.

Latin American cardinals comprise about 17 percent of the 135 voting-age members, while Asians and Africans are just under 10 percent each, Reese said.

Cardinal Roger Mahony of Los Angeles said the church inevitably will have a pontiff from the developing world. "The influence of those countries is tremendous," he said.

But he said nationality was less important than pastoral

skills.

"Our Catholic people are looking for a pope — like John Paul II — to be a real pastor, a real shepherd of souls who understands their needs," Mahony said.

Ntamwana, of Burundi, agreed. He said choosing a Third World pope "is not a preoccupation for us."

"The African church is not interested in the person who is going to be the pope. What we wish is a man who will really attend to African problems," Ntamwana said. "We are forgotten by the more advanced nations, but every year, through the church, the pope remembers us as part of the world which has to be helped, which has to be understood."

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Former Ala. chief justice speaks to church group

By Brandon Ferguson
THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

OVERLAND PARK, Kan. — Former Alabama Chief Justice Roy Moore, tossed off the bench after he refused to remove a granite Ten Commandment's monument from the state courthouse, said Wednesday he believes the country should acknowledge that God has a place in public life.

"We need to wake up to what this country is about, and quit thinking that God dwells in temples made of hands," Moore said to a crowd of several hundred at a suburban Kansas City church. "We think we can contain him within four walls of a church. I think this is an egregious error."

Moore challenged those in attendance not sit idle, he said, while the nation is being destroyed by the removal of the acknowledgment of God.

The Alabama state judicial ethics panel acted last week to remove Moore from the bench after he repeatedly refused to obey a federal judge's order to move a 2 1/2-ton block of granite from the courthouse rotunda.

Moore maintained he has no regrets, and he said he is considering whether to appeal the review panel's decision, which has made him a hero to fellow conservative Christians. In the interim, Moore said he has no plans to run for public office, but he will travel and speak about the role of God

in government.

"The truth is, our law does not prohibit acknowledging God," he told the audience at First Family Church. "We are so blinded to the fact that the acknowledgment of God is not prohibited by the constitution."

When asked by the church's pastor, Jerry Johnston, if he thinks God will judge America, Moore responded, "I think if God doesn't judge America, he'd have to apologize to Sodom and Gomorrah."

Yet Moore said he's hopeful about the country's future.

"I know that it seems impossible, but just as it seems impossible, God starts to work," he said. "The question before America is will we acknowledge the God on

which this nation was founded."

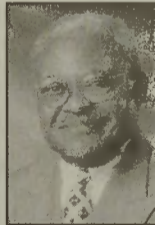


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Obituaries

Grier Funeral Service
Roy Lee Carter of 1625 Umstead St., died Nov. 7 at his residence. Memorial service was held Nov. 14 at the A.S. Grier Memorial Chapel.
Melvin Massey Johnson of 8400 Rego St., died Nov. 8 at the VA Medical Center in Salisbury. Funeral was held on Nov. 11 at First United Presbyterian Church. Burial was at Beatties Ford Memorial Garden.
Larry Adams of 2552 Remus Road died Nov. 8 at Presbyterian Hospital. Funeral was held Nov. 12 at the A.S. Grier Memorial Chapel. Burial was at Oaklawn Cemetery.
Clarence Erwin of 4410 Ely Ave., Bronx, N.Y., died Nov. 13 in New York. Funeral was held Nov. 19 at the A.S. Grier Memorial Chapel. Burial at York Memorial Park.
Allene Davis of 1712 Vantage Place died Nov. 15 at Hunter Woods Nursing Home. Funeral was held Nov. 21 in the A.S. Grier Memorial Chapel. Burial at Oaklawn Cemetery.
Roberta Ford of 1707 Bondale Place died Nov. 15 at Mecklenburg Healthcare Center. Funeral was held Nov. 21 at Little Rock AME Zion Church. Burial at York Memorial Park.
Carolyn Locklear of 1214 McAllister Drive died Nov. 17 at Baptist Hospital in Winston-Salem.
Avery Magdelaine Davis of 2422 S. Tryon St., died Nov. 15 at Carolinas Medical Center. Funeral was held Nov. 19 at A.S. Grier Memorial Chapel. Burial at Beatties Ford Memorial Garden.
Alexander Funeral Homes
Joseph Harris died Nov. 13 at Elizabeth Place. Visitation and funeral were held Nov. 16 at Friendship Primitive Baptist Church, followed by private burial.
Marty Keith Torrence died Nov. 13 at his residence. Visitation and funeral were held Nov. 18 at Friendship Missionary Baptist Church. Burial was at Oaklawn Cemetery.
Anna M. Johnson died Nov. 12 at N.C. Jaycee Bum Center in Chapel Hill. Memorial service was held Nov. 15 at St. Paul Baptist Church.
Catherine McBee died Nov. 12 at Charlotte Healthcare. Graveside service was held Nov. 15 at York Memorial Park.
Francis Cortez Jr. died Nov. 11 in Charlotte. Visitation and funeral were held Nov. 16 at Sugar Creek Church of Christ. Burial at Mecklenburg Memorial Park.
Johnny Pittman died Nov. 10 at Carolinas Medical Center. Visitation and funeral were held Nov. 14 at Bethel United Methodist Church in Catawba, S.C. Burial was in the church cemetery.

"A Word From Our Partners" "THANKSGIVING"



Don Stegar, Ph.D.,
Pastor of Reeder Memorial Church

There are some old social gestures that appear to have been lost, in most of our social circles today. However, there are some things that should never be lost. One is the matter of the plain old expression of gratitude. Can you say, "Thank you?"

How many times have you extended a kindness to someone, whether in words or deeds, and the recipient of your benevolent act said nothing in return, most noticeably, they did not even acknowledge your efforts by saying "thank you." Depending on the circumstance, as well as your mindset at the time, you may have felt a little less than enthusiastic about having extended the kindness, even if you later told yourself that it didn't matter. However, in reality, it probably did matter to you. This lack of gratitude might have caused you to think, "They never appreciate anything I do", or perhaps, "They'll see the next time I do something for them".

As children, we were told that failure to say "thank you," showed a lack of appreciation for what has been done for you. In some circles, it reflected "on your up-bringing." As adults, some of us take that further to mean a lack of appreciation, value, and respect. Yet, we must acknowledge that even though we expect thanks from others, we sometimes neglect to show our appreciation and gratitude, as we should. In other words, we, too, take people and things for granted. Frequently we even take God's grace for granted.

I am glad that God does not hold back the blessings because we have not adequately acknowledged him. In fact, our acknowledgement of His kindness and mercy is not contingent on our words of thanks. God blesses us despite ourselves every day, even when we do not notice them.

This is not to say that our thanksgiving is not important. In fact, with respect to our spiritual growth, our perception of life, and our relationship with God, it is crucial. We have frequently emphasized that prayer, including giving thanks, enhances our connection with God and influences our spiritual growth. Thanksgiving should be our humble acknowledgement not only of blessings already received or blessings to come, but of God's unfailing and unconditional love. It is His love for us that generates our blessings. Expressing our thankfulness deepens and enriches our relationship with God by humbling us, and opening our mind (our thoughts) to God's ever-present mercy and kindness. By channeling our thoughts of gratitude to a loving and giving God, we will find contentment and peace.

Make acknowledging Him part of your daily conversation with God. Just simply saying "thank you" to God for His goodness enriches your relationship with Him. In doing so, you are reminded that he is involved with you in all your circumstances. The proverb says, "In all your ways acknowledge him and he shall direct your paths" (Proverbs 3:6). Do not allow what you think you lack to take away from what you know you have. On a cloudy day, you know that the sun is still shining, even if you cannot see it. In the face of despair and pain, know that there is hope. Never give up! In the face of failure, know that there is success; in the face of defeat, know that there is triumph...AND BE THANKFUL!

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