

America

Signs of the Times

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CNS and Staff | OCTOBER 1, 2007

Dutch Proposal for Priestless Masses

The general curia of the Dominicans expressed surprise over a booklet published by members of the order in the Netherlands recommending that laypeople be allowed to celebrate Mass when no ordained priests are available. In a written statement released by the Vatican Sept. 18, the Dominicans' Rome-based leaders said that while they "laud the concern of our brothers" over the shortage of priests, they did not believe "the solutions that they have proposed are beneficial to the church nor in harmony with its tradition." The statement, dated Sept. 4, acknowledged the concerns of some Dutch Dominicans about the shortage of vocations to the priesthood and the difficulty in offering the faithful in the Netherlands a wider celebration of the Eucharist. But while the statement said Dominican leaders shared those same concerns, it said they did "not believe that the method they [the Dutch Dominicans] have used in disseminating" a booklet to all 1,300 parishes in the Netherlands was an appropriate way to discuss the issue.