



**Water conflicts volatile**

WASHINGTON (CNS) – As the world’s population grows and the amount and sources of potable water shrink, the number of conflicts over water access and usage is likely to increase, said members of a panel on water rights that convened Jan. 6 in Washington. But the opportunities to resolve those conflicts peacefully and sustainably can likewise grow, the panelists said. The forum, co-sponsored by Catholic Relief Services and the Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars, highlighted a new CRS publication, “Water and Conflict: Incorporating Peacebuilding into Water Development,” written by current and former CRS staffers. “You can’t be looking at development without looking at some of the structural issues,” said Jason Gehrig, a CRS consultant who is the publication’s main author. Increasing water scarcity around the world, Gehrig said, is “likely to be a catalyst for increasing violence on the local level.” He suggested tapping into Catholic social teaching principles to help explain “the right to safe water as a human right.” William Hall, an adjunct professor in the conflict resolution studies program at Georgetown University in Washington, noted that water disputes are not



Photo by Debbie DeVoe courtesy of Catholic Relief Services | CNS

**Women collect water from the Makuach system in Southern Sudan’s Bar County in this Feb. 26, 2009, file photo. The system, which was rehabilitated by Catholic Relief Services, provides the surrounding community and health clinic with access to clean, fresh water.**

exclusive to other lands, citing some hydroelectric power tussles in Oregon.

**Olympic hospitality**

VANCOUVER, British Columbia (CNS) – The Archdiocese of Vancouver is warming up for its own type of Olympic event. However, it won’t take place on ice or snow; it will be on the streets of the city. “(We) have embraced the theme of radical hospitality for our initiatives; that is, to see Jesus as both guest and host at these games,” Vancouver Archbishop J. Michael Miller wrote in a letter to athletes and participants of the 2010 Winter Olympics. Vancouver and Whistler will host the Olympics Feb. 12-28 and the Paralympics March 12-21. “While you are here, we hope you will consider visiting one of the archdiocese’s downtown hospitality

centers for athletes,” Archbishop Miller wrote, referring to Holy Rosary Cathedral and the archdiocesan offices. “We think you will find these places to be sanctuaries while you take a break from the rigors of competition.”

**Iraqi emigration**

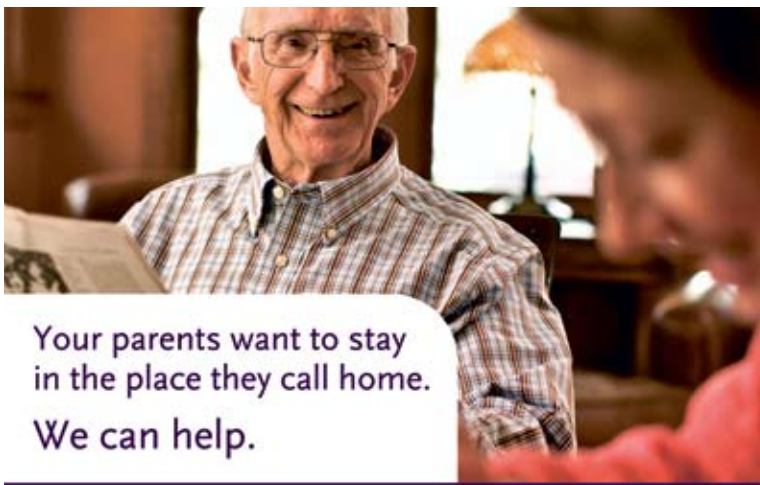
LONDON (CNS) – Chaldean Catholic Archbishop Louis Sako of Kirkuk, Iraq, has predicted a new wave of emigration from the war-torn country involving Christians who have tired of waiting for their situation to improve. The archbishop said many Christians taking refuge in northern Iraq were determined “to leave the country for good” after concluding that, nearly seven years after the invasion of Iraq by a U.S.-led coalition, it was still unsafe to return to their homes in the South. He told the British branch of Aid

to the Church in Need, a charity set up to help suffering and persecuted Christians, that a lack of jobs and services in the Kurdish north would speed emigration. “In Kurdistan, the security is quite good, but there are no jobs, no services and facilities in the new villages built by the Kurdish government,” Archbishop Sako said in a Jan. 6 statement issued by the charity. “Therefore many families are leaving the country for good.” The charity reported that the Christian population in Iraq has dropped from 1.4 million in 1987 to barely 300,000 today.

**‘Reform of reform’**

VATICAN CITY (CNS) – The pope’s chief liturgist, Msgr.

Guido Marini, endorsed calls in the church for a “reform of the reform” of Catholic liturgy. “For some years now, several voices have been heard within church circles talking about the necessity of a new liturgical renewal,” Msgr. Marini said. A fresh renewal movement would be “capable of operating a reform of the reform, or rather, move one more step ahead in understanding the authentic spirit of the liturgy and its celebration,” he said. Msgr. Marini, who has served as master of papal liturgical ceremonies since late 2007, spoke Jan. 6 to a conference of priests from English-speaking countries gathered in Rome to mark the Year for Priests.



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