

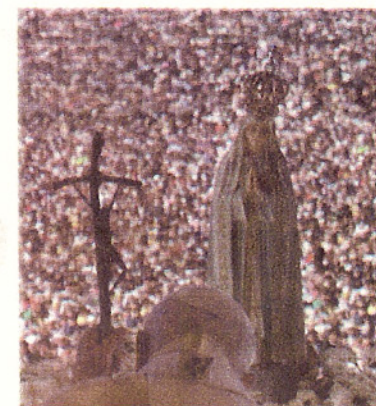


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Pope's Offering Page 16

Supreme Court in the Balance

by **BRIAN MCGUIRE**
Register Staff Writer

WASHINGTON — A group of Catholic lawyers has a message for voters: You'll do something more important than pick a president Nov. 7.

You'll pick a Supreme Court.

With four of the nine current justices over 65 years old, the next president may have the opportunity to alter the Supreme Court dramatically.

A President Al Gore-appointed court would be harmful to Catholic positions on major issues, says the Ad Hoc Committee of Concerned Catholic Lawyers in their Oct. 23 report, "Supreme Consequences." The group of 12 highly placed Washington lawyers who signed the report suggest that a President George W. Bush court would be more in line with Catholic positions.

Within the past year, says the report, five cases important to Catholics have been decided by just one vote.

These include *Stenberg v. Carhart*, which struck down Nebraska's partial-birth abortion ban; *Dale v. Boy Scouts*, which defended the Scouts' right to stay "morally straight" by excluding homosexuals;

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N.Y. Archbishop Edward Egan hosts presidential hopefuls Al Gore Jr. and George W. Bush at the Al Smith Dinner in New York Oct. 19. Asked about an Oct. 1 Register article, Bush told diners he was 'honored' to have the support of Democrat Ray Flynn. (CNS photo)