

# Baltimore cardinal condemns 'revisionist history' of Holocaust

**By Catholic News Service**

WASHINGTON (CNS) — Cardinal William H. Keeler of Baltimore condemned "revisionist history" of the Holocaust, the systematic efforts by Nazis during World War II to do away with Jews also known as the Shoah, a Hebrew word meaning devastation or catastrophe.

The cardinal took particular exception to a Dec. 11-12 conference in Iran during which speakers "sought to diminish the scope of the Holocaust."

Speakers at the conference in Tehran included David Duke, former U.S. leader of the Ku Klux Klan, and several authors who have been sued or arrested in Europe for denying the Nazis' mass murder of European Jews. Iranian President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad has in the past denied the Holocaust ever happened.

"The Catholic bishops of the United States stand in solidarity with the universal church in condemning 'revisionist history' that seeks to minimize the horror of the Holocaust," said Cardinal Keeler in a Dec. 14 statement, "We Must Remember the Shoah." Cardinal Keeler is episcopal moderator for Catholic-Jewish relations for the U.S. bishops. The statement was released in Washington.

He referred to a 2001 document of the U.S. bishops' Committee on Ecumenical and Interreligious Affairs titled "Catholic Teaching on the Shoah." It "stated two major reasons why grappling with the history and significance of the Shoah should be part of the central curriculum of Catholic education," he said.

"First, the Holocaust was not a random act of mass murder but 'a war against the Jews as the people of God, the first witness to God's revelation and the eternal bearers of that witness through all the centuries,'" the cardinal said. "Second, future generations need to be ever vigilant so that 'the spoiled seeds of anti-Judaism and anti-Semitism (will) never again be allowed to take root in the human heart.'"

The Vatican issued its own statement Dec. 12 on the Iranian government-sponsored conference, which was titled "Review of the Holocaust: Global Vision."

"The past century witnessed the attempt to exterminate the Jewish people with the consequent killing of millions of Jews of all ages and social categories simply for the fact that they belonged to that people. The Shoah (the Holocaust) was an enormous tragedy, before which one cannot remain indifferent," the Vatican said.

"The memory of those terrible facts must remain a warning for consciences with the aim of eliminating conflicts, respecting the legitimate rights of all peoples and calling for peace and truth in justice," the Vatican added.

"Let us take this occasion," Cardinal Keeler said, "to renew our commitment both to remember the great irruption of evil into human history that was the Shoah and to use that memory to fight the evils that led to it."