



# NEWS The United States Conference of Mayors

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## *The United States Conference of Mayors Mission to Rome*

### **Conference of Mayors President, Mayor James A. Garner of Hempstead, NY Meets with His Eminence Cardinal Francis Arinze at the Vatican**

#### *Wednesday, May 19 - Mayor Garner Will Greet His Holiness Pope John Paul II During Celebration of His 84<sup>th</sup> Birthday*

**Rome, Italy** – The United States Conference of Mayors (USCM) President and Hempstead, New York Mayor James A. Garner and Conference Executive Director Tom Cochran met with **His Eminence Cardinal Francis Arinze at the Vatican** today to report on the Conference of Mayors four-nation mission to Africa last year which addressed the devastation of the HIV/AIDS pandemic.

The United States Conference of Mayors *Mission to Africa*, which was the largest mission undertaken in the history of Conference, allowed U.S.A. mayors to share their experiences with African mayors and build collaborative partnerships between U.S. cities and African cities in response to the devastating impact of the AIDS pandemic in Africa. The Conference of Mayors delegation traveled to four African nations: South Africa, Namibia, Swaziland and Uganda.

While in Windhoek, Namibia African mayors along with U.S.A. Mayors agreed that USCM President Garner should officially thank the Vatican and representatives of the Catholic Church for the tremendous help it has played in alleviating pain and suffering of Africans as a result of the HIV/AIDS pandemic in the nations of Africa.

Also, Mayor Garner met with the **U.S. Ambassador to the Vatican, Ambassador R. James “Jim” Nicholson** on Tuesday.

Tomorrow, **Wednesday, May 19**, Mayor Garner and Executive Director Tom Cochran will officially greet **His Holiness Pope John Paul II** on behalf of The United States Conference of Mayors in front of St. Peter’s Square at the Vatican. The mayor will join other well-wishers in celebration of the pontiff’s 84<sup>th</sup> birthday which was Tuesday, May 18.

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#### **About The U.S. Conference of Mayors:**

The U.S. Conference of Mayors is the official nonpartisan organization of the nation’s 1183 cities with populations of 30,000 or more. Each city is represented in the Conference by its chief elected official - the mayor. For more information about The United States Conference of Mayors, visit [www.usmayors.org](http://www.usmayors.org).