

# Papal Snub

The pope cancelled a meeting with Archbishop KG Hammar, the head of Sweden's Lutheran church, because Hammar gave his support to an exhibition portraying Jesus Christ as a homosexual and AIDS sufferer.

In a statement, the Swedish church's spokesperson said that for diplomatic reasons the Vatican never explains these things but a communication with the Vatican cited the apparent disapproval of Swedish Catholic groups.

Archbishop Hammar had welcomed the photographic exhibition in a church in Uppsala by saying it was an opportunity for everybody to discuss homosexuality and its place in the church. About 90 percent of Swedes are Lutheran.

The exhibition, called *Ecce Homo*—Behold the Man—included pictures of Christ surrounded by homosexuals, and a transvestite version of the Last Supper. According to the spokesman, it was the biggest crowd ever at the cathedral. [Stephen Bates, "Gay images lead pope to cancel talks with Lutheran archbishop," *Irish Times*, 8 October 1998]

Source: *In Catholic Circles*, September to October 1998

# Irish Teener Stuns Computer World With Encoding Invention

DUBLIN—A 16-year-old Irish schoolgirl who invented a faster way of keeping messages on the Internet secret said on Wednesday she did not plan to make money out of her creation.

Sarah Flannery, from Cork, has developed a method of encoding data on the Internet which is 10 times faster than systems used globally now.

But she said that she had no intention of patenting her work as current systems were free.

"It's good to share your ideas with the science world. By patenting it I'd be hindering that process," she said in a telephone interview.

Flannery, who wants to complete a doctorate and work for one of a burgeoning number of high-tech companies in Ireland, was amazed at the huge interest she has attracted.

"I don't really want to get my feet back on the ground, but if it means getting away from the press I will," she joked.

"It hasn't sunk in yet," she added, reflecting on a series of awards she has won, culminating in East Telecom's Young Scientist of the year in Dublin last week.

Flannery's advance could be applied globally and benefit the fast-growing world of electronic commerce.

She said her success has sparked endless queries from high-tech companies and banks—though no concrete jobs yet.

"The implications for her are a lot of very good job offers, and a lot of universities chasing after her," said William White, an encryption specialist at Dublin-based Baltimore Technologies, where the seed of the idea was planted in her head during a two-week stint last March.

"They're estimating that billions of dollars of e-commerce will be done on the Internet and that's a lot of business to be protected," he added.

Flannery explained her system sped up existing ones like "RSA" which allows people to publish their E-mail addresses on the Internet but know data sent to them will stay secret.

Flannery was delighted to be in a new generation of Irish people facing the luxury of a skills shortage—unlike their ancestors who emigrated all over the world to escape poverty.

"There are really good jobs for people with PhDs and I like the Irish way of life, so I'd definitely like to stay here."

With awards from U.S. computer-chip giant Intel and the American Mathematics Association already under the belt, her options seem endless.

White said Baltimore Technologies had quickly realised her talents—but only after having her stuff enveloped for the first two days of her stint.

Source: Reuters, in *Today*, 1 January 1999