

POPE'S VISIT TO CUBA

Media coverage of Pope John Paul II's trip to Cuba began over a month before the actual encounter of the pope and Fidel Castro. Already there were those drawing comparisons between the two men.

Perhaps the most frequently heard unfair comment is that both men are dictators. But a dictator is one who oppresses the masses and punishes those who seek to flee his reign. The pope's message is one of freedom and he has no desire to punish anyone who wants to leave the Church. Castro, on the other hand, has spawned a message of oppression, torturing and imprisoning those who work against him, denying the Cuban people the right to emigrate abroad. And when it comes to freedom of religion, the contrast between John Paul II and Castro could not be more different.

Our media watch report on the Holy Father's trip will appear in the next *Catalyst*.