



From Courier-Journal Services

Stating that the 200th anniversary of the United States offers an opportunity to involve every level of the Church spectrum in a meaningful, common effort — "to learn what is causing people to hurt in Church and society" — Bishop James S. Rausch of the National Conference of Bishops said the bicentennial celebration will be an occasion to search for "our Catholic identity." He said the U.S. Catholic Church will emphasize the bicentennial theme of justice in the world . . . Edward H. Levi, designated to be the next U.S. attorney general, says he believes in the death penalty in limited cases, such as skyjacking, murder of police officers under certain circumstances, or murder by convicts in prison who are serving sentences for murder.

A group of Spanish Roman Catholic bishops will petition the Spanish government to grant amnesty to all prisoners in accord with Holy Year tradition. Last May, when Pope Paul formally proclaimed 1975 a Holy Year, he asked world governments to consider the granting of amnesty to prisoners . . . though the French parliament has passed a bill liberalizing abortion in France, Cardinal Francois Marty, archbishop of Paris, declared that abortion remains "an act of death" . . . the United Nations World Health Organization says that the world may record its last case of smallpox no later than Summer of this year . . . meanwhile Dr. Franklin H. Littrell, president of Christians Concerned for Israel (CCI) and professor of religion at Temple University, has urged the U.S. to leave the U.N. because of "of the recent diplomatic assault on Israel in the United Nations . . . the Communist bloc and the Arab League bloc and their fellow travelers among the new nations put together an overwhelming vote to make a small gang of terrorists the spokesman for some 2.1 million Palestinian Arabs."

According to Newscript, a religious newsletter, the National Council of Churches of the U.S.A. has been asked to look into the implications of a statement issued by some 35 Protestant leaders in Chile, praising the seizure of power there by a military coup. The statement conflicts with statements by other Christian groups, including Catholic, on the situation in that country. . . . Meanwhile more than 4,000 nuns in Britain and Ireland have signed a petition to the United Nations in which they asked the release of women and young people held in the jails and prison camps of Chile. . . . Reports pile up that Church people in the United States, Catholics and Protestants alike, are not only giving immediate help to nations wracked by hunger but are gearing up for long-range assistance and programs to influence public policy. . . . Catholic Bishop Donal R. Lamont of Umталix, Rhodesia, has charged that Rhodesian security forces have used electric shock to torture a number of blacks under interrogation.

People — Father Joseph B. Collins, a Sulpician Father, and a pioneer in the establishment of the Fraternity of Christian Doctrine in the U.S., died in Washington, Jan. 22, following a heart attack. . . . Dr. Donald Coggan has been enthroned as the 101st archbishop of Canterbury in a service unprecedented in its ecumenical character. It included three cardinals — the first time the Vatican has ever been represented at such a ceremony since the Reformation. . . . Dead at 81 is Father Oscar L. Huber, who administered the last rites to President John F. Kennedy following his assassination in Dallas in November 1963.

# Bishop Assails Abortion As President Listens

Washington, D.C. [RNS] — A Roman Catholic bishop told participants at the annual Red Mass at St. Matthew's Cathedral here — including President Ford and Chief Justice Warren Burger — to take the "unpopular" course of defending the right to life against abortion in the U.S. and the right to eat against hunger in the world.

Bishop James S. Rausch, general secretary of the National Conference of Catholic Bishops and the U.S. Catholic Conference, also urged the gathering of judges, lawyers and administrators of justice to safeguard other human rights in the socio-economic, political and religious spheres.

The prelate compared the positions of today's civil and religious leaders with that of St. John the Baptist, mentioned in the Sunday (Jan. 26) Gospel, and said that like the precursor of Christ their calls to justice and self-sacrifice will be "doomed to unpopularity." He added that the "program for living in the period ahead will demand a high degree of self-sacrifice."

President Ford sat passively during Bishop Rausch's sermon, and offered no reaction to it after the Mass, when he and Mrs. Ford met with Archbishop William W. Baum of Washington.

The Red Mass, sponsored by the lawyers' committee of the John Carroll Society of Washington, D.C., is held annually to ask God's blessing on those practicing in the field of law. Archbishop Baum was the main concelebrant.

In his homily, the bishop observed that the 1974 World Synod of Catholic Bishops outlined a program which merits the "serious attention" of all who seek to aid a "confused, unstable and dangerous world," particularly in the fight against injustice and in the struggle for human liberation.

Stressing that the Synod's statement on human rights makes action in behalf of justice and liberation a "constitutive dimension of the preaching of the Gospel," Bishop Rausch said five principal areas of human rights — rights especially



Protest Abortion Decision

A massive right-to-life rally, involving more than 30,000 adherents of an effort to reverse the 1973 U.S. Supreme Court rulings on abortion, is staged on the steps of the Capitol in Washington. Some estimates of the crowd ran as high as 50,000 persons from "nearly every state," including Hawaii, and the rally and subsequent "march for life" around the Capitol was described as the largest "pro-life" gathering ever. The demonstration marked the second anniversary of the Jan. 22, 1973 Court decision, which largely overturned most state abortion laws. (RNS)

## Sen. Buckley Reintroduces Life Amendment

Washington, D.C. [RNS] — Sen. James L. Buckley (C.N.Y.) has re-introduced a proposed constitutional amendment covering abortion that would protect the unborn.

The amendment, first introduced May 31, 1973, died in committee last year. It seeks to reverse the 1973 Supreme Court decisions which, in effect, prohibit states from outlawing abortions during the first 24 weeks of pregnancy.

As re-introduced in the 94th Congress, the Buckley amendment defines a "person" entitled to constitutional guarantees of life as "including . . . unborn offspring at every stage of their biological development." It would permit an abortion only if the life of the woman were in danger.

threatened in today's world, were outlined.

The first, he said, is the "right to life — our most fundamental and inalienable prerogative." Calling the right to life the "cornerstone of . . . civilization," he expressed the view that American society is not deeply enough committed to this right.

"Abortion directly attacks this right. Efforts to legalize euthanasia do violence to this right," he said. "Violence in our country and tolerance of torture abroad, the continuing arms race threaten to negate this right — this sacred right to life."

Concerning hunger in the world, Bishop Rausch said the right to eat follows from the right to life, "and we must be prepared to do something about it if we can."

"We in this country, blessed with the world's most fertile open plains, are the world's largest producers of food," he said. "This brings with it an awesome responsibility, one we dare not fail to meet by whatever means are available to us."

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