

COURIER-JOURNAL

16 Pages

Wednesday, January 21, 1976

NEWSPAPER OF THE DIOCESE OF ROCHESTER

20 Cents

Bishop Urges Participation In March for Life

Bishop Joseph L. Hogan this week encouraged Catholics in the Rochester area to take part in an annual March for Life and Prayer Service organized by the non-denominational Rochester Right-to-Life Committee.

The march, slated to start at 2 p.m. on Saturday, Jan. 24 at Washington Square is a protest against the 1973 Supreme Court declaration that abortion on demand is legal.

Writing in his weekly column on Page 3 the bishop says, "I urge all Catholics to participate to demonstrate our common solidarity and resolve in this bicentennial year to become once again one nation under God, with liberty and justice for all."

According to Father Michael Conboy, the bishop's secretary, Bishop Hogan will participate in an ecumenical prayer service at St. Mary's Church. The service will close the day's activities.

Bishop Hogan's endorsement of Right-to-Life activities on Jan. 24 follows on a Pastoral Plan for Pro-Life Activities, issued last November by the U.S. Catholic bishops.

That plan calls for amending the Constitution to guarantee a right to life for the unborn and "recognizes the value and necessity of local

pro-life action groups which are separate from the Church and involve the efforts of all who are committed to the value of human life, Catholic and non-Catholic alike," the bishop said.

The area demonstration is being held in conjunction with a national demonstration in Washington, D.C.

On the eve of the march, a 7 p.m. Mass for the Innocents will be held at St. Michael's Church in Newark. The Mass is sponsored by Newark Right-to-Life.

Tomorrow evening, Jan. 22, Gates-Chili Right-to-Life will sponsor a living rosary and Mass for the legal protection of the unborn at St. Pius Tenth Church. Chief celebrant of the liturgy will be Father Donald J. Murphy, pastor. The events begin at 7:30 p.m.

Also tomorrow, Father James E. Hewes will celebrate a Mass for the Unborn at 7 p.m. in St. Mary's Church, Canandaigua, at the request of the St. Jude's Mothers Circle.

Speaking for the diocesan Family Life Office, Father Robert Collins, director, noted the prayer services of right-to-life groups. "We realize that we have to restore a conscience to America and this can only be done through prayer, perseverance, and persistence," he said.

Reverse Ruling, USCC Asks Supreme Court

Washington, D.C. [RNS] — The U.S. Catholic Conference here has urged the U.S. Supreme Court to reverse its 1973 rulings which struck down most state laws against abortion and asked it to extend "legal personhood" to the unborn under the Fifth Amendment to the Constitution.

In an amicus curiae (friend of the court) brief filed in a case involving Missouri's abortion law — which is being challenged in the Court by Planned Parenthood of Missouri — the USCC argued that the current challenge to the Missouri law is directly attributable to the Supreme Court's 1973 rulings which abandoned a biological definition of life in favor of "sociologic standards."

The 40-page brief asked the court to affirm a February 1975 ruling by

a three-judge federal court upholding Missouri's abortion law, and beyond that, reject its own 1973 rulings in Roe vs. Wade and Doe vs. Bolton.

The Missouri law, passed in 1974, requires free and informed consent on the part of the woman seeking an abortion, parental consent if the woman is under 18, and the consent of the husband where the woman is married. The law also bans abortion by saline injection, prohibits experimentation on live aborted fetuses, and describes the intentional killing of a live aborted fetus as second degree homicide.

Besides calling on the court to uphold the Missouri law, the conference also examined the questions of fetal viability, parental consent, spousal consent and

concluded with a section defending the right of religious groups to support or reject various types of legislation and court rulings.

Suggesting that the abandonment of biological life as a criterion of Fifth Amendment protection will continue to subject the court to re-definitions of the term "human," the USCC brief said "in point of fact, re-definition of that term is already under way, respecting both ends of the life process."

"The issue of viability and the petitioner's (Planned Parenthood) challenge are products of Roe vs. Wade and can only be understood as such," the brief noted.

It charged that the Roe decision is "marked by many inner tensions

and inconsistencies but nowhere is that tension and inconsistency greater than in the court's view of unborn life. The dynamic which shapes the present controversy flows directly from the Court's treatment of pre-natal life."

The brief asserted that the main source of difficulty in the Roe decision is that the court created a category of "potential life." It said "this is a distinction which does not exist biologically. The human fetus is, according to all life science, a human life from the onset of conception. Biologically, it is not potential human life; it is actual human life in its earliest forms."

The Catholic Conference brief added that the court went on to substitute a definition of "human" according to a "societal con-

sensus," but pointed out that the court's definition must be considered in the light of the fact that the U.S. Constitution has removed certain civil rights from the workings of the popular will."

Claiming that control of certain rights is taken from the federal and state governments by the Bill of Rights and 14th Amendment, the brief said "chief among these rights is the right to life, which must not be taken away without due process."

"The effect of the decisions is to endanger civil rights in precisely the way the Constitution was designed to prevent," the brief claimed. "Those decisions subordinate a protected right to the caprice of societal evaluation."

Continued on Page 2

Vatican Reaffirms Teaching on Sex

Vatican City [RNS] — Citing an "urgent need" to refute serious errors and widespread "aberrant modes" of sexual behavior, the Vatican has issued a reaffirmation of Catholic Church teaching specifically condemning premarital sex, homosexual acts and

NEWSPRINT SHORTAGE

Because of a newsprint strike in Canada, newspapers are experiencing a shortage of paper. For this reason, the Courier-Journal has had to cut back on the number of pages. Hopefully, the dispute will be settled soon and production back to normal.

masturbation and calling for a positive espousal of chastity in Christian life.

While not mentioning birth control specifically, the document issued by the Vatican Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith does reaffirm the Church's traditional teaching which states that the use of the sexual function has its true meaning and moral rectitude only in true marriage.

A lengthy portion of the 3,500 word document is devoted to the observance of the moral law in the area of sexuality, in which it emphasizes that the current tendency to minimize as far as possible, when

not denying outright, the reality of grave sin" is erroneous.

The document, entitled "Declaration on Certain Questions Concerning Sexual Ethics" and dated Dec. 29, 1975, was issued by Cardinal Franjo Seper, prefect of the Vatican's doctrinal congregation, and approved by Pope Paul.

Declaring that the corruption of morals has increased in the present time, particularly in the "unbridled exaltation of sex" in the media and entertainment, the document said the corruption has "reached the point of invading the field of education and of infecting the general mentality."

It noted that while some educators and moralists have been able to contribute to a better understanding of sexual values "there are those who have put forward concepts and modes of behavior which are contrary to the true moral exigencies of the human person. Some members of the latter groups have even gone so far as to favor a licentious hedonism."

"The Church cannot remain indifferent to this confusion of minds (taking place even among Catholics) and relaxation of morals," the document stated. "It is a question, in fact, of utmost importance both for the personal lives of Christians and for the social life of our time."

The document citing the Church's establishment by Christ as "pillar and bulwark of truth" and the continuing assistance of the Holy Spirit, observed that throughout the Church's history certain precepts of natural law have always been considered "absolute and immutable" and in their transgression the Church has seen "a contradiction of the teaching and spirit of the Gospel."

Applying these immutable principles to sexual ethics, the document cited the teaching of Vatican II which declared that "moral goodness of the acts proper to conjugal love" does not depend

Continued on Page 16