

Catholics join thousands in NOW march

By Julie Asher

Washington (NC)— Several Catholic women who have become prominent because of their dissent on abortion were among thousands who participated March 9 in a march organized by the National Organization for Women (NOW) for continued legal abortion and birth control.

The U.S. Capitol police and the District of Columbia police estimated the crowd at 85,000.

A second march was planned for March 16 in Los Angeles.

Many marchers wore white and purple, the colors of the suffragettes, at the turn of the century, and some chanted, "Choice always" and "Women will decide our fate, not the church and not the state."

As the first of the marchers, led by NOW president Eleanor Smeal, passed the White House, a man broke through a police line and approached Ms. Smeal with what he said was a 20-week-old human fetus. The man, who identified himself as the Rev. Jerry Horn, from Appleton, Wis., was arrested and charged with disorderly conduct.

Joseph Scheidler, director of the Chicago-based Pro-Life Action League, was with Mr. Horn and was detained by police but released 45 minutes later.

Scheidler said later in a telephone interview that police confiscated the fetus, which was, he said, given to Mr. Horn "by an abortionist in Wisconsin. He gives us the bodies. I don't know why. Maybe he feels guilty." He said the D.C. coroner's office planned an autopsy of the fetus March 10.

Among the speakers who addressed marchers from the steps of the U.S. Capitol were Notre Dame de Namur Sisters Barbara Ferraro and Patricia Hussey of Charleston, W.Va.

The two nuns, who still faced a threat of expulsion from their communities for signing an advertisement on abortion in 1984 in The New York Times, signed the follow-up ad that appeared March 2 in the Times.

The first ad, signed by 97 Catholics, contended that there is more than one "legitimate Catholic position" on abortion. The second ad, signed by more than 900

Lobbying hoped to influence voting on state Medicaid funds for abortions

The New York State Catholic Conference is orchestrating lobbying efforts in Albany on Monday, March 17, to protest state Medicaid funding of abortion. Diocesan delegations from throughout the state will assemble in Room B of the Legislative Office Building from 9-11 a.m., and will be identified by pink and blue balloons bearing the message "Vote Life ... End Medicaid Abortions."

Lobbying efforts are designed to influence the voting on the state budget, which is scheduled to occur shortly after the 17th.

The Office of Social Ministry of the Diocese of Rochester encourages participation in this lobbying effort. Information and balloons are available through the Genesee Valley Office of Social Ministry at the diocesan Pastoral Center, 1150 Buffalo Road, Rochester, (716)328-3210.

Those who cannot be present for lobbying activities in Albany are urged to participate through prayer, as well as phone calls and letters to Governor Mario Cuomo and legislative representatives.

Catholics, expressed "solidarity" with signers of the first ad and protested "reprisals" against them by church officials.

"It's a real pleasure to be with you in this historical moment," said Sister Ferraro at the march. "I as a Roman Catholic woman and a nun am an advocate of choice (on abortion) and am encouraged by other women and friends even when my church condemns it and seeks to impose its beliefs on all."

She added that she would not "be silent. I will not be silenced."

Sister Hussey told her listeners that daily they all deal with issues of "control of the powerless by the powerful."

"In organized, coercive religions, the eternal fathers want to lord over obedient, submissive daughters," she said. "We can be silenced no more. As a Roman Catholic nun I stand for a woman's right to choose."

Another Catholic who spoke was Mary Ann Sorrentino, who as executive director of Planned Parenthood of Rhode Island was told last June by an official of the Diocese of Providence that she had incurred an

automatic excommunication.

She called the rally a "pro-life celebration" for women saved from "mutilation and death" of illegal abortions. She added that "recent actions of the Catholic hierarchy in my situation have done nothing but energize this movement."

Thirty to 40 pro-life supporters' held signs against abortion as marchers passed by.

Julie Loesch of Pro-Lifers for Survival said she opposed abortion as "an attack on the physical integrity of pregnant women," adding that women "choose life when they are exposed to the objective truth about what abortion is."

At a morning press conference held on Capitol Hill as marchers gathered on the Mall, Judie Brown, president of the American Life League, announced that she had issued a letter calling for excommunication of Ms. Smeal, a Catholic, because of her actions as N.O.W. president.

She said a letter was hand-delivered March 6 to Bishop John R. Keating of Arlington, Va., in whose diocese Ms. Smeal lives.

AQUINAS INSTITUTE THEN AND NOW



A series of articles to appear semi-monthly commemorating the sixtieth anniversary of the school.

When Aquinas juniors first heard in American history class those strange words, "Go West, Young Man. Go West," they may have wondered how valid Horace Greeley's advice would be for them. The vast majority, some 8500, of Aquinas alumni have not gone in any direction from Rochester; but some 3000 have headed out, many to the west. California today is the domicile of some 333 alumni; six alumni have gone further west to Alaska, and seven to Hawaii.

After California, Florida has the next most Aquinas alumni in residence with 266. Virginia and Pennsylvania have 135 and 105, respectively. 89 decided to go east instead and now claim Massachusetts as their home state. There are Aquinas alumni in all fifty states except North Dakota and Montana.

In the Rochester area the single zip code with the greatest Aquinas alumni is 14624 (Gates-Chili) with 775 graduates. Greece leads the Monroe County towns with 1530 alumni, followed by Irondequoit with 1175. Outside the city, Webster with 342 alumni, is number one, followed by Pittsford (293), Fairport (243), Penfield (151), Hilton (125), and Spencerport (111). The 14613 zip code, Rochester's tenth ward, has 489 alumni.

One alumni activity that knows no boundaries is the Annual Aquinas Appeal. Begun in 1969 under the principalship of Fr. Leon Hart, CSB, and directed by Fr. Thomas Miller, CSB, the appeal has gone out every year. The generous support of Aquinas alumni has been a source of unity among classes. The 1970 campaign began to rely on alumni leadership. Thomas Riley '56 and Jack Palvino '51 spearheaded the drive that year.

Aquinas alumni played an important role in the run for Section V championship of the basketball team last month. Coach Mike Ruff's father, Ray, is a '49 alumnus. Assistant coach Rick Pillitter graduated in 1963. Four players have fathers who are alumni: Pat Moynihan (Joe '38), Sean Schiano (Charles '52), Matt Lynd (Ed '52), Eric Loewenguth (Dick '49). Moynihan's two brothers, Kevin '72 and Martin '69; plus Schiano's three brothers, Charles '79, Chris '83 and Mike '81; plus Loewenguth's four brothers, Peter '76, Mark '80, Tom '83 and David '79 are all alumni. Tom Lucantella's brother Joe '83 and Paul Manarella's brother Tom '79 are alumni. They were among the 6000 spectators at the War Memorial cheering as the Aquinas team got to the finals for the first time in sixty years.

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TGA shortfall

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While she doesn't plan to cut programs, she does plan to request larger minimum enrollments. "In rural areas where you don't normally draw large numbers, we might have asked for seven, where now we can't offer a program unless at least 10 people sign up," she said.

Although the bishop urged directors to try to maintain the diocesan commitment to the poor, to the young and to leadership training, the divisions of social ministry and urban ministry have been hit particularly hard.

Subsidies and/or grants awarded to eight inner-city parishes by the Division of Urban Services will be reduced. While the dollar amounts of the cuts are not large, they are having a disproportionate effect, according to Father John Mulligan, Urban Services director.

"Those parishes affected are those that can least afford it," Father Mulligan pointed out. "But that's all we work with," he added.

Our Lady of Mount Carmel Parish's subsidy has been cut by \$175 per month, according to the pastor, Father Jim Hewes. "That may not sound like much, but to us, that's a lot of money," he said.

"I don't think many people realize how small our income is ... Our Sunday collec-

tions are only about \$200 a week. We're living on bare bones already — we don't have a secretary or housekeepers or maintenance men," he explained.

"It's really difficult to plan a budget and after six months to have to change it around. It's not a good way to do business, but I understand why it has to happen.

"We'll just have to depend that the Lord will give us what we need. He always has," Father Hewes added.

Both urban ministry and the Division of Social Ministry also face cuts in public funding sources as a result of the Gram-Rudman-Hollings Balanced Budget Amendment.

"We've tried to make sure that our most essential services will continue," said Father John Firpo, diocesan social ministry

director. "The TGA provides seed money (\$700,000) for us to go out and do close to \$8 million worth of services. The question is if we reduce that seed money, will we still be able to generate that amount of service?"

Social ministry will also lose the Diocesan Community Service Corps, a lay volunteer program, along with members of the Jesuit Volunteer Corps who have served here in the past.

Further cuts are projected for next year's budget as well, according to Father Norton.

"I hope we can do a better job of letting people in the diocese know how critical this funding is," Father Mulligan said. "The trickle-down effect always hits the poor. That's what's so frustrating. You wish it didn't have to happen in the Church, but it does."

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