

# Activists overcome difficulties during march

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WASHINGTON — Politicians and pro-life activists praised each other for their efforts to fight abortion at a rally on the Ellipse near the White House, kicking off the annual March for Life to Capitol Hill.

As the rally got underway under mostly cloudy skies, the temperature hovered around a brisk 50 degrees. Although parking restrictions on buses from out of town delayed several hundred marchers, weather was not the obstacle it has been at past marches.

A final tally of the crowd size from the U.S. Park Police put the number at about 75,000.

Marchers waved signs saying such things as "Stop abortion, it kills humans" and "Join the Rally for Life, April 28, 1990," a reference to another national pro-life demonstration planned for Washington, D.C.

President Bush made brief remarks via a radio-telephone hook-up from the Oval Office. He was one of a number of political and religious leaders to address the marchers.

"Before you begin the march I want to take a minute to share my deep personal concern about abortion on demand, which I oppose," Bush said. "The continuing strong presence of the March for Life re-



March for Life participants claim floor space for their sleeping bags in the basement of the National Shrine.

minds those of us in decision-making capacities in the White House and in the Congress and in the court that millions of Americans care fundamentally about this issue and are committed to preserving the sanctity of life."

Bush said the pro-life movement is also a reminder to the country "of the self-evident moral superiority of adoption over abortion."

He also said he wanted to assure the pro-life activists "that this president stands with you on this issue of life and that my prayers go out to all of you for your faith and courage."

March for Life President Nellie Gray told the enthusiastic crowd that despite the victory last summer when the Supreme Court upheld Missouri abortion restrictions, the fight has not been returned solely to the states.

"This issue of saving pre-born children still must be settled at the federal level," Gray said. Action by Congress in outlawing abortion nationwide is necessary "so they will not be killing babies in one state and saving them in the next," she said.

Gray said that some politicians have been going through a "flip-flop" on abortion but that some — like those who addressed march participants — stand firm.

She cited Bush — who last fall vetoed some bills because of abortion provisions



Worshippers fill the National Shrine of the Immaculate Conception for a pro-life vigil Jan. 21 prior to the 17th annual March for Life Jan. 22 in Washington, D.C. It was one of the largest crowds ever to attend the pre-march Mass.

in them — as one example. "The president did stand strong," she said. Americans "trust a man who does stand strong."

"Let him know how much we appreciate him," she said.

Gray said that because out-of-town groups were unable to park their buses in the immediate vicinity of the march this year, many participants were delayed in getting to the site. Some came by subway from the other end of town, she said.

"We have had many, many difficulties" this year, she added. "No matter what they are, we're going to save the babies."

Bush's predecessor, Ronald Reagan, said in a letter to the marchers that "as we enter the 1990s we are experiencing a reawakening of the American conscience," demonstrated in part by concern for animals and the environment.

"Today we place our pre-born children on the top of this list," Reagan said.

In his closing prayer to marchers, Car-

dinal James A. Hickey of Washington said, "We've come in trust and faith to bear witness to the sanctity of life. Stay with us, Lord, as we go forth on our march."

Sen. Gordon J. Humphrey, R-N.H., surveying the crowd, said that "black, white, Jew, Christian, people of Islamic faith all are here."

"Thanks for your faithfulness, for your persistence," he said. "But most of all thanks for your honesty."

"The so-called pro-choice position is based on a lie, that one human being may take the life of another," Humphrey added. "A lie cannot survive in a free society, and for that reason my friends, we too, shall overcome."

Another Republican senator, Jesse A. Helms of North Carolina, noted that political threats are being made to politicians who oppose abortion.

"They chant 'pro-choice' but what so many really mean is protection for their

own political hides," Helms said of those on the pro-abortion side.

"I will not yield to threats," he said. Those backing abortion rights, he said, "had better be prepared to answer a lot of questions. It's up to them if they want to play politics with (countless) little lives."

Former Gov. Hugh Carey of New York said abortion foes will win because "the politics of life have always triumphed over the politics of death." Carey said that when he was governor, state money funded abortions and he was unaware of the true nature of the issue. "I went along with that (funding), to my eternal regret," he said. "There is no basis for spending money to encourage abortions in this country."

Rep. Romano L. Mazzoli, D-Ky., saluted the hard work of pro-life activists. "We who are members of Congress thank you for the sacrifices you've made," he said. "You stand for the politics of life, and how wonderful that is, the politics of life."

Rep. Paul E. Kanjorski, D-Pa., predicted the right-to-life cause would get a good hearing in Congress in 1990.

Pro-lifers ultimately look forward to convincing all Americans "of the righteousness of our cause."

Rep. Christopher H. Smith, R-N.J., warned that "as Congress begins a new session, be prepared for a bumpy ride." He said, however that "in the end social justice will prevail. Truth is on the march."

"The fact of the matter is there's no excuse for Americans to be deceived any longer," Smith said. "This is not an issue of choice or who decides. This is an issue of child abuse."

Rep. Bob Dornan, R-Calif., praised Cardinal John J. O'Connor of New York, who in December stood up to a militant protest, described by Dornan as "this wave of glorifying sodomy" and promoting abortion, at St. Patrick's Cathedral.

Joining Cardinal O'Connor on the podium were 11 other Catholic bishops, representatives of the Jewish, Presbyterian, Episcopalian, and Orthodox Christian pro-life movements, and leaders of other anti-abortion organizations, including Athletes for Life.

Humphrey noted the involvement of celebrities in fighting abortion but told the crowd that "frankly, you are my kind of celebrities."

Prelates present, in addition to Cardinals Hickey and O'Connor, were: Cardinal Bernard F. Law of Boston; Archbishop Anthony J. Bevilacqua of Philadelphia; Archbishop Francis B. Schulte of New Orleans; Bishop James C. Timlin of Scranton, Pa.; Bishop Thomas J. Welsh of Allentown, Pa.; Bishop Thomas V. Daily of Palm Beach, Fla.; Bishop John F. Donoghue of Charlotte, N.C.; and Auxiliary Bishop James P. Lyke of Cleveland.

Also present were Auxiliary Bishops Leonard Olivier and William G. Curlin of Washington.

## Bishop sentenced for protest

ALBANY (CNS) — New York Auxiliary Bishop Austin B. Vaughan was one of six people convicted Jan. 17 and sentenced to 15 days in jail for their part in a Good Friday "Operation Rescue" abortion protest last year at an Albany abortion clinic.

Also sentenced was Father Francis McCloskey of the Albany Diocese and four lay people.

The six pro-life activists had been charged with trespassing last March 24 at the Upper Hudson Planned Parenthood facility. They chose jail over a \$250 fine.

"To pay the fine would be to sanction a legal system that has approved murder," said defendant Francis Murray of Troy.

Judge Lawrence Rosen, who tried the case in Albany Police Court, acknowledged the "deep and profound moral and religious beliefs" of the six, but said abortion was a "legally protected activity" in New York.

At the trial, Rosen ruled he would not consider the defendants' reasons for violating the trespassing law, but would only address whether the six had broken the state's trespassing law.

Under state law, a person can violate a law if the violation is necessary to prevent an injury that is of greater magnitude than the injury caused in breaking the law. But Rosen said abortion is not an "injury" because it is constitutionally protected under the U.S. Supreme Court's 1973 *Roe vs. Wade* decision.



Pro-life activist Bishop Austin Vaughan chose jail over a fine.