

# Nationwide rallies mark anniversary of Roe

WASHINGTON (CNS) — Nineteen years after the U.S. Supreme Court's landmark abortion decisions, abortion foes around the country again marked the Jan. 22 anniversary with rallies, meetings, Masses and prayer services.

Leading Catholic churchmen often were featured speakers.

"You get tired ... But you don't quit," Cardinal John J. O'Connor of New York told 1,400 members of Massachusetts Citizens for Life assembled in Boston Jan. 19.

"You don't give up because you know ... it is the right thing to do," said the New York cardinal, who is head of the U.S. bishops' Committee on Pro-Life Activities.

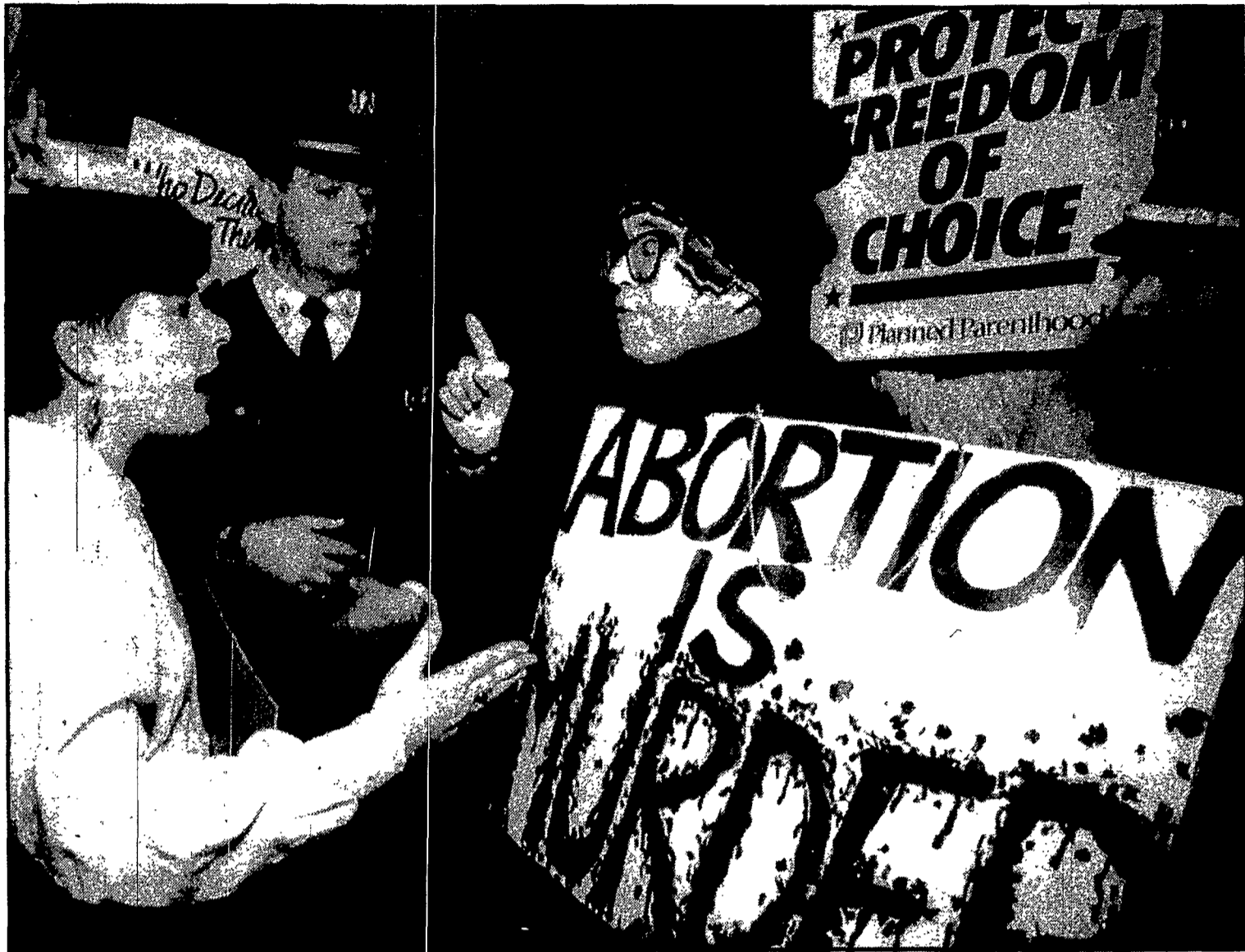
In Atlanta, Archbishop James P. Lyke urged 14,000 demonstrators at the Georgia Capitol to "strive to instill reverence for life at all stages" and to fight abortion by offering alternatives.

"While many today seek abortion for frivolous and selfish reasons, there are many women who see it as a tragic solution to agonizing problems," Archbishop Lyke said. "They deserve society's help in meeting and resolving those problems so that they will not feel a need to resort to the inhuman expedient of abortion."

More than 1,000 pro-life supporters joined Los Angeles Cardinal Roger M. Mahony in a Jan. 18 Mass and a mile-and-a-quarter march to a Planned Parenthood abortion center in East Los Angeles, where they prayed the rosary in English and Spanish. Chanting and singing abortion advocates tried to drown out the prayers.

After the 15-decade rosary, the pro-life marchers returned to Assumption Church, where they had begun, for a Benediction service. Meeting with the press afterward, Cardinal Mahony emphasized that the event was a prayer vigil, "not a demonstration or a protest."

To the claim that it is "oppression of women" to try eliminating abortion, he answered: "Abortion is the killing of unborn children ... There isn't good violence and bad violence."



Winter Miller, 18, (left) a Smith College freshman from Upper Black Eddy, Pa., confronts an unidentified pro-life advocate at the statehouse in Boston Jan. 22. The Coalition for Choice held the rally to commemorate the 19th anniversary of *Roe vs. Wade*, the Supreme Court's 1973 decision legalizing abortion.

"We need to talk about the fact that abortion is used as birth control," he added. "We're tossing away human life like paper cups."

Jan. 22 was the anniversary of the Supreme Court's 1973 rulings on two abortion cases: *Roe vs. Wade* and *Doe vs. Bolton*, which eliminated virtually all legal restrictions on abortion in the United States.

While the yearly national March for

Life was held in Washington on the anniversary date, dozens of local and statewide events around the country were held the weekend before, Jan. 18-19, or after, Jan. 25-26, to make it possible for more people to participate without taking a day off from work.

President Bush declared Jan. 19 National Sanctity of Human Life Day.

Some speakers told marchers that before next year's anniversary marches there could be significant changes in the legal framework of abortion in the United States.

Their hopes were bolstered by the Supreme Court's announcement Jan. 21 that it will hear an appeal on Pennsylvania's newest abortion law. The law at issue does not directly contradict the high court's main 1973 rulings, but it challenges a number of restrictions on state laws that were im-

posed as a result of the 1973 decisions.

At St. James Cathedral in Brooklyn, Cardinal O'Connor joined Brooklyn's Bishop Thomas V. Daily for the sixth annual Pro Vita Mass Jan. 18.

In addition to the national march and activities in Washington, D.C., there was a variety of local observances.

The Washington archdiocese sponsored a prayer rally at Constitution Hall, to which all participants were asked to bring a small gift for a baby or a mother, to be distributed through crisis pregnancy centers around the archdiocese.

In Texas, pro-life groups announced a series of rallies and prayer services running through most of the month, capped by a statewide Texas Rally for Life in Austin Jan. 25.

## Officers get 30 years for killing six Jesuits

SAN SALVADOR (CNS) — Two military officers convicted of the November, 1989, murders of six Jesuit priests have been sentenced to the maximum prison term, a court official said.

Col. Guillermo Benavides and Lt. Yushy René Mendoza received 30-year sentences. A court official said three other officers implicated in the crime, which drew worldwide protests, received three-year suspended sentences.

The sentences were announced Jan. 24, less than 24 hours after the Salvadoran legislature passed an amnesty law that left the door open for pros-

ecution of the worst human-rights abuses committed during El Salvador's 12-year civil war.

The Jesuits, their cook and her daughter were killed during a rebel offensive in the capital of San Salvador Nov. 16, 1989.

Benavides is the highest-ranking military officer ever sentenced in a human-rights case in El Salvador.

The army and extreme-right deaths squads were accused of a whole catalogue of massacres and killings during the war, which ended in mid-January with the signing of a U.N.-sponsored peace accord in Mexico City.

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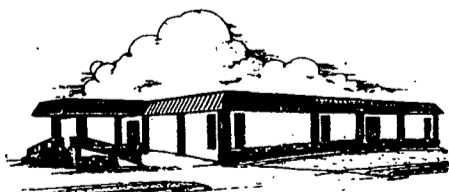
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