

Activists dispute rescues' results

By Lee Strong
Staff writer

The "Spring of Life" rescue in Buffalo officially ended Sunday, May 3, with both pro-life and pro-choice forces claiming victory.

Pro-life activists assert that 12 women — one of them carrying twins — told pro-life advocates that the protests had changed their minds about having abortions.

Pro-choice activists dispute that claim, however, noting that Buffalo-area abortion clinics remained open throughout the two-week campaign.

Amid conflicting assessments of the campaign's effectiveness, several facts are clear:

- At least 620 pro-life protesters were arrested. As of May 4, more than 235 of them remained in custody, refusing to post bail pending series of pre-trial hearings scheduled to begin May 5.

- 18 pro-choice activists also were arrested, mostly on charges of assaulting pro-life demonstrators.

- Six Operation Rescue leaders face federal charges of criminal contempt for violating a federal judge's order that protesters remain at least 15 feet away from Buffalo-area abortion clinics.

- Participants in the rescue campaign received a letter of support from

Mother Teresa, who praised them for their "courage to uphold the Law of God." The letter was published as a full-page advertisement in the April 30 edition of *The Buffalo News*.

- Buffalo-area pro-life activists have vowed to continue their campaign on a smaller scale for the indefinite future. And pro-choice activists say they will be ready to counter those efforts.

In a separate action, meanwhile, on May 2 the Diocese of Buffalo conducted the first of a scheduled nine rosary novenas for life. The service, which took place at St. Louis Church, was led by retired Auxiliary Bishop Bernard J. McLaughlin. Details on the service could not be obtained from Buffalo diocesan officials as of the *Catholic Courier's* press deadline.

The last major protests of the Operation Rescue campaign took place May 1, when police arrested 112 rescuers at a clinic in the Buffalo suburb of Amherst, and May 2, when a protest at the Buffalo GYN Womenservices clinic resulted in 65 arrests of pro-lifers.

Those two demonstrations culminated two days of prayer and fasting following the April 28 arrest of three Operation Rescue leaders for violating a court order issued by U.S. District Court Judge Richard J. Arcara. Arcara had ordered that protesters remain at least 15 feet away from the abortion

clinics.

Arrested on charges of criminal contempt were Joseph Slovenec of Cleveland, Ohio; Jeffrey White of Anaheim, Calif.; and James Anderson of Spokane, Wash. Two other Operation Rescue leaders — Joseph Kelley of Sag Harbor, N.Y., and Kenneth Kelley of Citrus Heights, Calif. — were arraigned on May 4.

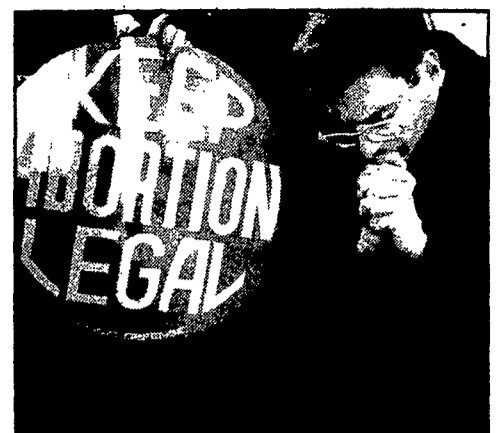
A bench warrant was issued May 4 for a sixth Operation Rescue leader, James Conrardy of Anaheim, Calif. He was arraigned May 5 before Judge Arcara.

Meanwhile, Buffalo area pro-life activists have vowed to continue their efforts, noted Karen Swallow Prior, a spokeswoman for the "Spring of Life."

According to Prior, about 1,000 Buffalo-area pro-lifers gathered at St. Catharine of Siena Parish in West Seneca May 3 for a rally to end the "Spring of Life" campaign. Many of the people gathered at the Roman Catholic parish said they would continue efforts to stop abortion in Buffalo, she reported.

"The 'Spring of Life' as an event is over, but the season of the 'Spring of Life' now continues," Prior said.

That season will include continuation of sidewalk counseling, picketing at doctor's homes (Operation John the Baptist), efforts to encourage voters to cast pro-life votes, and more rescue



Kellie McCann/Photo Intern
Surrounded by the signs of his pro-choice opponents, the Rev. Paul Schenck kneels in prayer Tuesday, April 28, for an end to abortion. The scene took place across from the Erie Medical Center on Buffalo's High Street.

efforts.

Prior said the continuing clinic demonstrations would be smaller in scale than those over the past two weeks, and would take place with no advance notice.

But Darci Restino of Buffalo United for Choice said pro-choice activists had successfully countered pro-life efforts during the two-week campaign, and were ready to counter any additional efforts in the coming months.

Restino, a Syracuse resident, said the key to countering the Buffalo protests is "that people mobilized. Once people knew that (Operation Rescue) was coming to Buffalo, they got ready."

Northeast Quadrant schools to keep current names

By Rob Cullivan
Staff writer

ROCHESTER — The Northeast Quadrant Governance Board has decided to retain the names of schools remaining open next year. The board had originally decided to change the names following the closing of three other schools in the quadrant.

The decision to allow Christ the King, St. Ambrose, St. Andrew's and St. Margaret Mary's quadrant schools to retain their names came during the an April 1 meeting, according to Anthony Leavy, a member of the board's communications committee.

During the meeting at St. Margaret Mary's Church, the board voted 6-5 to keep the names of the schools rather than change them as specified in the original reorganization plan announced by the governance board in

December, 1991.

Although the board later withdrew that plan because of fierce parental opposition to the closings, the diocese eventually reviewed and approved the plan — with its provisions for school-name changes intact — in January, 1992.

According to the diocesan-approved plan, the name changes were needed to allow "parents, students and staff to create a new identity for the schools." However, Leavy, a Christ the King school parent, noted that he and several other parents did not favor finding new names for the schools.

The minutes from the April 1 meeting confirm Leavy's contentions, noting that representatives from the schools' advisory committees were "not in favor of this proposal."

"Everyone was sort of moping," Leavy noted.

Sister Mary Alice O'Brien, RSM, principal at St. Andrew's School, said she had no strong reaction to the decision to keep the school names. She added, however, that she had originally supported the idea of changing the quadrant-school names.

"I felt it certainly would help to disassociate (schools) from any particular parish," she said.

On the other hand, Sister O'Brien noted that the quadrant will now save money it would have spent on altering building facades and making other changes necessitated by name changes.

In other quadrant news, the board also plans to select candidates for three additional representative positions. Although each quadrant parish is represented on the board — often by a school parent — the board originally allotted no specific representative positions for school parents.

The board's constitution, however, allows for three additional representatives who have "special skills" the board needs, Leavy said. Using this clause, the board decided to call on parishes and schools to recommend candidates for the three positions who would represent the interests of quadrant parents.

"Three parents isn't enough, but it's a big start," Leavy said. "It's another sign that the parents are coming together with the board."

The three representatives will be chosen by June, according to Mark Greisberger, a member of the board's finance committee and chairman of the quadrant's development committee.

Turning to the issue of fund development, Greisberger said the quadrant will embark on a \$200,000 fundraising campaign on Aug. 18, with an amateur golf tournament at Shadow Pines Golf & Racquet Club, 600 Whalen Road.

Tournament proceeds will go toward the quadrant's 1992-93 budget of \$3.6 million, Greisberger said.

Greisberger added that, in addition to the golf tournament, the following fundraisers will take place over the next school year: a walk-a-thon in September; a quadrant raffle; an annual giving campaign; and an auction.

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