

g

ns of the
ldy Doc
y track
Clanton
y them.
of mur-
fleeing
f rough
ion is O
A rating
ned that
riate for

d'

atary re-
the ear-
s in the
he taut-
cut with
no w e
ent, pro-
otional-
ng testi-
ed indi-
of racial
on is A-

th indi-
orker's
ina Pol-
y. Sister
real" to
s" were
ation in
heir in-
fiss Day
socially

signifi-
y. Non-
cause it
s' most

rofessor
ss Com-
ta, and
Catholic
rk Press,

der pre-
e Dame
46556.

cial
y

P
y

Road



Catholic Courier

DIOCESE OF ROCHESTER, NEW YORK

VOL. 105 NO. 40

THURSDAY, July 14, 1994

75¢

16 PAGES

Domestic Violence



State's bishops lobbied for law designed to end abuse

By Catholic News Service

Regardless of its outcome, the O.J. Simpson case has highlighted the problem of domestic violence in a manner never seen before across the nation.

Only days after Simpson — who was known to have abused his wife — was arrested June 17 for allegedly murdering Nicole Brown Simpson and Ronald Goldman, the New York State legislature unanimously passed a domestic violence bill.

Gov. Mario Cuomo signed the Family Protection and Domestic Violence Intervention Act into law last Wednesday, July 6.

Simpson was ordered July 8 to stand trial on two counts of first-degree murder in the June 12 slayings of his wife and her friend. He has pleaded not guilty.

In addition to numerous other substantive changes in domestic violence penalties, New York state's new law mandates police arrests of those who have committed a felony or a misdemeanor against their family members, and of those who have violated orders of protection.

One of the law's most ardent advocates was the New York State Catholic Conference whose executive director wrote Gov. Cuomo on June 23 urging him to sign the measure.

"As a society, we must send the clear message that violence will not be tolerated; not in our subways, our streets, our playgrounds or our homes," wrote John M. Kerry. The NYSCC provided the *Catholic Courier* with a copy of the letter.

Yet, it wasn't the Simpson case that prompted the NYSCC's support of the new legislation. In Feb-

ruary of this year, the legislature heard testimony supporting the bill from Kathleen M. Gallagher, the NYSCC's associate director for pro-life activities.

In her statement, provided to the *Courier* by the NYSCC, Gallagher pointed out that the conference supported the inclusion of several provisions that were contained in the bill's final version. The NYSCC urged that, in addition to physical injury and other forms of abuse, stalking and harassing a victim should be considered grounds for police arrest of their perpetrators, she said.

Gallagher also noted that the conference believes abuse victims should be allowed to pursue their cases in both the family and criminal courts. Until the new law was passed, victims had to choose either court and were barred from pressing charges in both courts simultaneously.

The old law eliminated "the option of family court once criminal court is chosen and the district attorney makes a decision not to prosecute!" Gallagher exclaimed.

Continued on page 14