

WORLD & NATION

Observances nationwide mark Roe's anniversary

WASHINGTON (CNS) — In observances of the 24th anniversary of *Roe vs. Wade*, the Supreme Court decision legalizing abortion virtually on demand, pro-lifers across country made their views known.

In Washington and around the country, people took part in rallies, marches, candlelight vigils, motorcades and other events to mark the anniversary Jan. 22. The National Right to Life Committee released a list of 92 activities going on in 37 states, including 21 in Wisconsin alone.

(Rochester diocesan teens joined the activities in Washington. See coverage on Page 6.)

At the center of much of the action in Washington was Cardinal Bernard F. Law of Boston, chairman of the U.S. bishops' Committee for Pro-Life Activities.

He was in Washington to celebrate a vigil Mass before the annual March for Life. He spoke at the rally preceding the march and also asked to meet with President Clinton to discuss partial-birth abortion.

White House spokeswoman Pat Lewis said, "Our staff is going to meet with the cardinal's staff." However, no date had been set for the meeting.

At the Jan. 21 vigil Mass at the Basilica of the National Shrine of the Immaculate Conception Cardinal Law told the packed assembly, "We must be unconditionally pro-life."

At the Jan. 22 rally, Cardinal Law addressed the many youths in the crowd, telling them, "You're the bridge to the new millennium."

In Austin, Texas, Bishop John E. McCarthy told a filled



CNS photo/Reuters
Participants in the annual March for Life rally Jan. 22 near the south lawn of the White House. Organizers estimate 100,000 people took part in the march.

church at a Jan. 25 rally and Mass that the forces behind the Supreme Court decision were at work long before the ruling was issued. He said if Christians could stand firm in their values, the rest of society could be changed.

In Olympia, Wash., about 1,500 protesters showed up at the state capitol Jan. 17 for the 19th annual Washington State March for Life. Rain and cold kept the numbers down from the 4,000-6,000 who customarily turn out for the event.

About 100 marchers turned out at the Connecticut state capitol in Hartford Jan. 22 for an event organized by the Pro-Life Council of Connecticut.

At the annual pro-life Mass in the Diocese of Lafayette, La., Jan. 19, Bishop Edward J. O'Donnell said the pro-life movement is gaining strength by the perseverance of its participants.

Florida's Catholic bishops issued a joint statement Jan. 22 challenging what they called a "utilitarian ethic, which sees each person not for his or her true value, but for what he or she can contribute to society."

In Arlington, Va., students at Bishop O'Connell High School more than doubled the goal of its "100,000 Rosaries for Life" campaign.

Started Oct. 29 at a school assembly, the rosary pledges were collected through Jan. 22, when students attended the March for Life in Washington.

Junior Linda Nguyen led the student campaign by soliciting 20,000 rosary pledges. Sophomore Ed Bresnahan brought in more than 12,000 pledges.

Cardinal: Rejecting all-male priesthood is not heresy

By John Thavis
Catholic News Service

VATICAN CITY — Catholics who reject the church's teaching on the all-male priesthood are not necessarily heretics, but they are making a serious error against the faith, Cardinal Joseph Ratzinger said.

The cardinal made the distinction Jan. 24 at a Vatican press conference promoting a volume of collected documents and commentaries on the ordination issue.

The book was the latest effort by church officials to underline the weight

of recent pronouncements against women's ordination. Doctrinal officials have warned Catholics against believing that women might be admitted to the priesthood in the future, perhaps under a different pope.

In addition to documents by Pope John Paul II and the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith, the volume included several theological commentaries, all of which supported the Vatican's position. Officials called the book an "obligatory point of reference" for future discussion on the issue.

Cardinal Ratzinger, head of the doctri-

nal congregation, was asked whether nonacceptance of the teaching on the all-male priesthood constituted heresy.

The issue arose recently when the congregation announced the automatic excommunication, for heresy, of a Sri Lankan theologian, Father Tissa Balasuriya. Father Balasuriya had refused to sign a profession of faith affirming, among other things, that the church had no authority to ordain women priests.

Cardinal Ratzinger said this did not mean, however, that favoring women's ordination was grounds for excommunication.

He said the Sri Lankan priest was excommunicated for more serious errors, such as his position on original sin and Christ's divinity.

The cardinal explained that the church generally groups its teachings into three categories:

- First, dogmas contained in Revelation.
- Second, definitive doctrines not formally revealed but linked to Revelation.
- Third, other teachings requiring an attitude of respect and assent.

The teaching on the all-male priesthood, he said, belongs to the second category. Hence, its rejection "perhaps should not be put in the category of 'heresy,' but in that of 'alien to and incompatible with the faith,'" he said.

He added that according to church le-

gal experts, canon law clearly spells out juridical consequences for those who reject church teachings of the first and third categories, but is not clear about the second category. He called this a "gap," but said it remained apparent that such people were in serious doctrinal error.

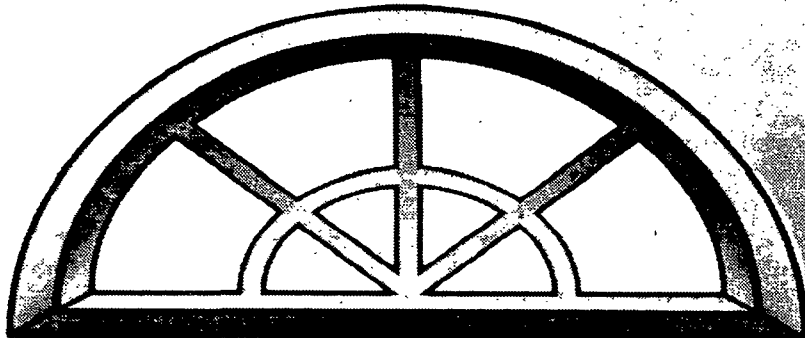
But this "would not be heresy in the strict sense of the word," he said.

Cardinal Ratzinger defended the congregation's treatment of Father Balasuriya. He said rather than pick apart the priest's book on Mary, the congregation decided to approach the issue in a "positive" way and simply ask him to sign a profession of faith.

Father Balasuriya and others have objected to such a method. But Cardinal Ratzinger said that "no wrong is done to any Catholic by inviting him to confess his faith." He added that the priest could remove this judgment of heresy by signing the profession.

Cardinal Ratzinger said it was easy to get the impression that the doctrinal congregation, in trying to defend church teachings, risks "mummifying" the faith, but he said that was not the congregation's intention.

He said doctrinal officials aim to preserve the faith as a dynamic reality open to new expression and new growth. But he said it was sometimes difficult to balance the "watchdog" role with that of encouraging productive theology.



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Urologists Seek Men With Enlarged Prostrate and Difficulty Urinating

Urologists at Strong Memorial Hospital are seeking men with an enlarged but non-cancerous prostate (known as benign prostatic hyperplasia, BPH) to participate in a free study of a new investigational treatment. The key symptom with BPH is difficulty in urinating.

The hospital is one of eight in the nation conducting a free clinical trial of a new, minimally invasive treatment for BPH.

To participate, men must be over the age of 45, have not had prostate surgery, and have moderate to severe symptoms. Participation involves free treatment and then monitoring and follow-up for several years.

Men interested in learning more about this study
are encouraged to call study coordinator
Maureen Kiernan, R.N. at 274-4495