

WORLD & NATION

RU-486 inspires theme for anniversary march

By Mark Pattison
Catholic News Service

WASHINGTON —The tenor for the 2001 March for Life promises to be markedly different from January 1993, the last time a new president was inaugurated.

Eight years ago, some marchers waved "Impeach Clinton" signs, only two days after President Clinton took the oath of office.

That march was on the 20th anniversary of the Supreme Court's decisions in *Roe vs. Wade* and *Doe vs. Bolton*, which legalized abortion virtually on demand, and Clinton invoked the power of the presidency to make abortions more accessible. He also ordered a study of RU-486, the French "abortion pill," whose importation for personal use was approved in 2000.

RU-486 has inspired the theme for this year's march Jan. 22: "Motherhood, Fatherhood and Childhood Begin at Fertilization."

"With all the emphasis for the partial-birth abortion for the big babies, it is

equally as heinous intentionally to kill a tiny, one-cell pre-born human being with drugs and devices as it is to intentionally kill a larger baby and born human being," said Nellie Gray, who has organized the March for Life since the first one in 1974.

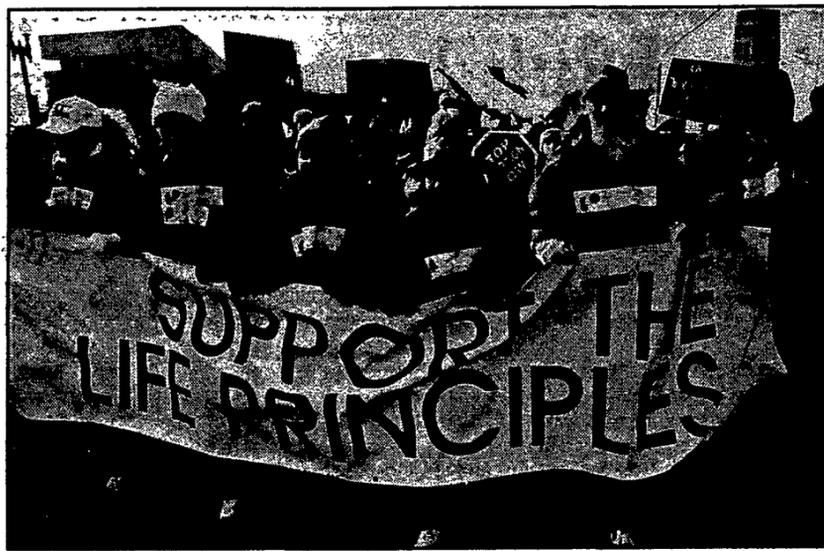
Gray recalled Clinton's actions, on Jan. 22, 1993, as "unfortunate, to say the least."

In addition to calling for study on RU-486, Clinton signed executive orders reversing:

- The regulations prohibiting abortion counseling in federally funded family planning clinics.
- The ban on fetal tissue research.
- Restrictions on access to abortion in U.S. military hospitals overseas.
- The "Mexico City policy," which denied U.S. foreign aid to programs overseas that promote abortion.

This year the March for Life again comes two days after the inauguration of a new president, and Gray hopes the new White House resident will attend.

"We have sent an invitation to President-elect (George W.) Bush not to send a surrogate, not to give us a phone call,



Nancy Wiehac/CNS

Young people lead the line during last year's March for Life in Washington. The theme of this year's Jan. 22 march is "Motherhood, Fatherhood and Childhood Begin at Fertilization."

but to come!" Gray said, adding she has heard no reply.

She also said she was "extremely distressed" that some Bush Cabinet appointees "tolerate abortion," singling out Secretary of State-designate Colin H. Powell and New Jersey Gov. Christie Todd Whitman, Bush's pick to head the Environmental Protection Agency. "This gives

respectability to people as if they were pro-life and that is a very distressing sign," she said.

Reps. Christopher Smith, R-N.J., and Roscoe Bartlett, R-Md., will speak at the pre-march rally, to be held for the first time on the grounds surrounding the Washington Monument.

Up to 17 U.S. bishops may retire in 2001

By Jerry Filteau
Catholic News Service

WASHINGTON — As many as 17 U.S. bishops could retire in 2001 because they are at or beyond the retirement age of 75.

Most prominent among them are Cardinal Anthony J. Bevilacqua of Philadelphia, who turned 77 last June, and Cardinal William W. Baum, the Vatican's major penitentiary, who turns 75 next November.

Church law says at age 75 a bishop "is requested to present his resignation" to the

pope. The pope may refuse it or delay accepting it, and Pope John Paul II often keeps bishops active beyond their 75th birthday.

Cardinal Bevilacqua is currently the oldest active cardinal and second-oldest active bishop in the United States.

Cardinal Baum, who was made a cardinal at 49, is one of only 11 cardinals in the world under the age of 80 who received their red hats before John Paul II became pope. He heads the Apostolic Penitentiary, a tribunal of the Holy See that deals with internal forum matters including decisions on questions of conscience, and matters pertaining to indulgences.

Cardinal Bevilacqua and 11 other active U.S. bishops were already 75 when the new year started. Cardinal Baum and four others will turn 75 during 2001.

Even when a cardinal has retired from his archdiocese or administrative post, he

remains eligible to enter a conclave and vote for a new pope until the age of 80.

The only active U.S. bishop older than Cardinal Bevilacqua is Bishop Patrick J. Sheridan, 78, one of four over-75 New York auxiliaries who are still active.

The other 10 bishops who are already 75 and still active are:

Bishop Joseph L. Howze of Biloxi, Miss.; Auxiliary Bishop Leonard J. Olivier of Washington; Auxiliary Bishop Anthony F. Mestice of New York; Auxiliary Bishop William J. McCormack of New York, national director of the Society for the Propagation of the Faith;

Auxiliary Bishop Thad J. Jakubowski of Chicago; Auxiliary Bishop Francisco Garmendia of New York; Lithuanian-born Bishop Paulius A. Baltakis, based in Brooklyn, as bishop of Lithuanian Catholics outside Lithuania;

Auxiliary Bishop Edward A. Peveo of Cleveland; Milwaukee-born Archbishop Charles A. Schleck, in Vatican service as adjunct secretary of the Congregation for the Evangelization of Peoples and president of the Pontifical Mission Works; and Auxiliary Bishop John R. Gorman of Chicago.

Besides Cardinal Baum, the four active bishops who will celebrate their 75th birthday in 2001 are Bishop William R. Houck of Jackson, Miss.; Auxiliary Bishop John J. Glynn of the Military Services; Bishop Gilbert I. Sheldon of Steubenville, Ohio; and Archbishop Francis B. Schulte of New Orleans.

Blood drive will honor Martin Luther King Jr.

LANSING, Mich. (CNS) — The Rev. Martin Luther King Jr. has been remembered through rallies and marches over the years, but leaders in the Lansing Diocese have organized a "Blood of the Martyrs" blood drive to honor his memory this year.

"This is the first coordinated effort of its kind in the nation for the purpose of honoring Dr. King and other martyred symbols whose blood has been spilled for the cause of helping to make our nation a better place," said Ronald Landfair, director of black Catholic ministry for the Lansing Diocese.

The blood drive — sponsored by the diocesan Office of Black Catholic Ministry in conjunction with the American Red Cross — is scheduled at parishes and other locations throughout mid-Michigan Jan. 13-15.

Rev. King, whose birthday is commemorated as a national holiday, was fatally shot on April 4, 1968, in Memphis, Tenn. This year his Jan. 15 birthday and the national observance fall on the same day.

"What is important about this symbolism is that blood is the life-giving and sustaining entity that we all share, regardless of ethnicity, race or income," Landfair told *The Catholic Times*, Lansing's diocesan newspaper.

According to Landfair, an entire generation of people has no memory of Rev. King. "If you are younger than at least age 35, then your memories of Dr. King are confined to video and still images of him," he noted. Thirty-three years after Rev. King's death, people still do not know what the King holiday is supposed to mean, he said.

"We are uncertain of its traditions. We know what we do on Thanksgiving, the Fourth of July and New Year's Day," he said.

For Martin Luther King Day, a tradition must be created, Landfair said. "We must make significant meaning for this day lest it become just another three-day weekend."

"We must invigorate this day with a living memorial, with the gift of life. This is what Dr. King gave his life for: can we do any less?"

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