

## HIGH FINANCIAL COST OF SEX ABUSE CITED

CHICAGO (CNS) — Even partial figures indicate the high financial cost of the church's clergy sexual-abuse scandal, said Illinois Appeals Court Justice Anne Burke, acting chair of the U.S. bishops' National Review Board that monitors diocesan compliance with their charter to protect children.

"In 23 dioceses alone, financial settlements (with the victims) have reached \$292.8 million," Burke said, speaking at St. Alphonsus Church in Chicago Oct. 28. Burke added that the first priority of the all-lay review board is "no more victims."

## COURT REJECTS TEN COMMANDMENTS CASE

WASHINGTON (CNS) — The U.S. Supreme Court Nov. 3 declined to hear an appeal of a lower court ruling that ordered removal of a Ten Commandments monument from an Alabama courthouse. The refusal to hear a case says nothing about its merits.

Suspended Alabama Chief Justice Roy Moore, who placed the monument in the Alabama Judicial Building in Montgomery, had appealed findings that the monument was an unconstitutional violation of the separation of church and state.

Liberty Counsel, a Florida-based organization dedicated to the legal defense of religious liberty, life and traditional family rights, said it is defending 10 separate Ten Commandments cases. Four federal courts have upheld such displays, it said.

## THIS WEEK'S READINGS

Sun., Nov. 16: Daniel 12:1-3; Psalms 16:5, 8-11; Hebrews 10:11-14, 18; Mark 13:24-32.

Mon., Nov. 17: 1 Maccabees 1:10-15, 41-43, 54-57, 62-64; Psalms 119:53, 61, 134, 150, 155, 158; Luke 18:35-43.

Tue., Nov. 18: 2 Maccabees 6:18-31; Psalms 3:2-8; Luke 19:1-10.

Wed., Nov. 19: 2 Maccabees 7:1, 20-31; Psalms 17:1, 5-6, 8, 15; Luke 19:11-28.

Thu., Nov. 20: 1 Maccabees 2:15-29; Psalms 50:1-2, 5-6, 14-15; Luke 19:41-44.

Fri., Nov. 21: 1 Maccabees 4:36-37, 52-59; (Ps) 1 Chronicles 29:10-12; Luke 19:45-48.

Sat., Nov. 22: 1 Maccabees 6:1-13; Psalms 9:2-4, 6, 16, 19; Luke 20:27-40.

# Abortion ban challenged

Nancy Frazier O'Brien/CNS

WASHINGTON (CNS) — Pro-lifers were cheering Nov. 5 when President Bush signed the Partial-Birth Abortion Ban Act into law, but were also left wondering when the law would actually go into effect.

Multiple court challenges claiming the law is unconstitutional were filed within moments of the signing of the bill. Three injunctions were issued to block enactment of the law.

At the ceremony, Bush said, "The facts about partial-birth abortion are troubling and tragic, and no lawyer's brief can make them seem otherwise. By acting to prevent this practice, the elected branches of our government have affirmed a basic standard of humanity, the duty of the strong to protect the weak."

The president said a partial-birth abortion "involves the partial delivery of a live boy or girl, and a sudden, violent end to that life."

"Our nation owes its children a different and better welcome," he added.

Archbishop Charles J. Chaput of Denver, chairman of the U.S. bishops' Committee on Pro-Life Activities, said the signing marked "the first time in three decades that our nation has placed any restriction on an abortion procedure, ... a vital step in the right direction for our nation."

He added in a Nov. 5 statement, "We commend the president ... and we pledge our prayers and support to see that this brutal procedure remains prohibited by law and intolerable to the American people."

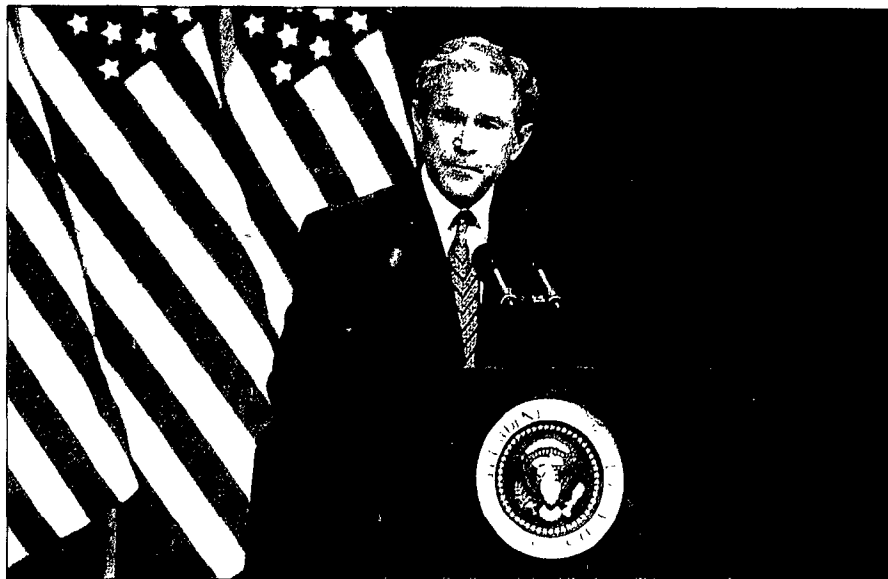
In the Diocese of Rochester, N.Y., Bishop Matthew H. Clark issued a statement expressing "deep gratitude and support for President Bush's endorsement of this new legislation."

"By signing into law the bill banning partial-birth abortion, passed earlier by our House and Senate representatives, he has effectively put an end to a late-term abortion procedure that ends the life of a viable human being."

Bishop Clark also addressed the fact that the law was being challenged in court, saying, "I hope and pray that judges and lawmakers throughout our country continue to support the life and dignity of the unborn, the most innocent and vulnerable among us."

Judy Michael, director of Rochester's Problem Pregnancy Help Center, said she was happy the law had been signed, but bewildered that it was even necessary.

"It just seems inconceivable to me that we need a law to stop people from killing their children as they're



Bob Roller/CNS

President Bush addresses the audience prior to signing the Partial-Birth Abortion Ban Act into law Nov. 5 in Washington. The bill prohibits the partial delivery of a fetus "for the purpose of performing an overt act that the person knows will kill the partially delivered living fetus."

born," she said.

Michael, a parishioner of St. Thomas the Apostle Parish in Irondequoit, noted her center provides a variety of services to women and families dealing with crisis pregnancies. She added that the pro-choice community is "not thinking about the humanity or the morality, they're just thinking of the legality, just trying to keep all abortion laws intact."

The new law defines partial-birth abortion as the partial delivery of a fetus from the womb "for the purpose of performing an overt act that the person knows will kill the partially delivered living fetus," instead of delivering it alive. Doctors who violate the ban could face a fine and up to two years in prison.

The legislation allows an exception to save the mother's life but not an exception for the mother's health.

Pro-life members of Congress have been working for the ban since 1993. Bills barring partial-birth abortions were twice vetoed by President Clinton on grounds that there was no health exception in them. A health provision would have rendered the legislation virtually meaningless because of the broad definition of maternal health given by the U.S. Supreme Court in 1973 in its decisions to legalize abortion.

But even as the president signed the legislation, U.S. District Judge Richard Kopf was hearing arguments in Lincoln, Neb., on whether he should block implementation.

Kopf, an appointee of President Reagan, said the law had "serious vagueness problems" and expressed concern that there was no

exception for a mother's health.

"It seems to me that the law is highly suspect, if not a per se violation of the Constitution," he said.

Kopf issued a temporary but indefinite injunction, limiting the scope of the injunction to Dr. LeRoy Carhart of Bellevue, Neb., and three other abortion providers who had filed the suit.

It was Carhart's fight against a Nebraska ban of partial-birth abortions that led to the U.S. Supreme Court overturning the law in 2000.

A federal judge in San Francisco blocked the law Nov. 6. The ruling affects doctors at 900 Planned Parenthood clinics across the country.

The same day a Manhattan federal judge also blocked the ban, granting a temporary restraining order to a network of abortion providers, the National Abortion Federation.

In advertisements Nov. 5 in *USA Today* and in a Capitol Hill political newspaper called *Roll Call*, the U.S. bishops' Committee for Pro-Life Activities and the Knights of Columbus congratulated Bush "and members of Congress on both sides of the aisle" for bringing the United States "one step closer to a culture of life." The ad was signed, "With gratitude, millions of Catholics across the United States."

A similar ad thanking Catholics for their efforts in supporting the ban was to appear in the Nov. 16 issue of the *National Catholic Register* and the Nov. 23 issue of *Our Sunday Visitor*, both of which have nationwide circulation.

Contains reporting by Rob Sullivan in Rochester.