

Rallies decry abortion legislation

WASHINGTON (CNS) — One rally before the annual March for Life Jan. 22 opened with a rock band and a rapping priest in a sports arena, rousing 20,000 or so mostly Catholic teens who joined in a lively Mass before the march.

A second, outdoor rally with the White House as a backdrop had a string of politicians and religious leaders urging political action and prayer from the throngs gathering from across the nation to march to the Supreme Court.

Speaking to the Ellipse rally by phone, President Bush said much the same thing.

"I know as you return to your communities you will redouble your efforts to change hearts and minds, one person at a time," he said from Roswell, N.M.

Since the first March for Life in 1974, participants have traditionally gathered at the Ellipse between the White House and the Washington Monument for a rally before beginning the march down Constitution Avenue to the Supreme Court and the Capitol.

In his phone call to the rally, Bush talked about abortion-limiting legislation passed during his administra-



Don Blake/CNS

More than 20,000 people pack the MCI Center for the Rally for Life and Youth Mass in Washington Jan. 22 prior to the March for Life, a demonstration protesting the Supreme Court's *Roe v. Wade* decision that legalized abortion.

tion, including the Born-Alive Infants Protection Act, the ban on partial-birth abortion and restrictions on use of tax money in international programs that encourage abortion. He thanked the march participants for their support in those accomplishments.

Bush listed several other pieces of legislation he said he would support, including increasing federal funding for abstinence education and passing the Unborn Victims of Violence Act, which would allow prosecution under homicide statutes for the death of fetuses killed during the

commission of a crime.

One of a handful of speakers to raise life issues not directly related to abortion, Sen. Sam Brownback, R-Kan., included prisoners among those whose right to life should be protected.

Rep. Chris Smith, R-N.J., talked about a group of women called Silent No More who used the occasion of the *Roe v. Wade* anniversary to discuss the lingering effects of having had abortions.

"They deeply regret that they believed the big lie that abortion was a benign option, a reasonable choice, rather than an act of violence," Smith said.

At a press conference shortly before the march, several members of Silent No More spoke about the emotional, physical and psychological effects of having had abortions.

DOCTOR GIVES THUMBS-UP TO BISHOP CLARK'S HEALTH

Bishop Matthew H. Clark underwent a successful heart angioplasty Jan. 23 at Rochester General Hospital, where chief cardiologist Dr. Gerry Gacioch of the Rochester Cardiopulmonary Group termed his prognosis "very good."

According to a statement from the Diocese of Rochester, Gacioch performed the procedure as part of an ongoing monitoring and treatment plan that began several years ago for maintenance of arterial blockages. During the course of the operation, two stents were inserted to correct blockages in the bishop's arteries.


"He's in very good health for a 66-year-old," Gacioch said. "His heart is healthy and strong. He is active, eating well and doing all the right things."

Doug Mandelaro, spokesman for the diocese, said the bishop recuperated at home, and was expected to be back to work by Jan. 27 or 28.

"I am doing very well and feeling fine and, by the time everyone reads this, will be back at work and resuming my normal schedule," Bishop Clark said Jan. 26. "I do very much appreciate everyone's thoughts and prayers."

In Oct. 1998, Bishop Clark underwent implantation of a pacemaker to regulate his heartbeat and, subsequently, angioplasty to correct blockages. Since then, he has had regular medical monitoring as part of long-term treatment. The most recent operation was a follow-up to the earlier angioplasty.

— Rob Cullivan



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