

# March won't end abortion

From Capitol Hill as far as I could see marched a sea of people for life! Traveling from all parts of the country we came to peacefully protest our government's refusal to protect unborn human beings from the barbaric practice of legalized abortion.

For me the March for Life every Jan. 22 brings mixed feelings. On the one hand, it's a real pro-life shot-in-the-arm. On this day it seems like victory is within our grasp. And then a sobering thought strikes me: We have been doing this for 31 years with no end in sight.

While some positive gains have been made, such as the passing of federal legislation to ban partial-birth abortions (presently undergoing court challenge), every day throughout the United States legal abortion brutally dismembers and kills more than 4,000 unborn babies. We have a long way to go!

I once heard Nellie Gray, president of the March for Life, say that if just the Catholics alone in the United States would stand up and demand an end to abortion, it would end. But sadly, millions of Catholics are sitting this one out.

The unborn desperately need all of us — clergy and laity — actively working and praying throughout the entire year on their behalf. An annual march and respect-life Mass is simply not enough.

What is urgently called for is a general mobilization of consciences and a united



**Tony Magliano**

## Making a Difference

ethical effort to activate a great campaign in support of life. All together, we must build a new culture of life" (Pope John Paul II, "The Gospel of Life," No. 95).

Catholics need to apply tremendous political pressure. Regularly urging your state and congressional representatives to support pro-life legislation is absolutely essential. Get on the mailing list of your diocesan respect-life office and state Catholic conference to find out about upcoming bills.

Have you heard of the Gabriel Project? Operating in 14 states, this parish-based program provides an alternative to abortion by supporting women practically, emotionally and spiritually.

The parish I serve participates in this wonderful project. In front of our church is a sign advertising our willingness to help. We have provided baby clothes, cribs and infant formula, helped poor women obtain public services and connected one mother with the adoption unit at Catholic Charities.

Paul Mulligan, executive director of Maryland's Gab-

riel Project, would be most willing to help parishes form a Gabriel Project. Give him a call at 301/262-9011.

I recently spoke with Father Frank Pavone, national director of Priests for Life, about what clergy and laity can do to help end abortion. He said their Web site ([www.priestsforlife.org](http://www.priestsforlife.org)) lists many important projects needing the help of the Catholic community.

For instance, their "Letters-to-the-Editor Project" helps people write effective pro-life letters to local newspapers. A free starter kit is available.

Father Pavone strongly believes many people will not be convinced to join the pro-life cause until they see the horrible reality of abortion. To that end, post cards showing an unborn child before and after an abortion, and one-page flyers with medical diagrams of a first-trimester abortion, are available (free-will donation requested) when you call 718/980-4400.

I asked Father Pavone what his message is to fellow priests. He said: "Do not be afraid to preach clearly and explicitly on abortion. Silence does not interpret itself. Silence hurts more — because women who have had an abortion, or may be contemplating one, need to know the truth, which of course includes the healing mercy of God."

Tony Magliano is a columnist for Catholic News Service.

## Don't blame the bishop for changes

To the editor:

Many parishioners in the Western Livingston Catholic Community (Holy Angels, Geneseo Newman Community, St. Lucy's, St. Mary's, St. Patrick's, St. Thomas and the Livingston and Groveland Correctional Facilities) want to blame Bishop Clark for the closings of churches and shortage of priests. The fact is the number of families that belong to a parish does not meet the number of people that attend each week. The fact is families will not commit an hour a week to go to Mass and support their parish. Fact is when things start to change around them they are the first to speak up without knowing the facts and blaming others.

Throughout the whole United States there is a shortage of priests. If more parishioners would have committed to the Sacrament of the Priesthood throughout our parishes, we would have more priests for our churches and church closings might not have to happen. Throughout New York State many of the smaller churches have closed and merged as one. Many of the larger churches only have two priests to handle the hundreds of families in their parish. So now is the time for the change in our parishes and to become one. With

this merger it will save hundreds of dollars a year on upkeep for our parishes. A new location could have one Mass on Saturday and three on Sunday and keep the two priests that are in place now to run the church.

If you need more information about Western Livingston Catholic Community, please contact one of the parishes.

Without your support there is no parish to call our own so please extend your hand to make this new "Community Church" happen soon.

**Mark Farruggia**  
 Retsof Road  
 Retsof

## More lost to abortion than in wars

To the editor:

"Is death of an unborn child different from the death of a 19-year-old, or the death of a child in the streets of Baghdad?" (Brian Mulligan's letter of Jan. 15). Surely, death is death regardless. Deaths of children, born and unborn are tragic, whether in war, automobile accidents, or from untimely natural means. Wars are fought for many reasons, just or otherwise, and there's much fault to pass around on ALL sides — perhaps for some more than others.

Was Mr. Mulligan as hard on President Clinton as he is on George W. Bush when (Clinton) bombed Kosovo, or all the other military escapades he involved himself in while attempting to take the emphasis off his impeachment hearings? Maybe so! Mr. Mulligan should review the events of September 11, 2001 and their aftermath — especially their immediate aftermath. How soon we forget when we involve ourselves solely on politics.

As for the above mentioned deaths, let's look at some easily verifiable facts: a quick check at <http://www.libraryspot.com/lists/listwars.htm> can clarify much! The total number

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