

Roe v. Wade Remembered

“Prayer for Life” Service

Sunday, January 20, 2019

3 PM, Bronson Park

As in years past, pro-lifers will gather in Kalamazoo’s Bronson Park to memorialize the Roe v. Wade decision with a time of prayer and reflection. Kalamazoo Right to Life will join St. Michael’s Lutheran Church and the Catholic Diocese of Kalamazoo in sponsoring the event. Several local pastors will also participate. The program is expected to last about 30 minutes depending on the weather. As in the past, donations of diapers or baby wipes may be donated to Alternatives of Kalamazoo or Caring Network.

Webcam Abortion Ban Heads Toward Final Vote

When the abortion drug RU-486 was introduced some 20 years ago, pro-choice zealots were thrilled. Not only did they promise that it would revolutionize the abortion industry, it would simplify the procedure by giving women more control. They would no longer have to rely on surgical abortions. Instead, chemical abortions provided a different option. Women could take the drug in the privacy of their homes, thus avoiding the hassle of dealing with unruly pro-lifers who might congregate and harass patients. They would then abort a few days later, again, in their homes. Over time, pro-choice folks became more inventive. They concocted a plan by which women could access the Internet while sitting in front of a computer at an abortion clinic and confer with an abortionist 50 or 100 or 500 miles away. After the “consultation” the doctor would use a remote control switch to open a draw at the clinic that contained RU-486. Women would take the drug, abort at home, with no follow-up care from the doctor. These webcam abortion conferences made taking RU-486 easier. However, if a woman experienced complications, how did that doctor 500 miles away have the ability to intervene with medical care? The Michigan legislature is preparing to pass a bill that would ban such webcam abortions. Doctors would be required to conduct a physical exam and later to dispense the drug in person and supervise the provision of the drugs. Currently, there is a ban on webcam abortions based on a bill signed by Governor Snyder in 2012. However, it has a “sunset” provision which means that they would be reinstated next year unless lawmakers intervene and make the ban permanent. On December 3 the Michigan Senate voted 25 to 12 for such a ban. As of December 12 the state House has not voted. However, positive House action is expected by the end of the year.

High school Pro-Life Oratory Contest

Kalamazoo Right to Life will be hosting our annual Oratory Contest on **March 2, 2019**. At Saint Monica's Community Building. All high school aged children may enter. There will be monetary prizes for the top three winners. For more information or for info on rules and requirements please contact Cynthia at info@kazoortl.org or 269-372-8123.

Focus on Life Dinner

The date is not set in stone, but tentatively keep your calendars open for either **May 2** or **May 9** of 2019. More concrete details will be announced in the next newsletter.

Top Ten Pro-Life for 2018

1. Justice Kavanaugh Confirmed

On June 27, 2018, Justice Anthony Kennedy announced that he was stepping down from the U.S. Supreme Court. Two weeks later President Trump nominated Judge Brett Kavanaugh, a member of the Court of Appeals for the DC District. Kavanaugh, considered a brilliant jurist, graduated from Yale law School, served in the George W. Bush administration before promotion to the federal court in 2006. Even before Trump made his selection, Senate Democrats announced near total opposition to any nominee. Consequently, confirmation hearings before the Senate Judiciary Committee were volatile and hostile. Democrats demanded to know where Kavanaugh stood on abortion. He deflected, as did every other nominee since 1987. Just days before the committee was set to vote a sexual assault charge against Kavanaugh surfaced, an allegation that supposedly transpired when he was 17 years old (36 years earlier). The vote was halted. The accuser appeared before the committee on September 27. Kavanaugh also answered questions the same day. The spectacle was aired on TV. It set another new low for senators willing to destroy the judge with no evidence. The Judiciary Committee voted to advance the nomination pending a short FBI investigation into the sexual assault charges. When the FBI report revealed no corroborating evidence, senators voted 50 to 48 to confirm Kavanaugh. Only one Democrat (Joe Manchin of West Virginia) voted with the Republicans. Donald Trump has been able to secure two solid conservatives to the court in two short years.

2. Pro-Life Senate Holds in Mid-Term Election

Despite the prediction that the mid-terms would reveal great dissatisfaction and loathing of Donald Trump and usher in a huge “blue wave” of Democratic lawmakers, Republicans retained control of the Senate. In fact they gained two seats and now control the chamber 53 to 47. The GOP toppled four Democratic incumbents: Joe Donnelly of Indiana, Bill Nelson of Florida, Claire McCaskill of Missouri, and Heidi Heitkamp of North Dakota. The race in Florida between incumbent Bill Nelson and Governor Rick Scott was especially close. The outcome was delayed for two weeks as recounts and lawsuits dominated the news. In the end, Scott won by a mere 12,000 votes. Republicans lost seats in Nevada and Arizona. Over-all, the new Senate is more pro-life than before, and more able to confirm conservative pro-life federal judges.

3. Mid-Term Election, GOP Loses House

While Republicans rejoiced that they had padded their lead in the Senate, the opposite occurred in the House of Representatives when the Democrats captured 40 seats, the most since the mid-term election of 1974 when Democrats saw huge gains in the wake of the Watergate scandal that rocked the GOP. Democrats now control the House 235 to 200. This year was unusual in that 20 Democrat and 44 Republican incumbents announced that they were retiring from the House. Since more GOP newcomers were forced to defend the Trump policies in perceived swing districts, victory less probable. Perhaps representative of Republican losses could be found in formerly conservative Orange County, CA, just south of Los Angeles. All four Republican representatives were defeated by Democratic challengers. Pro-abortion Nancy Pelosi will be the next Speaker. Regrettably, pro-life losses will ensure that very little if any legislation will pass in the next two years.

4. Alabama and West Virginia Approve Pro-Life Referendums

Pro-lifers in Alabama and West Virginia made strong pro-life statements in the November mid-terms when they approved state referendums that dealt with abortion. By an overwhelming 59 percent, Alabama voters approved a referendum--a change to the state's constitution--that recognized a fetus as a person. “It is the public policy of this state to recognize and support the sanctity of unborn life and the rights of unborn children.” While West Virginia's 52 percent victory was much closer, nonetheless voters affirmed the statement that abortion is not a protected right, a direct challenge to Roe v. Wade's assertion that a woman has a fundamental right to terminate a pregnancy.

5. Supreme Court Reverses Ruling on Crisis Pregnancy Centers

In 2015 California lawmakers passed a law that required religiously-based pregnancy care centers must inform clients about the availability of state-funded services that provide inexpensive or free abortions. However, pro-life pregnancy care centers challenged the law in federal court. They claimed that the law violated their First Amendment right of free expression by forcing them to relay a message that they opposed. On June 26, in a five to four ruling, the Supreme Court declared the law unconstitutional. We rejoice that Justice Gorsuch voted with the pro-life majority in his first abortion-related case.

6. Trump Speaks to March for Life Via Live Video Feed

Since 1974 the March for Life has been the premier pro-life rally in the United States. Beginning in 1981, President Ronald Reagan called in from the White House and spoke to the crowd via the phone hook-up. That policy was repeated each year and continued when George H.W. Bush was president and when George W. Bush served from 2001 to 2009. In 2017 the March for Life upped the ante when Vice President Mike Pence and White House advisor Kellyanne Conway spoke to the crowd “in person,” the first time such high-ranking officials grace the stage. In 2018 the bar was raised again when President Trump spoke to an enthusiastic crowd via a live feed from the Rose Garden. The president, surrounded by several dozen young people, spoke to a smaller group at the White House, the entire proceeding shown on huge screens at the March for Life.

7. Irish Voters Approve Liberal Abortion

On May 26 Irish voters overwhelmingly approved (66.5 percent to 33.5) a referendum that would legalize abortion. The vote repealed the nation’s Eighth Amendment that formerly stated that abortion was banned except to save the life of the woman. Tragically, this Catholic country has joined most other European nations in its descent into moral compromise on this most important social issue.

8. Pain-Capable Child Protection Acts Fails in Senate

For several years pro-life lawmakers have attempted to pass legislation that would prohibit abortions after the 20th week of pregnancy because many medical researchers have concluded that the fetus experiences pain at that point in pregnancy. Thus death/abortion after the 20th week would be cruel and unusual punishment. In October of 2017 the House approved the Pain-Capable Child Protection Act. Senators failed to vote by the end of the year. On January 28 pro-life senators tried to break a pro-choice, Democratic-led filibuster of the bill. The vote of 51 to 46 fell short because 60 votes were needed to invoke cloture and end the filibuster. In light of the new senate gains in the November mid-term election, pro-lifers still fall short of stopping pro-choice filibusters.

9. Ohio House Passes Heartbeat Bill

On November 15, the Ohio State House approved a bill that would ban abortion once a fetal heartbeat could be

detected, which usually can be heard by the sixth week of pregnancy. The bill passed by a wide margin of 59 to 35. The bill is similar to a bill passed in late 2016 that was subsequently vetoed by Governor John Kasich. Incoming pro-life governor Mike DeWine has pledged that he would sign it into law once the Senate approves the measure. Said state Rep. Christina Hagan who introduced the bill, “It gives a more consistent and reliable marker for the courts to use to determine the validity of a human baby.” “If there is a heartbeat, these is life,” echoed Rep. Ron Hood. “There is no debating that.” On December 6 pro-life state senators put a halt on the bill, possibly wanting a few amendments before proceeding. The bill must pass, the governor must veto, and an override attempt must happen before the end of the year. If not, the whole process will begin again in 2019 with new Governor DeWine. Not all pro-life groups support the bill. Some argue that the bill would be rejected by the courts. The Catholic World Report stated that Kasich has signed into law 18 pro-life bills while governor and that his 2016 veto of the previous heartbeat bill was his first.

10. President George H.W. Bush Dies

On November 30, George H.W. Bush passed away in Houston, Texas. The former president was 94 years old. He led a long and fulfilling life as businessman, congressman, envoy to China, vice-president under Ronald Reagan, and then president from 1989 to 1993. His public record on abortion was mixed and varied. Originally, Bush was a moderate pro-choice politician when he ran for the White House in 1980. After he pulled out of the race, Reagan continued to pick up primary delegates and secured the Republican nomination. At the GOP convention Reagan selected Bush as his running mate, much to the disappointment of pro-life voters. However, Dr. Jack Willke of the National Right to Life Committee held a private meeting with Bush at the Bush compound in Kennebunkport, Maine later that fall. After that educational session, Willke had convinced Bush to reevaluate his position on abortion. With Bush now agreeing to support the pro-life platform, pro-life voters supported the Reagan-Bush ticket on to victory. Bush became a solid pro-life vice-president and continued this new found conviction when he ran for president in 1988. He was elected that November as the pro-life candidate. During his administration Bush upheld pro-life laws and initiatives. In one year he vetoed four pro-abortion bills that had been passed by a pro-abortion Congress during the years when Democrats controlled both chambers. Congress failed to override the Bush vetoes so the bills did not take effect. Well done, President Bush!

President's Corner

by: Rob Karrer

Now that the election is past, let's look at some consequences and possible predictions. First, the loss of the House of Representatives was a huge setback for future pro-life legislation. As speaker, Nancy Pelosi will make sure that no pro-life bill sees the light of day. Defunding Planned Parenthood--not now. Since bills are passed in the House with simple majorities, a bill must get at least 218 votes. With the Democrats now controlling the chamber 235 to 200, it is difficult to image pro-life bills advancing. Let me give you an example of how few pro-life Democrats there are today. In 2015 the House approved the Born-Alive Abortion Survivors Protection Act. The Act stated that any child who survived an abortion, and was now a full-fledged born living person...a US citizen by virtue that it was a living child, receive the same medical care that any other child would receive at the same gestational age. Only five Democrats voted with 243 Republicans. One hundred seventy-seven other House Democrats voted against providing basic medical care to born babies who had the audacity not to die. The Senate faces somewhat the same fate. Because filibusters can still defeat Senate legislation, pro-life lawmakers would need 60 votes to stop filibusters. Unfortunately, I do not expect Democrats willing to vote with the GOP to advance pro-life bills. Bottom line: pro-life legislation is dead for the next two years. Thus, all eyes look to the Supreme Court. Whether or not the Court will hear any new abortion-related cases remains to be seen.

Kalamazoo Right to Life
4200 W. Michigan Ave, Suite 10
Kalamazoo, MI 49006-5840

Non-Profit Organization
U.S. POSTAGE PAID
KALAMAZOO, MI 49009
PERMIT NO. 1309

Address Service Requested