

Archdiocesan Catholics celebrate 40 Days for Life

Carolyn and Karl Schumaker will go anywhere to protect and pray for life.

The parishioners of St. Mary's in Annapolis drove through more than an hour of evening traffic to take part in a "40 Days for Life" gathering at St. Agnes parish in Catonsville Feb. 16.

"We're fighting to see the end of abortion," Karl said.

"I would love to see it in my lifetime," Carolyn added.

Auxiliary Mitchell T. Rozanski led an adoration of the Blessed Sacrament during the vigil at St. Agnes, which was attended by more than 50 people from around the Archdiocese of Baltimore. The vigil was originally scheduled to stop at a local abortion clinic, but recent snowstorms and lingering ice on sidewalks made the walk impossible.

According to www.40daysforlife.com, 40 Days for Life is a peaceful, community-based campaign that draws attention to "the evils of abortion" through prayer and fasting, constant vigil and community outreach. It officially began Feb. 17.

Throughout the archdiocese, people are participating in the 40 Days for Life.

The Schumakers are part of an Anne Arundel County Catholic pro-life group that gets together and prays outside what they call an Annapolis "abortion mill," on Tuesdays and Thursdays.

Carolyn Schumaker said the approach is simple: be a presence for the women contemplating abortion and offer a compassionate and helpful presence. She said intimidation is not necessary.

"I want to be able to tell people how important it is to be a witness in front of an abortion mill," Carolyn said. "It's more praying than anything. We're not there to demonstrate. We're not there to make a big scene."

Bishop Rozanski told participants that the plight of abortion brings disorder to the world. He said that each person is, as Jesus said, a temple of the Holy Spirit and that Lent offers an opportunity for people to reform themselves and reflect on the gift of life.

He asked participants to pray for pro-choice lawmakers so that they will have a change of heart.

“We gather here this evening because we know the sin of abortion,” Bishop Rozanski said. “We know the disorder it brings to our world- a rejection of the creation of God, of not even accepting the beautiful gift of life, of taking the sin of pride and making decisions over innocent lives. Here, we bring our prayers to God, asking to God to restore the order that is needed in our own country. We have in our hearts, in our minds and in our thoughts a total respect for life, especially the innocent, the pre-born and for those who do not have a voice. So, our prayers here are lifted up for all of those who have died by abortion.”