

55,000 Commemorate 1963 King March On Washington

BY LAURIE HANSEN

WASHINGTON (NC) — An estimated 55,000 marchers retraced the steps of the historic 1963 March on Washington Aug. 27 to rededicate themselves to achieving a dream fashioned by the Rev. Martin Luther King Jr.

Speakers, including Coretta Scott King, Democratic presidential nominee Gov. Michael S. Dukakis, the Rev. Jesse L. Jackson and Delores Huerta of the United Farm Workers, called on the nation to go after "deferred dreams" of racial and economic justice.

Marchers included sign-carrying members of religious, labor and human rights groups, parents and children, blacks, whites, Hispanics and Asian-Americans.

As did thousands 25 years ago, participants hiked from the Washington Monument to the steps of the Lincoln Memorial.

Father Russell L. Dillard, pastor of St. Martin of Tours Parish in Washington, represented the Archdiocese of Washington in a prayer for "peace, freedom and equal opportunity" at the opening of the rally.

It was at the original March on Washington, which attracted about 250,000 people to the capital, that Dr. King gave his famous "I Have a Dream" speech,

which is considered one of the great moments of the civil rights movement. He was assassinated in Memphis five years later.

"Abajo (con) la deportacion masiva" (Down with massive deportations), "No human is illegal" and "Our children also have a dream" were messages on signs carried by Hispanic marchers during the 1988 march.

A multicolored dancing dragon, sponsored by the Chinese Consolidated Benevolent Association, entertained onlookers.

T-shirts and posters urged voter registration.

In an interview, 17-year-old Ellis Peters, a member of St. Augustine Parish in Washington and the black youth ministry team of the Archdiocese of Washington, said that in his opinion a lot had been accomplished since the 1963 march. "There are more blacks interested in politics and integration into the power structures, and that's good," said Peters.

But his friend, Morina Jackson, 16, also a member of St. Augustine's and the youth ministry team, said, "People still see people for what color they are, not who they are."

Jenil Santos, 16, another member of the parish, said the biggest obstacle facing blacks is that "we're stereotyped."

"If you're black, it's like you have a dark cloud over your head. If you're a dark-skinned black person, people think you will vandalize. If you're light-skinned, more like white people, you're OK."

The best way to fight stereotypes, said Miss Jackson, is "to prove them wrong."

Juan Perez, 37, a Catholic physician from El Salvador who lives in Washington, said he decided to march because many Salvadoran residents of Washington "are persecuted by the (U.S.) immigration service."

"We didn't choose to come here. We are refugees — here because of a war financed by the United States taking place in my country. We want to be able to walk here freely, without problems."

He compared Dr. King to slain Archbishop Oscar Romero of San Salvador, who was assassinated in 1980.

"Like Martin Luther King, he was a great defender of human rights. He came to the defense of the poor," said Perez.

Mrs. King reminded the march participants that her husband's dream "was more than eloquent rhetoric."

She said in his dream for America "no one is discriminated against on account of race, religion, disability or sexual orientation. Individuals are judged by the quality of their character and contribution."

Mr. Jackson told the crowd that in the 25 years since the original march, "we have shed a lot of innocent blood, and we've gone from nigger to colored to negro to black to my brother."

He said there is still much work to be done. "Across our nation, there is too much access to guns and drugs and too little access to education, jobs and housing," he said.

Ms. Huerta said the struggle for civil rights must extend to migrant farmworkers, who she said "are living on the plantation today."

As a result of the "scourge" of pesticides, she said, farmworker children are born deformed. In addition, she said, they are dying of cancer at 800 times the norm.

Ms. Huerta said she was representing United Farm Workers leader Cesar Chavez, who on Aug. 21 completed a 36-day, water-only fast to protest the use of certain pesticides on California grapes.

During her speech she passed on to actor Martin Sheen a cross of twigs that the Chavez grandchildren had presented to a Catholic priest during Mass each day of the Chavez fast in Delano, Calif. Sheen will fast for three days before delivering the cross to actor Edward James Olmos, she said.

Operation Rescue To Open Atlanta Base Of Operation

BY GRETCHEN KEISER

ATLANTA — After six weeks of confrontations with abortion clinics and the criminal justice system of Atlanta, Operation Rescue organizers say that they will set up a permanent base of operations in the city.

The announcement came as a large group of those arrested, who had been held at the Fulton County Jail, came out of the jail during the week of August 22 to August 28.

One Catholic man, who said he was the only Atlanta Catholic among those imprisoned in the Fulton County Jail, said that only two male abortion protesters remained in that jail Aug. 29.

The Atlanta man, who had been in jail for 30 days, Father Edwin Arentsen, a Belleville, Ill. priest, who had been in jail for 40 days, and about 30 other men came out as a group on Saturday, Aug. 27. The men came out, the Atlanta man said,

because their numbers had reached a point at which they no longer felt completely secure in the general prison population of the jail. Originally the abortion protesters outnumbered the other prisoners in their dormitory, he said.

He also disputed the statement of jail authorities that abortion protesters were only kept with misdemeanor offenders in the jail, saying that one in their area was in jail for armed robbery and others, while their crimes were not revealed, said they were serving sentences whose length indicated they had been convicted of felonies.

The women being held in the Fulton County Jail also came out as a group last week because of security reasons, he said.

Two men who came out Sunday, Aug. 28, included John Arena, who fasted from solid food during his 40 days in jail, the Atlanta man said.

Operation Rescue spokeswoman Juli Loesch said the announcement that the

organization would open up an office in Atlanta meant that some kind of a center with staff and office facilities would be established.

At the moment, Operation Rescue has a center of sorts in a conference room at Motel One off I-285 and Chamblee Tucker Road. At that location, people arriving from out of town can receive information about lodging, transportation, evening rallies held at Perimeter Church, and, if they desire, sign up to take part in a "rescue" operation.

While some people arrested in recent protests remain at the Atlanta prison farm on Key Road, organizers said that the plan was to devote time in September to recruiting more people and training them in non-violence.

Fewer "rescues" would be held in September, but the full effort would resume in October, according to this plan.

Father Michael Woods, pastor of St. John the Evangelist parish in Hapeville, spent time taking part in training and then participating in demonstrations at three abortion clinics Aug. 24 and 25.

Initially drawn to the movement to see

whether or not the action "could fit my own form of conscience," Father Woods said he gradually decided to take part.

He found himself, after years of preaching about abortion, jolted out of that posture towards action. He said the language used by Operation Rescue particularly affected him.

"The language they use is very graphic," he said. "This is an abortion mill, not a clinic. It's called the death building."

"It (the language) is banging against what even we ourselves have been lulled into," he said. The Catholic Church has led the way in fighting for a legislative protection for the unborn child, he noted. "We're fighting for the change in the law. Even in that language, there isn't the urgency that this is a baby being killed."

Marriages

* Shelly Katherine Stein and Markus Stefan Bynum, Holy Family Church, Columbus, July 30.

* Kimberly Michelle Johnson and William Francis Braski, St. Anne's Church, Columbus, August 20.

Obituaries

* Theresa H. Reynolds - Savannah - August 10.

* John J. Forbes - Savannah - August 16.

* Helen C. Conneff - Savannah - August 19.

* Antonio Aflaque Quitugua - Columbus - August 22.

* Richard D. Wilson - Augusta - August 23.

* Karen Datka - Augusta - August 23.

* Alice V. Horgan - Savannah - August 25.

* Paula B. Hunter - Columbus - August 25.

Necrology

* Reverend Thomas O'Reilly, September 6, 1872.

* Reverend Michael A. Burke, September 9, 1983.

* Right Reverend Edward Barron, D.D., September 12, 1854

* Reverend John M. Crean, September 12, 1963.

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