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**‘Sending a hopeful message of life and love’**  
***Third March for Life takes place in Charlotte***  
**Participants brave cold, provide witness to life**

by KATIE MOORE  
staff writer

CHARLOTTE — The cold weather wasn’t a deterrent for the approximately 100 people who traveled from around the diocese to participate in the third annual Charlotte March for Life Jan. 16.

Less than one week before the 36th anniversary of the U.S. Supreme Court’s *Roe v. Wade* decision legalizing abortion, marchers braved temperatures in the mid-20s as they took to the streets in uptown Charlotte to provide a visible witness to the sanctity of life.

“We were really blessed with a great turnout,” said Tina Witt, a parishioner of St. Patrick Cathedral in Charlotte who organized the march.

Participants gathered in the parking lot of the diocesan Pastoral Center on South Church Street. From there, they marched down Tryon Street, distributing rosaries and pro-life reading materials to passersby along the way.

“It is something that we need to do as people who are pro-life,” said Seth Dobson, chairman of Charlotte Right to Life.

“It keeps the issue out there and emphasizes the importance of building a culture of life in our state,” he said.

The march stopped for a brief rally at the corner of Trade and Tryon streets, which featured an address from Father Timothy Reid, pastor of St. Ann Church in Charlotte.

“Almost 50 million American babies have died in the wombs of their mothers” since abortion was legalized in the United States in 1973, said Father Reid.

“We do not have to put up with abortion,” he said. “Today we are a visible witness to our hope and our convictions.”

“We are never without hope because our trust is in God,” he added.

Following Father Reid’s address, a brief talk was given by a representative from Silent No More, a national campaign devoted to exposing and healing the secrecy and silence surrounding the emotional and physical pain of abortion.

And to conclude the rally, approximately 15 children huddled around a microphone to chant Ave Maria in front of the crowd.

From the rally at the square, marchers proceeded through uptown Charlotte to the Charles R. Jonas Federal Building on Trade Street, which houses the courthouse.

“All of us here today are going to be signs of hope to our society,” said Bishop Peter J. Jugis who joined the marchers in praying the rosary and the Chaplet of Divine Mercy in front of the courthouse.

“We are sending a hopeful message of life and love,” the bishop said.

“There is a better choice” than abortion, he said. “That is love; that is life.”

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