

Thousands Here Urge Repeal of Abortion Statute

Several thousand people marched down Fifth Avenue yesterday to a rally in Central Park, urging the repeal of New York State's liberalized abortion law.

The march began at 86th Street and ended in the 72d Street mall of the park, where speakers attacked the law, which permits abortion on demand in the first 24 weeks of pregnancy. The police estimated the number of marchers at 10,000.

The parade and rally were sponsored by the Knights of Columbus. Yesterday had been designated "Right to Life Sunday" by Cardinal Cooke.

More than 40 buses were parked along the avenue. The police said the demonstrators had come from throughout the state.

'Price Tag on Life'

Rabbi Abraham Gross, president of the Rabbinical Alliance of America, was loudly applauded when he declared, "Let us call abortion by its proper name — murder."

Joseph V. Bica, chairman of the Knights' antiabortion committee, said that he felt that "finally the apathetic people of the state have been moved to protest what they know is wrong."

"Never in modern times," he declared, "except by Hitler, has a nation put a price tag of economic or social usefulness on an individual life as the price of its continuing existence."

"Never has our nation legally allowed innocent humans to be deprived of life without due process of the law."

Many demonstrators carried signs, some of them reading, "Pick on Someone Your Own

Size," "Stop the War Against Babies," and "Babies Want to See the World, Not the Inside of a Garbage Can."

The rally, originally scheduled to be held at 59th Street and Fifth Avenue, was moved to the mall, its organizers said, because the police decided it would be too large to be staged at the busy intersection.

Earlier, William Baird, an advocate of abortion and birth

control, said the Roman Catholic Church should "mind its own business" and not impose its antiabortion stand on non-Catholics.

Mr. Baird held a news conference at Fifth Avenue and 59th Street to protest "Right to Life Sunday."

Mr. Baird was joined by 12 white-robed young women who were chained to one another. He said they represented the

"twelve apostles seeking truth and freedom."

One of Mr. Baird's supporters was Mrs. Barbara Fisher, whose husband, according to Mr. Baird, was planning to sue her for having an abortion.

Her husband's attorney, Thomas Dylan, was one of the speakers at the antiabortion rally. He said the law meant that women could have an abortion "on mere whim."