

President Bush Calls For Sanctity of Human Life Day

As one of his final acts as president, George W. Bush called on Americans to put aside this Sunday to honor the sanctity of human life.

☒ [] One of George W. Bush's last acts as president this week was declaring Sunday, Jan. 18, the National Sanctity of Human Life Day. "All human life is a gift from our Creator that is sacred, unique, and worthy of protection," Bush said from the White House on Thursday.

"On National Sanctity of Human Life Day, our country recognizes that each person, including every person waiting to be born, has a special place and purpose in this world. We also underscore our dedication to heeding this message of conscience by speaking up for the weak and voiceless among us."

The pro-life movement has commemorated the third Sunday in January as a sacred day to reflect on the value of human life ever since former President Ronald Reagan proclaimed the first ever National Sanctity of Human Life Day on Sunday, Jan. 22, 1984. Reagan designated the new national observance on the 11-year anniversary date of *Roe v. Wade*, the federal court case that legalized abortion.

After Reagan, former President George H.W. Bush continued the annual observance, but during the eight years of Bill Clinton's presidency, the National Sanctity of Human Life Day went unobserved.

In 2001, President Bush renewed the practice. Bush said this week that his administration has for eight years vigorously promoted adoption and parental notification laws, opposed federal funding for abortions overseas, encouraged teen

abstinence and funded crisis pregnancy programs. The president also noted signing three critical pieces of pro-life legislation during his tenure: the Born-Alive Infants Protection Act; the Unborn Victims of Violence Act; and a ban on partial-birth abortion.

"The most basic duty of government is to protect the life of the innocent," Bush said. "On this day and throughout the year, we aspire to build a society in which every child is welcome in life and protected in law. We also encourage more of our fellow Americans to join our just and noble cause. History tells us that with a cause rooted in our deepest principles and appealing to the best instincts of our citizens, we will prevail."

Pro-life advocates seriously doubt the annual observance will continue in 2010 when Barack Obama is president.