

Catholic conversion may be on the horizon for former abortion advocate

WACO (AP) — Former pro-abortion plaintiff "Jane Roe," who converted to Christianity in 1995, is said to be preparing to become a Catholic.

Virginia-based Human Life International said today Norma McCorvey, known as "Jane Roe" in her land-

mark US Supreme Court lawsuit, announced Sunday in Waco that she will convert to Catholicism.

The Virginia-based group said that McCorvey made the announcement of her pending conversion at Trinity Church, an Evangelical Protes-

tant church in Waco.

McCorvey, who lives in Dallas, attended the organization's world convention in Houston in April. HLI said her experiences at the convention were a factor in her decision.

McCorvey plans to complete her study

of Catholicism with Father Edward Robinson of the Dallas Diocese and then receive the Sacrament of Confirmation in Rome.

McCorvey plans to travel and speak to women considering abortion or those needing counseling after abortions, HLI officials said.

Texas governor hopes to preserve historical, endangered courthouses

AUSTIN (AP) — Texas' historic county courthouses, many of which have fallen into disrepair, Monday were named to the list of America's most endangered historic places.

Gov. George W. Bush said it is time for the state to help save the aging buildings.

"I can't think of a better symbol of what has made our state great than the courthouses," Bush said. "Texans consider these symbolic centers of community as treasures worth preserving."

According to the Texas Historical Commission, the state has 225 historic courthouses.

Some 150 were built before 1920, and about 80 of those were built prior to the turn of the century.

"Courthouses, like jazz and baseball, are uniquely American contributions to the world. With more than 225 historic courthouses, Texas has one of the nation's best collections," Richard Moe, president of the National Trust for Historic Preservation said.

That group named the old Texas courthouses to its list of 11 most endangered historic places in the nation, joining such sites as the Chancellorsville Civil War battlefield in Virginia and Cannery Row in Monterey, Calif.

Dealey Herndon, who oversaw restoration of the Texas Capitol for several years and now is a trustee of the national preservation trust, said saving Texas courthouses is critical.

"They are in various states of disrepair and many may be lost," she said. But the courthouses display "remarkable diversity in architecture, and most still have county government in them."

Herndon said Texas' size and the isolation of some courthous-

es in rural communities make the urgency. "We have courthouses, and more diversity in architecture. They were developed at different times by different people. It is a unique state."

Bush, who has been many of the old courthouses he campaigns around made courthouse preservation part of his re-election campaign.

On Monday, the governor called for state money to help communities restore and renovate their courthouses.

He asked the Texas Historical Commission to develop a matching grant program which the state would fund. County governments would match the state money.

Bush said he would like to see the 1999 Legislature for about \$10 million to get the project started.

"Hopefully this designation will help us attract private investment as well," he said of the "most endangered" declaration.

"This is important with the state," Bush said. "The courthouses) oftentimes are not a center of our community. They are magnificent architectural structures."

The state Historical Commission, which has been established, the old courthouses, many are threatened by neglect, deterioration, lack of maintenance, insufficient funds and inappropriate development.

Problems include outdated electrical wiring, old and improper heating and air conditioning systems and leaking roofs. Many of these buildings are vulnerable to fire, theft and demolition, the commission said.

The list of 225 courthouses can be found on the Internet at the Texas Historical Commission Web site: www.the.state.tx.us

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