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NORTH COUNTRY CATHOLIC

DEC. 8, 2010

True faith leads to peace

VATICAN CITY (CNS) – True faith contributes to peace in the world because it sees God as a model of love and forgiveness, Pope Benedict XVI said. "To know God's true nature is a real way to ensure peace. A God who is not seen as a source of forgiveness could never be a light on the path

toward peace," the pope said Dec. 3 during a meeting with members of the International Theological Commission. Commission members, who advise the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith, discussed three topics at their five-day meeting: the principles, meaning and

methods of theology; belief in one God and its implications for relations among Jews, Christians and Muslims; and ways to better integrate Catholic social teaching into Catholic teaching in general. Pope Benedict said that for Catholics, the three themes

have a common root: God's love for his creatures. He said theology reflects a desire to know more about a loving God. True theology uses the essential tool of intelligence, combined with prayer and a sense of church communion, he said.

Families: Become What You Are...

The second installment in a four-part series featuring Bishop Terry LaValley's message to families is featured this week. The articles are adapted from his Oct. 30 presentation at the Family Life Forum in Carthage. This week, Bishop LaValley continues his reflections on families as "communities of love." The series will continue in the Dec. 15 issue with his words on families as "communities of holiness" and conclude Dec. 22 with "families - communities to treasure."

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News about Religious

Sr. Geraldine Canale celebrates 60 years as Filippini; Sr. Ruth Sequin leaves diocese after decades of service
FULL STORY, PAGE 4

CREATIVE ADVENT ADVENTURES



Sixth grade students at St. Marguerite D'Youville Academy in Ogdensburg help kindergarten students make Advent wreaths. Pictured above are kindergarten student, Jordan Amo; sixth grade students, Lorraine Hollis and Haley Whitmarsh; and kindergarten student, Emily Richter.

A NIGHT OF CELEBRATION

For Special Religious Education



PHOTO BY ANN CHARLEBOIS
St. Joseph Sister Diane Marie Ulmsamer, coordinator of the Special Religious Education Program in Watertown welcomes guest to the Special Religious Education Thanksgiving Program held Nov. 23 at the North Side Improvement League, Watertown. Bishop LaValley served as guest speaker for the evening.

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LETTER FROM THE EDITOR

Our family of faith

In this week's *North Country Catholic* we continue our focus on "family" with the second installment of Bishop LaValley's message for Catholic families of the Diocese of Ogdensburg.

This week, the bishop writes more on *families as communities of love*.

"Although it may struggle at times, (a family) will strive to communicate effectively, love deeply, forgive frequently, and share its values with one another," he writes. We encourage our readers to spend time with Bishop LaValley's words and take his timely message to heart.

This week's *NCC* also offers a look beyond our domestic families towards the Catholic

Church as our *family of faith*.

We are pleased to pay special attention to our beloved religious men and women (pages 4, and 7 through 10) and to our family members with special needs (page 5.) And, of course, we always hold the priests of our diocesan family close to our hearts. Today, we sadly bid farewell to Father James Lamitie whose funeral was held Nov. 29.

To offer a tribute to the life and ministry of this priest, we turned to the man who knew him best - his brother and fellow priest, Father Bob Lamitie.

Father Bob's homily at the funeral Mass give us a glimpse inside the priest who served the people of the Diocese of Ogdensburg with exceptional devotion for 57 years. Excerpts follow:

Rest in Peace, Father Lamitie

Your Excellency Bishop LaValley, my fellow priests, Jim's relatives and friends. I had better make this short - my brother hated long sermons and speeches and if we were alone he would lean over to me and say "when is this bag of wind going to stop?" He also had his own method to cut it short. He would fall asleep and snore.....

There many calls in our life. We are called to birth, we are called to baptism, we are called to the sacraments and we are called to death. My brother has experienced all of these callings.

Jim was also called to be a priest; in fact I think that he was born a priest. He was a good example of what a priest should be. He certainly lived what the reading of the Mass said today. He did walk humbly with his God; He had deep compassion for everyone. He could never say no to anyone in need.

In these past days I have heard from so many who told me that they could have never made it without him. Like the Apostles he was called to serve and serve he did.

Jim took all the assignments asked of him, no matter what or how difficult. He told the bishop at one of our meetings, all he wanted is to make sure that the rectory had a bathtub.

Jim was sick most of his life, in fact there was a question whether to ordain him or not. As it turned out he outlived most of his classmates. Yet never once did I hear my brother complain about his health, which was odd since he complained about everything else!

Jim was a priest to the end. A few days before his death, he was in a deep sleep but all of a sudden he sat up, looked at me and said we have to say Mass. And I said, do what? He said say "Mass." I said, "We have nothing here to say Mass". But he answered, "oh yeah we have everything here. It took me some time to convince him that we did not have to say Mass, and he fell back to sleep.

On the day before he died, we came into the room and asked him how he was, and he said very good. And I thought he was going to do it again and go back home. But then he said I feel terrible and I said - what? He said he felt terrible that he could not say Mass for the people at Will Rogers.

Heavenly Father take this good and faithful servant into your arms. But remember that he must have his meals on time; if you need a fourth for bridge, he will be there and if you play golf - you better count every stroke or he will correct you on it.

Well Jocko, have a good trip and have rest and peace, you have earned it.

Mary Lou
Kilian

Emmanuel

'God With Us' in a Family of Faith

By Sister Mary Eamon Lyng, SSJ

Director of Evangelization

Emmanuel - "God with us" the Advent prayer that begins Matthew's Gospel reminds us of Jesus' assurance that He will always be with us until the end of time. As we continue this Advent season and throughout the new Liturgical Church Year, the Sunday readings will focus on the Gospel of Matthew.

The whole Good News of Matthew is summarized at the beginning and the end of his Gospel. Matthew's community had become disillusioned and discouraged. They had difficulty understanding Jesus' mission that had been given to the disciples to "go out to the whole world and make new disciples."

How could they do this when the temple in Jerusalem had been destroyed and their hopes and dreams had seemed to vanish?

Does it seem as if our hopes and dreams have vanished when parish families are struggling to understand God's presence or when members of families are no longer active members of their parishes?

During this season of Advent, we have models of faith in Matthew's Gospel who help us understand the difficulties, tensions, and decisions that have to be made in living as a family of faith.

They are John the Baptist, Mary and Joseph. John the Baptist is the prophet who prepares the way for the coming of Jesus. His bold and unflinching message was "Repent, for the kingdom of God is at hand." Joseph makes some very difficult decisions for the well-being and safety of "the Child and Mary." Mary's "Yes" to the angel to become the mother of Jesus introduces us to her example of faithfulness to the day to day living of her call to discipleship.

How will our Advent be different this year? How can we "Emmanuel" — be God's presence to one another? Is there a way that you can reach out to your brothers and sisters who are not going to Church regularly?

Is there a "stranger" that is sitting next to you in church? Welcome them and introduce yourself and your family. Matthew's Gospel challenges us to really hear the message to repent, to be the presence of Christ to others, and to accept the challenge to be sent out to be "disciples in mission."

As a family of faith, we have the assurance of Emmanuel — God with us walking with us on the road to Bethlehem.

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FOLLOW ME

Family: Become What You Are

Editor's note: This is the second in a four-part series featuring Bishop Terry LaValley's message to families. The articles are adapted from his Oct. 30 presentation at the Family Life Forum in Carthage.

PART TWO:

Families are.... Communities of Love

For me, the image of all of us being on a pilgrimage to the Father is a powerful one. By virtue of our baptism, we have entered into the Divine Family. Jesus, our Lord and brother, has shown us the way to the Father. So our task is to follow Him.

But, you and I do not follow Him as isolated individuals. No, we follow Jesus as fellow companions on the journey.

We help each other get to heaven as members of the one Body of Christ, as a family of faith.

Pope Benedict, in a recent statement, told a group that "the road is the same, that of life, but the situations that we pass through on this route are different...We are one family of brothers and sisters."

Because Christians enter into a covenant of love with Jesus Christ, we are called to act with a consciousness of Christ's presence in our family lives.

A family striving to place Christ at its center becomes the most basic Christian community: a domestic Church.

Although it may struggle at times, it will strive to communicate effectively, love deeply, forgive frequently, and share its values with one another. It will also be life giving: bringing children into the world and rearing them re-

sponsibly; developing the potential of all its members; handing on values and traditions.

The Christian family will respond to a call of service in society and church by modeling love, generosity, kindness, and caring and by reaching out to others in need.

We cannot reach out to others, we cannot get beyond ourselves, we cannot live together, love each other, and work together without inviting the transforming power of Jesus Christ into our daily life.

Prayer increases the strength and spiritual unity of the family, helping the family to partake of God's own strength. Believe in the power of prayer!

Prayer is as essential to our spiritual life as breathing is to our bodily life. Without prayer, we become increasingly more unconscious of our personal failures and more acutely aware of another person's failures.

The family has much to hear from God and it has much to say to God, so let us pray.

No one is born with a halo and no one lives with someone who owns a halo. We are born into this world as sons and daughters of Adam and Eve. We all need redemption if we are to live and work together in love. Nowhere is this more apparent than in the intimate life of husband and wife.

The wholeness of the family begins with the wholeness of the spousal relationship. Without regular prayer and the frequent reception of the sacraments, it is impossible to develop this partnership of life and love that

defines marriage.

The Second Vatican Council reminds us that since the Creator of all things has established the conjugal partnership as the beginning and basis of human society, the family is the first and vital cell of society.

The family has organic links with society, since the family (mom and dad) is society's foundation and nourishes it continually through its role of service to life.

It is from the family that citizens come to birth and it is within the family that they find the first school of the virtues.

From their earliest years, children should be taught, according to the faith received in baptism, to know God, to worship Him and to love their neighbor.

Only by praying together with their children can a father and mother, exercising their royal priesthood, penetrate the innermost depths of their children's hearts and leave an impression that the future events of their lives will not be able to erase.

Because the Eucharist defines who we are and is so essential to our lives, it is important that parents never excuse themselves or their family lightly from the obligation to fulfill the Sunday Mass obligation.

But, look at it not so much as an obligation, but a blessed opportunity. Keep Sunday holy, except for those necessary daily chores.

When children are brought up in an atmosphere of faith, prayer, and the regular and worthy reception of the Sacraments,



Bishop
Terry R.
LaValley



Prayer for Our Family

O Dear Jesus, I humbly implore You to grant Your special graces to our family. May our home be the shrine of peace, purity, love, labor and faith. I beg You, dear Jesus, to protect and Bless all of us, absent and present, living and dead.

O Mary Mother of Jesus, and our Mother, pray to Jesus for our family, for all the families of the world, to guard the cradle of the newborn, the schools of the young and their vocations.

Blessed Saint Joseph, holy guardian of Jesus and Mary, assist us by your prayers in all our necessities of life. Ask of Jesus that special grace which He granted to you, to watch over our home at the pillow of the sick and dying, so that with Mary and with you, heaven may find our family unbroken in the Sacred Heart of Jesus.

Amen.

they are brought up in an atmosphere that values love.

There is an atmosphere of faith, of give and take, and a great respect of other persons. They learn how to sacrifice.

We are depriving our children of a tremendous lesson in life if we do not enable them to learn sacrifice.

I don't need to tell you that family life is hectic and fast-paced. But if we remember that faith is the underlying foundation of family life, a solid thread that is part of every aspect of life for ourselves and our families, then there is plenty of time for faith, right in the midst of all of the responsibilities, activities and tasks at hand.

In fact, faith in Christ can give all those other parts of our lives new and greater focus. Faith must inform our every decision.

We do not walk the journey of faith as lone rangers. An extremely important mission of the family today is that of living out this intimate relationship of love between family members always linked to the family of faith, the Church.

Look for opportunities to become relational, connected, with your local parish. You cannot simply leave your faith at the door when you leave Mass each week.

*In next week's NCC:
Families are.. Communities of Holiness.*

Sr. Geraldine celebrates 60 years as a Filippini

By Chris Brock

Reprinted with permission
from the Watertown Daily Times

WATERTOWN - Another of the "sisters eight" of Breen Avenue has observed a milestone.

My mother had to pass out smelling salts. I felt the calling to work in God's vineyard.

Sr. Geraldine Canale, MPF

Sister Geraldine Canale, 77, who left Breen Avenue on June 23, 1949, to become a nun, recently celebrated her 60th anniversary with the Religious Teachers Filippini.

Sister Geraldine surprised her Breen Avenue friends, and her parents, when as a Watertown High School sophomore, she decided to enter the convent.

"My mother had to pass out smelling salts," she said. "I felt the calling to work in God's vineyard."

All of the girls who left Breen Avenue to become nuns joined the Religious Teachers Filippini order, based in Morristown, N.J. Three of them are now deceased.

The Institute of the

Maestre Pie Filippini was founded in Italy in 1692 by Lucy Filippini and Cardinal Mark Anthony Barbarigo. The first sisters of the order arrived in the United States in 1910 as the Religious Teachers Filippini.

They came to Watertown in 1937 and opened the school at St. Anthony's in 1958, with five grades and 120 students.

The last of the Religious Teachers Filippini in the Roman Catholic Diocese of Ogdensburg left in 1995 after being reassigned.

Members of the order had tremendous influence on the eight girls of Breen Avenue to pursue religious careers.

Sister Canale's sister, Anita Canale, left to join Religious Teachers Filippini in 1956. She's a year-and-a-half older than Geraldine. Now 79, she serves as archivist at the mother house, Villa Walsh, in Morristown, which is the headquarters for the Religious Teachers Filippini order.

Sister Geraldine serves as pastoral minister at St. Joseph's Convent in Hammononton, N.J., where she assists the senior citizens in the parish.

Among her duties is arranging transportation to



Sr. Geraldine Canale, MPF

doctor appointments for seniors or driving them to appointments herself, bringing them Holy Communion and assisting with funerals.

"It's rewarding and fulfilling," she said. "I love my life here."

The Canale sisters are siblings of Ray Canale, a Watertown resident and comedian who has performed around the country, opening for such singing sensations as Al Martino, the Four Lads and Connie Francis.

Describing herself as a child, Sister Geraldine said

she was more "spirited" than her sister, Anita, who others thought was more suited for religious life.

"She was more subdued," Sister Geraldine said. "But the Bible says, 'The Lord calls you by name.'"

Sister Geraldine completed her remaining two years of high school at the Villa Walsh Motherhouse convent and received bachelor's and master's degrees at Seton Hall University, South Orange, N.J. She taught first grade for 40 years "all over New Jersey."

"More than ever in our materialistic society, kids need the impact of being close to a religion," Sister Geraldine said. "I think our presence in their lives gives them focus."

In the 1980s, Sister Geraldine took a leave of absence for two years to return to Watertown to care for her another sister, Rosie, who died of cancer in 1990. While here, she was a substitute teacher at the city's public schools.

"Now I soothe the souls and bring happiness to older parishioners," she said.

Notes of congratulations may be sent to Sister Geraldine at St. Joseph's Convent, 219 N. Third St., Hammononton, NJ 08037.

Besides the two Canale sisters, the other girls from Breen Avenue who became nuns and teachers are:

Sister Santa Priolo. In 2001, she celebrated her golden jubilee (50 years) as a member of the Religious Teachers Filippini in Morristown.

Sister Giacinta Basile. In August, she noted her 70th year with Religious Teachers Filippini. She is pastoral minister for St. Mary of Mount Virgin parish, New Brunswick, N.J., and also serves as a moderator for the Filippini community associate program.

Sister Rose Vallelunga. She is based at Elwood City, Pa., with Religious Teachers Filippini.

Rose's sister, Antonina Vallelunga, died in 2008 at age 91. She had also taught at Elwood City.

Sister Grace M. Scordo died in 2006 at age 81. She was a religious teacher in the Order of St. Lucy Filippini and based in Morristown.

Sister Rose Marzano, a cousin of the Canale sisters, died in 1968 at the age of 34 of the flu, which was complicated by asthma. She received her habit in 1955 with Religious Teachers Filippini in Trenton, N.J., where she taught at a number of parochial schools.

Mercy Sr. Ruth Seguin moves out of diocese

PLATTSBURGH - Mercy Sister Ruth Seguin, former administrator of Mercy Hospital in Watertown and most recently a tutor in the Plattsburgh area, has left the Diocese of Ogdensburg to live at Marion Woods, Hartsdale, N.Y. Marion Woods is an assisted living facility on the property of the Sisters of Mercy which serves four religious communities.

Born in Plattsburgh, the daughter of Arthur and Bertha Seguin, Sister Ruth grew up in Rouses Point.

She entered the Sisters of Mercy in Tarrytown, NY, Aug. 16, 1947 and made perpetual vows Aug. 16, 1953, taking the name Sister Mary Pierre.

She earned a B.S. from Mercy College, Dobbs Ferry, NY and an M.B.A. from Xavier University, Cincinnati, Ohio, Graduate School in Hospital Administration.

Sister Ruth obtained a permanent license as a NYS Nursing Home Administrator in 1971. She was admitted as a Fellow of the American College of Hospital Administrators in 1974 and as a Life Fellow in 1990.

"The Diocese of Ogdensburg was the beneficiary of many of Sister Ruth's gifts of leadership," said Atonement Sister Ellen Donahue, the bishop's delegate for religious. "In 1971, she was one of the founding members of

the Council for Religious."

Formerly known as Sister Mary Pierre, the Clinton County native served as administrator of Mercy Hospital in Watertown

She also served on the Council as a member from 1993-1999. She was secretary for four years.

In 1987, she wrote the History of the Council for Religious: Diocese of Ogdensburg, which was published by the *North Country Catholic*.

During the years 1950-

1954, she taught commercial subjects at St. John's School, Plattsburgh and from 1954-1958 at the Loretta Business School, Plattsburgh.

In 1958 she was assigned to Mercy Hospital of Watertown to the position of Business Office Manager. Sister Ruth served in various administrative positions at the hospital.

In 1980, Sister Ruth was appointed Administrator of the hospital

During the period of July 1989-September 1984, she served as a volunteer archivist for the hospital also known as Mercy Center for Health Services when she moved to Saranac Lake and

Lake Placid; and from 1999-2005 she was a tutor in the Plattsburgh area.

Sister Ruth was active in her Regional Community of New York, Institute of the Sisters of Mercy of America and served on its Steering Committee and the Advisory Finance Committee of the Regional Community of New York.

"Sister Ruth has returned to live with her Community in their assisted living facility," said Atonement Sister Ellen Donahue, the bishop's delegate for religious. "We wish her well and are grateful for the many gifts of service and consecrated life she shared with our diocese."

ON NOV. 23 IN WATERTOWN

A NIGHT OF CELEBRATION

Special Religious Education dinner brings Bishop LaValley, area priests, sisters, family members and friends together for special evening



TOP: Christopher O'Leary wrote and read the Thanksgiving Grace before the meal.



MIDDLE: A participant shows Sister Diane Marie her new hearing aid.

BOTTOM: Joe Freda and William Schantz from Immaculate Heart Central School helped with serving and clean-up.



PHOTOS BY ANN CHARLEBOIS

St. Joseph Sister Diane Marie Ulsamer, coordinator of the Special Religious Education program in Watertown, leads the choir in a medley of patriotic songs thanking God for freedoms. This was a highlight of the Special Religious Education dinner held Nov. 3 at the Northside Improvement League in Watertown. The choir members are Eliza Meeks, Celina Ingram, Eva Gotham, Stephanie Williams, Terese Burdick, Michael Sinclair, Destiney Charton, Sheri Baker, Eddie Sayyeau, Christopher O'Leary and Anderson Stenard.



Bishop LaValley is shown with two new friends, Stephanie Williams and Terese Burdick.



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Bishop LaValley's Schedule

Dec. 8 – 12:00 p.m., Mass and Visit to Trinity Catholic School in Massena.

Dec. 10 – 4:30 p.m., Advent Penance Service at Notre Dame Church in Ogdensburg.

Dec. 12 – 9:30 a.m., Mass at Notre Dame Church in Ogdensburg

Rest in Peace

This week marks the anniversary of the deaths of the following clergymen who have served in the Diocese of Ogdensburg

Dec. 8 – Rev. Patrick J. McGuinness, 1931; Msgr. Cornelius J. Crowley, 1946; Rev. John Leo Hammill, 1949; Rev. John Harvey, 1961

Dec. 9 – Rev. George Marion, O.M.I., 1927; Rev. Edwin Hanlon McCarthy, 1950; Rev. Arthur LaVigne, 1956

Dec. 10 – Rev. James Hogan, 1882

Dec. 11 – George Montreuil, 1914; Rev. Edward Tetrault, 1952; Msgr. George Henry Brisson, P.A., 1969

Dec. 12 – Rev. Victor Dugas, 1843; Msgr. Albert J. Farrell, 1967; Rev. Julian P. O'Brien, 1988; Deacon Floyd J. Barton, 1999

Dec. 14 – Rev. P.M. O'Shea, O.S.A., 1942

Protecting God's Children

The **Diocese of Ogdensburg** has scheduled sessions for Protecting God's Children for Adults. Pre-registration online is required in order to participate. Participants may pre-register at www.virtus.org by selecting the registration button and following the directions. All employees and volunteers who participate in church sponsored activities with minor are required to participate in this training. Ongoing monthly training is required for all employees involved in activities with minors. Volunteers are strongly encouraged to continue their training. Further information is available from Atonement Sister Ellen Donahue, phone, 315-393-2920. ext. 403

Upcoming programs:

Dec. 6 - Diocesan offices in Ogdensburg, 1 p.m.

Dec. 13 - St. Alexander's Church, Morrisonville, 6 p.m.

Jan. 27 - St. Mary's School, Canton, 7:30 p.m.

To Report Abuse

If you have a complaint of suspected misconduct involving diocesan clergy, religious, employees or volunteers, contact the Episcopal Vicar for Religious Rev. James Seymour at 315-393-2920 or the

Victims Assistance Coordinator, Terri-
 anne Yanulavich, 7061 Rt. 9, Plattsburgh, NY 12901-0310;
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Retirement Fund For Religious 2010

It Might Surprise You to Know ...

In 1727, nine Ursuline Sisters from France landed in the primitive frontier city of New Orleans. After braving a perilous ocean-crossing that included stormy seas and being chased by pirates, they almost drowned while trying to get on shore. This is how their story begins.

How Does Their Story Enfold?

Undeterred by the harsh conditions, they opened an orphanage, schools, and a hospital, beginning a ministry which until Hurricane Katrina had been uninterrupted for 278 years. ("Women & Spirit: Catholic Sisters in America" Exhibit)

This is only one of the thirty-three Congregations that serve or have served in the Diocese of Ogdensburg. Some of you may have attended the schools in Malone administered by the Ursuline Community: St. Joseph's Elementary School, St. Joseph's Academy, or the Notre Dame school. In addition to this ministry, the Ursuline Sisters assisted many parishes in their religious education and pastoral needs.



Sister Elizabeth Ann Brown, GNSH, shown here teaching at St. Mary's in Potsdam, is now retired and living at the Motherhouse in Yardley, PA.

In 1843, seven Sisters of Mercy from the Baggott Street Foundation in Ireland arrived in the United States, traveled to Pittsburg, and opened a hospital. The Sisters of Mercy are among the religious congregations who between 1829 and 1990 founded a total of 869 hospitals in the U.S., many of which are still open and receiving patients today. ("Women & Spirit: Catholic Sisters in America" Exhibit)

You may have experienced the presence of the Sisters of Mercy administering healthcare in Watertown, Lake Placid, Tupper Lake, or Gabriels. We were and are blessed to have them in the diocese in education and health-care.

We have highlighted from the Exhibit, "Women & Spirit", two of the eighteen Congregations who still live and serve in our diocese. We have included in this article pictures of other members of Congregations who served in the past or are serving presently in our diocese.

Share In The CARE

Religious Continue to Bring Christ to Others When You Share in Their Care



December 5, 2010



Dear Sisters and Brothers in Christ:

The annual appeal for the Retirement Fund for Religious will be conducted in our parishes the weekend of December 11 and 12. The readings at Mass for the Third Sunday of Advent speak of the radical transformations that occur in our lives if we have the faith and hope needed to await them. Despite countless challenges and sacrifices, religious sisters and brothers have been witnesses to Christ. With few resources, they helped to bring about radical transformations in our society. For instance, they have helped to build our Catholic schools, hospitals, and social service agencies. We are heirs of their efforts.

Though a number of elderly continue to serve, others are frail and in need of assistance. For generations, the religious congregations cared for their elderly members. In recent decades, however, elderly religious began to outnumber those earning stipends. Those religious who receive social security benefits today receive only about one-third of that received by the average recipient.

Ninety percent of the proceeds from this collection will be distributed by the Diocese of Ogdensburg to benefit the religious communities that serve here today and those who have served in the past. The remaining ten percent is sent to the National Religious Retirement Office for national distribution. Last year's collections were distributed among thirty-one communities of women and men.

Many of our families struggle financially today and numerous worthy causes seek our assistance. I ask you to consider offering what you are able to the care of the women and men who have made such enormous contributions to our Church. As St. Paul tells us, "Let us do good to all, but especially to those who belong to the family of faith" (Galatians 6:10). Thank you for your generous assistance to these cherished members of our family.

Gratefully yours in Christ,

Most Reverend Terry R. LaValley
Bishop of Ogdensburg

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- Daughters of Charity of the Sacred Heart of Jesus
- Dominican Sisters of Hope
- Franciscan Sisters of the Atonement
- Grey Nuns of the Sacred Heart
- Servants of Mary
- Sisters of Charity of St. Louis
- Sisters of Mercy of the Americas Mid-Atlantic Community
- Sisters of the Cross of Chavanod
- Sisters of the Precious Blood
- Sisters of St. Joseph
- Sisters of St. Joseph of Carondelet
- Society of the Daughters of the Heart of Mary
- Ursuline Sisters of the Eastern Province



Diocesan Council of Religious

Pictured right to left are: Miriam Najimy, DHM, President; Sister Mary Frances Barnes, DC, Vice President; Sister Bernadette Ducharme, SCSL, Treasurer; and Sister Rita Mary Morrissette, OSM, Secretary.



Sister Mary Elizabeth Looby, GNSH, conducting a "Why Catholic?" session, continues to live and work in our diocese standing on the shoulders of the many religious of the Grey Nuns of the Sacred Heart who worked in our schools, hospitals, and religious education programs.



Bishop Terry R. LaValley at the Religious Jubilee

Pictured with the Bishop front row left to right are: Sister Catherine LaBoure Goodbout, SSJ; Sister Norma Bryant, SSJ; Sister Mary William Argy, SSJ; and Sister Bethany Fitzgerald, SSJ. Back row left to right are: Chairperson, Sister Barbara St. Andrews, CSJ; Sister Janet Peters, RSM; Sister Anne Boyer, GNSH; Sister Ellen Donahue, SA, Episcopal Delegate for Religious; and Miriam Najimy, DHM, President of Council for Religious.



Brothers of the Congregation of Holy Cross, Eastern Province, New Rochelle, NY

National Statistics

- Approximately 35,000 religious men and women are 70 years of age or older.
- For most of their lives, elder women and men religious worked for small stipends that were reinvested in ministry.
- The income of younger members of religious institutes helps to support the care of elder members, but it is not sufficient to cover escalating health care costs.

We are aware of the difficulties our people face in light of the economic situation. We deeply appreciate any contribution you are able to make for the care of our elderly religious.

Sister Ellen Donahue, SA
Episcopal Delegate for Religious



Through the efforts of Sisters, countless immigrant children entered the mainstream of American life, and educational opportunities that were rare in those days were offered to girls and women.

Pictured above is Sister Jerome Kelliher, SA, who left Vancouver, B.C. with the displaced Japanese families and went to live with them in the internment camp in Greenwood, B.C. during the war. She helped educate the Japanese children in elementary and higher education during wartime. These were not the only immigrants Sister worked with. She worked tediously with the Puerto Rican community in Spanish Harlem in New York City, teaching in the kindergarten and nursery programs. Sometimes you promote justice just by standing with people who are suffering discrimination. Sister also worked in our diocese at the mission in Hogsburg, NY.

Please be as generous as you can for the Religious Retirement Collection on December 11th and 12th

RELIGIOUS RETIREMENT COLLECTION is December 11th and 12th

FACTS

- Less than five percent of the religious institutes in the National Religious Retirement Office database are adequately funded for retirement.
- More than 5,000 religious require skilled care.
- The average annual Social Security benefit for a religious is approximately \$4,500.



Sister Mary Christine Taylor, SSJ, and Native friends at the Fallen Leaves Celebration, St. Regis Mission, Akwesasne. There is no way to describe the love and energy Sister has for the Native people. Pictured left to right are: Nidia DeJung, Isabella DeJung, Sr. Mary Christine Taylor, SSJ, Caroline Tarbell, and Justin DeJung. Also attending were Jennifer DeJung, Cory Phillips and Vicky Phillips.

Religious institutes are financially autonomous and responsible for the support of their members. Income sources include compensated ministry, government benefits, and investment return.

The average Social Security benefit for religious women and men is approximately one-third that paid to the average U.S. beneficiary.

Amount Enclosed: \$ _____

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- Make your tax-deductible check payable to your parish.
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You can express your gratitude for all they've done and will continue to do by giving to your parish's annual collection for the Retirement Fund for Religious

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P.O. Box 369
Ogdensburg, NY 13669



Sister Mary Hallahan, OSU, conducting a Eucharistic Service for the assisted-living facility at Farrar Home. Many Sisters are able to continue their ministries through contributed services of their communities.

Congregations pray daily for those who provide care and support ministries.

CATHOLIC WORLD AT A GLANCE

While a cardinal, pope asked for swift action against abusive priests
VATICAN CITY (CNS) - A newly disclosed letter reveals that as early as 1988, the future Pope Benedict XVI pressed for swifter and more streamlined procedures to punish priests guilty of "grave and scandalous conduct." The letter, written by then-Cardinal Joseph Ratzinger when he was head of the Vatican's doctrinal congregation, expressed concern that the normal process for dealing with such priests - which typically involved a request for dispensation from priestly obligations - took too long and was seen more as a favor than a punishment. Eventually, with Cardinal Ratzinger's involvement, the penal procedures were simplified and sanctions were strengthened. But in 1988, the cardinal's suggestion of a "more rapid and simplified penal process" was rebuffed by the Vatican's canon law experts. The letter was cited in a lengthy article published Dec. 1 by the Vatican newspaper, *L'Osservatore Romano*. The article highlighted what it described as a "crucial role" and "decisive action" by Cardinal Ratzinger in the 20-year process of strengthening sanctions against errant priests.

Bishop Hubbard urges Senate to ratify START

WASHINGTON (CNS) -- Citing the Catholic Church's concern for the sanctity of human life, the chairman of the U.S. bishops' Committee on International Justice and Peace called on U.S. senators to set aside politics and ratify the new Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty. Bishop Howard J. Hubbard of Albany, N.Y., speaking on behalf of the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops, urged senators in a Nov. 29 letter to approve the treaty known as START during the lame-duck session in the final weeks of 2010. Citing earlier statements by both Pope Benedict XVI and the bishops' conference, Bishop Hubbard called ratification of the arms control accord critical "because it is a modest step toward a world with greater respect for human life." Bishop Hubbard's letter pointed to statements that Pope Benedict and the U.S. bishops have made welcoming the treaty, which was signed April 8 in Prague by U.S. President Barack Obama and Russian President Dmitry Medvedev as well as long-standing support within the church for nuclear arms control. The treaty would commit the two nations to reducing their strategic arsenals to 1,550 warheads deployed on long-range missiles, bombers and submarines. Under the previous START pact, which expired in December, both countries reduced their strategic arsenals to 2,200 weapons each.

Pope says Catholic newspapers have 'irreplaceable' role

VATICAN CITY (CNS) -- Pope Benedict XVI said the Catholic press has an irreplaceable role in forming Christian consciences and reflecting the church's viewpoint on contemporary issues. Despite the crisis in print media today, the Catholic newspaper still has a vital role to play in diocesan communications, the pope said. He made the remarks Nov. 26 to members of the Italian Federation of Catholic Weeklies, which represents 188 Catholic newspapers. The pope said that while secular media often reflect a skeptical and relativistic attitude toward truth, the church knows that people need the full truth brought by Christ. "The mission of the church consists in creating the conditions so that this meeting with Christ can be realized. Cooperating in this task, the communications media are called to serve the truth with courage, to help public opinion see and read reality from an evangelical viewpoint," he said. A primary task of the Catholic newspaper, he said, is to "give voice to a point of view that reflects Catholic thinking on all ethical and social questions." The pope said the printed newspaper, because of its simplicity and widespread distribution, remains an effective way of spreading news about local diocesan events and developments.

WORLD YOUTH DAY ON FACEBOOK



CNS PHOTO/PAUL HARING

Cristine del Campo works on the Facebook site of World Youth Day at the headquarters of the international youth gathering in Madrid, Spain, Nov. 12. Organizers of the Aug. 16-21 international Catholic youth gathering are preparing to welcome 1.5 to 2.5 million young people - including a group from the Diocese of Ogdensburg - to Madrid.

Pope marks beginning of Advent with prayer for life

By John Thavis
 Catholic News Service

VATICAN CITY (CNS) - Pope Benedict XVI welcomed the beginning of Advent with a prayer for life and a defense of the human embryo.

The pope presided over an evening prayer service at the Vatican Nov. 27, part of a worldwide pro-life vigil. He said it was an appropriate initiative to launch Advent, the liturgical period in which the church prepares to celebrate the birth of Jesus.

In a homily, he said the church's teaching against abortion comes from its teaching about the dignity of every human life and its concern that the unborn is most vulnerable to "the selfishness of adults and the clouding of consciences."

"There are cultural tendencies that seek to anesthetize consciences with spurious arguments," the pope said.

Regarding the human embryo, the pope said science itself has demonstrated the

embryo's autonomous capacity of interaction with the mother, the coordination of its biological processes, the continuity of its development and its complexity as an organism.

"It's not a question of a collection of biological material, but of a new living being, dynamic and marvelously ordered, a new individual of the human species," the pope said.

"This is how Jesus was in Mary's womb; this is how we each were, in our mother's wombs," he said.

The pope cited the early church author Tertullian, who reasoned that abortion is wrong because, as he wrote, "He is a man, who is to be a man." The pope added that "there is no reason not to consider him a person from the moment of conception."

Pope Benedict emphasized that the threat to human life does not end at birth. He said children today are often subject to abandonment, hunger, poverty, disease,

abuse, violence and exploitation. Faced with this "sad panorama of injustices" before and after birth, the church calls everyone to responsibility, he said.

He urged leaders in politics, economics and communications to do everything possible to promote a culture that respects human life and to establish a network of services that support human life.

On Nov. 28, the first Sunday of Advent, the pope spoke to pilgrims from his apartment window about the importance of "expectant waiting" in the period before Christmas and in people's lives in general.

"We think of the expectation of a child by a married couple, or of a visit by a distant relative or friend. We think of a young person who awaits the outcome of a decisive examination, or a meeting at work," he said.

"One can say that a person is alive as long as he is expectant, as long as hope lives in his heart," he said.

SCRIPTURE REFLECTIONS

Gaudete - an Advent Sunday to rejoice!

Today is Gaudete (Rejoice!) Sunday, the most joyful in tone of all the Advent Sundays.

It's as though the Church can no longer wait for the Messiah to appear with dramatic power to transform our world.

Isaiah tells us in the first reading that the desert "will bloom with abundant flowers, and rejoice with joyful song".

Yet, before we can see the glory and the splendor of our God, we must encour-



Monsignor
Paul E.
Whitmore

age one another to "strengthen the hands that are feeble, make firm the knees that are weak" and to "be strong, fear not" for our God has come to save us! And, oh, what a glorious day that will be, when "the eyes of the blind [will] be opened, the ears of the deaf [will] be opened..."

The second reading from the apostle, James, urges us to be patient until the coming of the Lord.

He uses the example of a farmer who must wait for the fruits of his labors. "You,

too, must be patient. Make your hearts firm..."

How difficult is that advice to those of us who endure more and more evil, hatred, exploitation of the helpless, and indifference toward God's commandments.

In solidarity with those who suffer such injustice, we must encourage the faint-hearted and the skeptical.

In the Gospel, we find John the Baptist is now in prison for telling the truth about Herod's wife.

In that dank, dark, and dismal atmosphere, the fiery prophet who has spent his life preparing the multi-

DEC. 12

Third Sunday of Advent

READINGS

Isaiah 35:1-6a, 10

James 5:7-10

Matthew 11:2-11

tudes for the Messiah, seems to waver, seems to doubt.

He sends messengers to ask Jesus, "Are you the one who is to come, or should we look for another?"

Jesus reassures John by reminding him that all the miracles and healings he has heard about are really true. They are the marks of

the Kingdom.

He pointedly adds, perhaps for John's benefit and for all of us, "And blessed are they who do not take offense in Me!"

These words must have consoled John who will soon face death from a weak king.

Unlike John, we do not suffer the horrors of a prison, although many in our world suffer persecution and exile because they are Christians, and we suffer along with them in their pain.

May we be consoled at this Gospel, and labor with the Lord in building the new Kingdom to come.

LOOKING AROUND

Looking behind the 'marriage gap' trends

By Father William J. Byron, SJ
Catholic News Service

News services made much of the recently released report of the Pew Research Center on what is being called the "marriage gap" in the United States.

Since 1960, there has been a sharp decline in marriage and a rise in new family forms. The marriage gap, researchers say, is related to the income gap. It seems that economic security is viewed by many as a condition for marriage. If income is low or uncertain, the commitment to marriage is postponed or simply ignored.

As marriage has declined, cohabitation has increased.

The phenomenon of couples living together as unmarried partners has doubled in the past 20 years, and although those who choose this route are not necessarily getting a standing ovation from their elders, they are not being disowned or condemned either.

In 1960, the share of births to unmarried women was 5 percent. In 2008, it rose to 41 percent.

I've been told that David's Bridal, a national firm that sells wedding gowns, bridesmaids' dresses and accessories, used to consider itself recession-proof. However, those who track national statistics for this firm reported 90,000 fewer weddings last year than the year before.

What's behind these numbers and trends?

I'll suggest two candidates: the erosion of commitment in American society and the failure to see

sacrifice as the foundation of a happy marriage.

For those of marriageable age, the most difficult word to utter is "forever."

We are caught in something of a cultural hesitation regarding commitments. We want to keep our options open. We don't want to drop the anchor in any one place, in any one career, or take the risk of dropping it in a shared life with any one person.

For those of marriageable age, the most difficult word to utter is "forever." It takes wisdom (that most of them don't yet have) to realize that postponing commitments is postponing happiness.

Mutual self-sacrifice, not enlightened self-interest, is what makes a marriage work.

Ironically, sacrifice be-

comes the highest form of self-interest in marriage. Without it, the happiness each partner seeks will always remain out of sight and out of reach.

In the years before the Second Vatican Council (1962-1965), the Catholic Church used Latin as its official liturgical language, but English was the language used for an exhortation read in all churches in the United States at the beginning of the wedding ceremony. I've often remarked that the reason for this was the church's fervent hope that the message would be clear and completely understood!

Let "the security of your wedded life rest on the great principle of self-sacrifice," the church advised its young brides and grooms in those days as they stood before the altar to pronounce their wedding vows.

"Sacrifice is usually difficult and irksome; only love

can make it easy and perfect love can make it a joy," the exhortation went on to say.

It said much more in beautiful and compelling language that a good Internet search engine should be able to retrieve for anyone who is interested. I quote the full exhortation in chapter one of my book "Words at the Wedding" (Paulist Press).

Those words can serve as a mission statement for a marriage. They can also stand alone on their own merits to be pondered at any time before and for many years after a wedding ceremony.

They have a timeless quality and profound beauty that reflect the beauty and permanence of marriage.

And, as the much-discussed Pew Research Center report serves to remind, we've got a lot of work to do to strengthen the bonds of marriage and family life in America.

(Jesuit Father Byron is university professor of business and society at St. Joseph's University, Philadelphia. E-mail: wbyron@sju.edu.)

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BETWEEN THE BOOKENDS

Books offer hope to those struggling

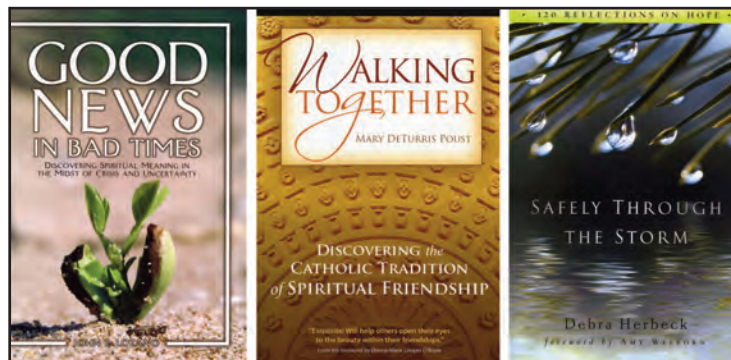
Reviewed by Sister Mona Castelazo, CSJ
Catholic News Service

"Good News in Bad Times" by John Lozano, "Walking Together" by Mary DeTurriss Poust and "Safely Through the Storm" by Debra Herbeck offer hope to those struggling to find spiritual meaning in the midst of suffering.

Lozano deals with obstacles to spiritual development in our culture. We distract ourselves from inner emptiness through television, the Internet, other communication novelties and constant activities, and are therefore oblivious to the wonder of reality calling us to reflection and transformation.

The author suggests that Christians can be traumatized by unexpected changes or crises because of having established an illusion of control over their lives. Contrary to Jesus' teachings, we place our hope for security in military power, economic growth and success. Lozano quotes a recent study showing that children's names are chosen to "look good on their resumes," showing that careers are valued above family and relationships.

In addition, we imagine God as a comfortable force to "pull out on Sundays." God becomes a sponsor of the American dream and the church a club, according to Lozano. If we pay our dues of going to church, donating money and making a faith commitment, we feel we are "covered." God will bless us with better jobs, careers, in-



These are the covers of "Good News in Bad Times: Discovering Spiritual Meaning in the Midst of Crisis and Uncertainty" by John P. Lozano, "Walking Together: Discovering the Catholic Tradition of Spiritual Friendship" by Mary DeTurriss Poust, and "Safely Through the Storm: 120 Reflections on Hope" by Debra Herbeck.

comes and houses. The divine thus becomes manageable and controllable as a help to self-improvement.

Lozano's book shows that spiritual deepening requires us to be humble, present to mystery, aware of the sky, the stars and of God reflected in the majesty of the universe. Second, we must "know and accept our entire humanity in all its goodness and all its destructive tendencies" in order to know God. Third, we need to learn not to "play silly little social games" but to relate to one another at deeper levels. These attitudes provide spiritual meanings for us in times of uncertainty and crisis.

Most importantly, Lozano offers insights into suffering. Change may be painful

and threatening, but to change is to live human life. It is through accepted failure, loss and suffering that transformation comes. The cross is an "image not of comfort but of hope," and Christianity is not about answers, he says, but about the revelation of the presence of God with us in the midst of all disappointment and heartbreak.

Poust's book, "Walking Together," focuses on the importance of spiritual friends who share deep longings, strengthen one another and pray together. The author, through personal, historical

About the books

"Good News in Bad Times: Discovering Spiritual Meaning in the Midst of Crisis and Uncertainty" by John P. Lozano. Kairos Missions/Acta Publications (Chicago, 2010). 208 pp., \$14.95.

"Walking Together: Discovering the Catholic Tradition of Spiritual Friendship" by Mary DeTurriss Poust. Ave Maria Press (Notre Dame, Ind., 2010). 192 pp., \$13.95.

"Safely Through the Storm: 120 Reflections on Hope" by Debra Herbeck. Servant Books (Cincinnati, 2010). 81 pp., \$12.99.

and biblical stories, gives examples of this type of profound and lasting connections that gives hope and meaning to life.

Saintly friendships include John of the Cross and Teresa of Avila; Francis de Sales and Jane de Chantal; and Therese of Lisieux and her sisters. Poust shows that spiritual friendships are possible between persons of different cultures, religions and genders. Selections for reflection and meditation

follow each chapter.

"Safely Through the Storm" is a collection of 120 quotations from saints and Catholic writers on suffering, hope and trust in God. Quotations include inspirational material such as this from Pope John Paul II: "We are not the sum of our weaknesses and failures, we are the sum of the Father's love for us and our real capacity to become the image of his Son," and this from Father Henri Nouwen: "The good news ... (is) not that God came to take our suffering away but that God wanted to become part of it."

Herbeck, the editor, includes a section of brief biographies of those quoted, as well as bibliographic information. The intent of the book is to offer comfort to those suffering disappointment, pain or loss.

Sister Mona Castelazo, a Sister of St. Joseph of Carondelet, has taught English for many years in Los Angeles. She is the author of "Under the Skyflower Tree: Reflections of a Nun-Entity."



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CLINTON

PRAYER VIGIL

Plattsburgh – A prayer vigil will held the first Sunday of the winter months.

Place: St. Peter's Chapel

Time: 1 p.m. to 2:30 p.m.

Features: Helper's of Gods Precious Infants prayer vigil will be held. We may not be able to save their lives, but can we not plead on their behalf?

DAY OF REFLECTION

Ellenburg Center – OLA House of Prayer to have an Advent Day of Reflection.

Date: Dec. 11

Time: 9:30 a.m. to 2:30 p.m.

Features: Deacon Dennis Monty will join us for an Advent retreat, encouraging us to reflect on Mary, the Eucharist, and the hope and promise of the season. Bring your Bible and a journal. Lunch provided. RSVP by Dec. 9 to oadiron@twcny.rr.com or call 518-594-3253. Donations appreciated.

40 DAYS FOR LIFE IN 2011

Plattsburgh – Please mark your calendars for Spring 2011 40 days for life! Ash Wednesday, March 9 to Palm Sunday, April 17.

EUCCHARISTIC ADORATION

Plattsburgh - Eucharistic Adoration is held throughout the year every Wednesday, Thursday, and Friday.

Place: St John's Adoration Chapel,

Time: 9 a.m. to 9 p.m.

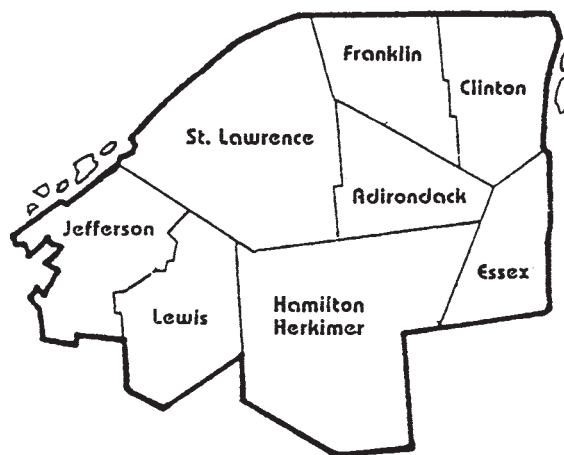
Theme: "The adoration of the Lord in the sacrament is also an education in sensitizing our conscience ... When the conscience becomes dulled, this lets in the violence that lays waste the world" (Pope Benedict XVI). O Come let us Adore Him—A Birthday gift for Jesus!

Contact: 518-561-5083 or email us at Sjohnsadoration@aol.com

ESSEX

PEACEFUL HOUR

Westport – St. Philip Neri Catholic Church will be the site of a peaceful hour in preparation for Christmas.



The **North Country Catholic** welcomes contributions to "Around the Diocese". Parishioners are invited to send information about activities to:
North Country Catholic, PO Box 326,
 Ogdensburg, NY 13669; fax, 315-394-0670;
 e-mail news@northcountrycatholic.org.

Items must be received in the **NCC** office by the Thursday before publication.

Date: Dec. 19

Time: 7 p.m.

Features: Martha Gallagher, the Adirondack Harper will present A Quiet Celebration. This beautiful program is a contemplative presentation with song, Scripture and spoken word.

Price: Thanks to an unnamed benefactor, there is no admission charge at St. Philip Neri although a free-will offering may be made.

FRANKLIN

WINTER'S GRACE

Brushton - All are welcome to attend the first annual Christmas Contada entitled Winter's Grace.

Date: Dec. 12

Time: 2 p.m.

Place: St. Mary's Church, Brushton.

Features: The choir is made up of 37 voices from Brushton, Massena, Moira, Norwood, Potsdam, St. Regis Falls, South Colton, and of different ages under the direction of Ms. Christine Sullivan. Winter's Grace tells the Christmas story using music, Scripture. Prayers and poetry. Each draws together to represent

humankind's spiritual need for renewal and redemption. Admission is free. Anyone wishing to bring a non-perishable food item for the local food pantries is invited to do so and can be left at any entrance of the church.

JEFFERSON

SPAGHETTI AND MEATBALL DINNER

Evans Mills – There will be a spaghetti and meatball dinner to benefit the Indian River Council 7471 Knights of Columbus.

Date: Dec. 11

Time: 4 p.m.

Place: St. Mary's Parish Center

Cost: Adults, \$6; senior citizens, \$5; children under 12, \$4; under 5, free

LIFERIGHT MEETING

Watertown - Liferight of Watertown will hold its monthly meetings on the third Wednesday of the Month.

Time: 4 p.m.

Place: 312 Sherman St.

Features: Liferight is a pro-life educational organization. The office has videos, books and educational materials which may be borrowed. Topics covered: infanticide, assisted suicide, euthanasia and chastity.

Contact: Phone 315-788-8480; website: www.liferight.org

TO SHRINES OF FRANCE

Watertown- Father Donald Robinson, is leading a pilgrimage to shrines in France

Date: March 21-31, 2011

Cost: \$2349 includes airfare, accommodations, and most meals

Features: Visit Lourdes, Nevers, Tours, Loire Valley, Chartres, Mont St. Michel, Normandy, Caen, Lisieux, and Paris.

Contact: Call 782-1190.

ST. LAWRENCE

HOLIDAY TOUR OF HOMES

Fort Drum – There will be a Holiday Tour of Home.

Date: Dec. 12

Time: 1 p.m. to 5 p.m.

Place: Tour will begin at the Timbers Community Center and end at LeRay Mansion.

Cost: \$15 per person. Includes entry to all home. Refreshments and snacks will be served

Features: On the tour will be 8 locations including an apartment at the Timbers, homes in Richard Hills, the USO building and homes on LeRay Drive.

Contact: For more information and tickets contact Sonia Patton at 254-258-2850 or Teri-Gene Conlin 778-3978.

WINTER'S GRACE

Norwood - All are welcome to attend the first annual Christmas Contada entitled Winter's Grace.

Date: Dec. 12

Time: 7 p.m.

Place: St. Andrew's Church

Features: The choir is made up of 37 voices from Brushton, Massena, Moira, Norwood, Potsdam, St. Regis Falls, South Colton, and of different ages under the direction of Ms. Christine Sullivan. Winter's Grace tells the Christmas story using music, Scripture. Prayers and poetry. Each draws together to represent humankind's spiritual need for renewal and redemption. Admission is free. Anyone wishing to bring a non-perishable food item for the local food pantries is invited to do so and can be left at any entrance of the church.

CRAFT FAIR

Gouverneur – St. James School to host a Craft Fair.

Date: Dec. 11

Time: 10 a.m. to 3 p.m.

Features: Santa will visit at 1:30 p.m. Items available will include: jewelry, woodcrafts, ceramics, stuffed animals, homemade dolls, leather goods, candles, knitted items, country crafts, Christmas ornaments and decorations, baskets, etc. Paula Towne, local artist, will be doing portraits. Over 50 vendors will be there.

Lunch will be available.

Price: Admission is a donation

CHRISTMAS PARTY

Ogdensburg – The Knights of Columbus Ladies Auxiliary will have their Annual Christmas Party.

Date: Dec. 12

Time: 5 p.m. to 6 cocktails with dinner to follow

Place: K of C Hall

Cost: Free to all paid up members; All others, \$8 per person

Features: Reservations are required with our choice of meat by Dec. 4. All members are asked to bring in pajamas or a monetary gift in lieu of a gift exchange. Please wrap the pajamas and mark on tag for boy or girl and the size so we can donate them to the PJ's for Kids program. \$15 limit.

CHRISTMAS CONCERT

Ogdensburg – St. Mary's Cathedral is holding a Christmas Concert.

Date: Dec. 19

Time: 2 p.m.

Features: This year's Christmas Concert will feature traditional hymns and carols from various cultures throughout the world. If we need to postpone because of snow, the snow date will be January 2, 2011, which is Epiphany Sunday.

Contact: Music Director, Ernie Hadley. 393-3930

K OF C BRUNCH

Norfolk – The Knights of Columbus will be sponsoring a brunch.

Date: Dec. 12

Time: 8:30 a.m. to Noon

Place: Visitation Parish Center; Take-outs available

Cost: Adults, \$6; Children under 12, \$4; Under 5, Free; Family, \$16

NOVENA FOR MILITARY

Ogdensburg - Notre Dame Church is holding a weekly novena for the safety of U.S. military personnel

Date: Tuesday evenings

Time: 6:30 p.m.

Place: Notre Dame Church

HOLY HOUR FOR VOCATIONS

Ogdensburg - St. Mary's is holding a monthly Holy Hour for Vocations.

Date: Thursday before the First Friday

Time: 8 p.m. to 9

Place: Deacon Winter Chapel

Features: Nocturnal Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament continues through the night, concluding with Benediction at 7 a.m. Friday.

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Christmas greetings from Quito, Ecuador

By Sister Cindy Sullivan

Massena native, Missionary in Ecuador

This has been quite a year for us here at the Working Boys Center – A Family of Families. Pat Parks, our Director, has declared it “The Year of Padre”... and that it has been.

Father Halligan celebrated his 80th birthday at a beautiful celebration in Milwaukee. Many family, friends and volunteers came to help the Padre celebrate his dream of having each day of the year sponsored by our generous friends.

In November of this year the Padre received and split the top honors at the Opus Prize. This is a prize given annually since 2004. Madre Miguel and I were with the Padre for the festivities in New York at Fordham University for the awards ceremony.

Each year the Opus Prize chooses a Catholic University to partner with them to sponsor the award. It is comparable to the Nobel Prize but for Humanitarian and Faith-based works.

The Working Boys Center was chosen from over 20 candidates from around the globe. When the jurors narrowed it down to two organizations, they could not decide, so for the first time ever the top prize was split by two finalists.

The money will help us get caught up in a tough year economically and give us a month or two to sleep a bit easier!

God has continued to work his miracles for us this year as we celebrate our 46th Anniversary.

Now the Working Boys Center is a buzz with decorating, plans for the novenas, the rehearsals of the Christmas Nativity plays and the parties to welcome baby Jesus.

On Christmas Day we will have First Communions in each Center and a chicken dinner for all the families.

We will spend these days of Advent pondering the miracle of the season and the reason that Jesus came into our World. We will also spend the season thanking God for having you and your families be a part of our little family of families. We all realize that we need each other to make some sense out of this crazy world.

We need the poor to need us, and together we can continue to change this world into a better place.

Merry Christmas to you and all of your loved ones from our family in Quito!

May the baby Jesus bless you with a Happy New Year!

Visit: www.dioogdensburg.org/missionoffice

Please remember “The Society for the Propagation of the Faith”
when writing or changing your Will.

OBITUARIES

Alexandria Bay – Robert E. Giltz, 80; Funeral Services Nov. 27, 2010 at St. Cyril's Church; burial in St. Mary's Cemetery, De Witt.

Altona – Geraldine G. “Geri” LaBarge, 80; Funeral Services Dec. 2, 2010 at Holy Angels Church; burial in St. Edmund's Cemetery, Ellenburg.

Bloomington – Katherine K. (King) Tolhurst, 73; Funeral Services Nov. 26, 2010 at St. Paul's Church; burial in St. Bernard's Cemetery.

Carthage – Lillian Zeler Loomis, 82; Funeral Services Nov. 30, 2010 at Bossuot-Lundy Funeral Home, Inc.; burial in Sanford Corners Cemetery, Calcium.

Churubusco – John Thomas Matthews, 79; Funeral Services Dec. 3, 2010 at Immaculate Heart of Mary Church; burial in Immaculate Heart Cemetery.

Colton – Larry P. Demo, 77; Funeral Services Nov. 27, 2010 at St. Patrick's Church; burial in St. Patrick's Cemetery.

Copenhagen – Lyle E. Benware, 76; Funeral Services Dec. 1, 2010 at Bossuot-Lundy Funeral Home, Inc.; burial in St. Rita's Cemetery.

Crown Point – Germain (Jim) H. St. Pierre, 87; Funeral Services Dec. 3, 2010 at Sacred Heart Church; burial in Sacred Heart Cemetery.

Deferiet – Irene K. (Kereke) DeLosh, 86; Funeral Services Nov. 29, 2010 at St. Rita's Catholic Church; burial in New St. James Cemetery, Carthage.

Glenfield – Gilbert M. Thisse, 95; Funeral Services Nov. 27, 2010 at St. Mary's Catholic Church; burial in Martinsburg Cemetery.

Hogansburg – John J. Gray Sr., 85; Funeral Services Nov. 27, 2010 at St. Patrick's Church; burial in St. Patrick's Cemetery.

Lake Placid – Philip H. Albright; Funeral Services Dec. 3, 2010 at St. Agnes Church; burial in St. Agnes Cemetery.

Lake Placid – Kristy M. (Wood) Isham, 41; Funeral Services Dec. 1, 2010 at M.B. Clark Inc. Funeral Home.

Long Lake – Timothy H. Bissell, 38; Funeral Dec. 4, 2010 at St. Henry's Church; burial in Long Lake Cemetery.

Lowville – Stephanie M. (Bellinger) Crouse, 32; Funeral Services Dec. 3, 2010 at Iseneker Funeral Home, Inc.; burial in West Lowville Rural Cemetery.

Lowville – Florence S. (Micek) Matula, 80; Funeral Services at Iseneker Funeral Home, Inc.; burial in Lowville Rural Cemetery.

Massena – Joseph A. Greco, 77; Funeral Services Dec. 1, 2010 at St. Mary's Church; burial in Calvary Cemetery.

Massena – Lorraine E. (Payette) LeRoux, 90; Funeral Services Dec. 2, 2010 at Sacred Heart Church; burial in Notre Dame Cemetery, Cornwall, Ontario.

Massena – Anne L. (Lazarchuck) Kennedy, 94; Funeral Services Nov. 29, 2010 at St. Mary's Church; burial in Calvary Cemetery.

Massena – Clare D. (Hodge) Podgurski, 83; Funeral Dec. 4, 2010 at St. Mary's Church; burial in Calvary Cemetery.

Massena – John D. Warriner, 44; Funeral Services Dec. 1, 2010 at St. Mary's Church; burial in Calvary Cemetery.

Mineville – Laura B. (Rule) Granger, 82; Funeral Services Nov. 27, 2010 at All Saints Church; burial in Putnam Cemetery.

Morrisonville – Michael S. Kelley, 44; Funeral Services Dec. 1, 2010 at St. Alexander's Church; burial in St. Alexander's Cemetery.

Morrisonville – James Kenneth Luck, 83; Funeral Services Nov. 30, 2010 at St. Alexander's Church; burial in parish cemetery.

Morrisonville – Jean M. (DuBray) Pulsifer, 44; Funeral Services Nov. 29, 2010 at St. Alexander's Church; burial in St. Alexander's Cemetery.

Ogdensburg – Harold W. “Hi” Amo, 89; Funeral Services Dec. 1, 2010 at Notre Dame Church; burial in Notre Dame Cemetery.

Ogdensburg – Karen A. (LaLonde) LaPlatney, 65; Funeral Services Nov. 29, 2010 at Frary Funeral Home.

Ogdensburg – Barbara (Alton) Montpetit, 75; Funeral Services Nov. 29, 2010 at Frary Funeral Home; burial in Ogdensburg Cemetery.

Plattsburgh – Donald J. Bouyea, 86; Funeral Nov. 27, 2010 at St. Peter's Church; burial in St. Peter's Cemetery.

Plattsburgh – Mark E. Bouyea, 60; Funeral Services Dec. 3, 2010 at St. Peter's Church; burial in St. Peter's Cemetery.

Plattsburgh – Marguerite Long Harran, 83; Funeral Services Nov. 29, 2010 at St. John's Church; burial in Whispering Maples Mausoleum.

Port Henry – Benjamin Fred Winters, 85; Funeral Dec. 4, 2010 at St. Patrick's Church; burial in Moriah Cemetery.

Redford – Fred Reyell, 73; Funeral Services Dec. 2, 2010 at Church of the Assumption; burial in parish cemetery.

Rouses Point – Gordon P. Duffy, 94; Funeral Services Nov. 27, 2010 at St. Patrick's Church; burial in St. Patrick's Cemetery.

Saranac Lake – Valeita (Ohmann) Allen, 64; Funeral Services Dec. 3, 2010 at St. Bernard's Church; burial in St. Bernard's Cemetery.

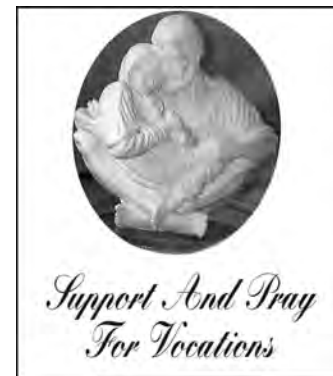
Ticonderoga – Inza M. (Wells) Jordon, 85; Funeral Services Dec. 4, 2010 at St. Mary's Catholic Church; burial in Old Hague Cemetery.

Waddington – Timothy L. Arquiatt, 37; Funeral Nov. 27, 2010 at St. Mary's Church; burial in St. Mary's Cemetery.

Watertown – Mary (Fontana) Borello, 98; Funeral Services Dec. 1, 2010 at St. Anthony's Church; burial in Glenwood Cemetery.

Watertown – Paul F. Moran, 80; Funeral Dec. 3, 2010 at Our Lady of the Sacred Heart; burial in Glenwood Cemetery.

Watertown – Marilyn I. (Nichols) Morgia, 83; Funeral Services Dec. 3, 2010 at St. Anthony's Church; burial in Glenwood Cemetery.



THE HOLY LONGING

JUST SHOW UP AND PRAY!

Maturity in Relationships and Prayer

By Father Ron Rolheiser, OMI
NCC columnist

Several years ago, a friend shared this story with me: Raised a Roman Catholic and essentially faithful in going to church and in trying to live an honest moral life, he found himself, in his mid-forties, plagued by doubts, unable to pray, and unable (when he was honest with himself) to even believe in the existence of God.

Sit in humility and silence long enough so that you can begin to hear someone else, not yourself.

Anxious about this and looking for spiritual guidance, he went to see a Jesuit priest who had a reputation as a spiritual director.

He anticipated the usual counsel about dark nights of the soul and how these are given to us to purify our faith and, already familiar with that literature, he wasn't expecting much.

Certainly he wasn't expecting the advice he received.

His Jesuit guide didn't try to engage him in any deep theological reflections on doubt and dark nights of faith.

Instead, like Elisha to Naaman, the Syrian leper, he gave my friend a counsel that sounded so simplistic that it triggered irritation rather than hope:

The Jesuit simply told him: Make a promise to yourself to sit in silent prayer for a half an hour a day for the next six months. I promise you that if you are faithful to that you will, by that time, recover your sense of God.

My friend, beyond being upset with what he felt was an over-simplistic bit of advice, protested that the biggest part of his problem was precisely that he couldn't pray, that he couldn't talk to a God whom he didn't believe existed: How can I pray when I no longer believe that there is a God?

The Jesuit persisted: "Just do it! Show up and sit in silent prayer for



CNS PHOTO BY NANCY WIECHEC

Young pilgrims kneel in prayer inside St. Peter's Basilica in Vatican City.

half an hour a day, even if you feel like you are talking to a wall. It's the only practical advice I can give you."

Despite his skepticism, my friend took the Jesuit's advice and faithfully sat in silent prayer for half an hour a day for six months and, by the end of that time, his sense of God had returned, as had his sense of prayer.

This story, I believe, highlights something important: Our sense of God's existence is very much linked to fidelity to prayer.

However, and this is the catch-22, it is hard to sustain a life of prayer precisely because our sense of God is often weak.

Simply put, it is not easy to pray.

We have easy words about prayer, but we struggle to sustain, long term, real prayer in our lives.

Prayer is easy only for beginners and for those who are already saints. During all the long years in between, it is difficult.

Why?

Because prayer has the same inner dynamics as love and love is sweet only in its initial stage, when we first fall in love, and again its final, mature stage.

In between, love is hard work, dogged fidelity, and needs willful commitment beyond what is normally provided by our emotions and our imagination.

Prayer works in the same way. Ini-

tially when we first begin to pray, like someone young and in love, we tend to have a period of fervor, of passion, a time when our emotions and our imaginations help give us a sense that God exists and that God hears our prayers.

But as we grow deeper and more mature in our relationship to God, just as in a relationship to someone we love, reality begins to dispel an illusion. It's not that we become disillusioned with God, but rather that we come to realize that so many of the warm thoughts and feelings we believed were about God were really about ourselves.

Disillusionment is a good thing. It's the dispelling of an illusion. What we thought was prayer was partly a spell of enchantment about ourselves.

When that disillusionment sets in, and this a maturing moment in our lives, it is easy to believe that we were deluded about the other, the person we had fallen in love with or, in the case of prayer, God.

The easy response then is to back away, to quit, to see the whole thing as having been an illusion, a false start. In the spiritual life, that's usually when we stop praying.

But it the opposite is called for. What we need to do then is to show up, just as we did before, minus the warm thoughts and feelings, bored, uncertain, and stripped of our enchantment about ourselves.

The deeper we go in relationships and in prayer, the more unsure of ourselves we become, and this is the beginning of maturity:

It's when I say, I don't know how to love and I don't know how to pray, that I first begin to understand what love and prayer actually are.

Hence, there is no better advice than that given by this Jesuit priest to my friend who thought himself an atheist: Just show up! Sit in humility and silence long enough so that you can begin to hear someone else, not yourself.

Oblate Father Ron Rolheiser, theologian, teacher, and award-winning author, is President of the Oblate School of Theology in San Antonio, TX. He can be contacted through his website www.ronrolheiser.com.