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NORTH COUNTRY CATHOLIC

MARCH 14, 2012

Need for interior light....

VATICAN CITY (CNS) - Just like the disciples, every follower of Jesus needs a "mountain-top" experience of light and of closeness to the Lord to get them through life's difficult and painful moments, Pope Benedict XVI said.

Celebrating a morning Mass March 4 at the Church of St. John Baptist de la Salle

in a Rome suburb and reciting the Angelus at midday with visitors at the Vatican, Pope Benedict commented on the day's Gospel account of the Transfiguration.

Jesus told his disciples that he would have to suffer and die, but they did not understand him and, in fact, they objected to the idea, the

pope told the crowds gathered in St. Peter's Square for the Angelus.

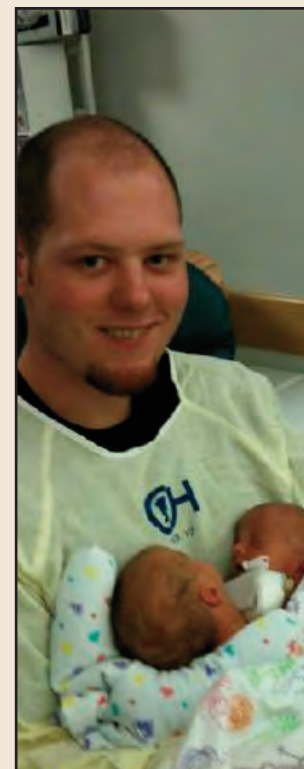
"For this reason, Jesus took three of them up the mountain and revealed his divine glory, the splendor of truth and love. Jesus wanted this light to illuminate their hearts when they would pass through the thick darkness

of his passion and death, when the scandal of the cross would be insupportable for them," the pope said.

"All of us need interior light to overcome the trials of life," Pope Benedict said. "This light comes from God, and it is Christ who gives it to us."

DADDY'S LITTLE GIRLS

Adams couple welcomes twins



Greg Tucker of Adams holds his newborn daughters Amelia and Allison, shortly after their March 1 birth at the Children's Hospital of Philadelphia. Upon learning that the twins were conjoined, Tucker and his wife, Shellie, resisted pressure from a Syracuse specialist to terminate the pregnancy. With support from family and friends, they have welcomed the girls into their family.

FULL STORY, PAGE 4

'Helping Jesus in Disguise'

This weekend, parishes of the diocese will take up The Catholic Relief Services Collection. This Collection supports six Catholic agencies that touch more than 100 million lives around the world.

The funds from the Collection help provide food to the hungry, welcome and support to displaced refugees, and invaluable life skills to those seeking a better life.

The diocese is also conducting the Peter's Pence Appeal March 17-18.

This is a collection for the Works of the Holy Father so that he may offer timely and effective emergency assistance to suffering people around the world.

No paper next Week

The next issue of the *North Country Catholic* will be dated March 28, 2012

SIGNING THE BOOK OF THE ELECT

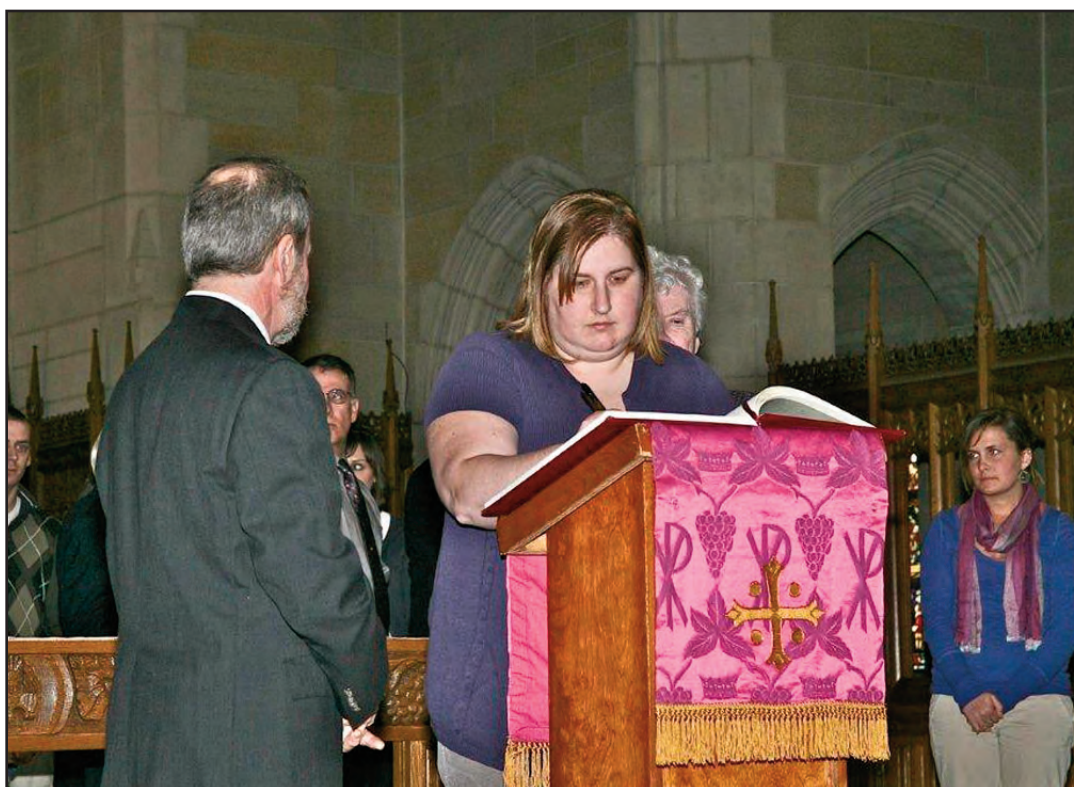


PHOTO BY BETTY STEELE

Kari Michalak, a catechumen from St. Mary's Parish in Ticonderoga, signs the Book of the Elect during the Rite of Election of Catechumens and of the Call to Continuing Conversion of Candidates held March 4 at St. Mary's Cathedral. Bishop Terry R. LaValley presided at the ceremony. Ms. Michalak is making final preparations before receiving the sacraments of initiation - Baptism, the Eucharist and Confirmation - at the Easter Vigil. More photos on page 5.

SEARCHING FOR HAPPINESS: Finding it as a 'Woman of Grace'... p. 16

NORTH
COUNTRY
CATHOLICBox 326
Ogdensburg, N.Y. 13669
USPS 0039-3400BISHOP TERRY
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General Manager

 Publish 45 issues per year: Weekly except issue after Christmas, one week in January, one week

in March and every other week in July by the Diocese of Ogdensburg, 622 Washington Street, Ogdensburg, N.Y. 13669.

Editorial Office:
622 Washington Street,
Ogdensburg, N.Y. 13669.

Telephone:
(315) 608-7556

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news@northcountry
catholic.org

**Entered at the
Post Office:**
Ogdensburg, NY
13669 as
Periodical Postage.

Subscription:
For one year:
In-Diocese Rate: \$25
Outside of Diocese Rate: \$28

Matters for publication should be addressed to PO Box 326 Ogdensburg, NY 13669 and should be received by Thursday prior to publication.

Paper is printed each Monday; dateline is Wednesday. Member, Catholic Press Association.

POSTMASTER:
Send address changes to
North Country Catholic,
PO Box 326
Ogdensburg, NY
13669-0326

LETTER FROM THE EDITOR

Please pray for
our pilgrims

It was a little over two years ago - on Feb. 23, 2010 - that the Vatican finally released the news that Father Terry LaValley would become the 14th Bishop of the Diocese of Ogdensburg.

And, it was on that very same day that this oh-so-bold editor asked him what he thought about traveling to Europe.

In 2008 and 2009, the *North Country Catholic* had organized two very successful pilgrimages, to Italy and to Ireland, with Bishop Robert Cunningham as our intrepid spiritual director.

To my delight, Bishop-elect LaValley didn't say 'no.'

I kindly gave him a few months to settle into his new life as our bishop before broaching the subject again.

This time Bishop LaValley said 'yes' and we immediately started to make plans for a 2012 pilgrimage to Catholic sites in Italy.

More than a year after we started the process, we're finally on our way.

Bishop LaValley, Father Doug Lucia and 70 pilgrims started our international journey on Monday with a trip to the Montreal Airport. After a long day and night

of travel we would begin our Italian pilgrimage at the historic St. Mark's Basilica in Venice.

Getting ready for the journey has not been without its challenges. There are so many details that must be addressed for pilgrimages like this - from passports to packing to prayer cards to popes.

Two weeks before our departure, we had to pass along the disappointing news that Pope Benedict would not be in Rome for our hoped-for papal audience. Our only consolation came from the knowledge that the people in Cuba and Mexico need our Holy Father, too.

And so we had to turn our focus from what we won't experience during our Italian adventure to all that we will.

And we ask you all to keep us in your prayers from now through March 23.

Please pray that this pilgrimage will indeed be a time for great spiritual nourishment for us and pray that we make our way to the other side of the world and back in safety.

And know that we will be praying for all of you too!

Mary Lou
Kilian

Warm up with a subscription to the *North Country Catholic* and find out what is happening with the Diocese of Ogdensburg.

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CHURCH: A FAMILY OF FAITH
Faith in the Light of Christ
4th Sunday of Lent - March 17-18

By Sister Mary Eamon Lyng, SSJ
Director of Evangelization

In this week's Gospel readings from John either from the narrative of Nicodemus, or, the Blind Man, the message is to have faith in the person of Jesus Christ. He is the Light of the World that overcomes the darkness of the sin and evil in the world. Faith in Jesus Christ is to believe that He can help us to see beyond the darkness of doubt. Jesus is the light that shines into the heart of each person, and the way we respond to this light determines our destiny. God's mercy, love, and light are sources of grace for us as the family of faith. They are gifts given to us, not because of any merit we earned, but because these gifts flow from God's gracious mercy and love to us. The question is asked to the blind man, "Do you believe in the Son of Man?" The same question is asked of us. Jesus was lifted high upon the cross so that all might be able to see Him and realize God's great mercy toward us. What story do you have of coming out of your own darkness into the light of Christ? What is your image of God? Has your image of God changed over the years? How can you help others you meet to come into the light of faith, step by step each day?

Sharing in Jesus' Ministry

5th Sunday of Lent - March 24-25

The hour of Jesus' death draws closer as the readings from John's Gospel tell us that the Son of Man is about to be glorified. One narrative tells us about the image of the grain of wheat falling into the ground and "dying" in order to produce fruit, or, the story of Jesus raising Lazarus from the dead. Jesus knows what He is about, where He is going, and what He must do. It is always giving glory to God, that is, the doing of His Father's will. He lays out for us how to be in harmony with all that the Father desires by His words and deeds. The ultimate deed is being able to lay down our lives for the sake of the Gospel.

This is the meaning of the hour; the time had come for Jesus to enter into His passion and death.

Out of obedience to the Father's will, Jesus laid down His life upon the Cross so that everyone might have eternal life.

The grain of wheat must die in order to live. Lazarus comes forth from the tomb, a sign pointing to Jesus' own resurrection. These narratives show a relationship between death and life. "Whoever loves his life loses it, and whoever hates his life in this world will preserve it for eternal life" (John 12:23). "I am the Resurrection and the Life; whoever believes in me, even if he dies, will live, and everyone who lives and believes in me will never die" (John 11:30). In Jesus' own person He exemplified the general principle: life through death—"And I, when I am lifted up from the earth, will draw all men to myself" (John 12:33). This lifting up is the actual posture of Jesus Crucified on the Cross being lifted up on Calvary; and the divine act by which Jesus was glorified was His obedience to the Father. It was the torment of sinful man that lifted up Jesus on the Cross; it will be the divine act of the Father's love that raised Jesus in immortal triumph. Through Jesus' death and glory, He will draw all humankind to Himself, to give them faith, life, and forgiveness. Jesus is the Triumphant King who has overcome sin and death.

Both these narratives express for us as, a community of faith that we, too, share in Jesus' ministry. It is one of complete surrender to the Father's will through acts of love, faith, hope, forgiveness, service and fidelity. We are called to follow Jesus' example. Our hour will also come. By dying to our own selfishness, we gain eternal life. What experiences have you had that dying for a particular cause has gained new insights or life for you? How has your work or your ministry called you to care for and work with others? How has this made a difference in your life?

'Too Few in the Pew'

Franciscan Sister Louise Alff, former director of Faith Formation for the Archdiocese of Philadelphia with a special focus on Parish Evangelization, will be presenting a workshop across the Diocese called Too Few in the Pew from April 14-16.

Evangelization workshops set in three sites of the diocese

Sister Louise will share practical strategies to learn practical ways to invite someone to 'take another look'; recognize signs of openness to discuss the faith, identify the best approach for different needs, and to recognize everyday opportunities to invite

St. Joseph Sister Mary Eamon Lyng, diocesan director of evangelization, said, "Often we see the pews in our parish churches full for Ash Wednesday, Palm Sunday, Easter Sunday, Christmas and maybe at the celebration of a wedding or at the time of a funeral for a family member or friend. Why is this?"

"We look around us and see that many of our family members and friends are not with us to pray, to worship, and to participate in the activities as a family of faith, Sister Eamon said. "These are Catholics who are still Catholic but are not practicing their Catholic faith. The reasons are varied as the questions are asked. Where are they? They are in our parishes, in our workplace, in our neighborhoods, and in our homes. We, as a Church, A Family of Faith truly miss their presence."

Sister Louise, who currently serves in the Diocese of Buffalo as the Education

and Faith Based Coordinator at the refugee center called Vive La Casa, will offer the Too Few in the Pew workshop in three locations, Carthage, Massena and Plattsburgh.

The workshop is open to all members of the parish but especially to the pastors, Parish Council members, Evangelization Teams, parish ministries that focus on outreach.

Registration for the workshop is due Friday, March 30, 2012.

Please contact your pastor or Sister Mary Eamon Lyng, SSJ, Office of Evangelization, elyng@dioogdensburg.org or call 393-2920 Ext. 380.

The schedule follows:
Jefferson/Lewis/Hamilton-Herkimer Deaneries

Augustinian Academy, Carthage, April 14, from 10 a.m. to 12.

St. Lawrence/Franklin Deaneries
 Trinity Catholic School, Massena, April 15 from 2 p.m. to 4

Clinton/Adirondack/Hamilton-Herkimer/Essex Deaneries

St. Peter's Emmaus Hall, Plattsburgh, April 16, from 1p.m. to 3 and 7 p.m. to 9

"Come and See and let us gather as a community of faith and love to learn we can be the face and presence of Christ for those who are seeking to return to the life of the Church," Sister Eamon said.

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2012 Diocesan Youth Rally is set for April 28 at IHC

The Office of Youth Ministry is gearing up once again for the annual Diocesan Youth Rally.

Young people, youth leaders, and catechists are invited to Immaculate Heart Central in Watertown on April 28

The theme for this year's rally is "Hear His Voice" inspired by the scripture readings for the fourth Sunday of Easter and Good Shepherd Sunday.

Deacon Brian Dwyer, diocesan director of youth ministry said, "with all the voices we are in contact with daily, our rally will inspire us to turn an eager ear to the Good Shepherd, the voice of truth and love."

The keynote speaker for the day will be Chris Padgett from Steubenville, Ohio. Padgett, a convert to Catholicism entered the Church at Easter in 1999. He has offering ministry around the country for the past decade.

"Using the medium of music and message he has attempted to communicate the truth of Christ's love and forgiveness in a way that makes a difference," Deacon



Musician, author and speaker Chris Padgett of Steubenville, Ohio, will be the keynote speaker at this year's Diocesan Youth Rally, focusing on the theme "Hear His Voice."

Dwyer said. "Chris and his wife Linda have been blessed with nine children. Chris enjoys speaking all around the country but is quick to say that his family is the backbone of this apostolate."

In addition to the keynote address, the day will be filled

with workshops geared toward young people and youth leaders. There will also be an interactive park with tables featuring SportsCamp and Guggenheim, Vocations and scouting, family life office and Catholic Charities and the Respect Life office.


In addition, there will be the opportunity for adoration of the Blessed Sacrament and the participation in the Sacrament of Reconciliation.

The day concludes with a question and answer session with Bishop LaValley and closing Mass.

"This is a great opportunity for young people in grades six to 12 to come together for a day of faith and fun with young people across the Diocese," Deacon Dwyer said. "Hope to see you all there and bring a friend or two along as well."

Registration may be made through parishes or by calling the youth office at 315.393.2920, Ext 411. The cost is \$20.

Further information is available at <http://dioogdensburg.org/Youth/rally.html>



Chrism Mass 2012
 All the Religious of the Diocese of Ogdensburg are cordially invited to join
Most Reverend Terry R. LaValley
Bishop of Ogdensburg
 for the annual Renewal of Priestly Commitment, the Blessing of the Holy Oils, and the consecration of the Sacred Chrism for use in all the churches of the Diocese symbolizing that we are one family in Christ on **Thursday, March 29th at 11:00 a.m.**
at St. Mary's Cathedral in Ogdensburg, New York.

Doctor urged that pregnancy of conjoined twins be terminated, but....

Amelia and Allison are welcomed to the world

By Kevin Mastellon
Staff writer

ADAMS - Twin girls, Amelia Lee and Allison June Tucker, were born March 1 in The Children's Hospital of Philadelphia by Caesarean section, the daughters of Shellie and Greg Tucker of Adams.

Both girls are doing exceedingly well but will face future surgery.

The girls are conjoined from their breast to their belly.

Shellie Tucker was in Georgia when she learned she was pregnant. "You will have a baby girl" was the conclusion of medical personnel after two ultra sounds. Shellie and Greg already had one son, Owen, and the couple was trying for another child.

Greg was in the process of separating from the US Army. With formal separation looming the Tuckers began the trip back to Jefferson County where they would live with Shellie's parents for a while and then get an apartment, raise their son and anticipate the birth of their daughter.

They drove north in two cars. Shellie drove one of the vehicles the 1000 miles or so to her family's home in Adams. Her parents are Lawrence and Vickie Ambeau, communicants of St. Cecilia's in Adams. Her father is in the Permanent Deacon Formation program of the Diocese.

There is nothing in what has been related to the reader so far that sounds unusual or out of the ordinary.

Nothing seemed very different to the Tucker and Ambeau families either.

That all changed two days after Shellie and Greg returned north. They had an appointment with a physician in Syracuse to establish a relationship with an obstetrician here.

It was then, Larry Ambeau says, "that they found out Shellie was five months pregnant with twins and the ba-



Greg and Shellie Tucker of Adams are shown with their twin daughters Amelia Lee and Allison June. The babies, born March 1 at Children's Hospital of Philadelphia, are conjoined from their breast to their belly. A Syracuse specialist urged the couple to terminate the pregnancy but, with support from their family and friends, including parishioners of St. Cecilia's Parish, the Knights of Columbus and Catholic Charities, the young couple made the decision to welcome their babies into their lives

bies were conjoined."

Naturally everyone wondered why these facts were missed in Georgia. Mr. Ambeau doubts Shellie would have driven all that way if she was aware of the circumstances of her pregnancy.

The family physician referred Shellie to a specialist in Syracuse. That physician tried to talk Shellie into terminating her pregnancy.

"That's all he talked about," Ambeau said, "he didn't talk about other options; he painted a really bleak picture."

The first physician anticipated Shellie's determination to see the pregnancy through and referred her to The Children's Hospital of Philadelphia (CHOP).

The medical staff in Philadelphia found the babies conjoined but the news about organ sharing was

very positive.

"They laid everything on the table," Ambeau said, "all the options, all the possibilities."

The doctors sounded generally optimistic. Shellie decided to go forward and the doctors concurred.

There were plenty of stresses on both families in the months that followed. Greg was unemployed. With Greg leaving the Army in January the couple would lose their TRICARE health care benefits for the uniformed services.

The Tuckers might have continued coverage beyond termination of employment in the Army but the premium was too steep. The Ambeaus explored coverage under their insurance plans but were again looking at premium payments beyond their means.

Shellie has been working to get her collegiate degree online. She is close to graduating but that effort had to take a back seat.

The Ambeaus willingly brought their daughter, son-in-law and grandson (and two dogs to add to their own two) into their home.

The empty nest was crowded and that naturally disrupts the lives of everyone involved.

"But we all understood what we were going through and we handled it," Ambeau said.

Patience, prayer, support

It took enormous patience, prayer and support.

The support came from Daughter of Charity Sister Donna Franklin, Director of Catholic Charities in the Diocese who worked with the Tuckers to apply for and se-

cure Medicaid benefits.

It came from Bishop Terry LaValley through the Bishop's Fund.

It came and continues to come from the Ambeau's former pastor, Father Douglas Decker (now Pastor in Tupper Lake) in the way of contributions from the parishes of St. Alphonsus Church and Holy Name Church.

And it comes from the current Pastor Father Patrick Ratigan and the parishioners of St. Cecilia's in Adams.

The Knights of Columbus conducted a fund raiser at St. Cecilia's that raised more than \$7,000.

Ambeau credits Father Ratigan and his frequent reminders to the parish of Shellie's story and her decision to carry the pregnancy to term.

Contributions continue to arrive and are deposited in a fund for the children. (They can be sent directly to Vickie Ambeau 11590 Ayles Rd, Adams NY 13605.)

Larry Ambeau's final comments during our conversation were about prayer.

He said that he has been overwhelmed by the number of people who have joined their hearts to pray for them.

"I am just amazed at the number of people who have come up to me and said, 'I'm praying for you', people I don't even know," he said. "It has been prayer, conversations with Jesus, that has carried me through all of this and Shellie told me it has been prayer and the knowledge that so many people were praying for us that has helped her as well."

Shellie and Greg are at a Ronald McDonald House in Philadelphia near the hospital and their girls.

There is no date set for the surgical separation of the twins. Amelia and Allison will continue to grow healthier and stronger and then their doctors will decide the time is appropriate.

It will be another occasion for prayer.

CEREMONY HELD MARCH 4 AT THE CATHEDRAL

THE RITE OF ELECTION

And the Call to Continuing Conversion of Candidates



PHOTO BY BETTY STEELE
Michael Wagner, Watertown regional director of the Department of Christian Formation, left, watches as **Felix Kurtz** of St. Stephen's Parish in Croghan signs the Book of the Elect. **Felix' sponsor, Bob Buholtz**, is at right.

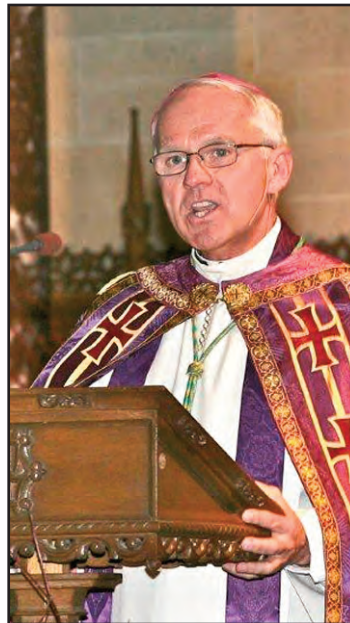


PHOTO BY BETTY STEELE
 In his homily, **Bishop LaValley** thanked the catechumens and candidates "for coming to our Cathedral Church to be counted among the elect. Your presence here brings such joy to all of us."



PHOTO BY BETTY STEELE
Bishop LaValley greets **Elizabeth Rhone** of St. James Parish in Carthage, who is the sponsor for her husband, **Jonathon**, center.



PHOTO BY ANN CHARLEBOIS
Bishop LaValley is shown above with the group from St. Mary's Church, Ticonderoga. From left are, **St. Joseph Sister Sharon Dalton**, sponsor; **Travis Whitford**, candidate; **Heather Whitford**, candidate; **Atonement Sister Carol Daul**, sponsor; **Becki Wayman**, sponsor; **Bishop LaValley**, **Courtney Wayman**, candidate; **Maureen Johns**, sponsor; and **Kari Michalak**, catechumen.

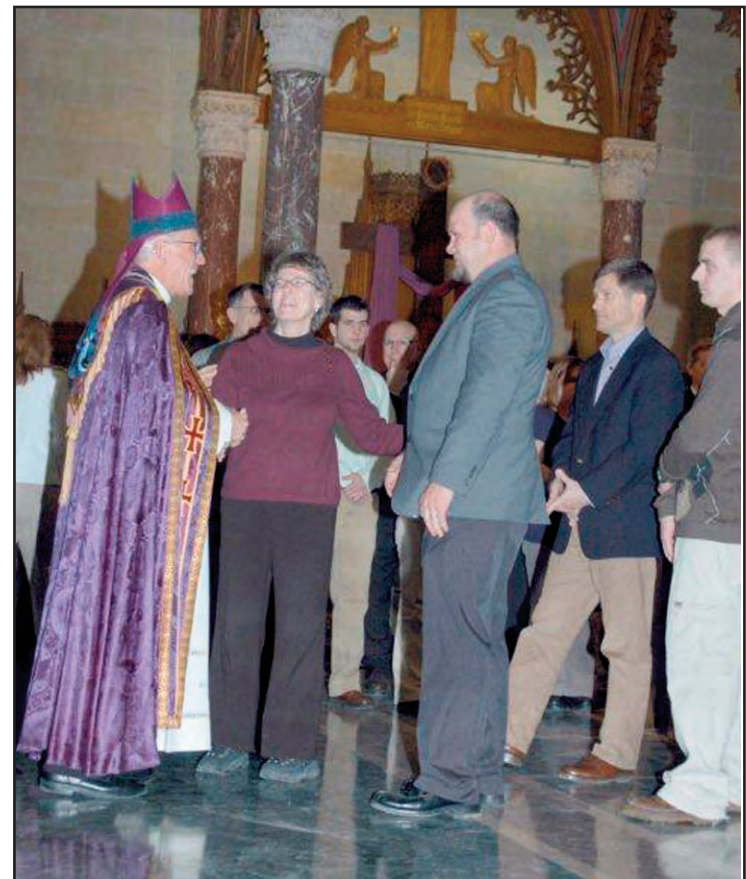


PHOTO BY ANN CHARLEBOIS
Kathy Allan introduces **Jerry Garvin**, a catechumen from Holy Family Church in Watertown, to **Bishop LaValley** while **Tim Nolan**, sponsor and **Brad Mercer**, catechumen from Holy Family Church wait to meet the bishop.

Funeral held for Atonement Sister Lucille Menard, 87

GARRISON, NY – A Mass of Christian Burial for Atonement Sister Lucille Menard, 87, was held Feb. 21 at the Franciscan Sisters of the Atonement's Motherhouse chapel.

She died Feb 15 at the Residence at St. Francis Convent,

Graymoor, Garrison. Burial was in the Sisters' Cemetery at Graymoor.

Sister Lucille was born in Schenectady, N.Y., Aug. 14, 1924, the daughter of Charles and Margaret (Healey) Menard.

She joined the Franciscan Sisters of the Atonement at Graymoor, Garrison, NY in 1941. She professed her first vows in 1943 and her final vows in 1948. She received a B.S. in Social Sciences from Boston College and her M.Ed. in Religious Education from Boston College.

As an Atonement missionary, she served in catechetical and pastoral ministries in California and on the East

Coast throughout the New England States, New Jersey, New York and at Graymoor, Garrison, NY.

During the early 1970's, she was a coordinator of religious education in Potsdam, Ogdensburg and Port Henry. She also served the Diocese of Ogdensburg as a member of the Liturgical Commission and Sisters' Council.

Sister Lucille is survived by her sister Margaret (Hogan – O'Rourke) of St. Augustine, Florida and many nieces and nephews.

She was pre-deceased by her brother Edward and her sisters Patricia (Clair) and Elaine (Blakey).


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Bishop LaValley's schedule

March 12-23 – Pilgrimage to Italy.

March 25 – 11 a.m., Mass for the Deacon Retreat at Wadhams Hall in Ogdensburg.

March 26 – 11 a.m., Mass and luncheon with the Daughters of Charity on their Vow Day; 6:15 p.m., Recognition Dinner for the National Honor Society Students of Immaculate Heart Central High School at the Italian American Club in Watertown.

March 27 – 9:45 a.m., Episcopal Council Meeting at the Bishop's Residence in Ogdensburg.

March 28 – 9 a.m., St. Joseph's Home Board of Manager's Meeting at St. Joseph's Home in Ogdensburg. 6 p.m., Dinner and Evening of Prayer with Priests at Wadhams Hall in Ogdensburg

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.

Further information is available from Atonement Sister Ellen Donahue, 315-393-2920, ext. 440.

Upcoming programs:

April 21 - 9 a.m., St. Augustine's School, Peru

May 2 - 6 p.m., Seton Academy, Plattsburgh

May 23 - 6 p.m., Seton Academy, Plattsburgh

NO PAPER NEXT WEEK

The next issue of the *North Country Catholic* Will be dated March 28

NO PAPER NEXT WEEK

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Rest in Peace

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

March 14 – Msgr. Maurice Bellamy, 1958; Msgr. Edgar A. Gallagher, 1961; Rev. Joseph E. Turcotte, O.M.I., 1980; Rev. Edward C. Rivette, 1981; Rev. Timothy J. Soucy, 2009
March 15 – Rev. Charles J. McMorrow, 1898; Rev. Howard G. Goiser, 1984
March 16 – Rev. William A. MacDermott, 1913; Msgr. Noel V. Zimmerman, 1994
March 17 – Rev. Michael Froc, O.M.I., 1905; Rev. Francis X. Parisian, 1955
March 18 – Rev. Joseph Murtagh, 1928

March 19 – Rev. Andronique Blaignier, 1958; Msgr. Thomas J. Robillard, 2009

March 20 – Bishop Joseph H. Conroy, 1939

March 23 – Msgr. Paul T. Joly, 1987

March 24 – Rev. George Roskwitalski, O.F.M. Conv., 1980

March 25 – Rev. Michael D. Charbonneau, 1909

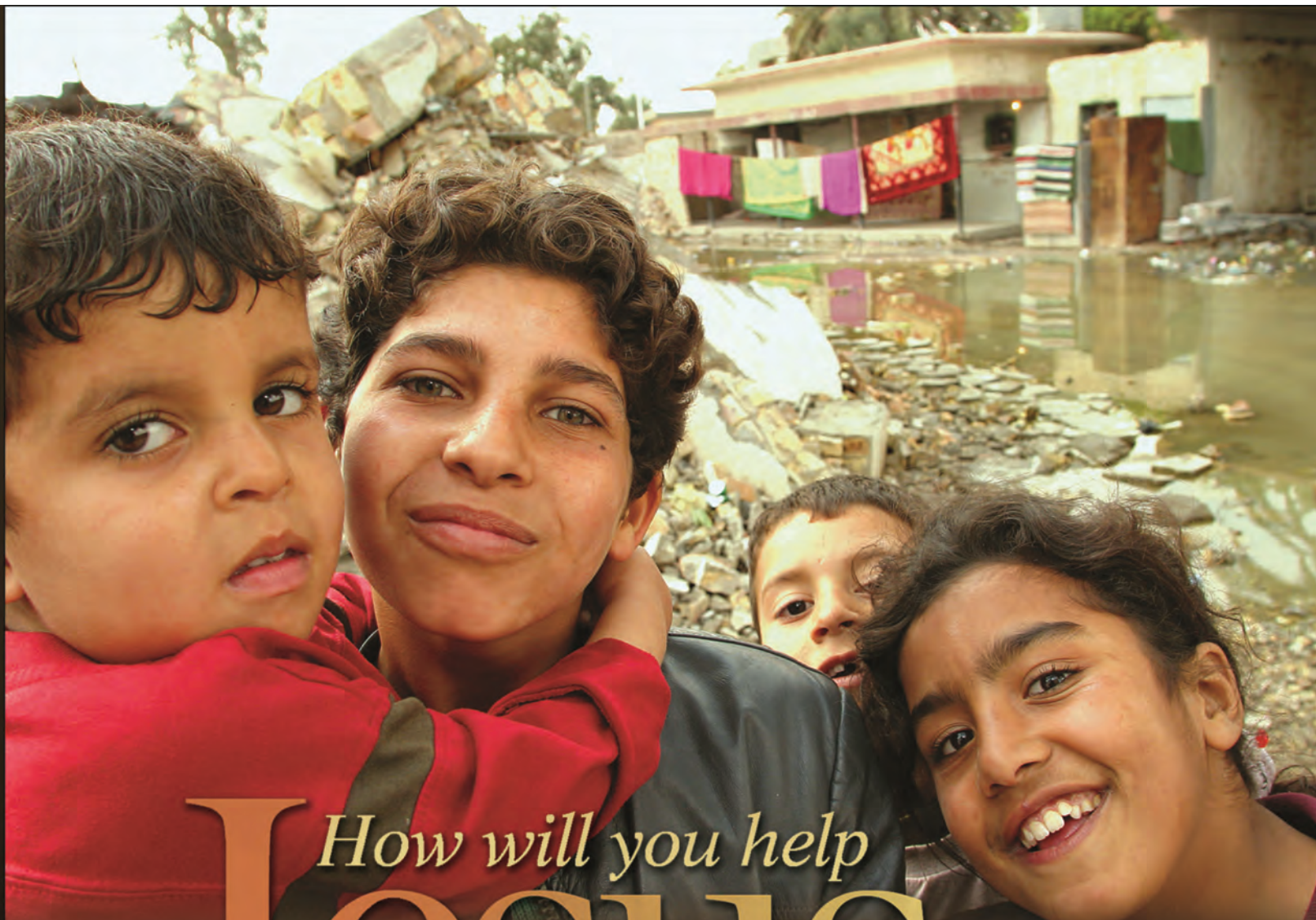
March 26 – Rev. Jean P. Bernard, O.M.I., 1885; Rev. Thomas J. Rodgers, O.S.A., 1971; Msgr. William E. LaVallee, 1976

March 27 – Rev. Bernard Marron, 1927; Rev. Henry Cormerais, 1938; Rev. Lawrence J. Gerrity, O.S.A., 1981; Rev. John L. Gallagher, O.S.A., 1982

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**, Terriane Yanulavich, Adult & Youth Counseling Services of Northern New York, PO Box 2446, Plattsburgh, NY, 12901; e-mail: aycsnn@yahoo.com; Phone: 518-569-0612; Fax: 518-425-0401

COLLECTION WEEKEND
APRIL 2 & 3, 2011



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The Gabriel Project

By Paula Shares
Contributing writer

PLATTSBURGH-Where are women supposed to turn when they find out they are pregnant and don't have the financial or emotional resources to welcome the baby into their life?

The main purpose of the Gabriel Project is to help women who are in a crisis pregnancy with spiritual, emotional and practical assistance

One local resource many women have found helpful is the Gabriel Project.

The Gabriel Project, which has an office at Our Lady of Victory Church in Plattsburgh, has been in existence since 2001 and is one of many in the country.

Its main purpose is to help women who are in a crisis pregnancy. The help provided includes spiritual, emotional and practical help.

Many women are referred to the program by various social service offices throughout the area. In 2011, the project also helped families who were affected by Hurricane Irene and the flood. The poor economy



Paula Schares, one of the coordinators of the Gabriel Project at Our Lady of Victory Church in Plattsburgh, reads a story to Cheyenne and Montana Uehlein whose family was helped by the Gabriel Project.

has also factored into the number of families the program helped in the last few years.

Women who are in the program are offered gently used maternity clothing which has been donated, along with new and used items for the baby. The coordinators also help the families find additional resources in the area including Birthright, Family Connections and Catholic Charities. Prayer books are offered to encourage the women to pray for their baby before and after he/she is born.

The goals for the following year are to encourage all women to breast feed, and also to use cloth diapers where a washing machine is available. The cost of disposables to the family and the environment make using cloth diapers a smart choice for those who are at home with their baby. This year it is hoped that more families will use cloth diapers in order to save money. A family who chooses to use the cloth diapers is given a starter set, which the mothers appreciate.

Funds for the Gabriel Proj-

ect come from the Respect Life Fund, as well as private contributions.

Last year, the first BOOGIE BASH was held in Plattsburgh. The event raised over \$1000 in cash and donated baby items. Another BOOGIE BASH will be held at Our Lady of Victory Gym on Sunday, April 22 from 5-8 pm.

The evening will be broken down into half hours segments where five different types of dancing will be taught by local teachers.

People attending will have an opportunity to participate in zumba, line dancing,

square dancing, English Country Dancing, and folk dancing.

Breaks will be given between the dances, and the Knights of Columbus will have their concession stand open for people to purchase refreshments.

Group plans second annual BOOGIE BASH to raise needed funds

Admission to the event is a new baby item or monetary donation. Four gift baskets will also be raffled off during the evening.

The enthusiasm and crowd last year made for a great evening and the organizers are hoping for an even larger turnout this year.

For questions regarding the Gabriel Project or the BOOGIE BASH, contact Paula at 562-2127 or nicetouch1@juno.com

Ann Meskunas, a 2011 BOOGIE BASH participant, said, "Last year's BOOGIE BASH was so much fun. I've been looking forward to this year's ever since that night. It was a great idea and it gave "birth" to a great event. About 80 people or so were introduced to and got to try their hand and feet at English Country dance, Round dancing, square dancing/zumba, contra and line dancing. I loved it! I love to dance and I'd never tried some of those before, and many others hadn't either, and now I can't wait for an opportunity to do them all again. "Great music, great socializing opportunity, and great exercise," she said. "And all for a great cause. Who wouldn't want to try it?"

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VATICAN LETTER

In Mexico & Cuba, pope to highlight local issues

By Francis X. Rocca
Catholic News Service

VATICAN CITY (CNS) - Pope Benedict's trip to Mexico and Cuba March 23-28 will be a relatively brief one, consisting of a little more than two days in each country. Yet his visit is bound to highlight a wide range of prominent issues affecting an entire continent of crucial importance to the Catholic Church.

The pope arrives in Leon, in central Mexico, late afternoon local time March 23. His first full day's schedule will be light, no doubt reflecting concerns for the health of the pope, who turns 85 April 16. Pope Benedict's flight will have taken him across eight time zones, to a city 6,000 feet above sea level (compared to only 70 in Rome).

On the evening of March 24, the pope will meet with Mexican President Felipe Calderon, who has served as head of state since December 2006. His administration has been marked by a violent struggle between the military and the country's drug cartels, a topic that will presumably arise in discussions between the two men.

The next day, Pope Benedict will address bishops from Mexico and across Latin America at a vespers service in Leon's Cathedral of Our Most Holy Mother of Light. Here he is likely to touch

on some of the issues that he raised on his only other Latin American trip, in 2007, when he spoke to the Fifth General Conference of the Bishops of Latin America and the Caribbean in Aparecida, Brazil.

At that time, the pope urged church leaders to struggle against poverty and oppression but to shun direct involvement in partisan politics -- an echo of his long-standing critique of the liberation theology movement, which grew from Latin American roots.

Pope Benedict also warned then against the danger of syncretism, or the blending of religions, by those who adopt elements of indigenous traditions in their Catholic devotions -- a practice that the pope also denounced on his trip in November to the West African country of Benin.

The context and timing of this year's speech will likely affect the content of Pope Benedict's message to the Latin American bishops.

Mexico is historically a highly polarized country on religious questions. The country's 1910 revolution was heavily anticlerical, and the 1917 constitution forbade religious education and even the public display of clerical garb. Such measures sparked the Cristero Rebellion in the late 1920s, when conflict between Catholic rebels and government forces left as many as 90,000

dead. The country remains a mix of highly assertive secular and religious traditions, making it potentially fertile ground for the new evangelization that Pope Benedict has made a priority of his pontificate, and which will be the theme of a Vatican synod of bishops this October.

Cuba, where the pope goes March 26, is in a sense the mirror image of Mexico. It's a country where the Catholic Church has enjoyed relatively tranquil dealings with the civil authorities; diplomatic relations with the Holy See have never been interrupted, even by the institution of a communist government in the 1960s, but religious practice has traditionally been as feeble as anywhere in Latin America.

Church officials estimate that only about 2.5 percent of Cuba's population of 11 million can be considered practicing Catholics today, a fraction of the proportion prior to the revolution, though it represents a significant rise since the visit of Pope John Paul in 1998.

The church in Cuba continues to operate under severe restrictions, unable to build new churches or legally operate schools. However, the role of Cardinal Jaime Ortega of Havana and other Cuban bishops in successfully negotiating for the release of more than 100 political prisoners in 2010 reflects the government's growing respect for church authority.

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Cardinal Dolan dismayed that White House rebuffs religious freedom concerns

WASHINGTON (CNS) -- In a strongly worded letter to his fellow bishops, Cardinal Timothy M. Dolan of New York charged that White House officials failed to consider the U.S. bishops' concerns that the federal mandate governing employer coverage of contraception and sterilization under the health care law violated religious freedom principles.

An invitation from the White House to "work out the wrinkles" regarding the mandate either by rescinding it or at least widening the exemptions on religious grounds failed to reach an agreement and the effort "seems to be stalled," he said in the letter released late March 2.

The letter cited recent comments by a White House official that the mandates are a "fait accompli" and that Congress was notified that the rules have been published in the Federal Register "without change."

Cardinal Dolan, president of the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops, also said that during a recent meeting with White House officials, USCCB staff members "asked directly whether the broader concerns of religious freedom ... are all off the table."

"They (USCCB staff) were informed they are," he wrote.

"Instead they advised the bishops' conference that we listen to the 'enlightened' voices of accommodation," pointing to a recent editorial in America magazine, the cardinal said.

The editorial in the magazine's March 5 issue questioned whether the bishops' opposition to the revised mandate released by the ad-

ministration Feb. 10 was an issue of disagreement over government policy as opposed to an infringement of religious liberty.

As our ancestors did with previous threats, we will tirelessly defend the timeless and enduring truth of religious freedom

Cardinal Timothy M. Dolan of New York

"The White House seems to think we bishops simply do not know or understand Catholic teaching and so, taking a cue from its own definition of religious freedom, now has nominated its own handpicked official Catholic teachers," the letter continued.

Despite the setback, Cardinal Dolan promised that the USCCB would not back down in its drive to overturn the mandates because of its overriding concern for religious freedom.

Obama's revision said religious employers could decline to cover contraceptives if they were morally opposed to them, but the health insurers that provide their health plans would be required to offer contraceptives free of charge to women who requested such coverage.

Questions remain as to how it relates to religious employers who are self-insured.

In his letter, the cardinal reiterated that the bishops' conference will "continue to accept invitations to meet with and to voice our concerns to anyone of any party, for this is hardly partisan, who is willing to correct the infringements on religious freedom that we are now under."

"But as we do so, we cannot rely on off-the-record promises of fixes without dead-

lines and without assurances of proposals that will concretely address the concerns in a manner that does not conflict with our principles and teaching," he added.

Cardinal Dolan also expressed hope that Congress may be more willing to address religious freedom concerns legislatively.

"Our commitment to seeking legislative remedies remains strong. And it is about remedies to the assault on religious freedom. Period," Cardinal Dolan said.

The letter outlined planned actions to spread the word about the mandates to parishes.

It said advocacy and education efforts will expand and that catechetical resources on the significance of religious freedom to the church and the church's teaching on it from doctrinal and moral perspectives are being developed.

Liturgical aids to encourage prayer on challenges to religious freedom also are on tap, the letter said.

"Given this climate we have to prepare for tough times," Cardinal Dolan wrote.

"Brothers, we know so very well that religious freedom is our heritage, our legacy and our firm belief, both as loyal Catholics and Americans," he continued. "There have been many threats to religious freedom over the decades and years, but these often came from without. This one sadly comes from within."

"As our ancestors did with previous threats, we will tirelessly defend the timeless and enduring truth of religious freedom," he said.

Editor's Note:

The full text of Cardinal Dolan's letter can be found online at www.usccb.org/issues-and-action/religious-liberty/upload/Dolan-to-all-bishops-HHS.pdf.

CATHOLIC WORLD AT A GLANCE

Church must better explain teaching on sexuality, pope tells bishops

VATICAN CITY (CNS) -- Permissive attitudes toward sex, cohabitation before marriage and acceptance of same-sex marriage can damage individuals and are harmful for society, Pope Benedict XVI told a group of U.S. bishops at the Vatican. "It is in fact increasingly evident that a weakened appreciation of the indissolubility of the marriage covenant, and the widespread rejection of a responsible, mature sexual ethic grounded in the practice of chastity, have led to grave societal problems bearing an immense human and economic cost," the pope said March 9. Meeting the bishops of Minnesota, North Dakota and South Dakota, who were making their "ad limina" visits to report on the status of their dioceses, the pope said ignorance of or challenges to church teaching on marriage and sexuality were part of the "intellectual and ethical challenges" to evangelization in the United States today. The pope did not focus on current tensions between the U.S. bishops and the Obama administration, particularly over health care coverage of contraception and other practices that violate church teaching. But at the beginning of his speech, Pope Benedict reiterated his concern about "threats to freedom of conscience, religion and worship which need to be addressed urgently so that all men and women of faith, and the institutions they inspire, can act in accordance with their deepest moral convictions." Concentrating his remarks on the need to promote and explain church teaching on sexuality, the pope said the church's key concern is "the good of children, who have a fundamental right to grow up with a healthy understanding of sexuality and its proper place in human relationships."

Bishops urge Congress to remember the poor in budget decisions

WASHINGTON (CNS) -- Congress should base all federal budget decisions on how they provide for those in need, whether they protect or threaten human life and dignity, and if they promote the common good of "workers and families who struggle to live in dignity in difficult economic times," said the chairmen of two U.S. bishops' committees in a letter to Congress. "In the past year, Congress and the administration have taken significant action to reduce the federal deficit, while attempting to protect programs that serve poor and vulnerable people," said Bishops Stephen E. Blaire of Stockton, Calif., and Richard E. Pates of Des Moines, Iowa. The letter was dated March 6 and released March 7. Bishop Blaire is chairman of the U.S. bishops' Committee on Domestic Justice and Human Development and Bishop Pates is chairman of their Committee on International Justice and Peace. "Congress will continue to face difficult choices about how to allocate burdens and sacrifices and balance resources and needs," the bishops said. "We fear the pressure to cut vital programs that protect the lives and dignity of the poor and vulnerable will increase. As Catholic bishops, we have tried to remind Congress that these choices are economic, political, and moral." The bishops said they joined other Christian leaders in calling for a "circle of protection" around the poor and vulnerable, both "at home and abroad," as members of Congress craft and debate a budget resolution and spending bills for the next fiscal year. The bishops said access to "affordable, life-affirming health care that respects religious freedom" is an urgent national priority and warned against shifting rising health care costs to vulnerable seniors, people with disabilities and the poor. They also pushed for efforts to restore funding cut from the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program, formerly known as food stamps, and to make permanent an expansion of low-income tax credits.



Catholic leaders: Farm bill can help hungry, rural US

WASHINGTON (CNS) - Five U.S. Catholic clergy and lay leaders said they want to work with lawmakers for a new farm bill that "provides for poor and hungry people both at home and abroad, offers effective support for those who grow our food, ensures fairness to family farmers and ranchers, and promotes stewardship of the land."

"The farm bill affects us all, but most significantly, those who are hungry, living in poverty and struggling to keep farming a viable way of life," they said in a March 6 letter to key members of a Senate committee that works on agricultural issues.

The farm bill is a reauthorization package that generally comes up for renewal every five or six years.

"The 2012 Farm Bill is an opportunity to address our nation's broken and outdated agricultural policies. This is a crucial time to build a more just framework that puts poor and hungry people first, serves small and moderate-sized family farms, promotes sustainable stewardship of the land and helps vulnerable farmers and rural communities both at home and in developing countries," the letter said.

The letter was signed by Bishop Stephen E. Blaire of Stockton, Calif., chairman of the U.S. bishops' Committee on Domestic Justice and Human Development; Bishop Richard E. Pates of Des Moines, Iowa, chairman of the bishops' Committee on International Justice and Peace; Father Larry Snyder, president of Catholic Charities USA; Carolyn Woo, president of Catholic Relief Services; and James F. Ennis, executive director of the National Catholic Rural Life Conference.

It was addressed to Sens. Debbie Stabenow, D-Mich.,

and Pat Roberts, R-Kan., chairwoman and ranking member, respectively, of the Senate Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition and Forestry.

The Catholic leaders targeted domestic hunger and nutrition, international food security and development, conservation, subsidies and rural development in their letter.

In an era of budget constraints, "government resources (subsidies) should assist those who truly need assistance and support those who comply with environmentally sound and sustainable farming practices," they said. "We also call for a careful consideration of the economics and ethics of subsidizing food to produce fuel."

On domestic hunger and nutrition issues, "we call on you to support access to adequate and nutritious food for those in need and to oppose attempts to weaken or restructure these programs that would result in reduced benefits to hungry people," they said. They specifically called for adequate funding for the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program, formerly known as food stamps, and the Emergency Food Assistance Program.

Rural communities and small towns, the Catholic leaders said, are "the backbone of the social and economic life of America. Effective policies and programs are needed to encourage rural development and promote the culture and well-being of these communities." Help, they added, should be funneled to beginning, socially disadvantaged, small and midsized farmers and ranchers, as well as access to broadband telecommunications services and entrepreneurial assistance initiatives.

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SCRIPTURE REFLECTIONS

Gospel shows reason for courage and hope

For older Catholics, the phrase "Laetare Sunday" brings memories of a Mass celebrant clothed in beautiful rose vestments, and maybe even flowers on the altar.

It was the half-time show to mark our long struggle since Ash Wednesday with fast and abstinence.

Years ago, Catholics fasted from midnight before receiving Holy Communion, and "giving up" candy and movies was a lot more common. (Today we would add TV, the Internet, texting, and facebook, etc.).

If we've given up some of

that, then we have reason to rejoice today at the half-time!

Few of us, however, feel exhausted from all the extra hours of vigilant prayer! Rather, we're more likely to feel that we'd better get going, or Lent will be over!

As usual, we find many insights from today's Scriptures that point the way to some Lenten prayer and activity for the week ahead.

In the first reading, we hear of the deplorable conditions

and the laxity of faith among the Jewish people of the sixth and fifth centuries, B.C.

Princes, priests and people had "added infidelity to infidelity" by mistreating the prophets and ridiculing God's message. (This sounds a lot like the moral corruption in the society of our own day).

Enraged, God had sent them into exile in Babylon for seventy years.

But in his great mercy, he uses a pagan, King Cyrus, who had conquered the Babylonians, to release the enslaved Israelites, sending them back to Jerusalem, loaded with gold and other materials for rebuilding the Temple, the center and soul of their worship.

By this time, most Catholics in this country are aware of the attempts of our government to intrude on

MARCH 18

The Fourth Sunday of Lent
READINGS

2nd Chronicles 36:14-16

Ephesians 2:4-10

John 3:14-21

the precious rights of conscience and religious freedom through the proposed new health care laws.

While one religion cannot impose its beliefs on others, we must never be forced to act against our conscience in operating our hospitals, nursing homes, and other charitable institutions.

We can and should stand up for our rights. Otherwise, we may become isolated and helpless to live our faith right in our own

country. A reason for courage and hope, however, is found in today's Gospel.

There, we find one of the most consoling texts in all Scripture: "For God so loved the world that he gave his only Son, so that everyone who believes in Him might not perish but might have eternal life."

What follows is Jesus' plea that we shun the darkness. "For whoever lives the truth comes to the light, so that his works may be clearly seen as done in God."

Our reason to rejoice then lies in our resolution to live and act in the light of God's truth, and to stir up our faith in His incredible and ever-present love and mercy. Then, we need to act on that conviction!



Monsignor
Paul E.
Whitmore

OUR READERS WRITE

The qualities we need in our political leaders

By Fr. Vincent Freeh, MSC

Missionary of the Sacred Heart Community,
Watertown

We need political leaders who believe in leading by principle - not for personal gain or in order to impose some ideology, but to serve the people in keeping with their rightful needs.

Our people in government need to make it clear that leadership by principle does not accommodate those who are driven by ideology or are in the service to pragmatism.

Our leaders need to have clear in their minds that according to the U.S. Constitution, what our founders had in mind was a separation of the powers of Church and State, not a prohibition for

citizens to a public observance and celebration of their religious beliefs.

Our leaders need to recognize the erroneous belief that democracy gives us religious freedom.

It is rather that religion provides the necessary conditions for us to have democracy.

Again, our founding fathers made this clear, v.g., President George Washington, who in his farewell address pointed out that you can't have democracy without morality and that you won't have morality very long without religion.

Our political leaders need to believe in the fact that the only way in which religion can provide this benefit is if it resides in our culture.

For in reality it is culture that ultimately authorizes human behavior.

To "privatize" or prohibit the flow of religious values, truths, principles, priorities and goals into the ambient culture is to strip society and civilization of all genuine worth, leaving it the prey of pragmatic interests which have no regard for human dignity.

Our leaders need to be reminded that there are three institutions which exercise the greatest influence in creating culture and in shaping our cultural code - family, school, and church. These three institutions represent our best hope for preserving our most cherished values - life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness.

The basic principles that

serve these institutions can be shared with and must be protected by government. However, when any administration, whether for pragmatic reasons or in an attempt to impose an ideology, either undermines, interferes with or appropriates the legitimate authority of these institutions, our freedom from dependence on and control by the State is in peril.

With regard to general or "first" principles - those which apply for everyone and at all times - there is neither need nor possibility for compromise as to the law itself, only as to its application in a specific case.

Specific principles, by reason of origin and circumstance, are open to and often do require interpreta-

tion. In our often-deplored political paralysis that goes by the name of gridlock we have a clear example of what happens when attempts are made to reach consensus without reference to principle.

The real tragedy is not a failure to make more laws, but to understand the limits within which laws can promote the common welfare without compromising the rights of individuals.

The call for smaller government is not a vote for anarchy.

It is rather a protest against a government that tries to gather all power into its hands and to enforce by law that which can be achieved only by a cultural revolution informed with morals values.

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AT THE MOVIES

A THOUSAND WORDS

By John Mulderig
Catholic News Service

Silence may indeed be golden. But the comedy "A Thousand Words" (Dream-Works) -- which lumbers forth from an elaborate premise whereby a fast-talking literary agent must learn to hold his peace or kick the bucket -- turns out to be about 90 minutes worth of barely alloyed lead.

Eddie Murphy plays slickster Jack McCall, whose career marketing manuscripts brings him into contact with nice-guy guru and author Dr. Sinja (Cliff Curtis). Jack's habitual insincerity, however, soon puts him on Sinja's (and, so we're meant to infer, the cosmos') bad side and he finds himself cursed.

According to the terms of the jinx, each word Jack

speaks causes a leaf to fall from a tree that has magically sprouted in his backyard. Once the branches are bare, he'll die. By the time Jack figures all of that out -- and the audience, though wearied, is well ahead of him on this -- he has only the titular amount of vocabulary left.

Jack's sudden reticence stymies not only his career (Clark Duke plays his beleaguered office assistant Aaron) but his heretofore happy marriage to wife Caroline (Kerry Washington) as well.

There's mugging galore, but little hilarity in director Brian Robbins' barren comedy. And, when screenwriter Steve Koren's script turns serious about two-thirds of the way through, it mixes fruitful messages about marital fidelity and the importance of family life with shady New Age-style spiritu-

ality.

Thus, Jack's desperate efforts to become charitable, which see him tossing baguettes of French bread to Skid Row hobos and donating his expensive watch to fund-raising nuns, only to take it back again, gain him nothing. But reaching out to Caroline and to his Alzheimer's-afflicted mom (Ruby Dee) and resolving his long-standing emotional impasse with his deceased father, taken together, do -- so to speak -- the trick.

Along the way, Sinja offers some gobbledygook guidance, and Caroline dons leather to "spice up" -- and save -- her marriage. Though she briefly handcuffs Jack, it's the folks in the audience who may feel shackled by these flimsy proceedings.

The film contains mature content, including scenes of aberrant sensuality within



CNS PHOTO/DREAMWORKS

Allison Janney and Eddie Murphy star in a scene from the movie "A Thousand Words."

marriage and incidental gay characters, a few uses of profanity, considerable crude and crass language and an obscene gesture.

The Catholic News Service classification is A-III --

adults. The Motion Picture Association of America rating is PG-13 -- parents strongly cautioned.

Some material may be inappropriate for children under 13.

ALSO PLAYING



CNS/OPEN ROAD FILMS7

Elizabeth Olsen stars in a scene from the movie "Silent House," a cinematic fixer-upper in which a young girl (Olsen) is chased around the conveniently dark - and apparently haunted - summer house that she's helping her father (Adam Trese) and creepy uncle (Eric Sheffer Stevens) clean out in preparation for selling it. Part horror flick, part psychodrama, co-directors Christopher Kentis and Laura Lau's low-budget remake of a similarly down-market Uruguayan film called "La Casa Muda" ends up being a satisfying representative of neither genre. The Catholic News Service classification is A-III -- adults. The Motion Picture Association of America rating is R -- restricted. Under 17 requires accompanying parent or adult guardian.



CNS PHOTO/DISNEY

Lynn Collins and Taylor Kitsch star in a scene from the movie "John Carter," an ambitious and largely successful 3-D adaptation of Edgar Rice Burroughs' first novel propels a 19th-century American (Kitsch) to the planet Mars, where he becomes embroiled in a war between two city-states and falls in love with a princess (Collins). Despite an unwieldy and illogical mash-up of now-familiar sci-fi tropes, director Andrew Stanton nicely brings the narrative together in the end. Obstacles along the way include a rather bland star, a protracted running time, and less-than-scintillating dialogue. Yet the epic marries the appeal of a pulp serial with cutting-edge filmmaking techniques. Likely best for older teens and up. The Catholic News Service classification is A-II -- adults and adolescents. The Motion Picture Association of America rating is PG-13 -- parents strongly cautioned. Material may be inappropriate for children under 13.



The Society For

The Propagation Of The Faith

Sr. Mary Ellen Brett, SSJ, Director
622 Washington St., Ogdensburg, NY 13669
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Making a difference

From Director's Desk
Sister Mary Ellen Brett, SSJ
Diocesan Director

Each person can make a difference in the world for God has chosen us to do so. This belief is true of missionaries spreading the good news of Jesus' love whether they are serving in the third world countries or at home in their diocese.

I believe that Janice Shoen has been a compassionate missionary in the Diocese of Ogdensburg

I believe that Janice Shoen has been a compassionate missionary in the Diocese of Ogdensburg visiting with donors either by phone from her office or traveling to their homes.

Working with her I've witnessed a faith-filled woman who is appreciative of her Catholic beliefs and wants others to grow in their faith.

This witness of faith has also been observed by donors as she seeks financial assistance to support the endeavors of spreading the faith at this time in the diocese and in planning for the future.

I remember traveling with Janice to Bishop's Fund dinners and hearing many accolades for her faith-filled zeal.

Janice's many years of effort and toil with heartfelt graciousness have succeeded in the growth of the Development Office. She can look back in gratitude for the blessings of her great and quiet achievements.

Retirement will give Janice the time to travel with her wonderful husband Bill and to enjoy family time with children and grandchildren.

Molly Ryan and I will miss her in the office as we wish her God's blessings in fulfilling her family dreams.

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OBITUARIES

AuSable Forks – Theresa Ann (Irwin) Smith, 79; Funeral Services March 8, 2012 at Holy Name Church; burial in Riverside Cemetery.

Canton – John W. Hackett, 59; Memorial Services March 7, 2012 at the Lawrence Funeral Home.

Carthage – Kathleen Mary Foy, 63; Funeral Services March 10, 2012 at the Lundy Funeral Home; burial in Hillside Cemetery, Natural Bridge.

Carthage – W. Grant Thesier, 71; Funeral Services March 9, 2012 at the Bezanilla-McGraw Funeral Home; burial in Pitcairn Cemetery.

Crown Point – Grace Louise (Denno) Armstrong, 79; Funeral Services March 5, 2012 at the Sacred Heart Church; burial in Valley View Cemetery, Ticonderoga.

Dannemora – Wesley J. McCasland, 74; Funeral Services March 2, 2012 at St. Joseph's Church; burial in parish cemetery.

Gouverneur – Kathryn R. "Kay" (Randall) Bush, 68; Funeral Services March 7, 2012 at St. James Church; burial in St. James Cemetery.

Lake Placid – Arnold J.L. Gallos, 91; Funeral Services March 9, 2012 at the Uihlein Chapel.

Massena – Robert E. "Bobby" Ashley, 79; Funeral Services at the Donaldson Funeral Home; burial in Calvary Cemetery, Massena

Massena – Rose M. (Fiacco) Brown, 90; Funeral Services March 9, 2012 at Phillips Memorial Home; burial in Calvary Cemetery.

Massena – Peter E. Marlow, 85; Funeral Services March 7, 2012 at Sacred Heart Church; burial in Calvary Cemetery.

Massena – Elmer A. Richards, 72; Funeral Services March 8, 2012 at the Donaldson Funeral Home; burial in Pine Grove Cemetery.

Mineville – Frances A. (LaHendro) Baldwin, 95; Funeral Services March 10, 2012 at All Saints Church; burial in St. Peter and Paul Cemetery, Moriah.

Mineville – Patrick W. Smith, 56; Funeral Services March 5, 2012 at All Saints Church.

Mooers Forks – Roger Homer Barbeau, 89; Memorial Services Feb. 18, 2012 at St. Anne's Church.

Mooers Forks – Albert W. LaValley, 82; Funeral Services March 10, 2012 at St. Anne's Church.

Morrisonville – Wayne H. Potter, 84; Funeral Services March 10, 2012 at St. Alexander's Church; burial in parish cemetery.

Ogdensburg – Stephen E. Lalonde, 64; Funeral services March 5, 2012 at Notre Dame Church; burial in Notre Dame Cemetery.

Peru – Agnes F. (Hostler) Blaise, 74; Funeral March 5, 2012; burial in Immaculate Conception Cemetery, Keeseville.

Peru – John P. Daly, 82; Funeral Services March 7, 2012 at St. Augustine's Church; burial in St. Augustine's Parish Columbarium.

Peru – Margaret A. (Rock) Falcone, 83; Memorial Services April 14, 2012 at St. Augustine's Church; burial in St. Augustine's Cemetery.

Peru – Theresa M. (Kirk) Goodman, 82; Funeral Services March 3, 2012 at the Hamilton Funeral Home; burial in Immaculate Conception Cemetery, Keeseville.

Plattsburgh – Rodney M. "Bobby" Belrose, 64; Funeral Services March 5, 2012 at the Hamilton Funeral Home.

Plattsburgh – Janice F. (Forkey) Bulriss, 75; Funeral Services March 8, 2012 at St. John's Church; burial in St. Joseph's Cemetery, Mooers.

Plattsburgh – Harvey Dames Oliver Filion, 76; Funeral Services March 9, 2012 at Our Lady of Victory Church; burial in Sacred Heart Cemetery.

Plattsburgh – Walter E. Light, 92; Funeral Services March 6, 2012 at St. Peter's Church; burial in Whispering Maples Mausoleum.

Plattsburgh – Mildred "Millie" (Lovely) Mitchell, 93; Funeral Services March 9, 2012 at St. John's Church; burial in Mt. Carmel Cemetery.

Plattsburgh – Lawrence "Larry" E. Tourville, 75; Funeral Services March 10, 2012 at St. Peter's Church; burial in parish cemetery.

Plattsburgh – Peter Peryea, 60; Funeral Services March 10, 2012 at St. Peter's Church.

Tupper Lake – Sadie D. (Smith) Amoriell, 89; Funeral Services March 5, 2012 at Holy Name Church; burial in St. Alphonsus Cemetery.

Tupper Lake – Edmund Grose, 96; Funeral Services March 5, 2012 at Holy Name Church; burial in Holy Name Cemetery.

Watertown – Jane M. Collins, 84; Funeral Services March 8, 2012 at St. Patrick's Church; burial in St. Patrick's Cemetery, Brasher Falls.

Watertown – Alice B. (LaDuke) Walsh, 86; Funeral Services March 6, 2012 at St. Patrick's Church; burial in Glenwood Cemetery.

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YOUNG CATHOLIC VOICE

Searching for Happiness

By Kristina Dean
Staff Writer

Over the past ten years, I have been looking for happiness. Only – I didn't know that I was looking. In a self-deceiving manner, my thoughts always seemed to be focused on the outcome instead of the reason.

Maybe if I clean out the closet, I'll be happy. Maybe if I'm more organized, I'll be happy. Maybe if I begin a new health regimen, I'll be happy. Maybe if I lose 10 pounds, I'll be happy. Maybe a new outfit will make me happy. Maybe if I read a book about being happy, I'll be happy. Maybe if I was the perfect mom, I'll be happy.

Happiness is so elusive. None of these things worked. None gave me satisfaction. The tricky part of the equation is that I wasn't aware that whatever I was doing or trying would only make me temporarily happy. And – that kind of happiness isn't REALLY being happy. It was a small satisfaction which usually

skittered away quickly like a mouse down a hole.

I was looking for something to consume me. So often we look for something to fill the emptiness.

As I turned the corner of 40, I decided, seemingly on a whim (but really led by the Holy Spirit), I began to read more about my faith. I heard about a women's group which I believed at the time to be like a Bible study group. At the first information meeting, I was told that there would be reading and work in a textbook.

It sounded like homework. How I would find the time between working full time as a teacher and taking care of my three young children? I also was worried about over committing. I didn't want my family to suffer because I'd taken on too much. Plus we'd signed up two of my sons for swimming lessons on Thursday nights, the same night as the group.

So, I went home and prayed. I put it in God's hands and asked Him to figure out a way for me, if it



Kristina Dean

was His will.

It was during a conversation with a coworker - again seemingly on a whim - when I disclosed my problem. She became very interested in the group and offered her daughter as a babysitter for my youngest so my husband could take the two older boys to swimming. Everything just fell into place.

We joined the Evans Mills Women of Grace in September 2010 as a result. It seems so long ago.

We began learning about our role as women in the church. Ladies - we have a role! We have a mission, as women of the church. We

also have Mary, our role model. I began to understand more of what it means to say "yes" to Mary. We, as a group, began to loosen up, to discuss our opinions - to listen to our wonderful facilitators, Mary Dillenback and Meg Ringer - God Bless them!

What they taught us is beautiful. We are valued, we have a place. We are loved. We are not second best. We are holy. We are daughters of the Lord. We need to hold our heads up. We need to know that even at our worst moments, our moments of greatest sin, God is full of love for His daughters.

Women of Grace became a trusted, valued place full of sisters that would listen to me and encourage me as I learned more and more of who I was meant to be. One of the most surprising things to me was the affirmation that I received. So many times I've been on the right track intuitively. I just needed a little bit of hope and encouragement.

The ladies around the table are my place of safety. Although we are all in differ-

ent places in our faith, we help each other grow. Mary works through each of us, through each of us to bring us closer to Christ.

And I discovered that one thing that makes me truly happy is prayer. During our unit of study on prayer, I found that I've been mistaken in so many ways about praying. Prayer can be one little quiet moment, or an hour on my knees saying the Rosary. When I pray for other people, I feel its transformative effect. I am a prayer warrior - a conduit of grace for others. This is my mission. This is who I am. This is what Women of Grace made me realize. Happiness doesn't lie in making myself happy. It lies in making others happy.

Women of Grace have an upcoming retreat coming in April with a special guest who will be speaking, the ministry's founder, Johnette Benkovic. I am tremendously excited to see how this time will bring healing and further graces into my life. I look forward to meeting more of my sisters in Christ.

Around the diocese

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 14

PANCAKE BREAKFAST

Watertown – Men's Mount Carmel Society of St. Anthony's Church will have an all you can eat Pancake Breakfast.

Date: March 25

Time: 8:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m.

Place: St. Anthony's Church

Cost: Adults, \$5; Children, \$3

BEREAVEMENT MEETING

Watertown – Fr. Stephen H. Gratto, MSW, will speak at the Sisters of St. Joseph Motherhouse.

Date: March 26

Time: 7 p.m.

Topic: "How does Grief fit into the Milestones on Life's Road"

LEWIS

FEAST OF THE DIVINE MERCY

Houseville – The Feast of the Divine

Mercy will be celebrated

Date: April 15

Time: 3 p.m.

Place: at St. Hedwig's Church.

Features: Sacrament of Reconciliation will be at 2 p.m. and a Divine Mercy movie will be shown at the church hall at 2 p.m. At 3 p.m. the program will include Blessing of the Divine Mercy image, Exposition of the Most Blessed Sacrament, Chaplet of Divine Mercy (sung), Homily and Benediction. Rev. Jozef Mucha of Christ our Light Church, Pulaski, will be the main celebrant.

Contact: Mary Ann at 315-348-6260

ST. LAWRENCE

GUN AND KNIFE SHOW

Brasher Falls – The Knights of Columbus will be hosting a Gun and Knife Show.

Date: March 31 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. & April 1 9 a.m. to 3 p.m.

Place: K of C Hall

Cost: \$3; under 12 free (must be accompanied by an adult)

Features: Many dealers will be present with all kinds of hunting, fishing, archery and sporting items. Dealers wishing to reserve tables can contact Phil Davis at 315-38-4627. Concession stand available, breakfast served until 11 a.m. Public invited to buy, trade or sell.

FRIDAY NIGHT FISH FRIES

Ogdensburg – The Knights of Columbus Council 258's Friday Night Fish Fry Buffet is open to the general public and continues every Friday until Easter.

Time: 4:30 p.m. to 7

Place: K of C Hall

Cost: \$9 for all you can eat. Desserts are \$1 and there is a cash bar.

Features: All proceeds benefit K of C Charities and building fund.

CORN BEEF/HAM & CABBAGE

Heuvelton – Msgr. Robert Giroux Knights of Columbus will be sponsoring a St. Patrick's Day dinner of corned beef, ham and cabbage.

Date: March 17

Time: 4:30 p.m. to 6:30 p.m.

Cost: \$8 donation, under 5, Free

FISH & SHRIMP FRY

Gouverneur – St. James School will be having a Fish & Shrimp Fry every Friday during Lent.

Time: 4:30 p.m.

Cost: Adults, \$10; Children 12 and under, \$5; under 5, free; Take-outs and delivery available, phone ahead for faster services at 287-0130.

DIOCESAN EVENTS

METANOIA RETREAT

Ogdensburg - A Young Adult Metanoia

Retreat will be held

Dates: April 13-14

Place: Wadhams Hall Retreat Center,

Features: Are you needing to take some time away from your busy schedule? Are you needing to hear what God is saying to you? You are invited to the Metanoia Retreat

Contact: For more information call or email Lorraine at 315-323-4989. lturgeon@dioogdensburg.org

YOUNG ADULT ONLINE RETREAT

Diocese Young Adult Ministry will be sponsoring an "ONLINE" Lenten prayer group

Schedule: Sunday nights at 9p.m. each week during Lent.

Contact: If interested please call or Email Lorraine Turgeon 315-323-4989 turgeon@dioogdensburg.org for more information.