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# NORTH COUNTRY CATHOLIC

MAY 1, 2013

## Called to Serve

*As part of the NCC's annual Vocation Issue, Bishop LaValley shared a special message. Excerpts follow:*

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United States today, we have not experienced an increase in the number of seminarians studying for our diocese.

As you know, this has most serious consequences for the sacramental life of our parishes and for our priests who so faithfully serve them today.

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FULL STORY, PAGE 3

## Listening Sessions scheduled

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In his letter appointing team members, Bishop LaValley included the responsibility for the team to host a series of Listening Sessions throughout the diocese to assist the team in discerning what the People of God in the diocese desire in terms of ministry and service.

Bishop LaValley and the team have scheduled ten Listening Sessions throughout the Diocese.

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## Vision of the Future

Five year strategic plan announced for Immaculate Heart Central

Schools in Watertown  
FULL STORY, PAGE 6

## HONORED FOR A LIFE OF SERVICE



PHOTO BY COLLEEN MINER

Father William Muench, right, helps Msgr. C. John McAvoy prepare for a special Mass April 21 at St. Bernard's Church in Saranac Lake in honor of Msgr. McAvoy's 50th anniversary of the priesthood. Msgr. McAvoy, one of ten priest jubilarians who will be honored this year, served as pastor of St. Bernard's from 1973 to 1986.

## VATICAN ORDINATION

### Pope Francis ordains ten



CNS PHOTO/PAUL HARING

Pope Francis ordains one of 10 priests during a Mass in St. Peter's Basilica at the Vatican April 21. Before the ordination, the pope prayed privately with them in the sacristy and entrusted them to Mary's care. Pope Francis told the new priests they would have "the sacred duty of teaching in the name of Christ the teacher. Impart to everyone the word of God which you have received with joy." The pope, who frequently mentions the wisdom and lessons he learned from his grandmother, told the men, "Remember your mothers, your grandmothers, your catechists, who gave you the word of God, the faith — the gift of faith."

**DEACON SCOTT BELINA:** Awaiting ordination with great anticipation... p. 4

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## EDITOR'S NOTES

## Called to serve: seedbed of vocations

If it's May in the Diocese of Ogdensburg, it's time to think about vocations!

In a couple weeks, we'll be celebrating priesthood jubilees as well as the ordination of a man who will join their ranks.

That makes this week's *NCC* annual vocation issue "Called to Serve" perfectly timed.

In the pages that follow, you can read all about Deacon (nearly Father) Belina as well as vocational reflections from Bishop LaValley and Father Bryan Stitt, diocesan vocation director.

We're also profiling our first bishop, a young woman discerning life as a religious sister

and a religious Sister and beloved Father who have served our diocese for generations.

As we often hear, the seeds of vocations to priesthood, religious life and the diaconate are all found in the same place – in families. And so we welcome one more vocational reflection, from the director of the diocesan office of family life. Gayle Frank passed along the following piece, written by a Sister of Mercy who works for the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops.

It's definitely something that all of us who are part of a family should think about.

Mary Lou  
KilianThe Seedbed of My Vocation:  
One Sister's Story

(By Sister Mary Joanna Ruhland, RSM, Associate Director, Secretariat of Clergy, Consecrated Life and Vocations, U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops)

The formation of every human person begins in a family, whatever its condition may be—healthy, religious, irreligious, broken, or divorced. Held in the tender loving care of our God, the family prepares, according to its state and condition, every child to know, love and serve God.

Every family provides children with the place for natural maturation – physically, psychologically, spiritually – to receive and respond to a call from God to a vocation to the priesthood or consecrated life.

Allow me to share with you ways that my family became the "seedbed" for my vocation as a religious sister:

- Marital love becomes familial and filial love. The love my father and mother had for each other, and for God, told me volumes about God's love. It is faith in God that brought my parents through marital difficulties, deaths in the family, and other trials and joys of life.

Through prayer, their relationship with God nourished qualities of healthy, holy relationships: courage in speaking the truth in love, patience in weaknesses, forgiveness after hurtful words and pardon sought. Our familial relationship with God was nourished (communally and

CONTINUED ON PAGE 10

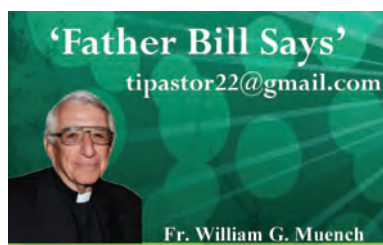
## Called to serve: as Ogdensburg's first bishop

I would like to share with you today an outstanding example of devotion and dedication to the priesthood – and to the Diocese of Ogdensburg – our first Bishop, Bishop Edgar P. Wadhams.

I was recently given a wonderful little book about him, "Reminiscences of Bishop Wadhams", by Rev. C.A. Walworth, written in 1893/ I do remember reading this book in my seminary days and it is truly wonderful. It describes many incidents in the life of Bishop Wadhams – and also tells us a great deal about his dedication and outstanding faith filled life.

Bishop Wadhams was born in Lewis, New York. (There is still a historical marker at his boyhood home along Route 9.) He was raised in the Episcopal Church and entered the seminary to prepare to be an Episcopal priest. He was ordained an Episcopal deacon and ministered for a time to all of Essex County – especially at the Church of the Cross in Ticonderoga. I have often visited that Church.

Then Bishop Wadhams went through a conversion to the Catholic Church. He then entered St. Mary's Sulpician Semi-



nary in Baltimore now preparing to become ordained a Catholic priest. I attended that same seminary, as did many other priests of our diocese.

Bishop Wadhams was ordained a priest for the Diocese of Albany – in those days that diocese covered all of the North Country. He served at the Albany Cathedral, later becoming the rector of the Cathedral. Father Walworth tells that he was an excellent preacher, was deeply concerned for the poor and had a delightful sense of humor.

In 1872, the Diocese of Albany was divided forming the new Diocese of Ogdensburg. Bishop Wadhams was chosen to be the first Bishop of this new diocese.

Keeping in mind that this was 1872 – many of his friends were rather worried about his moving from the city to the

North Country. One of his friends supposedly asked him, "How can you leave the great center of life and go away to that barren and trackless region?"

Bishop Wadhams responded, "My dear friends that is my native air. I love those Adirondacks, I love those mountains, those rivers and streams; I love all there is in that territory. I love to hear the sawmills; they are music to my ears. Why I was brought up on saw-logs."

Father Walworth also remembers another time the bishop expressed his readiness to take on this new ministry. Speaking with a friend, a Professor Carmody, he said, "I know, Carmody, the task I have before me. I know that country well. The population is poor and scattered. It is a land of small settlements and long distances. The people cannot be reached by railways or stage coaches. Even good wagon roads are few. But I'll tell you what I mean to do. I shall get a good pony that will carry me anywhere; and you take my word for it, it will not be long before I visit every family and every man and woman, barefooted boy and yellow haired girl in my diocese will know

me. Yes, Sir-ee!"

Father Walworth tells us, "The diocese of Ogdensburg made progress during the nineteen years of Bishop Wadhams' Episcopate. New parishes were formed, new churches built, schools were established, priests were added, convents were founded and the Catholic population increased. Bishop Wadhams looked with joy upon the growth and improvement in his diocese, but he was too truthful and too humble to take all the credit of it himself – he was always careful to give the principal credit to his priests and others who labored with them."

This little book of Father Walworth is filled with so many more delightful stories about Bishop Wadhams. He was truly dedicated to his priests and people. Bishop McQuaid spoke at Bishop Wadhams funeral – he said, "The priests who came to him from different parts of his diocese always found a plate at the table and a room to lodge in."

Bishop Wadhams' dying words are very familiar to us, priests, we have heard them often – "The priests are for the people, not the people for the priests."



FOLLOW ME

# Who am I called to become?

Before Christianity, Socrates asked the question, "What ought I to do?"

Christian spirituality re-frames this question in terms of a vocation: "Who am I called to become?"

First and foremost, we know that a vocation is always the initiative of God. The word vocation comes from the Latin, *vocare*, "to call."

Each of us must ask "What does the Lord intend me to do with my life?"

God does have a plan for each of us.

One of my favorite Scriptural passages expresses this beautifully: "*How precious to me are your designs, O God; how vast the sum of them!* (cf. Psalm 139)

The same Lord who called His first disciples calls young women and men today to serve in the consecrated life and ordained ministry.

A most serious ongoing challenge for the Diocese of Ogdensburg is the promotion of vocations to the religious life and priesthood.

Unlike many dioceses in the United States today, we have not experienced an increase in the number of seminarians studying for our diocese.

As you know, this has most serious consequences for the sacramental life of our parishes and for our priests who

so faithfully serve them today.

Sometimes it's difficult for us to appreciate the impact of this until it hits closer to home and we learn that our own parish must lose a resident pastor and share a pastor with a neighboring parish.

We can look at the world around us and find many contributing reasons for this sobering reality: popu-

lation shifts, the decline and the breakdown of the family, the widespread secular mentality that pushes faith to the edge of our daily living, the all-consuming desire for material wealth, the reluctance of many to make life-long commitments, among many other realities.

In the midst of these factors, what can we do to build a culture in the parishes of our North Country that encourages more of our family members to consider God's invitation to give their lives in ministry to the Church as a consecrated religious, deacon or priest?

While our vocations director, Father Bryan Stitt, is working diligently, each of us has a decisive role in the nurturing of Church vocations.

The pastoral care of vocations is the responsibility of each one of us as individuals and as members of a parish family.

I am grateful to the members of our diocesan vocation society (DOVS) for their

promotion of vocations and strong support of our seminarians.

If you would like to learn more about the Society, please contact Father Stitt. We are always looking to increase our membership.

We must pray fervently for vocations. Never tire of praying for vocations, both personal and communal prayer, such as parish Holy Hours for Vocations.

We must do all that we can to encourage our families to participate in the sacramental life and social outreach of the Church. Vocations grow in an environment where faith is practiced and lived.

*Church vocations must come from our families here in the North Country.*

When our young people are asked to consider what they want to be when they grow up, a religious vocation should not be offered as an afterthought or something to think about when all else is ruled out.

Recent studies have con-

sistently indicated that over ninety percent of our priests today are happy in their vocations. That's a statistic that any other career field would find hard to match!

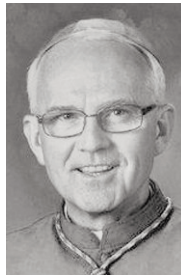
Our youth today welcome challenges where they can make a difference.

A religious vocation can guarantee that and much happiness to boot!

This Year of Faith is an especially blessed time for the Church of Ogdensburg because soon we will add to the ranks of our presbyterate.

We all rejoice and praise God as ordination day nears for Deacon Scott Belina. Let us thank God for Deacon Scott's "Here I am Lord" to God's call and offer continued prayers for him and for our seminarians Mike Jablonski, Alex Pacelli and Matt Conger.

*"The harvest is plentiful, but the laborers are few; therefore pray earnestly to the Lord of the harvest to send out laborers into His harvest."* (Matt. 9:37)



Bishop  
Terry R.  
LaValley

## Oz... the great and powerful vocations director

By Father Bryan Stitt  
Diocesan director of vocations

Truth be told, I haven't seen this year's movie that inspired the title of this article. Nevertheless the trailer was enough to bring back memories of the original "Oz" movie and my new reflection that the Wizard would have made a wiz of a vocations director.

Week after week, I talk to people about discerning their vocations. And week after week I emphasize three needs to discern a vocation. Those three needs are the same as the deficiencies of the three natives to Oz: brains, heart, and courage. (They are required to follow any Christian vocations, but for simplicity sake, I'm going to look through the lens of a vocation to the priesthood.)

Three needs. First, you have to have a brain. Unlike the Scarecrow, no candidate for the seminary today can be satisfied with ambiguous directions. "That way is a very nice way...It's pleasant down that way too...Of course, people do go both ways" just can't cut it today.

Christians need to point with laser-like accuracy to one Way, one Truth, and one Life; semi-

narians must do so even more so. To do so, they must have brains.

**Week after week I emphasize three needs to discern a vocation. Those three needs are the same as the deficiencies of the three natives to Oz: brains, heart, and courage.**

Obviously a candidate for the seminary must be a good student—one who is able to study philosophy and theology as well as all the normal classes of a liberal arts education. But what's more he must be able to speak the language of the faith to the listeners of today.

Second, he needs to have a heart.

Just like the Tin Man, a seminarian is far from perfect if he has all the other parts (good personality, academic knowledge, engaging eloquence, devotion to the magisterium, willingness to serve) if he has no heart that overflows with the love of God.

Sometimes the struggle for a young man to enter the seminary is not whether or not he could do it, but much more basically whether he believes that God wants him to be happy.

This can only be overcome by a heart that is open to the heart of Christ.

Third, we all know the need of the Cowardly Lion.

As Vocations Director, I see why the shortcoming of the third character was so vital to the movie plot. For courage is vital to the plot of the Christian life. Fear paralyzes. Courage enables.

Without courage no one can pick up the phone or send an email to their vocations director. Without courage, he'll never make a visit to the seminary, nor will he ask for an application. And certainly, without courage he'll never cross the threshold into his new life.

At the end of the movie, the Wizard "gave" these three gifts to the Scarecrow, the Tin Man, and the Lion in a simple way that I am jealous of. I wish that it were so easy to pass on wisdom, empathy, and bravery to those that God is calling to be His future priests.

But perhaps the greatest need for young people today is to reclaim Dorothy's lost love: Home. Only with a goal to strive for will all the other abilities and talents of life make sense.

Dear friends, would you please repeat after me: "There's no place like heaven. There's no place like Heaven. There's no place like HEAVEN."

YEAR OF FAITH...STORY OF FAITH

# 'What if God wants me to be a priest?'

By Deacon Scott Belina  
Contributing Writer

In August of 2007 - six long years ago! - I entered St. Charles Borromeo seminary in Philadelphia. Having graduated from Clarkson University that same summer, I was embarking on a brand new journey, meeting many new people, and beginning a very new relationship with Jesus Christ.

## Deacon Scott Belina reflects on his journey towards priesthood ordination, to be held May 25

During the first couple of weeks at the seminary, I distinctly remember a conversation with one of my classmates during an ice-cream social. As we were relating our stories to one another, I said to him, "I just can't believe I'm actually here. It's so surreal." He said that he felt the same.

At that point, what was surreal was the thought that God might actually be calling me to be a priest.

As I arrived at the seminary and adjusted to the schedule, I was full of zeal, yet somewhat uncertain (actually, before I entered the seminary, I had to be convinced that I didn't need the certainty I desired—I just needed faith).

The idea of being a priest at that time was still very idyllic in my mind. Even though I had willingly engaged this discernment, I



PHOTO BY JUSTIN SORENSEN

Deacon Scott Belina is shown during his diaconate ordination at St. Patrick's Church in Watertown in 2012. Bishop LaValley will ordain him to the priesthood May 25 at St. Mary's Cathedral in Ogdensburg.

had no idea of all the learning and formation that would ensue as a result of placing my faith in Jesus in this way.

I cannot begin to explain all that has happened in my relationship with God over the last six years. What I can explain, however, is that it has been the work of God in my life.

The call from God for me to give him my life in this way developed over time. It began as a few thoughts early on in my life (which I admittedly hastily dismissed), later became the question, "What if God wants me to be a priest?", and over a few years in college slowly became a pull toward the seminary.

Eventually, I made the de-

cision to give it a shot, and as I say to everyone to whom I tell this story, to be very honest, each year has been better than the last. The seminary, full of its own challenges, has given me ample opportunity to grow and respond to God's grace. I hope I've been responding these past six years!

As a priest, I look forward to celebrating the Mass, celebrating the Sacrament of Penance, and being available to the people to whom God will send me.

I also look forward to being part of a presbyterate whom I respect and admire, to collaborate and contribute to the continued growth and flourishing of the Church of Ogdensburg. I am very hopeful, and eager to learn.

As for the question of the number of vocations in recent years and in the future, I am confident that the Holy Spirit has not fallen asleep.

While concern for the number of priests is healthy, God ceaselessly calls men to give their lives to him as priests.

There are more men in our diocese who are being called to the priesthood, and so the question is one of courage, trust and ultimately, one of faith.

Stepping away from the side of the boat was not easy for Peter (Mt. 14:22-33). Yet, at Jesus' word, "Come," he went. He faltered, but Jesus lifted him up.

Often the fear is that if we go, we'll fall, or things will become out of control. We know our own weakness. We don't get out of the boat. We want certainty that it will all go as we want it to - that we will be in control.

Is that faith? Or is faith walking out onto the water where, in a quite literal way, control is no longer ours. Where also, being in any sort of control is nothing other than a "yes" to God, which places us in cooperation with his will for us.

I can honestly say that each year in the seminary has been better than the last. I hope that this contin-

ues throughout my priesthood, through the trials and joys which will come.

If there are any guys reading this who may even for a second think that God is calling them to the priesthood, do not be afraid! Pray. Listen to God. If he is calling you, he will give you everything—and I mean everything—you need.

If there are any parents reading this who think your son may have a vocation, simply ask him if he's considered it, and yep - you guessed it - pray for him! Simple encouragement and prayer, and let God do the rest. Let him know you support him.

I look forward with great anticipation to May 25. Much like during those first weeks here at St. Charles in 2007, I find it hard to believe the time has almost arrived.

I have many hopes and some fears of what it will be like, but I know that just as God has been with me especially through seminary, he has also called me through His Church for this vocation.

It will be a gift, and I only hope that I can live it worthily. Please pray that Our Lady of Perpetual Help will guide me in all my ministry.

As for details of the ordination ceremony, it will be on Saturday, May 25 at St. Mary's Cathedral in Ogdensburg. I will be vested by Father Garry Giroux, pastor of St. Patrick's Parish in Brasher Falls, and St. Lawrence Parish in North Lawrence.

Also, this year marks the 100th Anniversary of St. Anthony's in Watertown, my home parish for 21 years. I am very much looking forward to celebrating this special weekend in a particular way with my parish family.

Until then, please pray for me and my classmates as we finish our studies and prepare for ordination. God bless you!

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Process towards discerning *Mutually Shared Vision* continues

# Ten Listening Sessions to be held across diocese

Bishop Terry R. LaValley and his Envisioning Leadership Team are fully engaged in the process of discerning a mutually shared vision in diocesan priorities.

Bishop LaValley and the team have met over the last three months to undertake this process. The bishop began the process of forming his team last fall in order to help and create a Mutually Shared Vision for the Diocese. He asked key members to come together to assist him in discerning needs and formulating a plan for the future of the diocese.

In his letter appointing team members, Bishop LaValley included the responsibility for the team to host a series of Listening Sessions throughout the diocese to assist the team in discerning what the People of God in the diocese desire in terms of ministry and service.

In response to this mandate, Bishop LaValley and the

team have scheduled ten Listening Sessions throughout the Diocese. (The schedule of Listening Sessions is printed at right.)

The Listening Sessions are intended to give the People of God the opportunity to share their thoughts, insights, and hopes about the Diocese of Ogdensburg. Bishop LaValley will be present at the Listening Sessions to listen and hear the concerns of his people.

At the Listening Sessions, participants will have the opportunity to voice their thoughts if they wish. More importantly, participants will have the opportunity to write their comments on survey forms that will be collected at the end of the session. These comments will be discussed and considered by Bishop LaValley and the team as they discern a vision of where we ought to be in two years as a Diocese and to formulate a plan that will take us there.

The Listening Sessions will give the opportunity for a wide variety of viewpoints to be heard and considered by the Team. Bishop LaValley and the Envisioning Leader-

Listening Sessions for <i>Mutually Shared Vision</i>			
Catholics from across the diocese are encouraged to participate in one of these listening sessions as part of the diocesan envisioning process to discern priorities and goals for the Church in the North Country			
	DATE	LOCATION	AUDIENCE (DEANERY)
1	Tue, May 14, 2013	2 pm at Wadhams Hall, Ogdensburg	Chancery Staff
2	Tue, May 21, 2013	7 pm Presbyteral Assembly, Alexandria Bay	Presbyterate
3	Wed, May 29, 2013	6:30 pm, St. Bernard's School, Saranac Lake	Permanent Deacons/ Deacon Candidates & Wives from Eastern side of the Diocese
4	Thu, May 30, 2013	6:30 pm, Immaculate Heart Central, Watertown	Jefferson
5	Mon, June 3, 2013	6:30 pm, Wadhams Hall, Ogdensburg	Permanent Deacons/ Deacon Candidates & wives from Western side of Diocese
6	Wed, June 5, 2013	6:30 pm, St. Peter's Church Hall, Lowville	Lewis
7	Thu, June 6, 2013	6:30 pm, Trinity Catholic School, Massena	St. Lawrence
8	Tue, June 18, 2013	6:30 pm, St. Mary's School, Ticonderoga	Essex & Hamilton/Herkimer
9	Wed, June 19, 2013	6:30 pm, Seton Academy (across street from St. Peter's Church), Plattsburgh	Clinton
10	Tue, June 25, 2013	6:30 pm, Holy Family School in Malone	Franklin & Adirondack

ship Team are hoping for wide participation in the Listening Sessions.

This process is really a "grassroots" process to find a vision and plan for our Diocese.

"A true vision cannot be imposed on the Diocese,"


said Bishop LaValley, "to be meaningful and effective, our vision and plan have to build on the desires and the hopes of all our people.

These Listening Sessions will give us the opportunity to listen and reflect on the concerns expressed by Catholics throughout the Diocese."


### Team Members

#### Envisioning Leadership Team

- Bishop Terry R. LaValley,
- Dr. William Amoriell, Colton
- Rev. Mr. Mark Bennett, Plattsburgh
- Mrs. Barbara Boyle, Henderson
- Sr. Ellen Rose Coughlin, Watertown
- Mr. James Coughlin, Malone
- Rev. Garry B. Giroux, Brasher Falls
- Rev. Thomas J. Higman, Malone
- Rev. Douglas J. Lucia, Canton
- Mr. Patrick, Plattsburgh
- Rev. Kevin J. O'Brien, Heuvelton
- Mrs. Cathy Romano, Ogdensburg



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# IHC announces five-year 'Vision for the Future'

WATERTOWN—Immaculate Heart Central School released its first five-year strategic plan April 22.

Entitled *Strategic Plan 2013-2018: A Vision for the Future*, the strategy focuses on enriching educational value as the cornerstone to ensure the school retains its strong reputation for scholastic excellence, while ensuring a viable and sustainable future.

The Strategic Plan also represents IHC's concerted effort over the last several years to proactively confront the challenges that have threatened many Catholic schools throughout New York.

Those challenges include smaller family sizes, a slow economic recovery, the rapidly rising cost of healthcare insurance for faculty and staff, and an overall decline in the school-age population

in Jefferson County.

The Strategic Plan outlines a number of initiatives in IHC's Junior/Senior High School, Elementary School, and Pre-School. Some initiatives are new, with implementation beginning this coming school year, while others represent a continuation of recent efforts.

For example, Elementary School initiatives include:

- The increased integration of technology, including "smart boards" in every classroom;

- The introduction next year of a pilot Spanish program in Kindergarten and first grade;

- A strengthened math and English program; and

- The expansion of the St. John Bosco Pre-School, to include the introduction of a Junior Kindergarten next year for young five-year olds and mature four-year olds.

At the Junior/Senior High School, initiatives include:

- Enhancement of the school's literacy and fine arts programs;

- Continued integration of technology, paired with professional development;

- The building of a Science, Technology, Engineering and Math (STEM) program of excellence over the next several years, leveraging strides in integrating technology and introducing new courses in recent years; and

- An entrepreneurial program to develop students' 21st century skills in the areas of business and economics.

IHC has already begun implementing much of the Strategic Plan, initiating efforts as it identified priorities and needs throughout the planning process.

The Strategic Plan, an executive summary, and a one-page "quick glance" can be downloaded from the school's website at [www.ihc-schools.org](http://www.ihc-schools.org).

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Enjoy the renewal of spring with a subscription to the *North Country Catholic*, the newspaper for the Diocese of Ogdensburg.

## Bishop's Schedule

May 1 – 7 p.m., Confirmation at Notre Dame Church in Malone

May 2 – 7 p.m., Confirmation at St. Stephen's Church in Croghan

May 3 – 7 p.m., Confirmation at St. Peter's Church in Plattsburgh

May 4 – 11 a.m., Confirmation at St. Ann's Church in Mooers Forks

4:30 p.m., Confirmation at St. John the Baptist Church in Plattsburgh

May 5 – 11 a.m., Confirmation at St. Patrick's Church in Chateaugay

4 p.m., Confirmation at St. Mary's Church in Ticonderoga

May 6 – 7 p.m., Confirmation at Sacred Heart Church in Massena

May 7 – 11 a.m., Personnel Board Meeting at the Bishop's Residence in Ogdensburg

7 p.m., Confirmation at St. Mary's Church in Evans Mills

## Rest in Peace

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

May 1 – Rev. Joseph J. Halde, 1891;

Rev. Edward P. Burns, 1985

May 2 – Rev. Jean Marie Royer, O.M.I.,

1905; Rev. Joseph M. Blais, 1948; Rev.

Leon LaPorte, 1954; Rev. Burchard

Murray, O.S.A., 1966

May 3 – Rev. Cormac Walsh, O.F.M.,

1977

May 6 – Rev. P.A. Lynch, O.S.A., 1927

May 7 – Deacon Thomas R. Finnegan,

1996

## Environmental Stewardship

"The vocation of being a "protector,"...is not just something involving us Christians alone; it also has a prior dimension which is simply human, involving everyone. It means protecting all creation, the beauty of the created world, as the Book of Genesis tells us and as St. Francis of Assisi showed us. It means respecting each of God/s creatures and respecting the environment in which we live."

Homily given by

Pope Francis at his Installation.

Tips for living more lightly . . . .

- Purchase products with less packaging.
- Collect "extra water" (from warming water for dishes, shower, etc.) for watering plants; collect rain water for garden.
- Use a water-saver shower head.

## 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](http://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. 403.

May 2 - 4 p.m., St. Mary's Parish Center, Indian Lake

Aug. 29 - 8 p.m., SUNY Potsdam

## To Report Abuse

If you have a complaint of suspected misconduct involving diocesan clergy, religious, employees or volunteers, contact the Episcopal Vicar for clergy 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](mailto:aycsnn@yahoo.com); Phone: 518-569-0612; Fax: 518-425-0401

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# 'God is knocking and only you can let him in'

By Suzanne Pietropaoli  
Staff Writer

**MALONE**—“Have you ever been in love?”

At first Meaghan Prue thought this was a strange question for the vocation director of a religious order to be asking her. But as the 26-year old sales associate works through the discernment process with the Carmelite Sisters for the Aged and Infirm, she sees that Sister Maria Therese's inquiry is very significant.

“I realize that I am in love with Jesus,” Meaghan relates. “He is my rock, my best friend, the other half of my heart. I can't stop thinking about him; I want to be with him; I want to serve him.”

However, this was not always the case—despite a childhood rich in faith experiences.

“I was so happy to be in church back then,” she recalls, “and I could not wait for my First Communion. The day finally came, and I had the great joy of receiving Jesus. I couldn't wait for Sundays to come so I could receive him again.”

Then Meaghan lost her beloved Grandpa Prue. “My Grandpa and Grandma had led me to Christ and the Church in so many ways,” she explains. “When he died, I thought that God had abandoned me and I stopped going to Church. In truth, I had abandoned him.”

“But on Holy Thursday, 2011, God called me back,” she said. “As Father Donny Calloway says, it was ‘like getting hit with a divine two-by-four!’

“While shopping, I suddenly knew that I had to go to Church that night,” she said. “That was the first time I met [Malone Catholic Parishes pastor] Father Joe Giroux, who spoke of God's mercy and of how much God loves us and wants us back.

“My heart responded, ‘I want you back, too, Lord,’” Meaghan said. “A hunger awakened in me then, and memories of why we go to

Church, and who we go to Church for.”

Nourished again by the sacraments and by scripture, Meaghan's relationship with God grew quickly.

**Your life is not own. We are here to do God's will, and that is what brings us real joy**

Meaghan Prue

Yet when Grey Nun Sister Mary Elizabeth Looby, pastoral associate at Malone Catholic Parishes, asked if she had ever thought of becoming a nun, Meaghan—with a strong sense of her own unworthiness—was taken aback.

The question got her thinking, and then a family trip to the Bahamas focused her attention firmly on religious life. Moved by the extremes of poverty and wealth she saw there, and realizing that a two-hour-long Sunday Mass was the high point of her trip, Meaghan came home “with God on my mind and the poor on my mind.

“I knew then that God was calling me to something, to a way to love him and serve those in need,” she said.

Since then, Meaghan has been trying to discern just how God wants her to serve him. After briefly considering a few other orders, Meaghan discovered the Carmelite Sisters for the Aged and Infirm; she has made one discernment retreat with them and will shortly make another.

With her own love for the elderly, Meaghan found that the Sisters' life, and the “impeccable care” they provide, really drew her to the order.

“These are joyous women, dedicated to God and to his people,” she said. “It is inspiring to watch them put into action the words of their foundress: ‘To clasp the hand of the aging person, to give meaning to the autumn of life by offering respect and honoring each one's dignity.’ Whether I am accepted or not, I know that I want to take care of the elderly in

just this way, to bring them God's love.”

Right now, Meaghan says she is “on God's timetable,” working through a huge packet of forms that is part of the application process while staying in close touch with the order's vocation director.

Along the way, she has had “insanely wonderful” support from the priests and sisters of Malone Catholic Parishes. “Father Joe Giroux, Father Tom Higman, and (diocesan vocation director) Father Bryan Stitt have really helped me understand my faith and life at a deeper level. The Grey Nuns, Sister Mary Elizabeth Looby and Sister Barbara Schiavoni, have been very helpful, especially at answering my questions about life in a religious order. The priests and sisters were so encouraging!”

That encouragement was especially important for Meaghan as she prepared to tell her family the news.

“I was so afraid to tell my parents,” she said. “It was not easy, but it was a relief. My mom struggled a bit, at first, to understand; but my dad was happy for me. He told me that he was proud of me, and that he was not surprised, since I had always loved to go to Church.

“My brother was quiet, and then said ‘Wow! That's great!’ My sister responded that she wanted me to be happy,” Meaghan said. “My Grandma Prue was very excited for me, and keeps asking when I will go into the convent.”

Though Meaghan does not know the precise answer to that question, she is happy to be moving forward with the discernment process.

And to anyone considering religious life, she offers clear advice. “If you feel God is calling you, respond by pursuing it. Contact a vocation director and talk about what is deep inside you.

“Realize that the Lord is knocking, and only you can let him in,” she said. “Your life is not own. We are here to do God's will, and that is what brings us real joy.”



Meaghan Prue of Malone is shown with her grandmother Alice Prue. The young woman is discerning a call to religious life and has begun the application process for the Carmelite Sisters for the Aged and Infirm.

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# Bless me, Father

*Father Tom Higman reflects on the powerful experience of hearing confessions*

By Father Thomas J. Higman  
Parochial Vicar, Malone Catholic Parishes

During a panel discussion in our class on the Sacraments of Penance and Anointing of the Sick, ten transitional deacons preparing in just weeks to be ordained priests were given the chance to ask confessors of varying ages and experiences about what it would be like to hear confessions.

Faithful of course to the sacramental seal which absolutely prohibits a priest from ever revealing anything about what he heard in Confession, the panel shared with us their own experiences about being new confessors.

They told us how they prayed before hearing confessions, practices they found helpful to remain focused and recollected while hearing confessions, along with other pieces of spiritual and practical advice to help settle our anxious feelings about becoming ministers of this sacrament.

One of the older priests shared with us what an elderly bishop had told his class while they were preparing for Ordination; the bishop said to them, "I love hearing confessions because I get to see how good people really are!"

Since that day this sentiment has stuck with me - and I find it on my heart and near my lips every time I place a purple stole over my shoulders to hear confessions as well as the times I kneel on the other side of the screen and confess my own sins.

Admittedly, my classmates and I, while often wanting to show the seminary that we were ready to conquer the world and set out in priestly ministry were rather anxious and nerv-



Scenes from confessionals in Madrid, Spain, during World Youth Day 2011.

ous about taking up our new seats in the confessional.

What would we say? What would we hear? What should we give for a penance?

These questions, and others like them occupied much of our conversations during our last weeks at the seminary. However, what we didn't realize was that nothing could adequately prepare us for the work we were about to undertake.

While we were prepared in knowing the theology of the sacrament, the proper liturgical procedure in celebrating the sacrament, and now equipped with some advice from veteran confes-

sors—there was still that nervous feeling that remained.

Here I am now, nearly a year old in priestly ministry, and I'm happy to report, the nervous feeling remains each and every time I enter a confessional or hear the words, "Bless me Father for I have sinned."

I'm happy to report this because, in the midst of those feelings, I believe it's God reminder that it's not about me, it's not about what I'm going to say—instead it's about Him and what He's going to say through me.

With each experience, I've come to realize that the only reason I'm allowed to see how good people really are is because God shows me albeit my own sinfulness, how good he's really created them to be!

Hearing confessions or going to confession myself should never become something comfortable in my life because of the reality that occurs here; it's about the change effected by God's grace in one's life by which sin is once again conquered and the gates of heaven are again thrown open. If that doesn't make someone anxious, I'm not sure what will!

So for me, I'm okay with the anxious feelings that accompany any trip I make to the confessional—either for myself, or for those with whom I've been entrusted with to serve.

So next time you're worried about what to say, or how to say it, or about who you're saying it to - remember although you may not see it as clearly, those same sentiments are being returned from the other side of the screen—and from this recognize how good God has truly created each of us to be!

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**CONTACT:** Sister M. Gregory, SSJ, Vocation Director  
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# Please pray for vocations



**Remember, O most gracious Virgin Mary, that never was it known that anyone who fled to thy protection, implored thy help, or sought thy intercession was left unaided.**

**Inspired by this confidence, I fly unto thee, O Virgin of virgins, my mother; to thee do I come, before thee I stand, sinful and sorrowful. O Mother of the Word Incarnate, despise not my petitions, but in thy mercy hear and answer me. Amen.**

Loving God, through the intercession of the Blessed Virgin Mary, we ask that You bless Your faithful people of the Diocese of Ogdensburg with hearts open to receive Your word, minds enlightened to understand Your call, and spirits courageous enough to follow it. Give our diocese more priests and religious, and like Mary, may all Your children listen to Christ's call "Follow Me." Through the same Christ our Lord. Amen.

**[www.myvocation.net](http://www.myvocation.net)**  
Painting by Francisco Goya



# Thank you, Sister, for your vocation

By Kelly Donnelly  
Staff writer

**PLATTSBURGH** -- It doesn't take long after meeting her to realize that Sister Bernadette Ducharme is an incredibly good-hearted, prayerful, kind-natured woman.

Everything she does exudes compassion, and her vocation serves as an example for all who come in contact with her.

A sister of Charity of St. Louis, Sister Bernadette was born in Chazy. She grew up in a supportive, Catholic family with three brothers and four sisters. Her family clearly served as an early example of faith and love.

Sister Bernadette explained that she grew up with her family praying the rosary together, going to church together, taking family Sunday car rides, and visiting her

grandparents.

As the years progressed, Sister Bernadette's married siblings would visit the rest of the family on Sundays.

During the summer, Sister Bernadette's uncle, Brother Adrian Lewis, a Brother of Christian Education who taught at Manhattan College, would visit them.

She remembers him making religious pictures on leaves and rose petals, and she always looked forward to his visits.

In addition to the strong example of faith set by her family, Sister Bernadette's next-door neighbors were a positive influence in her young life.

She went to daily Mass with them, and looked forward to their sister, Sister Rosalie (a Grey Nun), visiting in the summer.

Sister Bernadette said that she "seemed to be drawn to

these kind of people."

As she grew older, she began walking to daily Mass before school and looked forward to religious education release time, which was taught by the Dominican Sisters.

Sister Bernadette describes developing an understanding of her vocation. "I always felt drawn to church-related people and services," she said. "There was an awakening moment in my life when I deeply realized that God made me, and therefore I belonged to Him.

"It was a matter of how I would give my life to God," she said. "A prayer card which I received during released time religion classes became a very dear motto for me: 'Others, Lord, yes others. Let this my motto be: to live

for others that I might live for Thee.'

"Another important saying posted on the high school classroom board that stayed with me is 'To thy own self be true' (William Shakespeare)," she said.

Sister Bernadette has served in a variety of ministries throughout her service as a Religious sister. She has taught a variety of grade-levels in Catholic schools in Massachusetts, Connecticut, and New York; she is currently a member of the secretarial staff at Seton Catholic.

Additionally, she has done pastoral work, which Sister Bernadette cites as one of her favorite ministries, because it involved working with adults, "taking them where

they're at, and bringing them closer to God."

When asked what advice she would offer for someone discerning a vocation to the religious life, Sister Bernadette said, "If you're even minutely thinking about it, then go through with it, and give it a try. It's better to try than to not try at all. God works in mysterious ways."

Sister Bernadette says that she has "met many wonderful and holy people throughout my life which I am indebted to."

Similarly, she is a wonderful, holy person who serves as a model for many.

Her willingness to quietly and cheerfully offer help in any situation, and her example of faith is an incredible model.

Thank you, Sister Bernadette, for your vocation!



Sr. Bernadette  
Ducharme, SCSL

## Seedbed of vocations

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 2

individually) through sacraments.

The family is where I learned the love of God "made flesh" in our family, and this love nourished my own love for God and the love I have for the sisters in my religious community.

In fact, as a religious sister, my love for God is expressed as being like that of spousal love, eventually sealed in my consecration to Him as a religious sister and profession of the vows of poverty, chastity and obedience.

- Family Prayer. Hindsight is 20/20! Although I did not always understand the importance of prayer in our family, I sensed it.

Kneeling after supper around the dinner table to pray the Rosary during Lent, going to the Stations of the Cross and the Sacrament of Penance, and Sunday Mass – despite my young "groans" at the discipline to do so –

opened my heart to my own personal relationship with the Lord.

As a young adult in college, I realized the importance of prayer and began to take responsibility for my own relationship with God through prayer.

- A Sacred Meal. Eating our meals together as a family taught me the importance of being together, sharing the day's blessings and challenges.

I remember the struggle we shared when the telephone began ringing more frequently during supper. It interrupted our conversation and often seemed necessary to answer. We realized that many phone calls were not necessary to answer immediately.

Valuing our time together, we decided to turn off the ringer during supper. I grew in respect for my parents' wisdom and their vigilance over our family time together.

Today, my religious community's highest value is the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass, and we, too, must be vigilant in protecting it from interruption.

**The family is where I learned the love of God "made flesh" in our family, and this love nourished my own love for God and the love I have for the sisters in my religious community.**

The Mass is the "source and summit" of our life together and in service to others.

- Respect for elders. Every Sunday after Mass, our family would visit my widowed paternal grandmother.

Visiting her taught me the value of respect for authority, and this became the ground out of which I learned love for the Superi-

ors of our religious community.

I understood more readily from this example of benevolence towards the sick and dying the representation of God's love that authority ideally holds.

Knowing the responsibility they bear, I was more quick to pray for them. When persons in authority have no regard, respect or love for God, their authority becomes exercising power for the sake of controlling others to achieve their own ends. True authority is service for others.

- Love of neighbor. The compassion that our family showed to the poor, sick, and suffering in our community taught me how to love my neighbor with generosity and tenderness.

Children seem to have an innate ability to give, and help those in need. When nurtured, this desire becomes a fruitful form of self-gift to God.

The joy of helping those in need is recalled at moments when the self-gift requires a deeper sacrifice. This is critical to understand and develop to maturity for any vocation.

In fact, even after we have responded to a particular vocation of marriage, priesthood or consecrated life, maturation in self-donation to God, and others for the sake of the Kingdom, continues! Daily, in my work and prayer, God gives me opportunities to deepen my love for Him and for my neighbor.

These are just a few simple ways I recognize how my parents and family contributed to my religious vocation, and I could not be more grateful for their patience and love.

May the Holy Family of Jesus, Mary and Joseph, guide all families and parents to respond to God's will with generous and willing hearts for love of Him!



# CATHOLIC WORLD AT A GLANCE

**Pope Francis' first encyclical might be out this year, says spokesman**  
VATICAN CITY (CNS) -- Pope Francis may publish his first encyclical this year, the Vatican spokesman said. Jesuit Father Federico Lombardi said he "would not exclude" the possibility of the publication of the pope's first encyclical "within this year," Vatican Radio reported. The spokesman told reporters April 25 that retired Pope Benedict XVI had already "fleshed out material on the theme of faith" for an encyclical. Vatican officials had said Pope Benedict completed work in late 2012 on what would have been his fourth encyclical -- a letter on the theological virtue of faith. Its release was expected in the first half of 2013, but the pope resigned Feb. 28 before its publication. It is not unusual for a pope to pick up work begun by his predecessor, make changes and publish it in his own name. The second part of Pope Benedict's first encyclical, "Deus Caritas Est" ("God is Love"), was a discussion of Catholic charitable activity prepared under Blessed John Paul II. Nine months after Pope Benedict was elected, the document was released after the new pope reworked that section.

**Vatican official: Archbishop Romero's sainthood cause 'unblocked'**  
VATICAN CITY (CNS) -- Archbishop Vincenzo Paglia, president of the Pontifical Council for the Family and the official promoter of the sainthood cause of the late Archbishop Oscar Romero of San Salvador, said the process to beatify and eventually canonize the slain Salvadoran archbishop has been unblocked. Archbishop Paglia, who has been the postulator of Archbishop Romero's cause for years, made the announcement in a homily April 20, just a few hours after meeting with Pope Francis. The Italian archbishop, who was preaching at a Mass in the Italian city Molfetta to mark the 20th anniversary of the death of the diocese's Bishop Antonio Bello -- widely known by the diminutive Don Tonino -- said, "Today, the anniversary of the death of Don Tonino, the cause for the beatification of Archbishop Romero was unblocked." The archbishop gave no more details, and his office said April 22 that no more would be said until there is something "concrete" to report.

**Italian media report progress in Blessed John Paul's sainthood cause**  
VATICAN CITY (CNS) -- A Vatican-convoked commission of doctors concluded a healing attributed to Blessed John Paul II had no natural explanation, according to Italian news reports. Eventual papal approval of the alleged miracle would clear the way for the canonization of the pope, who died April 2, 2005, and was beatified May 1, 2011. Once a panel of physicians convoked by the Congregation for Saints' Causes determines a healing is authentic and lasting, and that there is no natural, medical explanation for it, the files are passed on to a panel of theologians. The theologians study the events -- especially the prayers -- surrounding the alleged miracle and give their opinion on whether the healing can be attributed to the intercession of a particular sainthood candidate. If the theologians give a positive opinion, the cardinals who are members of the congregation vote on whether to recommend the pope recognize the healing as a miracle and set a canonization date. The newspaper *Il Messaggero* quoted Jesuit Father Federico Lombardi, the Vatican spokesman, as saying, "There is a widespread desire for the canonization" of Blessed John Paul, "but no date has been set. First these two formal acts (by the theologians and by the cardinals) are necessary, and then the decree of the pope about the miracle."

## One cannot follow Jesus, love Jesus without the church, pope says

By Cindy Wooden  
Catholic News Service

VATICAN CITY (CNS) - Following Jesus means belonging to the church, the community that gives Christians their identity, Pope Francis said.

"It is not possible to find Jesus outside the church," he said in his Mass homily April 23. "The great Paul VI said it is 'an absurd dichotomy' to want to live with Jesus without the church, to follow Jesus outside the church, to love Jesus without the church."

Dozens of cardinals living in Rome or visiting the Vatican joined the pope in the Pauline Chapel of the Apostolic Palace for the Mass on the feast of St. George, the martyr.

The feast is the pope's name day; he was born Jorge Mario Bergoglio.

Cardinal Angelo Sodano, dean of the College of Cardinals, told the pope the cardinals had wanted to join him for the Mass "to thank our Father in heaven for the gifts he has given you thus far and to request abundant graces upon your Petrine ministry."

The cardinal asked God to give them and the pope "the strength with which the Holy Spirit infused St. George and the martyrs of every age" to face difficulties, serve the poor and spread the Gospel.

In his homily, Pope Francis spoke about the persecution of the first Christian communities and how opposition did not stop them from sharing their faith in Christ, but went hand in hand with even greater missionary activity.

"Precisely at the moment persecution erupted, the missionary activity of the church erupted as well," the pope said.

When the first Christians began sharing the Gospel



CNS PHOTO/L'OSSEVATORE ROMANO VIA REUTERS

**Pope Francis celebrates a Mass in the Pauline Chapel of the Apostolic Palace at the Vatican April 23. Dozens of cardinals living in Rome or visiting the Vatican joined the pope in the chapel on the feast of St. George, the martyr. The feast is the pope's name day; he was born Jorge Mario Bergoglio.**

with "the Greeks," and not just other Jews, it was something completely new and made some of the Apostles "a bit nervous," the pope said. They sent Barnabas to Antioch to check on the situation, a kind of "apostolic visitation," he said. "With a bit of a sense of humor, we can say this was the theological beginning of the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith."

Barnabas saw that the church was growing, he said. The church was becoming "the mother of more and more children," a mother that not only generates sons and daughters, but gives them faith and an identity.

Christian identity is not a bureaucratic status, it is "belonging to the church ... the mother church, because it is not possible to find Jesus outside the church," Pope Francis said. "It is the mother church who gives us Jesus, gives us identity."

Pope Francis said that when Barnabas witnessed the crowds of new believers he rejoiced with "the joy of

an evangelizer."

The growth of the church, the pope said, "begins with persecution -- a great sadness -- and ends with joy. This is how the church moves forward -- as I saint, I don't recall which right now, said -- between the persecution of the world and the consolation of the Lord. The life of the church is this way."

"If we want to take the path of the mundane, negotiating with the world," the pope said, "we will never have the consolation of the Lord. If we seek only consolation, it will be superficial."

The life of the church is a path that always alternates between "persecution and consolation, between the Cross and the Resurrection," he said.

Pope Francis asked the cardinals to join him in praying that they, too, would have the "fervor to move forward -- as brothers, all of us -- forward, forward, carrying the name of Jesus in the heart of holy mother church, which is -- as St. Ignatius said -- hierarchical and catholic."



## SCRIPTURE REFLECTIONS

# Making use of the gifts of the Holy Spirit

We're getting closer to Pentecost. Already, Bishops are visiting their parishes in order to confer the Sacrament of Confirmation.

At this ceremony, one of the readings is almost always from the Acts of the Apostles which describes the apostles at prayer suddenly feeling great power coming on them in the form of fiery tongues.

From weak and uncertain men, they become courageous and bold followers of

Christ

In today's Gospel, Jesus prepares his apostles for this great moment. He tells them that when He leaves them, the Holy Spirit will teach them everything they need to know, and will remind them of everything He himself had taught them.

Jesus knew that all the time He had spent preaching and healing would be in

vain without the transforming power of the Holy Spirit. Even as he tried to pre-

pare them for His death the next day, He knew that only the Holy Spirit could give them the courage they would need to baptize and preach the Good News to all the world.

In the first reading from the Acts of the Apostles, we learn of the events that lead up to the First Ecumenical Council of the Church in Jerusalem.

It was there that a courageous decision was made to welcome non-Jews into the Church without requiring that they be circumcised or made to follow the law of Moses.

Only the power of the

imitation of the life of Jesus. He urges us to be protectors of the poor and needy, and to preach by our actions. What might have happened if the Apostles had decided to keep the whole treasure of God's Word to themselves? The newly-born Church would have withered and disappeared within a few years.

Jesus did not prepare his followers for an easy life. That's not why He died on the Cross, or why He rose from the dead.

As He loved us to the death, so He expects us to pay the price for the glory of eternal life.

MAY 5

Sixth Sunday of Easter

READINGS

Acts 15: 1-2, 22-29

Revelation 21: 10-14, 22-23

John 14: 23-29

Holy Spirit present at that council could have guided that decision.

This is a good week for us to ask ourselves how we make use of the gifts of the Holy Spirit which we received at our Confirmation.

Our new Holy Father, Pope Francis, urges us to close

## SPIRITUALITY FOR TODAY

## Finding our calling - finding a path toward joy

By Father John Catoir  
Catholic News Service

How do I know what God's will is for me?

That is a wise question. God wants you to rise from the dead and attain eternal salvation. You are already united to his glorified body by your baptism. But the se-

cret of happiness and holiness rests in your fidelity to the will of God as it is manifested in the duties of the present. That means you should strive to live in the present. Be attentive to the needs of others.

The fulfillment we've found during our journey toward Easter is more about being in the present moment. One day you will be united with God in paradise, but for the present we are on our earthly pilgrimage to find joy and strive to be holy.

Real holiness is more about being in love than it is about doing good deeds. The two go together, however. Blessed Teresa of Calcutta explained the

connection, "It's not about how much you do, but how much love you put into what you do that counts."

For some, this means finding their calling in life. "But how do I find my calling?" some may be asking.

Do not confuse the idea of finding a calling with that of being called to a religious vocation. Few people are called to the priesthood or to the religious life, but everyone is called to holiness, including priests and sisters.

The essential calling of every Christian is to love and honor almighty God first. We do that best by living joyfully. In this joy we find the knowledge of God's love for us. Pray for the

grace to appreciate God's love by responding to it joyfully.

In that way you will be better able to love God in return.

The supreme law is love. It is first mentioned in Deuteronomy 6 and also at the Last Supper. Jesus repeated this command, "Love one another."

He then explained why he taught this, "I have told you this so that my joy may be in you and your joy may be complete" (John 15:11).

Doesn't the pursuit of personal joy sound a little self-serving? Not if you are striving to love God with your whole heart. He said he wanted us to be joyful. Joy is a byproduct of love. After

I began studying the writings of Pope John Paul II, I came across this quote from him:

"Christ came to bring joy; joy to children, joy to parents, joy to families and friends, joy to workers and scholars, joy to the sick and elderly, joy to all humanity. In a true sense, you are the keynote message of Christianity and the recurring motif of the Gospels. Go therefore and become messengers of joy."

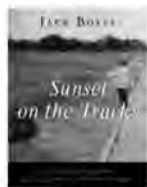
For over 25 years I have been writing books on joy and spread the message via the messengerofjoy.com website.

Why? Because we are called to be messengers of joy and that means all of us.

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## AT THE MOVIES

## PAIN AND GAIN

By John Mulderig  
Catholic News Service

The fact-based crime chronicle "Pain and Gain" (Paramount) presents itself as a merry riff on the theme of a gang too comically inept to shoot straight.

Yet the vicious antics of its central characters - acted out within a lowlife milieu of strippers and porn pushers - are too repellant to be amusing.

Snarky swipes at religion throughout Christopher Markus and Stephen McFeely's screenplay, moreover, culminate in blasphemous humor and the character of a pervert priest.

Set in Florida in the early 1990s, director Michael Bay's would-be caper follows a trio of dimwitted bodybuilders: personal trainers Daniel Lugo (Mark Wahlberg) and Paul Doyle (Dwayne Johnson) and ex-con gym rat Adrian Doorbal (Anthony Mackie).

Dissatisfaction with his

working-class lot prompts Daniel to come up with an extortion scheme - and to recruit his two pals as accomplices.

Their target is one of Daniel's clients, abrasive but successful businessman Victor Kershaw (Tony Shalhoub). Kidnapping Victor, the boys plan to beat and torture him into signing over all his holdings to them. Once he does so, they'll kill him.

Despite the array of slapstick errors they commit while executing it, their harebrained plot almost succeeds. But then, thanks in large part to the intervention of straight-arrow police officer-turned-private-eye Ed Du Bois (Ed Harris), things begin to unravel.

In adapting a series of magazine articles by Pete Collins, Bay invites viewers to marvel at the he-men's jaw-dropping stupidity. But the nasty proceedings that pit these dopes against the thoroughly unlikable Victor -- and, subsequently, against

a predictably low-minded porno king -- involve too much cruelty and bloodletting to register as comic.

Via Adrian's behind-bars conversion to a simplistic, utterly hypocritical brand of Catholicism, faith comes in for a satiric bashing.

So it's hardly a surprise when we see the seedy clergyman to whom Adrian turns for help on his release from the big house start to put the moves on his new-found protege.

Happily married Ed provides the picture's slim moral core. But, surrounded by gleeful greed, mindless mayhem and dumbbell debauchery, the center, in the words of poet W.B. Yeats, cannot hold.

The film contains a negative portrayal of Christian faith and clergy, brutal, sometimes gory violence, strong sexual content -- including graphic sex acts, masturbation and upper female and rear nudity -- drug use, about a half-dozen instances of profanity and



CNS PHOTO/PARAMOUNT

Anthony Mackie, Mark Wahlberg and Dwayne Johnson star in a scene from the movie "Pain and Gain."

pervasive rough and crude language.

The Catholic News Service classification is O -- morally offensive. The Motion Pic-

ture Association of America rating is R -- restricted.

Under 17 requires accompanying parent or adult guardian.

## Seton drama students to present Godspell JR.

PLATTSBURGH - The Seton Catholic Central Drama Club students will musically tell the stories of John the Baptist, Jesus, and Judas when they present their production of Godspell JR. May 17 and 18.

Conceived and originally directed by John Michael Tebelak, with music and new lyrics by Stephen Schwartz, Godspell is one of the biggest Off-Broadway and Broadway successes of all time.

Based on the Gospel According to St. Matthew, the musical uses major episodes of the Bible - including the baptism of Jesus, the Last Supper, and Jesus' arrest and

crucifixion - to explore important ideas such as compassion, love, forgiveness, and sacrifice for the greater good.

The show draws on various theatrical traditions and musical styles, including pantomime, charades, acrobatics, vaudeville, folk music, and rock music to create a groundbreaking and unique reflection on the parables of Jesus.

The Seton Catholic Central Drama Club will present the MTI Broadway Junior production of Godspell JR. on May 17 at 7:30pm and on May 18 at 2pm and 7:30pm.

Directed by Pam and Tom Lavin, the shows will be held

in the cafeteria at Seton Catholic Central.

Tickets cost \$4 for students and senior citizens, and \$7 for the general public. Tickets may be purchased at the door.

Further information is available from principal Cathy Russell at 518-561-4031 or the Lavin's at adironackregionaltheatre@hotmail.com.

Godspell JR. is presented through special arrangement with the Musical Theatre International.

All authorized performance materials are supplied by MTI. 421 West 54th St. New York, NY 10019 Phone: 212-541-4684.

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Early Bird drawing of \$300 will be drawn Sunday May 5th after the 8 a.m. Mass. Early Bird winner will still be eligible for all other prizes. Drawing date: Sunday May 26<sup>th</sup> at 6:00 pm on the Bazaar grounds of St. Mary's in Champlain. Winner need not be present to win.

**If 1400 tickets are not sold the raffle will revert to 50/50 cash drawing no other prizes will be awarded.**

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[www.stmarys-church-champlain.org](http://www.stmarys-church-champlain.org)

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**CLINTON**

**LITTLE ROCK SCRIPTURE STUDY**

**Plattsburgh** – A Little Rock Scripture Study “Good News in New Places” has been planned

**Date:** Tuesdays through June 18

**Time:** 7 p.m.

**Place:** St. Peter’s Church

**Cost:** \$15 donation

**Registration:** Call the Parish Office or fill out a registration form in the Atrium.

**EUCCHARISTIC ADORATION**

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

**Place:** St. John’s chapel

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

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

**ESSEX**

**REDISCOVERING VATICAN II**

**Schroon Lake** – The Second in a series of DVD presentations during the Year of Faith has been planned.

**Schedule:** Sun. at 4:30 p.m. at Our Lady of Lourdes & Fri. at 4:30 p.m. at St. Joseph’s.

**Features:** A study of the documents of the Second Vatican Council.

**Contact:** 518-532-7100 for information

**JEFFERSON**

**CATHOLIC COUPLES DATE NIGHT**

**Watertown** – Celebrate your love story while reflecting on what your Christian marriage means to you.

**Date:** May 11

**Time:** 7 p.m.

**Place:** Holy Family Church

**Features:** Program includes a 12-minute DVD, one-on-one sharing, fun games, refreshments. Reserve by May 8.

**Contact:** Kathy Allan at 785-8576

**SPAGHETTI SUPPER**

**Watertown** – St. Anthony’s Altar Rosary Church will be having Spaghetti Supper.

**Date:** May 30

**Time:** 4:30 p.m. to 7

**Place:** Msgr. Sechi Hall

**Cost:** Adults, \$8; children \$4.50; under 3, free; sauce, \$5 per quart meatballs are \$.75 (bring containers)

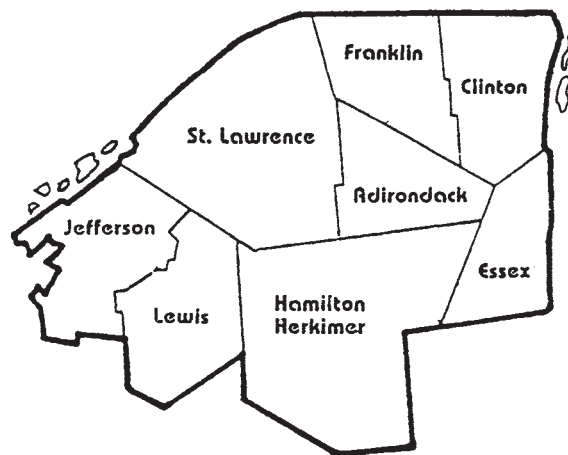
**Features:** Take-outs begin at 4 p.m.

**ROSARY CRUSADE**

**Carthage** – The 12th annual seven-hour Rosary Crusade will be held

**Date:** May 17

**Time:** Mass at 5:15 p.m., followed by



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, 1-866-314-7296;  
 e-mail news@northcountrycatholic.org.

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

seven hours of the rosary.

**Place:** St. James Minor Church,

**Features:** Praying three complete Rosaries each hour. Specific intentions are scheduled for each hour. Artist Bob Renaud, organizer of the Crusade, creates a painting each year which sets an overall theme for the evening. Those who take part in at least three hours of prayer at St. James will receive a free print of the painting.

**Information:** Photos of the previous paintings, the specific intentions for each hour, and other information can be found on website: <http://catholicsof-carthagecopenhagen.org>.

**LEWIS**

**WHO IS FRANCIS?**

**Croghan** – The Secular Franciscan Order of St. Stephen’s Church is welcoming anyone interested in learning more about St. Francis, St. Clare and the Secular Franciscan Order.

**Date:** May 8

**Time:** 7 p.m.

**Place:** St. Stephen’s Church

**ST. PETER’S ANNUAL FESTIVAL**

**Lowville** – Plans are underway for St. Peter’s May Festival

**Date:** May 17-19

**Place:** Lewis County Fair Grounds

**Features:** Ontario Amusement will provide Carnival rides; Saturday matinee with unlimited rides from 1 p.m. to 5, homemade food specialties including Shiskabob, Pizza, Chili, Hot Dogs, Hamburgers, Fried Dough, and Pie & Ice Cream. Other booths will include “This-

n-That”, a Giant Bake Sale, and Games for all ages. Fri. is the Grand Opening at 5 p.m., Sat. there is the ride special, Calk Walk at 2 p.m. and Tony’s Polka Band from 6:30 p.m. to 9:30. Sun. features a Classic Car and Tractor show from 10 a.m. to 2, a display of vintage vehicles by Tackaberry’s from Athens, ON. CC Biskens will provide music during the show. Chicken BBQ from 11 a.m. until gone. At 3 p.m. the drawings for the cash prizes

**MAY DIVINE MERCY DEVOTIONS**

**Houseville** – Divine Mercy Devotions for the month of May to be held.

**Date:** May 5

**Time:** 3 p.m.

**Place:** St. Hedwig’s Church

**Features:** The program includes: Vespers (Evening Prayer), Exposition of the Most Blessed Sacrament, The Divine Mercy Chaplet, and Benediction.

**Contact:** 348-6260.

**ST. LAWRENCE**

**FIRST SATURDAY ROSARY**

**Massena** – St. Mary’s Church is holding a special rosary to mark First Saturday

**Date:** May 4

**Time:** 3:15 p.m.

**Features:** Rosary to Our Lady of Fatima in reparation to Her Immaculate Heart and for World Peace. A private meditation will follow...Confessions are at 2:45 p.m. and Mass is at 4:00.

**ST. JAMES CARNIVAL**

**Gouverneur** – St. James Church to host Carnival.

**Date:** May 9, 10 & 11

**Features:** Rides, games, food, fried dough all three days. Bingo May 10 7 p.m., doors open at 6. Craft fair May 11 10 a.m. to 3 p.m.

**MOTHER’S DAY BRUNCH**

**Brasher Falls** – A Special Mother’s Day Buffet Brunch to be held.

**Date:** May 12

**Time:** 9 a.m. to 12 p.m.

**Place:** K of C Hall

**Cost:** Adults, \$7; Children 5-12, \$5; under 5, Free

**K OF C BRUNCH**

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

**Date:** May 12

**Time:** 8:30 a.m. to Noon

**Place:** Visitation Parish Center

**Cost:** Adults, \$7; Children under 12, \$4; Under 5, Free; Family, \$18; Take-outs available

**SPAGHETTI DINNER**

**Ogdensburg** – Notre Dame Altar & Rosary is holding a Spaghetti Dinner.

**Date:** May 15

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

**Place:** Knights of Columbus

**Cost:** \$6 and take-outs available

**WOMEN OF GRACE**

**Ogdensburg** – Women of Grace Foundational Study Series to be held.

**Schedule:** Weekly meetings beginning June 4 from 6:30 p.m. to 8:30 and June 5 from 9:30 a.m. to 11:30.

**Place:** St. Mary’s Cathedral Bishop Brzana Hall.

**Features:** This is an opportunity for women to explore their dignity as daughters of God and their gift of authentic femininity. Registration will be closed after the first class. Books will need to be ordered by each participant at [www.womenofgrace.com](http://www.womenofgrace.com) or by calling 1-800-558-5452. Scholarships available if needed.

**Contact:** Amy Schirmer 344-7202 or amyrobschirmer@gmail.com

**UNTOLD BLESSING SERIES**

**Ogdensburg** – St. Mary’s Cathedral will be presenting a seven-week series by Father Robert Barron called “Untold Blessings.”

**Date:** Thursdays

**Time:** From 10 a.m. to 11:30 and 6:30 p.m. to 8”

**Place:** Brzana Hall

**Cost:** Workbooks are \$11

**Contact:** Bill O’Brien, by email at wili315@aol.com.

**LIFE CHAIN PLANNED**

**Potsdam** – Life Chain is to be held as a prayerful witness for the unborn babies.

**Date:** May 11

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

**Place:** The participants will stand along Market and Main Street. Gather and get signs at 12:45 p.m. in parking lot across from Roxy Theater.

**Features:** Life Chain will happen rain or shine. We encourage all ages to participate. Don’t forget chairs, hats and water.

**Contact:** Chris LaRose at 315-403-8123

**CATHOLICISM SERIES**

**Norfolk** – The Church of the Visitation’s Catholicism program has begun for the Lent and Easter season.

**Schedule:** Tuesday mornings – 9 a.m. Mass followed by a light social; 9:45 a.m. DVD presentation by discussion. Thursday evenings – 5:30 p.m. Mass followed by a light social; 6:30 p.m. DVD presentation followed by discussion.

**Contact:** 315-384-4242

**CATHOLICISM SERIES**

**Massena** – The Catholic Community of Massena/Louisville will be using Fr. Robert Barron’s video series “Catholicism” during this Year of faith.

**Dates:** May 1, 8

**Time:** 6:30 p.m. to 8

**Place:** St. Mary’s Social Hall

**TRIP TO SHOW IN SYRACUSE**

**Ogdensburg** – Notre Dame Altar & Rosary is sponsoring a bus trip to Landmark Theatre to see Daniel O’Donnell.

**Date:** Sept. 11 at 7 p.m.

**Features:** Tickets are \$125 which includes show ticket, S&W bus fare (leaves from Donut King) and dinner at the Spaghetti Warehouse restaurant.

**Contact:** Call Cherie @393-5050 or 393-7158 or Joyce @713-4457.

**DIOCESAN EVENTS**

**INTERNATIONAL ROSARY**

There will be a continuous praying of the Rosary throughout the world.

**Date:** May 5

**Time:** 2 p.m.

**Features:** We encourage you to participate by praying twenty decades of the Rosary. The intention is for “World Peace, Life, and Family.” Our Blessed Mother is a force for Faith. Who better to lead and guide us than she who is the Mother of Faith. Pray alone, with family, or with friends. There are no other requirements. We encourage you to take part in this wonderful opportunity to join in prayer





## The Pontifical Mission Societies of the Diocese of Ogdensburg, Inc.

The Society for the Propagation of the Faith

Sr. Mary Ellen Brett, SSJ, Director

622 Washington St., Ogdensburg, NY 13669  
(315) 393-2920; fax 1-866-314-7296

mbrett@rcdony.org

# From supermarket to 'sign of hope'

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

The excerpt below is from the Pontifical Mission Website's "Stories from the Missions." I thought it was a heart-warming piece to share with you:

Chanakila Lubasi was once the manager of a local supermarket in his native Zambia. Five years ago, he was ordained a priest. "I want to be a sign of hope that Christ is present in the joyful and sorrowful mysteries of life," Lubasi said as a seminarian.

Reading the Gospels, he was particularly struck by the Lord's call to "proclaim the 'Good News' to the whole world." "These words," he explained, "eventually compelled me to go to the seminary."

Zambia is a country marked by extreme poverty and a place where the HIV / AIDS epidemic has left thousands of orphans. "My role as a priest would be to point to Christ – for strength, for hope," observed Lubasi.

A fellow seminarian Aaron Njobvu agreed. "I am becoming a priest above all to serve," he says. "I want to be a sign of the love of God for all."

Njobvu stressed the importance of the Eucharist in his service. "In the Eucharist especially the broken connect with Jesus and His love," he explained. "It will be my privilege to celebrate the Eucharist among my own people."

Today, some 140 young men are preparing for the priesthood at the seminary where now Fathers Lubasi and Njobvu studied, St. Dominic's Major Seminary in Lusaka, Zambia. Each seminarian receives \$700 in annual support through the Society of St. Peter Apostle – about \$5 a day.

Throughout Asia, Africa, the Pacific Islands and remote regions of Latin America, there are some 30,000 major seminarians in formation. They've heard the Lord's call to the priesthood, but lack the financial help to complete their seminary studies. Through St. Peter the Apostle, these young men receive that support, and the poor of the Missions are reached with the powerful, hope-filled presence of our Lord. Pray for them please and the work they do.

Please remember "The Society for the Propagation of the Faith" when writing or changing your Will.  
[www.dioogdensburg.org/missionoffice](http://www.dioogdensburg.org/missionoffice)



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## OBITUARIES

**Carthage** – Irene (Burns) Goetz, 94; Funeral Services May 29, 2013 at St. James Church; burial in Fairview Cemetery.

**Chazy** – Celia (LeClaire) Garrow, 104; Funeral Services April 22, 2013 at Sacred Heart Church; burial in St. Louis of France cemetery, Sciota.

**Churubusco** – Arthur J. Premo, 83; Funeral Services April 20, 2013 at Immaculate Heart of Mary Church; burial in Whispering Maples Memorial Gardens.

**Clayton** – Edith F. Davis, 87; Funeral Services April 26, 2013 at St. Mary's Church; burial in St. Mary's Cemetery.

**Dannemora** – Betty Jean Lucia, 65; Funeral Services April 26, 2013 at St. Joseph's Church; burial in St. Joseph the Worker Cemetery.

**Hogansburg** – Ronald Boots, 56; Funeral Services April 28, 2013 at St. Regis Church; burial in Kateri Cemetery.

**Hogansburg** – Frank M. Cook, 73; Funeral Services April 21, 2013 at St. Regis Church; burial in St. Lawrence Cemetery.

**Hogansburg** – Darlene C. (Bero) Oakes, 66; Funeral Services April 23, 2013 at St. Regis Church.

**Houseville** – Edward F. Markowski, 96; Funeral Services April 25, 2013 at St. Hedwig's Church; burial in Lowville Rural Cemetery.

**Keeseville** – Giuseppe "Joe" Guglielmo, 100; Funeral Services April 22, 2013 at St. John's Church; burial in parish cemetery.

**Lake Placid** – Aloisia (Burkard) Thiemann, 84; Funeral Services April 22, 2013 at the Uihlein Living Center; burial in North Elba Cemetery.

**Malone** – Gladys T. (Tobey) Brown, 96; Funeral Services April 23, 2013 at Notre

Dame Church; burial in parish cemetery.

**Massena** – Richard "Dick" A. Diagostino, 75; Funeral Services April 24, 2013 at St. Mary's Church; burial in Calvary Cemetery.

**Massena** – Margaret M. (Kish) Dunbar, 90; Funeral Services April 25, 2013 at St. Mary's Church; burial in Calvary Cemetery.

**Massena** – Leo P. LaShomb, 82; Funeral Services April 24, 2013 at Church of the Sacred Heart; burial in Calvary Cemetery.

**Massena** – Donald E. McCormick, Sr., 79; Funeral Services April 25, 2013 at Donaldson Funeral Home; burial in Calvary Cemetery.

**Mooers Forks** – Sarah E. (Pennell) Rabideau, 94; Funeral Services April 26, 2013 at St. Ann's Church; burial in parish cemetery.

**Morrisonville** – Nancy (Weegar) Ratliff, 58; Funeral Services April 23, 2013 at St. Alexander's Church; burial in parish cemetery.

**North Lawrence** – Thiry V. (Crump) Sauvie, 65; Funeral Services April 30, 2013 at St. Lawrence Church.

**Norwood** – Nazarine J. Bellardini, 85; Funeral Services April 25, 2013 at St. Andrew's Church; burial in Calvary Cemetery.

**Ogdensburg** – Randy J. Tynon, 51; Funeral Services April 20, 2013 at Frary's Funeral Home; burial in St. Mary's Cemetery.

**Peru** – Robert Paul "Bob" Davidson, 47; Funeral Services April 24, 2013 at St. Augustine's Church; burial in parish cemetery.

**Plattsburgh** – Thomas W. Fortin, 65; Funeral Services April 27, 2013 at St. Peter's Church; burial in St. Peter's Cemetery.

**Plattsburgh** – James J. Sweeney III, 61; Funeral Services April 27, 2013 at Our Lady of Victory Church; burial in Saratoga National Cemetery.

**Port Henry** – Josephine M. (Fernandez) Brace, 84; Funeral Services April 27, 2013 at St. Patrick's Church; burial in St. Peter & Paul Cemetery.

**Raymondville** – Roger F. Abresch, 85; Funeral Services May 1, 2013 at St. Raymond's Church; burial in Briar Hill Cemetery, Morrisville.

**Saranac Lake** – William F. Madden Jr., 85; Funeral services April 27, 2013 at St. Bernard's Church; burial in St. Bernard's Cemetery.

**Star Lake** – Lillian M. (Isereau) Streeter, 73; Funeral Services April 22, 2013 at St. Hubert's Church; burial in St. Hubert's Cemetery.

**South Colton** – Edward D. Guiney, Sr., 94; Funeral Services April 22, 2013 at St. Paul's Church; burial in St. Patrick's Cemetery, Colton.

**Tupper Lake** – Beverly P. (Loso) Brownell, 74; Funeral Services April 27, 2013 at St. Alphonsus Church; burial in parish cemetery.

**Tupper Lake** – Concetta Y. "Connie" (Corso) LaPointe, 83; Funeral Services April 24, 2013 at St. Alphonsus Church.

**Tupper Lake** – Robert P. Straub, 74; Funeral Services April 22, 2013 at Holy Name Church.

**West Chazy** – Randal A. Favreau, 51; Funeral April 23, 2013 at St. Joseph's Church; burial in parish cemetery.

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## YOUNG CATHOLIC VOICE

# A life of service

By Amanda Conklin  
Contributing writer

When asked to share someone who is visibly following Christ's call in their life, I immediately think of Father Mark Reilly.

I have known Father Mark since I was 11 years old, when he was stationed at St. Bernard's Church/School in Saranac Lake. He became a quick friend of the family and would often join us for week night dinners.

One of my favorite things that Father Mark used to do before leaving after his visits, was bless me and my sisters with holy water. This simple gesture turned a routine goodbye into a reminder of God's love for us.

In high school, my parents led a weekly teen bible study out of our home which always included dinner and this particular time, a visiting Father Mark.

It was during this evening, which I can vividly recall, that I had my first real, memorable encounter with the reality of the priesthood.

Father Mark had begun to discuss a topic related to the weekly scripture readings and all were listening intently. As I looked around,



PHOTO SUPPLIED

Father Mark Reilly is shown in a Miner family photo when he served as parochial vicar of St. Bernard's Church in Saranac Lake after his 1997 ordination. Shown are Colleen Miner with her daughters Amanda Conklin, author of this reflection on Father Reilly; Erin and Ellen.

I realized that Father Mark was seated in a chair in the living room, while all of the teens in the room were seated on the floor around his feet.

As he taught, I couldn't help but think of Christ teaching His disciples and how the scene, though less modern, would have looked quite similar.

Even my friends who came to bible study more for the fellowship than the doctrine were completely captivated by Father Mark's

words and held his blue-eyed gaze for the entire time he spoke.

For fear of being mocked by my peers, I held back my tears that night, but I knew that I had witnessed something very authentic about the vocation to the priesthood.

Years later after listening to one of Father Mark's beautiful homilies, with moist eyes, my good friend Melissa turned to me. Sniffling echoed throughout the congregation as she simply

whispered with a smile, "Father Mark IS Jesus!"

While in his humility, he would be the first to scoff at this, it is very true that it's not hard to see him acting "in persona Christi." When you look in Father Mark's eyes, you truly see Christ.

As my husband Seth and I were planning our October 2011 wedding, we had already decided that we'd like to ask Father Mark to celebrate the Mass. I can remember making a phone call to him asking him if he would do us the honor. Father got a little choked up and replied that he would love to but that he had to admit it was a little weird because it felt like "his little sister was getting married."

Father Mark embraces his parishioners as his family and the Church as his bride in the most genuine way.

Father Mark leaves behind a wake of Christ's love everywhere he goes. From St. Bernard's in Saranac Lake, to Immaculate Heart Central School in Watertown, there are many people who know and love Father Mark from his years of service and very few dry eyes when it is time for him to move on to the next assignment.

Not only has he served in "normal" areas of service as a priest, he is also "in the service," in another capacity, as a Navy Chaplain. Father Mark has previously served in the Marines as well.


Last year, when finally within the reaches of retirement from the military service, Father Mark unexpectedly got called up to be deployed to Africa for a year. He had just settled back in at St. Bernard's in Saranac Lake when he humbly said "yes" to God's call once more.

He is currently serving as a Navy Chaplain at Camp Lemonnier in Djibouti, Africa and is scheduled to return to Saranac Lake in September.

I believe God was calling him to Africa to fill a need and that many have been/will be touched by his service as a priest and a serviceman. He is living his call to mission.

I know also, when he returns to the United States at the end of the summer there will be many happy "family members" rejoicing in his safe return.

Thank you for saying yes to the call to the priesthood Father Mark!



**DIocese of OGDENSBURG  
VOCATIONS SOCIETY (D.O.V.S.)**

**To encourage and promote vocations to the priesthood, permanent diaconate, and consecrated religious life in our diocese.**

"It was not you who chose me, but I who chose you"

John 15:16

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