

INSIDE THIS ISSUE

Author gives parents tips to bring kids back to church | PAGE 11

Sister Rita Frances Brady - 60 year jubilarian | PAGE 16

The Diocese of Ogdensburg Volume 70, Number 28

NORTH COUNTRY CATHOLIC

DEC. 16, 2015

'Church needs this Holy Year'

VATICAN CITY (CNS) - The Catholic Church needs the extraordinary Holy Year to become an effective witness of God's divine mercy, Pope Francis said. "The jubilee is a favorable time for all of us, so that in contemplating divine mercy, which surpasses every human limitation and

shines in the darkness of sin, we may become more convinced and effective witnesses," the pope said Dec. 9 during his weekly general audience.

One day after inaugurating the Year of Mercy, the pope dedicated his audience talk to the significance he hopes

the year will have for the church saying that it is a time to experience the "sweet and gentle touch" of God's forgiveness and his presence in difficult times.

"In short, this jubilee is a privileged moment," he said, "so that the church may learn to choose only that which

pleases God most": forgiveness and mercy.

The Bible says that God saw the world, the planets and the animals he created and called them "good," but when he looked at the man and woman he fashioned, he pronounced them "very good," Pope Francis said.

Youth Ministry Training

One of the goals of the Diocesan Pastoral Vision - proclaimed at the 2014 Chrism Mass - was "to establish youth ministry, in accordance with diocesan standards, in 25-30 parishes with competent, qualified leaders by June, 2015."

To insure the competency of those interested in youth ministry, the committee charged with meeting this goal organized a Youth Ministry Training Weekend Nov. 6-8 at Wadhams Hall in Ogdensburg. The program featured a variety of speakers and prayer experiences.

FULL STORY, PAGE 5

Christmas collection

Donations on Christmas from parishes across the diocese support the Priests' Retirement Fund

FULL STORY, PAGE 4

HOLY DOOR IS OPEN.... HOLY YEAR BEGINS

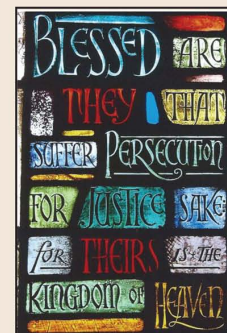


CNS PHOTO/MAURIZIO BRAMBATTI, EPA

Pope Francis opens the Holy Door of St. Peter's Basilica to inaugurate the Jubilee Year of Mercy at the Vatican Dec. 8. Bishop Terry R. LaValley led a similar ceremony for the Diocese of Ogdensburg Dec. 13 as he opened the Holy Door at St. Mary's Cathedral in Ogdensburg.

I WAS IN PRISON...

A look at prison ministry in the diocese



A picture of the stained glass windows at St. Dismas Church in the Clinton Correctional Facility in Dannemora is featured on a prayer bookmark with a prayer from the Paulist Prison Ministry and a prayer for prison chaplains. The bookmarks will be provided by Catholic Charities to the parishes by March 25, 2016, the Feast of St. Dismas the Good Thief. This week's NCC features reflections on prison ministry in the diocese - home to 13 state and federal correctional facilities - from Bishop LaValley, Daughter of Charity Sister Donna Franklin, director of Catholic Charities and coordinator of diocesan efforts to support prison ministry; and Deacon Thomas Kilian, an 18-year-prison chaplain.

FULL STORY, PAGES 3, 8 & 9

FIRST SATURDAY DEVOTION: More Catholics are urged to take part... p.3

NORTH
COUNTRY
CATHOLIC

Box 326
Ogdensburg, N.Y. 13669
USPS 0039-3400
**BISHOP TERRY
R. LAVALLEY**
President
REV. JOSEPH A. MORGAN
Vice President
SR. JENNIFER VOTRAW, SSJ
Secretary-Treasurer
MARY LOU KILIAN
Editor/
General Manager



Publish 45 issues per year: Weekly except skipping one week in Jan. and every other week beginning July through Aug. and skipping one week in Dec. 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

E-mail:
news@northcountry
catholic.org

**Entered at the
Post Office:**
Ogdensburg, NY
13669 and
additional mailing offices as
Periodical Postage.

Subscription:
For one year:
In-Diocese Rate: \$27
Outside of Diocese Rate: \$30

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

EDITOR'S NOTE

From Indian Lake to Iraq

I am fully aware that nobody benefits more from the generosity of retired priests of the diocese than the editor of the *North Country Catholic*.

With the demands of parish administration behind them, Msgr. Whitmore and Father Muench have the time and perspective to offer weekly doses of inspiration to our readers.

This week, we welcome the writing of Father Jack Downs who is encouraging faithful Catholics to embrace the Holy Saturday devotion. For Father Downs, retirement means he has time to serve as chaplain for the Our

Lady of the Adirondacks House of Prayer, celebrate Mass all over the place... and write for us.



Mary Lou
Kilian

Another priest who doesn't seem to grasp the concept of retirement is Father Phil Allen who continues to serve as pastor in Indian Lake as he looks ahead to his 83rd birthday.

Father Allen did take a break from parish responsibilities in late November, though, for a six day trip to Iraq! Catholic Relief Services invited the priest to take part in a donor trip to the war torn country where two million people are internally displaced. About one million have set-

tled in the Kurdish area where Father Allen and the CRS group stayed. A relatively stable part of the country, Father Allen said that the people are more secular and think of themselves as Kurds first, not Sunni or Shia Muslims.

The CRS staff showed the visitors its projects, mostly housing and childcare facilities.

"CRS is doing a great job," Father Allen said. "They've hired 75 people and they are great hires, smart and dedicated. They've made great efforts to take care of the children, many of whom are so traumatized after seeing people killed before their eyes.

"Waves of people started to come in the summer of 2014," Father Allen said, "but they all

expected to go back home soon. Now they know they need schools and houses. CRS has been active throughout this time. They do so much and are so efficient with their donations.

A highlight of the visit for Father Allen was the opportunity to concelebrate Mass which was spoken in the Aramaic, the language of Jesus.

"The missal had English and one said and Aramaic on the other," Father Allen said. "I fumbled my way through most of the Mass but when we came to the Our Father I just stopped and listened.

"I figured I was hearing this prayer the way Jesus and his apostles said it," he said.

Not a bad way to spend time in retirement!

Advent: of John the Baptist and Mercy

Advent means John the Baptist. Each and every year as we, Catholics, prepare for Christmas, the Church's liturgy turns to John the Baptist.

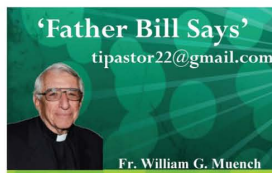
In those days, many people thought that John the Baptist was the long awaited Messiah. John made it very clear that he was no Messiah. He tells all that he has come to prepare the way for the Messiah, like an Elijah. He makes it very clear that one greater than he is coming who would baptize with the Holy Spirit and fire. John says, "He must increase, I must decrease."

In St. Luke's Gospel, the passage that was read on Sunday, there is recorded a dialogue between John and the people who came to him seeking baptism for the forgiveness of sins. They are repenting and desire to change their lives as they seek advice from John for a good life.

I love this passage. I can imagine this is just like a present day interview, like with a politician.

For me, John's challenging responses make more sense.

Some ordinary folks approach John asking, "What should we do?" They are



searching for advice for a conversion to a new life. John's response is simple "share" – so great! He tells them to recognize the needs of those around them, to stop being so selfish, to "share." This will lead to a more dedicated, loving life. John says, "Whoever has two cloaks should share with the person who has none. And whoever has food do likewise."

Then – and can you believe this – the next person approaching John is a tax collector, who comes for baptism and seeks John's advice. I can imagine that nowadays this is someone who makes tax laws – rather like John is offering advice to a modern day politician. He says, "Stop collecting more than what is prescribed." Interesting advice, isn't it.

Then, some soldiers approach John, asking, "And what is it that we should do?" We could easily put in that group

our police or other such groups. So, picture John the Baptist being around today. Do you suppose anyone would bother to listen to him?

In those days, his advice was, "Do not practice extortion, do not falsely accuse anyone, and be satisfied with your wages." How would that advice go over these days?

Now, Pope Francis takes up St. John the Baptist's banner. He steps into a world filled with anger and violence to say, "Mercy."

We have begun Pope Francis' Jubilee Year of Mercy. Pope Francis now challenges us to react to all that is happening in our world in a better way. Rather than reacting with anger or violence Pope Francis call us to Mercy, to bring into our lives peace, understanding, even, forgiveness.

This Year of Mercy means that we must be ready to reach out to others with understanding. This may not be easy for some of us. It will demand a great deal of prayer. It will demand a memory of just how much the Lord has done for us, how much the Lord's love and forgiveness and Mercy has changed our own lives.

How many times God has given us new life over and over again?

Each time the celebrant at Mass prays the Third Eucharistic Prayer, he prays that all of God's people will be united in God's mercy, living and demonstrating that mercy. The celebrant prays: "Listen graciously to the prayers of this family, whom you have summoned before you: in your compassion, O merciful Father, gather to yourself all your children scattered through the world." We are invited to join in an effort as Catholics to transform our world into mercy.

Reaching out in mercy means we are unafraid to be loving, even forgiving.

I would like to share with you a prayer written by Catherine Doherty (from *God in the Nitty Gritty Life*). "Hospitality of the heart means accepting others as they are, not as we would like them to be, and allowing them to make themselves at home in one's heart. To be at home in another person's heart is to touch love. It is through the love of our brothers and sisters in Christ that we begin to understand the love of God."

FOLLOW ME

'I was in prison and you visited me'

The Holy Father continues to challenge each of us to reach out to those who live on the margins, the periphery of life. Our ministry to the imprisoned is an example of the Church as a field hospital - serving the most needy and most wounded where they are.

Today, there are approximately 11,000 incarcerated persons in the Diocese of Ogdensburg, over 2,600 are Catholic. Among the eight dioceses in New York State, only the Archdiocese of New York has more incarcerated persons.

One of the important responsibilities I have as bishop is to make pastoral



**Bishop
Terry R.
LaValley**

visits to all of our correctional facilities. At our listening sessions that were held as part of our Envisioning Process, I was reminded of our Church's need not to neglect or avoid segments of our society that often feel left out by the Church.

A frequent comment that I hear from the incarcerated is their plea that we not forget them. These pastoral visits provide me with the opportunity to meet men whose life decisions have harmed others, as well as themselves.

The many individuals whose lives were impacted by such harmful decisions need healing and reason to

hope. As we celebrate this Jubilee of Mercy, it is good to recall that ministry to prisoners is one of the seven corporal works of mercy grounded in the Gospel mandate of charity.

We recall that as He was preaching about the Last Judgment, Jesus identified Himself with those who were imprisoned: "I was in prison and you visited me" (Mt.25:36).

We remember, too, how, on that Good Friday, Jesus ministered and brought the hope of eternal life to the repentant criminal hanging on a cross next to Him.

The Diocese of Ogdensburg is blessed with dedicated priests and deacons who minister as chaplains in our prisons. They provide worship services, the sacraments, spiritual guidance

and pastoral counseling that can help prevent these institutions from becoming warehouses of lost hope.

If behavioral and emotional healing is to occur, spiritual healing must be a catalyst. Their presence offers the prisoners a path of healing for their souls, making peace with themselves and God.

They, also, provide support to the Corrections Officers, the staff and their families. Our chaplains help the inmates who will be released to reintegrate back into their community and connect with their parish.

This Jubilee Year of Mercy is an opportune time for each of us to consider our personal attitudes toward the imprisoned.

Do we feel that convicts are outside the scope of the

mercy of Jesus? Some people would rob the incarcerated of every human dignity in prison.

"For with the judgment you pronounce you will be judged, and the measure you give will be the measure you get" (Matt.7:1; cf. Lk.6:38).

Though surrounded by concrete walls and steel bars, the Church must help them to see light amid the darkness.

Through Christ, we all need help and healing to overcome inclinations to evil.

With the promise of Divine Mercy, hope is cultivated and darkness can be lifted for all of us.

(See pages 8-9 for more reflections on prison ministry in the diocese)

A VOICE OF FAITH

Seeks an increase in First Saturday devotion

By Father John L. Downs
Contributing Writer

The year 2017 will mark the 100th anniversary of Our Blessed Mother's apparitions at Fatima, Portugal, to three shepherd children. During those apparitions she revealed that God wishes devotion to her Immaculate Heart to be established in the world.

While all of Our Lady's Fatima requests are important, one is of particular significance. Our Blessed Mother told us she would return to ask for the Communions of Reparation on the First Saturdays.

On December 10, 1925, she returned to Sister Lucia in the Dorothean Convent, Portevedra, Spain, to ask for the Communions of Reparation.

Although its practice was once widespread, it has

fallen off sharply in the last 45 years. The World Apostolate of Fatima, USA, has initiated a campaign it hopes will result in a dramatic increase of the Devotion on the part of the Catholic faithful.

The World Apostolate of Fatima, USA, has initiated a campaign it hopes will result in a dramatic increase of the devotion on the part of the Catholic faithful

How does one practice the Devotion of the First Saturday Communions of Reparation?

With the specific intention of making reparation for sins committed against the Immaculate Heart of Mary, 1) make a good confession; 2) receive Holy Communion;

3) pray five decades of the Rosary, meditating on either the Joyful, Luminous, Sorrowful or Glorious Mysteries; 4) spend 15 additional minutes in meditation of one, several or all the mysteries of the Rosary.

Jesus said to Sister Lucia: "My daughter, the motive is simple - there are five ways in which people offend and blaspheme against the Immaculate Heart of Mary."

These five ways are the basis of the requested dispositions. On the first 1st Saturday, make reparation for attacks upon Mary's Immaculate Conception; on the second 1st Saturday, make reparation for attacks against her Perpetual Virginity; on the third 1st Saturday, make reparation for attacks upon her Divine Maternity and for the refusal to

accept her as the Mother of all humankind; on the

fourth 1st Saturday make reparation for those who try to publicly implant in children's heart indifference, contempt and even hatred of the Immaculate Mother; and on the fifth 1st Saturday, make reparation for those who insult Our Lady directly in her sacred images.

Our Lady promised to assist at the hour of death with the graces necessary for salvation all those who practice this devotion on five successive first Saturdays.

One of the most fundamental of Our Lady's Fatima requests was to pray, do penance and make sacrifices in reparation for the

sins of poor souls who are headed for hell.

Doing this should become part of the very fabric of every one of our lives.

St. Raymond's Parish, Raymondville, has inaugurated the Devotion of the First Saturday Communions of Reparation and has reached out to the parishes of St. Lawrence County.

Our Lady of the Adirondacks House of Prayer, Ellenburg, initiated the Devotion May 2015.



**Fr. John L.
Downs**

Editor's note

Father Downs, a retired priest of the Diocese of Ogdensburg, remains active as chaplain of Our Lady of the Adirondacks House of Prayer in Ellenburg and assists at parishes near his home in Raymondville nearly every weekend. Prior to his 2004 retirement, he was pastor of St. Joseph's Parish in Massena.

Parishioners support Priests' Retirement Fund through Christmas collection

Retirement plan benefits 49 priests

By Michael J. Tooley
Diocesan Fiscal Officer

The 38 retired priests of the diocese who currently receive pensions from the Priests' Retirement Fund will be direct beneficiaries of the generosity of Catholics in the North Country who contribute to their parishes in the Christmas collection.

Also, 11 priests age 70 and older who remain active in their ministry in the Diocese of Ogdensburg are receiving partial retirement benefits.

Your gift this year will help support not only priests currently receiving support from the Priests' Retirement Fund but also benefits to be paid to future retirees.

The Priests' Retirement Fund of the diocese receives 75% of the Christmas Collection proceeds given to each

parish.

While your gift helps pay pensions to retired priests, it will also help the diocese make provisions for pensions for other priests as they retire in the future.

Actuarial studies are performed annually to assure the diocese is preparing for its future obligations to retired priests. The firm of Frank J. Walters and Associates has determined that adequate provisions are being made in 2015-16 to fully fund the Plan.

The Priests' Retirement Fund of the diocese currently pays monthly pensions to 38 retired priests and 11 active priests eligible for a partial retirement benefit. Estimated pension payments in this fiscal year amount to \$840,000.

Effective July 1, 2015, retired priests in the diocese received an increase of \$40 per month in their pension

benefit. It is the diocese's intention to provide a pension increase in every year in which the diocese is able.

One hundred percent of the cost of health insurance for retired priests is also funded through the PRF.

Retired priests of the diocese receive pensions from the Social Security system. Because priests' income is typically modest, their Social Security pensions are not large and most rely heavily on pensions from the diocese for a good portion of their financial support.

The value of the investments of the Priests' Retirement Fund decreased over one-year period from \$12,524,557 to \$11,869,202 on June 30, 2015.

The diocese's Investment Advisory Committee, diocesan administration, and the investment portfolio's investment managers closely

monitor monies invested in support of the Plan.

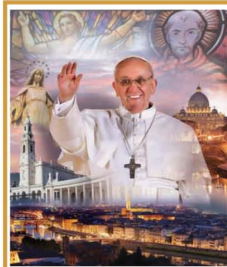
The Priests' Retirement Fund of the diocese is also assisted through extraordinary gifts.

Information about gift opportunities to benefit the Priests' Retirement Fund is available from the Development Director of the Diocese, Scott Lalone. He can be reached in Ogdensburg

at (315) 393-2920 or through e-mail to slalone@rcdony.org.

Your personal generosity to the Christmas collection in your parish will support all retired priests of the diocese and benefit longer term the diocesan and religious priests serving you today.

Your priests, retired and active, will appreciate your support tremendously!



Bishop LaValley to lead Holy Year of Mercy

Catholic Italy Pilgrimage

April 5 - 17, 2016 - 13 Days

\$3999 from Montreal

For information and reservations

call 315-608-7556

Or e-mail: mkillian@rcdony.org

The North Country Catholic Makes A Great Gift!

Enter a one year subscription for a member of the family or for a friend as a gift from you. We'll send a special gift card to the recipient.

Gift Recipient Information

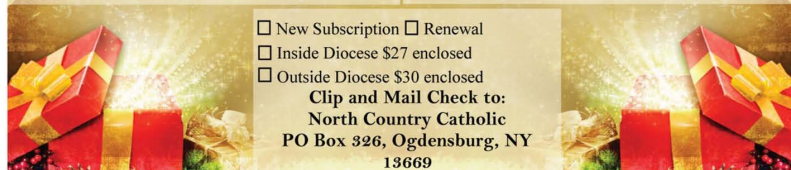
Name _____
Address _____
City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Gift Giver Information

Name _____
Address _____
City _____ State _____ Zip _____

- New Subscription Renewal
 Inside Diocese \$27 enclosed
 Outside Diocese \$30 enclosed

Clip and Mail Check to:
North Country Catholic
PO Box 326, Ogdensburg, NY
13669



Among the retired priests who receive benefits from the diocesan Priests' Retirement Fund is Father Andrew Amyot of Norfolk. The Parish of the Visitation and St. Raymond had an open house Dec. 4 - at the Father Amyot Parish Center - to celebrate Father Amyot's 80th birthday. A priest of the Diocese of Ogdensburg for 51 years, Father Amyot turned 80 on Dec. 11. Guests were invited to contribute to the Missionary Projects of the Diocese of Ogdensburg in his honor to be used toward the purchase of a much needed truck at St. Martin dePorres Parish, Mollendo, Peru, the mission Father served. The tributes have been very generous and have exceeded \$4,000 so far.

Guide Light Essays

Inspirational Commentary
guidelightessays.blogspot.com

Hosted by Holly Middleton

YOUTH MINISTRY



Bishop LaValley at closing Mass



Deacon Brian Dwyer, workshop leader



Chris Padgett, keynote speaker



RoseAnn Hickey, workshop leader



Kelly Donnelly, workshop leader

'Inspiring' Youth Ministry Training Weekend held

OGDENSBURG— "The Youth Ministry Training Weekend offered at Wadhams Hall has made me realize that I am not alone in the tough continuously changing battle that is youth ministry," said Connor Cummings, a parishioner of St. Cyril's Parish in Alexandria Bay.

The weekend, Nov. 6-8, was organized to meet the diocesan goal "to establish youth ministry, in accor-

dance with diocesan standards, in 25-30 parishes with competent, qualified leaders," put forth in the Pastoral Vision of the Diocese of Ogdensburg.

Cummings said, "The various workshops and guest speakers were incredibly inspiring and have given me the motivation and knowledge to tackle youth ministry in my parish head on!"

"Along with the excellent

workshops that were offered," he said, "I met and networked with dozens of youth ministers who have the same passion to inspire youth and bring them to Christ."

"I am incredibly thankful that the Diocese of Ogdensburg has offered the youth ministers such an awesome and helpful opportunity," Cummings said,

Keynote speaker for the

weekend was Chris Padgett, a speaker and musician who currently serves as an adjunct professor of theology at the Franciscan University of Steubenville.

Along with the excellent workshops that were offered I met and networked with dozens of youth ministers who have the same passion to inspire youth and bring them to Christ

Connor Cummings, Alexandria Bay

Others who took part were Christine Woodley of Clayton, a member of the diocesan smart goal committee for youth ministry, who welcome the participants and led an icebreaker.

Michelle Watkins of Croghan, former Guggenheim director, presented the first workshop: Communicating with Youth and Deacon Brian Dwyer of Chateaugay, former diocesan

director of youth ministry, presented the USCCB Overview on Youth Ministry

Another former diocesan youth director, RoseAnn Hickey of Lake Placid led "Evangelizing Youth in Today's Culture"

A final workshop on best practices for youth ministry was offered by newly hired diocesan youth director Kelly Donnelly of Plattsburgh.

The weekend also featured a presentation on the spirituality of a youth minister by Father Scott Belina of Malone, networking sessions, prayer times, a session with Bishop Terry R. LaValley and a closing Mass with the bishop presiding.

Father Christopher Carrara of Lowville serves as chair of the youth ministry smart goal committee which planned the weekend.

Other members of the committee are Father Belina, Ms. Woodley, Ms. Donnelly, Deacon Dwyer, Seth Conklin of Gouverneur, Krystle Drollette, Morrisonville; and Samantha Poulin of Malone.



PHOTOS BY JESSE SOVIE

A youth ministry training weekend held at Wadhams Hall in Ogdensburg Nov. 6-8 closed with a Mass with Bishop LaValley.

IHC to present Christmas Show

WATERTOWN - It's that seasonal time again, and nothing gives us a spiritual boost more than partaking in the traditional seasonal festivities we look forward to year-after-year.

One of those beloved traditions is the Immaculate Heart Central Christmas Show. Set for Dec. 21 at 7 p.m., the show offers something for everyone, and everyone is invited to attend.

The event will start with a showcase of select Christmas music performed by the high school band and chorus under the direction of music teacher Miranda Briggs.

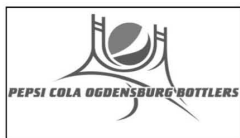
Following the concert will be a performance of "The Littlest Elf," a short skit written and directed by Rodger Carr, the new dramatic arts teacher. This short play, written especially for this occasion, teaches Sprinkles the

elf that there are "no bad elves" and that everyone has a purpose if they can find it.

The comedic, yet heart-warming tale segues into the traditional Living Nativity. In this sacred re-enactment of Jesus' birth as revealed in the Bible, the shepherds and wise men are called by God to bear witness to the humble birth of the holy King of Kings. In this touching tribute, we are reminded of the real "reason for the season."

There is no charge for The Christmas Show - it is a gift of the school back to the community, though they will be accepting donations for the local food pantry.

There will be a second performance, Wednesday morning, as the students perform for the high school and intermediate school children before they begin their holiday break.



Follow Pope Francis on Twitter!
www.twitter.com/Pontifex



Peaceful Dove Books & Gifts

164 Boynton Ave. Sq., Ste 304, Plattsburgh, N.Y. 12901

Bibles, Crosses, Missals, Rosaries, Medals, Cards

Baptism, Wedding & Sacramental Gifts, Statues

Memorial, Candles, Icons, Music, DVDs, Recovery

Willow Tree Products, Seasonal, Maple Syrup & More!

Gifts of the Spirit! Shipping Available!

Hours: M-F 10:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m. Sat. 10:00 a.m. - 2:00 p.m.

(518) 561-5083 www.peacefuldovebooksandgifts.com

Mrs. Linda Bracy and Ms. Mary Beth Bracy

MONASTERY CARD SHOP

Cards for All Occasions

Mass Enrollments for your living & deceased loved ones.

Precious Blood Monastery

OPEN: 9 AM - 5 PM

SATURDAY 9 AM - 3 PM

400 PRATT ST., WATERTOWN

315-788-1669

Bishop's Schedule

Dec. 16 - 12 p.m., Mass at St. Mary's Cathedral

Dec. 17 - 12 p.m., Mass at St. Mary's Cathedral

Dec. 18 - 2 p.m., Episcopal Council Meeting followed by Dinner at the Bishop's Residence in Ogdensburg

Dec. 20 - 8 a.m., Mass at St. Mary's Cathedral

Dec. 22 - 12 p.m., Mass at St. Mary's Cathedral followed by Lunch with the Seminarians of the Diocese of Ogdensburg at the Bishop's Residence in Ogdensburg

Rest in Peace

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

Dec. 16 - Rev. J. F. McGowen, O.S.A., 1935; Rev. Frederick C. Horton, 1975

Dec. 17 - Rev. John O. Senecal, 1980

Dec. 18 - Msgr. Narcisse Lorrain, 1915; Msgr. Harold J. Skelly, 1980;

Rev. George A. Fortaine, 1990

Dec. 20 - Rev. Luke Harney, 1892;

Dec. 21 - Rev. Charles A. Grady, O.S.A., 1981

Dec. 22 - Rev. Edgard Thivierge, O.M.I., 1975

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 preregister 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. Further information is available from Atonement Sister Ellen Donahue, 315-393-2920, ext. 1440. Upcoming sessions: Dec. 19-9 a.m., St. Vincent de Paul Church, Cape Vincent

To Report Abuse

If you have a complaint of suspected misconduct involving diocesan clergy, religious, employees or volunteers, contact:

Victims Assistance Coordinator, Terrianne Yanulavich, Adult & Youth Counseling Services of Northern New York, 413 Ryan Road, Churubusco, NY, 12923; e-mail: terrianneyanulavich@yahoo.com Phone: 518-483-3261; or Father James Seymour, the Episcopal Vicar for Clergy at 315-393-2920, ext. 1340

NORTH COUNTRY CATHOLIC HAS GONE GREEN



Here is what one subscriber has to say:



"What a pleasure to be able to read the North Country Catholic online. I am pleased that it has been offered in this manner - as sometimes I don't have time to sit and read a paper - but when I can't sleep at night - I log onto the computer. Very nice gesture - thanks"

To sign up to receive the *NCC* in your e-mail you can call our office at 315-608-7556

Attention Snowbirds
going south for the winter!

Notify our office so you don't miss a single issue of the *North Country Catholic*! Call (315) 608-7556 with your winter address.

Environmental Stewardship

Becoming a Reed of God

In the midst of our Advent preparation Pope Francis inaugurated the Year of Jubilee. In his encyclical *Misericordiae Vultus (MV)*, he tells us that this Jubilee is a special time for each of us to experience God's loving mercy.

He then speaks of his "burning desire that during this Jubilee, the Christian people may reflect on the corporal and spiritual works of mercy. It will be a way to reawaken our conscience, too often grown dull in the face of poverty. Jesus introduces us to these works of mercy in his preaching so that we can know whether or not we are living as his disciples."

What might this message offer us during this Advent?

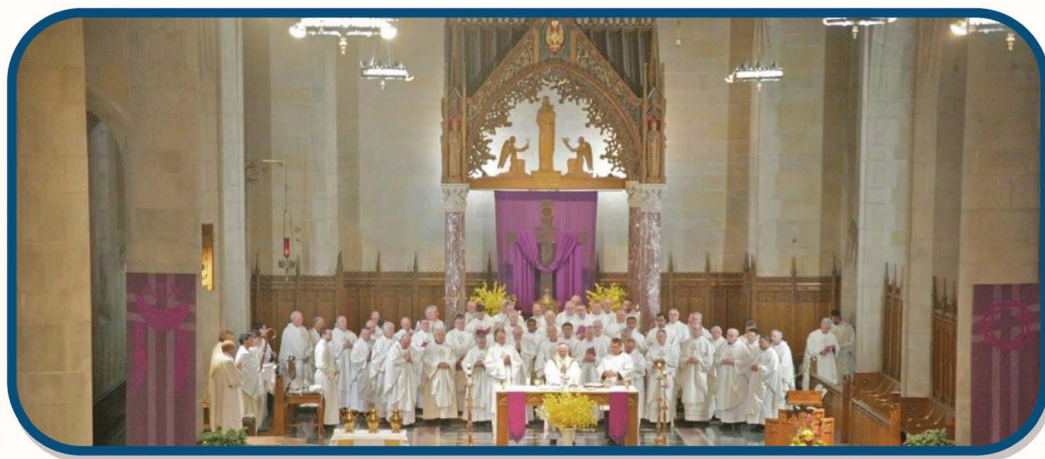
The image used by Caryl Houselander in her book, *The Reed of God* comes to mind. Before the reed can be used to produce music, it must first be hollowed out to make space for the breath of the musician. Likewise, we must first hollow out the things in our lives that prevent us from receiving the healing breath of God's love within us. Then, we can become better channels of His loving compassion through acts of mercy.

One way to hollow out space for the Lord is to find ways to simplify our lives. In Christian spirituality Pope Francis reminds us that "less is more. A constant flood of new consumer goods can baffle the heart and prevent us from cherishing each thing and each moment." #222 (LS)

How might simply purchasing less, consuming less, throwing away less, become MORE?... Could it provide more time for prayer; more resources for others; more time to enjoy each other; more time to appreciate what we have; more time to do the works of mercy for others, i.e. visiting the sick, making meal for a family in need, offering to shop for someone, sharing with those in need, advocating for care of our common home are but a few possibilities.



Christmas Collection



Your personal generosity to the Christmas collection in your parish will support all retired priests of the diocese and benefit longer term the diocesan and religious priests serving you today.

Your priests, retired and active, will appreciate your support!

**Merry Christmas
&
a Blessed New Year!**



PRISON MINISTRY

Diocese expands outreach to prisons

By Sister Donna Franklin
Diocesan director, Catholic Charities

Meeting with the prison chaplains provided an opportunity, for Bishop Terry LaValley, Father Jay Seymour and me to listen to the concerns, the insights, the creative ideas and the realities of working in the prison environment. Observations regarding the challenges faced by the victims and their families and the families of persons who are incarcerated were highlighted.

The North Country landscape is dotted with prison facilities. Yet, there appears to be an invisible aspect to our recognition of the impact of the prison industry on our parishes and communities

The whole concept of prison ministry is complex. Multiple layers of needs exist. Consider the reality of the compassion and outreach that victims and their families deserve. Do we realize that individuals who work every day in the stressful environment of a prison, corrections officers, chaplains, administrative staff and others live in our parishes?

The North Country landscape is dotted with prison facilities. Yet, there appears to be an invisible aspect to our recognition of the impact of the prison industry on our parishes and communities.

The prisons are there but how often do we think about the human beings who are incarcerated or about their victims? What type of outreach does the community have for the children whose parents are incarcerated? These questions challenge our commitment to living out the corporal works of mercy.

The reality of the number of prisons in the diocese and the number of people employed in this industry challenges our ability to see and hear the needs of our brothers and sisters. Have you ever thought about the fact that there is a high rate of divorce, depression, anxiety and domestic violence in many families of corrections officers and others who work in the prisons. If these families looked in your parish bulletin would they find listed any support groups or programs?



PHOTO BY MARY LOU KILIAN
Sister Donna Franklin, director of Catholic Charities, is coordinating diocesan efforts to support those who work in prison ministry in the 13 correctional facilities in the North Country. She is shown with Bishop LaValley and Father James Seymour, diocesan vicar for pastoral personnel, during a meeting with prison chaplains held earlier this year.

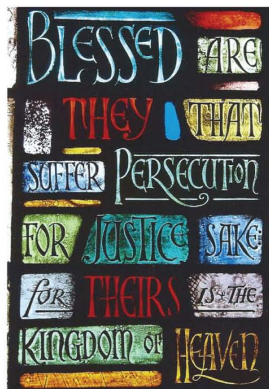
One of the suggestions from the prison chaplains presents us with an easy way to begin raising our awareness of the need for prison ministry. The suggestion was to ask individuals and parish communities, as well as, the prisoners and those who work in the prisons to pray for one another.

To achieve this goal Catholic Charities in collaboration with the Diocesan Office for Evangelization will be providing each parish with bookmarks. Each bookmark will have the prayer from the Paulist Prison Ministry and a prayer for prison chaplains. This second prayer was written by Marika Donders, Diocesan Office for Evangelization.

The bookmarks will be provided by Catholic Charities to the parishes by March 25, 2016. That is the Feast of St. Dismas. St. Dismas is the name of the Good Thief. The picture on the bookmark comes from the stained glass windows at St. Dismas Church in the Clinton Correctional Facility.

The prayer is included on this page. This will give you a chance to begin praying for all of our brothers and sisters whose lives are impacted by the prisons. You are invited to say this prayer each day in solidarity with the victims and their families.

Thinking about prison ministry



A Daily Prayer for Justice and Mercy

Jesus, united with the Father and the Holy Spirit, give us your compassion for those in prison.

Mend in mercy the broken in mind and memory.

Soften the hard of heart, the captives of anger.

Free the innocent; parole the trustworthy. Awaken the repentance that restores hope.

May prisoners' families persevere in their love. Jesus, heal the victims of crime.

They live with the scars. Lift to eternal peace those who die.

Grant victims' families the forgiveness that heals. Give wisdom to lawmakers and to those who judge.

Instill prudence and patience in those who guard.

Make those in prison ministry bearers of your light, for all of us are in need of your mercy!
Amen.

challenges us to look at our own biases, feelings, fears and ability to believe that every human being can be reconciled with a forgiving God. Praying for all whose lives are changed when they or a family member becomes a victim of a crime calls us to reach out in compassion and understanding.

Pope Francis has called for a Year of Mercy. This call to mercy provides us with the opportunity to look around us and see who is on the margins of our community.

Mercy enables us to reach out to the disenfranchised, those on the



A Prayer for Prison Chaplains

Lord Jesus Christ, we pray for prison chaplains and all who, in their ministry, are called to provide spiritual and emotional support for those who are incarcerated and their families.

We pray that they will be filled with your light and grace as they enter to visit the incarcerated and work for restorative justice and reconciliation.

May they be instruments of your love and peace to those whom they meet so that they may come to know their dignity as children of the heavenly Father.

Lord, strengthen them when they are tired or discouraged. Send your Holy Spirit to inspire them when they feel alone in their ministry.

Bless them whom you have chosen to perform this important corporal and spiritual work of mercy.

Amen

For more information contact:
Catholic Charities
(315) 393-2255
ccdirect@wadhams.edu



outside and make sure that no one is invisible. We are called to see and hear the needs around us. We are invited to pray about what we are seeing and hearing. Then, we will be compelled to find ways to act based on the lessons we have learned through Jesus' teachings in the Gospel.

For more information or to make a donation contact: Catholic Charities (315) 393-2255 or ccdirect@wadhams.edu. All checks can be made out to Catholic Charities, 6866 State Highway 37, Ogdensburg, NY 13669.

PRISON MINISTRY

'I am a Catholic prison chaplain'

By Deacon Thomas Kilian
Chaplain, Ogdensburg and
Gouverneur correctional facilities

Advent, the holidays, are a tough time at the prison. Thanksgiving and Christmas see the highest rate of suicide, among inmates AND among staff who work at Correctional facilities.

It's hard to be locked up when you have little kids and a family on the outside. It's hard to be in prison when everyone and everything is screaming about joy and peace and love and all you know is pain, a pain that is always there and comes from so many people and places.

Yet, prison fits so well with Advent. Advent has its desert and its Baptist crying out, "Make straight the way." So too, prison has its wilderness, an empty void with wild beasts and demons who lurk and haunt and seek to possess. This is where I minister. I am a Catholic prison chaplain.

The demonic takes many forms: gangs and drugs and violence are there at every turn. The demonic inhabits all the failure and missed chances and broken promises made from the incarcerated to their families and to society and from society and family back to them.

The prisons that mark almost every nook and cranny of the Diocese of Ogdensburg are places of tremendous suffering and hopelessness.

Just a few weeks ago, at one of the Ogdensburg prisons was a murder of an inmate by two other inmates. Yesterday, an inmate was taken to the hospital, now on life support after he attempted to kill himself. He had gotten a "Dear John" letter from his wife and then hung himself to die. There are slashings and stabbings, and near death after drug overdoses or inmate on

staff assault or staff on inmate mistreatment.

The desert I work in is a place of difficult and intractable addiction along with serious mental and emotional illness – problems that overwhelm limited budgets and staffs.

Prison fits so well with Advent. Advent has its desert and its Baptist crying out, 'Make straight the way.' So too, prison has its wilderness, an empty void with wild beasts and demons who lurk and haunt and seek to possess. This is where I minister. I am a Catholic prison chaplain.

I have been a prison chaplain for almost 20 years. Very early on, I realized that incarcerating a human being does great damage to them. While we as a community may need to deprive people of their freedom in order to protect others in the community – it's how we do it, with solitary confinement and cells and locked gates and razor wire and assigning a DIN number and making one wear only green. All these conspire to erode and wear away at a person's sense of dignity before God.

Taking one's basic freedoms away damages the soul of those imprisoned and those whose job it is to keep people locked up and under control.

Many inmates deal with this damage to their soul by numbing themselves through the use of drugs or pornography or other types of contraband they can get their hands on. Some protect themselves by joining a gang or fashioning homemade weapons.

Those who work at the prison take the pain and

damage home with them and it often affects their marriages, their children, their home life.

Unless the damage to soul is recognized and acknowledged and remedies are applied so healing can take place, the desert that prison is can become a place of death not just physically but spiritually as well!

When Pope Francis was elected pope, one of the first places he went was to a prison. He told the prisoners that we have to look to Jesus and see how he chose a path of humility and service. Jesus decided to become a man and as a man to be a slave even unto death on a cross.

The pope called this emptying out – the way of love, a life choice, a way of being – this path of humility and solidarity. The pope called this way of Jesus a choice for being small, of staying with the lowliest and with the marginalized, staying among all of us who are sinners! A way of life that comes from love and from the heart of God!" (Address of Pope Francis at the Cathedral of Cagliari to Prisoners and the Poor on Sunday September 22, 2013)

This morning I had to tell an 18-year-old man that his father had died. The young man sat in my office and cried uncontrollably for over an hour. I held him, prayed with him, fed him the Eucharist and connected him with his family who also grieved – trying to bring the consolation and sustenance of Jesus and his Church, the Catholic faith to someone who lives in a desert and was just given one more burden to bear.

A couple weeks ago, a Lieutenant secretly came to my office and told me his pastor had asked him to be a Eucharistic Minister but he was going to say "no". Even though he and his wife are active in his parish and his



PHOTO BY MARY LOU KILIAN

Deacon Thomas F. Kilian is shown with his pastor, Father F. James Shurtleff of Notre Dame Church in Ogdensburg, during the parish celebration of Deacon Kilian's 25th anniversary as a deacon in October. Deacon Kilian has served as a prison chaplain for 18 of those years. This article begins a series of reflections from those who offer ministry to inmates and those who work in correctional facilities in the North Country.

children are all in Church school and he is honored to be asked... He was absolutely unworthy because he was a leader among the correction officers and needed to be strong and tough before the inmates.

He didn't feel the kind of work he did made him worthy to touch the Holy Eucharist and give it to others. I know this man, widely respected by both staff and inmates. There is no person more worthy – and so for a couple hours – together we wrestled with his conscience. I hope he told his pastor, "yes".

I spend my days helping young men get over the guilt they feel over the bad they have done.

I spend my days helping people cope with addictions

and their cost.

I spend my days helping not just Catholics, but Muslims and Jews and Rastafarians and Santerias and Wiccans and Native Americans and Buddhists and Protestants and agnostics and atheists try to make some semblance of why they are in prison and how to make their choices and their lives better.

I spend my days helping people to prepare for the sacraments and to understand God's word and to make things right with their wife or their parents or their babies.

Every week, I gather with some to celebrate the Eucharist – the most lively, most sung through, most actively participated in Masses around.

Extraordinary Holy Year of Mercy begins Dec. 8

'A reminder to put mercy before judgment'

By Junno Arocho Esteves
Catholic News Service

VATICAN CITY (CNS) -- On a cloudy, damp morning, Pope Francis' voice echoed in the atrium of St. Peter's Basilica: "Open the gates of justice." With five strong thrusts, the pope pushed open the Holy Door, a symbol of God's justice, which he said will always be exercised "in the light of his mercy."

The rite of the opening of the Holy Door was preceded by a Mass with 70,000 pilgrims packed in St. Peter's Square Dec. 8, the feast of the Immaculate Conception and the beginning of the extraordinary Holy Year of Mercy.

As the sun broke through the clouds, heralding the start of the jubilee year, the pope bowed his head and remained still for several minutes in silent prayer.

Amid a crowd of dignitaries and pilgrims, a familiar face was also present at the

historic event: retired Pope Benedict XVI, who followed Pope Francis through the Holy Door into St. Peter's Basilica.

During his homily, Pope Francis emphasized the "simple, yet highly symbolic" act of opening the Holy Door, which "highlights the primacy of grace;" the same grace that made Mary "worthy of becoming the mother of Christ."

"The fullness of grace can transform the human heart and enable it to do something so great as to change the course of human history," he said.

The feast of the Immaculate Conception, he continued, serves as a reminder of the grandeur of God's love in allowing Mary to "avert the original sin present in every man and woman who comes into this world."

"This is the love of God which precedes, anticipates and saves," he said. "Were sin the only thing that mattered, we would be the most des-



CNS PHOTO/MAURIZIO BRAMBATTI, EPA
Pope Francis greets retired Pope Benedict XVI prior to the opening of the Holy Door of Saint Peter's Basilica at the Vatican Dec. 8. Pope Francis opened the Holy Door to inaugurate the Jubilee Year of Mercy.

perate of creatures. But the promised triumph of Christ's love enfolds everything in the Father's mercy."

The Year of Mercy, the pope stressed, is a gift of grace that allows Christians to experience the joy of encountering the transforming power of grace and rediscovering God's infinite mercy toward sinners.

"How much wrong we do to God and his grace when we speak of sins being punished by his judgment before we speak of their being forgiven by his mercy," he said.

"We have to put mercy before judgment, and in any event God's judgment will always be in the light of his mercy. In passing through the Holy Door, then, may we feel that we ourselves are part of this mystery of love."

Fifty years ago, he said, the church celebrated the "opening of another door," with the Second Vatican Council urging the church to come out from self-enclosure and "set out once again with enthusiasm on her missionary journey." The council closed Dec. 8, 1965.

Pope Francis, the first pope

to be ordained to the priesthood after the council, said the council documents "testify to a great advance in faith," but the council's importance lies particularly in calling the Catholic Church to return to the spirit of the early Christians by undertaking "a journey of encountering people where they live: in their cities and homes, in their workplaces. Wherever there are people, the church is called to reach out to them and to bring the joy of the Gospel. After these decades, we again take up this missionary drive with the same power and enthusiasm."

Shortly after the Mass, as thousands of people waited in St. Peter's Square for a chance to walk through the Holy Door, Pope Francis led the midday Angelus prayer.

The feast of the Immaculate Conception has a special connection to the start of the Year of Mercy, he said, because "it reminds us that everything in our lives is, a gift, everything is mercy."

Chaplain

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 9

I spend my days helping desperate and depressed and suffering people find that spark of light inside themselves that points to Someone Else who wants to be born in them so they might know His mercy, so that they might have real life! I spend my days like John the Baptist, helping them discover that place inside them, pointing them to that Lamb who not only takes away their sins but helps them forward, to a future and a promise God wants for them.

I am not unique. I am humbled by holy men and women, saints really, who labor in the prisons of the North Country so that those who are incarcerated may know their true dig-

nity as sons and daughters of God and they might be accompanied by a minister of Jesus and His Church so to taste of God's mercy and love.

Pope Francis once said, "You cannot be a Christian if you do not know how to cry... You cannot be a follower of Jesus if you do not have tears in your eyes."

The inmates I work with, the correction officers and staff who work at my side, and especially my brother and sister chaplains who pour themselves out every single day and night - they have shown me how to cry."

Pray for them... Pray for the incarcerated and their families - in this desert, making straight God's way,

Bishop: proposals to restrict religion raise 'alarms'

ROME (CNS) -- The threat of terrorism must be confronted sensibly and not by restrictions based on religion, which ultimately threaten religious freedom and incite more violence, said Archbishop William E. Lori of Baltimore, chairman of the U.S. bishops' Ad Hoc Committee for Religious Liberty.

"As citizens and as believers, Christians and Catholics in the United States cannot possibly countenance" denying people entry into the country due solely to religious affiliation, he told Catholic News Service Dec. 10.

Archbishop Lori was in Rome for a Dec. 10-12 international conference on

Christian persecution in the world, held at the Pontifical Urbanian University.

While the continuing threat of terrorist acts in the West by Islamic State has caused security concerns, restricting religious liberty in countries like the United States, he said, could lead to policies that make matters worse.

The archbishop was asked about the increasing climate of fear in the wake of terrorist attacks, as reflected, for example, in recent remarks by Republican presidential candidate Donald Trump, who called "for a total and complete shutdown of Muslims entering the United States until our country's representatives can figure

out what is going on" and better understand possible threats. Such proposals, the archbishop said, have raised "great religious freedom alarms."

Archbishop Lori told CNS that while there are growing security concerns and a fear of terrorism, denying entry into a country based solely on religious affiliation may only worsen the situation.

"I think those things have to be addressed in sensible ways," Archbishop Lori said. To address growing security threats, the archbishop stressed that governments must do so in "ways that do not in fact make this situation worse by inciting more violence."

CATHOLIC WORLD AT A GLANCE

Faith leaders say U.S. must not 'pause' refugee resettlement

WASHINGTON (CNS) -- A coalition of religious leaders joined three U.S. senators on Capitol Hill Dec. 8 to say "enough is enough" to those who want to bar Muslim refugees from Syria and other Middle East trouble spots from the U.S. after terrorist attacks in Paris and Southern California. In the Nov. 13 Paris attacks, shooters identified as jihadists killed at least 129 people. In San Bernardino, California, a married couple, who authorities say were radicalized Muslims, killed 14 people and injured 21 others Dec. 2 at a county social services center. "There is absolutely no reason to stop or pause the resettlement of Syrian refugees. The fear around this is wrong and as people of faith, we must demand more from our public officials," said Cardinal Theodore E. McCarrick, retired archbishop of Washington. The House has passed legislation that would pause the Obama administration's plan to take in at least 10,000 Syrian refugees over the next year. A similar bill will be taken up by the Senate. Lawmakers backing the measures claim there are too many holes in the process to properly vet refugees to be resettled in the U.S. But Cardinal McCarrick in his remarks on the Hill said the United States "has the most secure refugee resettlement process in the world. Refugees are the most scrutinized and screened individuals to enter the United States."

Vatican official beatifies 3 missionaries to Peru, says they taught love

CHIMBOTE, Peru (CNS) -- Three Catholic missionary priests have been beatified as martyrs in Peru, 24 years after their murder by Maoist Shining Path guerrillas. "During the period of revolutionary terror, the ideology of death led to attacks on the church and its priests, to burning, desecrating and killing," said Cardinal Angelo Amato, prefect of the Vatican's Congregation for Saints' Causes, who preached at the Dec. 5 beatification Mass. Beatification is a step toward sainthood. The cardinal said love "conquers hatred and revenge, forgives killers, fosters reconciliation and brings people to God, which is the true shining path." Cardinal Amato said Polish Conventual Franciscan Fathers Zbigniew Strzalowski and Michal Tomaszek and Italian Father Alessandro Dordi had "taught a lesson of love" through their work as pastors and development workers, by "defending the lowest and neediest in the name of good against evil."

Pope reaffirms new annulment reforms as they come into effect

VATICAN CITY (CNS) -- As reformed rules for marriage annulment cases came into effect, Pope Francis said the new norms are to be adhered to in order to help bring healing to failed marriages. With the release of two papal documents in September, the pope rewrote a section of canon law with the aim of making the Catholic Church's marriage annulment process quicker, cheaper and much more of a pastoral ministry. A juridical process is always necessary for making accurate judgments, and the new rules were not about promoting annulments, but rather about helping Catholic couples with the process so they would not be "oppressed by the shadow of doubt" for prolonged periods, he had said in the papal documents. The papal documents, "Mitis Iudex Dominus Iesus" ("The Lord Jesus, the Gentle Judge") for the Latin-rite church and "Mitis et misericors Iesus" ("The Meek and Merciful Jesus") for the Eastern Catholic churches, went into effect Dec. 8, the opening day of the Year of Mercy.

Author has tips for parents to encourage children to come back to church

By Veronica Ambuhl
Catholic News Service

COLORADO SPRINGS, COLO. (CNS) -- It's a scenario that will probably play out in thousands of homes across the country this Christmas: A young adult goes home for the holidays and announces that he or she no longer attends Mass. How parents should respond is the subject of a new book and video series by Brandon Vogt, content director for Word on Fire Catholic Ministries and author of the best-selling book, "The Catholic Church and New Media."

Vogt said the inspiration for his new book, "Return" -- available at www.returngameplan.com -- grew out of his experiences.

"Over the last several years, I've been speaking around the country at Catholic conferences and events, at parishes and in small groups, and I noticed that the most pressing and pervasive problem among many of the people I encountered was that so many were distraught over sons and daughters who have left the church," Vogt told The Colorado Catholic Herald, the newspaper of the Diocese of Colorado Springs.

"The second thing which reinforced this anecdotal evidence was the release of the Pew Religious Landscape Survey," he said. "One of the numbers that popped out: 50 percent of young Americans who were raised Catholic no longer call themselves Catholic today. They also found that 79 percent of people who drifted away from Catholicism did so before age 23. So these are predominantly young people who are leaving the Church in massive numbers, and I felt like I needed to do something about it."

Although each person's

story is unique, fallen-away Catholics typically fall in one of six categories, he said:

- Cultural Catholics: People who still identify as Catholic, but they don't really have a sacramental life. Many researchers have noted that this describes the largest percentage of adult Catholics who don't practice their faith," Vogt said.

- Shruggers: "A lot of people tell me that the problem with their children is not that they disagree with one of the church's teachings or have issue with the church's liturgy; they just don't care," Vogt said.

- Spiritual but not religious: Described by many researchers as "unaffiliated" or "nones." "The interesting thing about these people is that not all of them disbelieve in God," Vogt said. "In fact, the majority of them still believe in a higher power, to pray and to be interested in spiritual things. They're just leery of the institution of the church."

- Moral movers: People who leave the Catholic Church because they disagree with one of the church's moral teachings, such as contraception, abortion, homosexuality, or divorce and remarriage.

- Religious switchers: About a quarter of former Catholics who switch from one church to another

- Skeptics: Includes atheists, agnostics and anyone skeptical of God and religion. "They make up a relatively small proportion of the population right now; about 3 percent of Americans are atheist and 4 percent identify as agnostic.

While it's important for parents to remain calm and keep the lines of communication open with children who have stopped practicing the faith, they can't be complacent, Vogt said. One of the common myths about fallen-

away Catholics is that, once they get married and have children, they will return to church.

"Statistically, there seems to be little or no evidence that this is actually true," Vogt said. "Here's why: In 1960, the average age for getting married was 23 for men and 20 for women. Today it's 29 for men and 27 for women. So young people are waiting longer than ever to get married. That extra time away from church makes it less likely they'll return. And when they do get married, they're not getting married in the church."

When faced with a child who has drifted from the faith, parents must first pray and equip themselves with resources to answer any questions their children might have.

"You need to know where to find the things you don't know," Vogt said. Also, it is important for parents not to be angry and confrontational, he said.

"Ask lots and lots of questions," he said. "When your child has drifted away from the church, a bad approach is to confront him with lots of assertions about why he's wrong and why he should come back. Ask, 'why did you leave? What have you found in this other faith?'"

Vogt said that the new evangelization called for by recent popes is largely aimed at people who have been baptized but do not have a personal relationship with Christ.

"The new evangelization -- if you were to sum it up in a sentence -- is to help people encounter the Lord Jesus," Vogt said. "That encounter is what's missing for so many people. They reason they drift away is that they don't have an anchor holding them to the Catholic Church, and the anchor is that encounter with the Lord Jesus."

SCRIPTURE REFLECTIONS

Women at the center of greatest story ever told

On this last Sunday of Advent, the scene shifts from John the Baptist to the two women who are at the center of the greatest story the world has ever known—the mothers of John and Jesus.

How happy God must have been to hear the cry of joy from Elizabeth as she greeted her cousin Mary in today's Gospel.

Elizabeth's joy doubled as John the Baptist leaped in her womb at the presence of the unborn Jesus.



Monsignor
Paul E.
Whitmore

Both Micah and Luke proclaim that, through a woman, the Savior of the world will appear on earth.

When Mary traveled to the hill country to aid her cousin, both women, filled with the Holy Spirit, the major role God has played in their pregnancies is revealed.

Elizabeth is the very first in Scripture to announce that Mary is the

Mother of the Redeemer, and she proclaims her blessed because she has believed what God said he

would do in her.

And Mary, also through the Holy Spirit, sings, "My soul proclaims the greatness of the Lord...from now on will all ages call me blessed...the Mighty One has done great things for me."

The Fourth Sunday of Advent is always a happy one, and even more so this year, because we are just beginning the Extraordinary Year of Mercy.

On Dec. 8th, Pope Francis opened the Holy Door of Divine Mercy at St. Peter's.

Today, he opens the Holy Door at St. John Lateran, the oldest church in Rome.

Thousands of other spe-

DEC. 20

The Fourth Sunday of Advent

READINGS

Micah 5:1-4a

Hebrews 10:5-10

Luke 1:39-45

cially designated churches throughout the world will also open a Door of Mercy to those who seek forgiveness this year from the Lord.

There is only one proper response - joy, gratitude, and sharing love with everyone around us.

Let both body and spirit

sing, for God has broken into his world once more to repair the damage done by satanic forces masquerading as religion, as well as the confusion of our leaders and the weak faith and paralyzed hearts of many good people.

May Christ be born in our hearts as well as in Mary's body through the light of His Grace.

Let us seek his Mercy in the sacrament of reconciliation. Filled then with that light that gives courage to our faith, may we share it in a world filled with darkness. "Hurry, the Lord is near" we sing in our Advent hymn.

MAKING SENSE OF BIOETHICS

A higher standard than for cats and dogs

Sometimes people will point out: "We euthanize our pets when they suffer, and they are clearly creatures of God, so why can't we euthanize a sick and suffering person who wants it? It seems like we treat our dogs and cats better than we treat our suffering family members."

The way we treat animals, however, should not be the measure of how we treat fellow human beings. We keep animals as pets, but we don't do the same with humans.

We use animals to make clothing and food, but we don't do the same with humans.

For all our similarities to the rest of the animal kingdom, we are aware of a fundamental difference in kind between ourselves and our furry friends.

We are not meant to die just as animals do, or be euthanized as they are. The death of a human is a more complex event that has other important realities associated with it.

In euthanizing a cat or dog, an assessment about

the nature of the creature is rolled up into our decision to proceed.

We are not meant to die just as animals do, or be euthanized as they are.

The death of a human is a more complex event that has other important realities associated with it

Our pets seem to process the world around them mostly in terms of pleasure and pain, oscillating between these two poles as they instinctively gravitate towards pleasurable experiences, and engage in "mechanisms of avoidance" when they come up against pain or discomfort.

Animals lack that uniquely human power to reason about, resign themselves to, and allow good to be drawn out of pain. Animals can't do much else in the face of their suffering apart from trying to skirt around it, escape the situation, or passively endure it. Because of our strong

sense of empathy, humans find it more emotionally acceptable to "put the animal to sleep," rather than watch it suffer a long and agonizing death.

But it would be false empathy, and a false compassion, to promote the killing or suicide of suffering family members.

As human beings, we have real moral duties, and better options, in the face of our own pain and tribulations.

On an instinctual level, we tend to recoil and do our best to avoid suffering, just like animals. But we are able to respond in a way that animals cannot, and even willingly accept our suffering, which is unavoidably part of the fabric of our human existence.

None of us lives out our life without encountering some suffering, even if it may be purely internal, like the agony that comes from loneliness, isolation, depression, or rejection.

Every person must, in one

way or another, confront suffering along the trajectory of life, and human maturity is partially measured by how we deal with suffering.



Father Tadeusz
Pacholczyk Ph.D.

Those who live with serious disabilities, through their determined and beauty-filled lives and example, remind us every day of the good that can be drawn from suffering. The way they deal with their struggles manifests the depths of what it is to be authentically human.

It is precisely disability, with its disfigurement, impairment, vulnerability and dependence, that challenges us to grasp the outlines of our human journey in a less superficial way, and to value human life and protect human dignity in sickness as well as in health.

Victoria Kennedy spoke to this same point when describing Senator Kennedy's final months:

"When my husband was

first diagnosed with cancer, he was told that he had only two to four months to live.

... But that prognosis was wrong. Teddy lived 15 more productive months... Because that first dire prediction of life expectancy was wrong, I have 15 months of cherished memories. ... When the end finally did come—natural death with dignity—my husband was home, attended by his doctor, surrounded by family and our priest."

As human beings, we reach beyond the limits that suffering imposes by a conscious decision to accept and grow through it, like the athlete or the Navy seal who pushes through the limits of his exhaustion during training. We enter into an awareness of something greater behind the veil of our suffering when we come to accept it as an integral component of our human condition.

We also give positive example, strength and encouragement to the younger generation as they witness our response to, and acceptance of, our own suffering.

CONTINUED ON NEXT PAGE

MOVIE REVIEW

IN THE HEART OF THE SEA

By John Mulderig
Catholic News Service

With "In the Heart of the Sea" (Warner Bros.), the real-life events that helped inspire Herman Melville's classic 1851 novel "Moby-Dick" become the basis for a polished and exciting adventure directed by Ron Howard.

Despite some grim plot developments and other material precluding blanket endorsement for any but grownups, Howard's film will make fit and even valuable fare for most mature adolescents.

In adapting Nathaniel Philbrick's eponymous history text, published in 2000 and subtitled "The Tragedy of the Whaleship Essex," screenwriter Charles Leavitt sets out with ambitions as lofty as Melville's own. "How does a man come to know the unknowable?" the novelist, played by Ben Whishaw, asks in the picture's opening moments.

To find out, Melville has journeyed to Nantucket,

Massachusetts, where he hopes to interview Tom Nickerson (Brendan Gleeson), the last survivor of the ill-fated - and already famous - 1820 expedition that proved to be the Essex's undoing.

But the haunted, alcoholic old salt is reluctant to open up about the harrowing experiences of his youth (during which he's portrayed by Tom Holland).

The tale he eventually weaves is one of hubris and greed - whale oil was the primary fuel, and therefore one of the most valuable commodities, of the era - as well as deprivation and extermination.

At its center looms the bitter rivalry between the Essex's aristocratic but inexperienced captain, George Pollard (Benjamin Walker), and its veteran first mate, the intrepid Owen Chase (Chris Hemsworth).

Driven by avarice, and by the mutual desire to be rid of each other, Pollard and Chase recklessly carry their vessel off to the remote, mid-Pacific feeding grounds

where the relentlessly hunted whales, already absent from more accessible areas, are still to be found, so it's rumored, in large numbers. There the ship meets its disastrous destiny as the result of an uncanny encounter with a leviathan of vast proportions and unusual ferocity.

While the picture falls short of its own sublime ambitions, it does reach the level of thoughtful, generally absorbing entertainment. And the imagery is frequently striking, as when a harpooned whale showers his hunters in a rainfall of the blood forcefully expelled from his blowhole.

Other scenes evoke everything from a particularly good episode of the 1960s gothic soap opera "Dark Shadows" to an eerie maritime painting.

Howard and Leavitt maintain a light touch as the script deals incidentally with such religious themes as the power of prayer and the benefits of (non-sacramental) confession. Equal delicacy is observed in



CNS PHOTO/WARNER BROS.

Chris Hemsworth and Tom Holland star in a scene from the movie "In the Heart of the Sea."

treating other heavyweight topics, especially a newborn sense of environmentalism voiced through a debate about man's true status within -- and proper stance toward -- the natural world.

Although it's no match for the masterful narrative with which it shares its factual source material, "In the Heart of the Sea" does represent accomplished moviemaking of a high order.

The film contains much

stylized seafaring violence with brief gore, mature themes, including cannibalism and suicide, a fleeting bawdy image, about a half-dozen uses of profanity as well as a single crude and several crass terms. 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.

Higher standard

CONTINUED ON NEXT PAGE

Our trials and tribulations also teach us about our reliance on God and the illusions of self-reliance.

On the other hand, if our fear of suffering drives us to constant circumlocution and relentless avoidance, even to the point of short-circuiting life itself through euthanasia or physician-assisted suicide, we can miss those mysterious but privileged moments that invite us to become more resplendently human, with all the messiness, awkwardness and agonies that are invariably part of that process.

Rev. Tadeusz Pacholczyk, Ph.D. earned his doctorate in neuroscience from Yale

and did post-doctoral work at Harvard.

He is a priest of the dio-

cese of Fall River, MA, and serves as the Director of Education at The National

Catholic Bioethics Center in Philadelphia. See www.ncb-center.org



- Inside Diocese \$27
 Outside Diocese \$30
 New Subscription
 Renewal
 I want to be a Patron:
 \$35 \$50
 \$100 \$250

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Parish _____

Please send my subscription to my e-mail address: _____

Catholic news from around the world and the Diocese of Ogdensburg delivered to your home with a subscription to the *North Country Catholic*

Visit our website at www.northcountrycatholic.org to pay by Credit Card for immediate delivery.

OR Send this coupon with payment to:
 North Country Catholic

PO Box 106, Canajoharie, New York, 13317

Please allow 3-4 weeks for delivery when mailing in your renewal

The Diocese of Ogdensburg
NORTH COUNTRY CATHOLIC
 is on
FACEBOOK


 • Find Us
 • Like Us
 • Follow Us


ADIRONDACK

LESSONS, CAROLS

Lake Placid - The Northern Adirondack Vocal Ensemble (NAVE) will give a performance of a Festival of Lessons and Carols

Date: Dec. 27

Time: 4 p.m.

Place: St. Agnes Church.

Features: Anthems, carols, and hymns illuminating the Christmas story along with community readers and congregational singing in the tradition of King's College, Cambridge. NAVE, under the musical direction of Andrew M. Benware, is a mixed chamber choir of professional and amateur singers that performs choral music from a variety of periods and styles with harmonies of four to eight parts.

Price: Admission is a suggested donation of \$10.

Contact: drew.benware@gmail.com or on Facebook

CLINTON

LESSONS, CAROLS

Plattsburgh - The Northern Adirondack Vocal Ensemble (NAVE) will give a performance of a Festival of Lessons and Carols

Date: Dec. 26

Time: 7:30 p.m.

Place: St. Peter's Church.

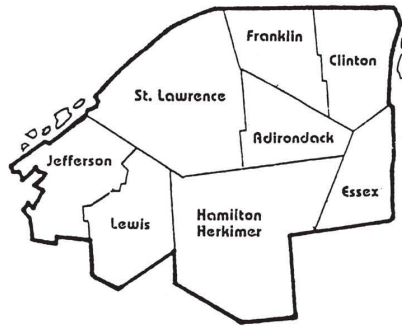
Features: Anthems, carols, and hymns illuminating the Christmas story along with community readers and congregational singing in the tradition of King's College, Cambridge. NAVE, under the musical direction of Andrew M. Benware, is a mixed chamber choir of professional and amateur singers that performs choral music from a variety of periods and styles with harmonies of four to eight parts.

Price: Suggested donation of \$10.

Contact: drew.benware@gmail.com or on Facebook

EUCCHARISTIC ADORATION

Plattsburgh - Eucharistic Adoration is



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.

held throughout the year every Wednesday, Thursday, and Friday.

Place: St. John's "Holy Family" Adoration Chapel, downstairs

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

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

BLESSED SACRAMENT ADORATION

Keeseville - There is Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament every Sunday.

Time: 1 p.m. to 4

Place: Immaculate Conception Church

FRANKLIN

SATURDAY DEVOTION

St. Regis Falls - First Saturday Devotion and Holy Hour to be held the first Saturday of each month.

Time: after 4:30 p.m. anticipated Mass

Place: St. Ann's Church

Contact: 518-856-9656

JEFFERSON

IHC CHRISTMAS SHOW

Watertown - IHC Christmas Show to be held.

Date: Dec. 21

Time: 7 p.m.

Place: IHC High School

Features: There is no charge for The

Christmas Show - it is a gift of the school back to the community, though they will be accepting donations for the local food pantry. The event will start with a showcase of select Christmas music performed by the high school band and chorus. Following the concert will be a performance of "The Littlest Elf."

BEREAVEMENT MEETING

Watertown - Ecumenical Bereavement meeting to be held.

Date: Dec. 21

Time: 7 p.m.

Place: Sisters of St. Joseph Mother House Hearshide Hospitality Center
Topic: Grief during holidays

HOLY HOUR FOR VOCATIONS

Watertown - Holy Hour for vocations

Date: Mon.-Fri.

Time: 9:30 - 10:30 a.m.

Place: Holy Family Church

Contact: 315-782-2468

LIFERIGHT MEETING

Watertown - Liferight of Watertown meets the first Wednesday of the Month.

Time: 1 p.m.

Place: 870 Arsenal Street.

Features: The office has a variety of

pro-life videos, books and educational materials which may be borrowed.
Contact: Phone 315-788-8480

LEWIS

DIVINE MERCY DEVOTIONS

Houseville - Divine Mercy Devotions for the month of January will be held.

Date: Jan. 3

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.

LEWIS HOLY HOUR

Lowville - Holy Hour to be held.

Date: Dec. 17

Time: 4 p.m. to 5

Place: St. Peter's Chapel

Features: Adoration prayers, the Divine Mercy Chaplet, and the Benediction.

INTERNATIONAL CRÊCHES

Houseville - An international exhibit of Christmas Crèches-Nativities is set

Place: St. Hedwig's Church.

Dates: Dec. 20, 27 and Jan. 3,

Time: The display may be viewed after the 11 a.m. Mass or from 1 p.m. to 3 on the above dates, or by appointment.

Features: The exhibit is free and open to the public. Bring family and friends to experience the universality of Christ and Christmas through the eyes of many different cultures.

Contact: 348-6260.

POLISH CHRISTMAS WAFER

Houseville - The Polish Christmas Wafer or *oplatek* is available from St. Hedwig's Church.

Cost: \$3 per package plus postage.

Features: The Christmas Wafer of OPLATEK is part of a Polish, Lithuanian and Slovak custom that is observed during the Vigil of Christmas (Wigilia). After the first star is visible, family and friends gather around the dinner table to share the OPLATEK, which symbolizes the presence of Christ, the Newborn Child. The OPLATEK is sent and shared with family and friends all over the world as a symbol of love, unity and forgiveness while wishing God's Blessing on each other.

Contact: 348-6260.

IMPACT NIGHTS

Lowville - IMPACT (High school youth group) nights are the first and third Sundays of the month.

Time: 6 p.m. to 8

Place: St. Peter's Church

PIZZA AND PRAYER

Lowville - Pizza and Prayer to be held every Monday.

Schedule: 5:30 p.m. to 6:15; pizza and social time; Bible Study 6:15 to 6:45; Pick up at 7 p.m.

Place: St. Peter's Church

Features: Open to high school students. Most P&P will be Bible studies. The first Monday of the month will be Eucharistic adoration in the chapel

MIDDLE SCHOOL YOUTH GROUP

Lowville - Middle School Youth Group to meet.

Date: third Wednesday of each month

Time: 5:30 p.m.

Place: St. Peter's Church

ST. LAWRENCE

HOLY HOUR FOR VOCATIONS

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

Date: Thursday before the First Friday

Time: 7 p.m. concluding with Benediction at 8 p.m.

Place: Deacon Winter Chapel

EUCCHARISTIC ADORATION

Massena - St. Mary's & St. Joseph's hold Benediction and Adoration every Friday

Time: 9 a.m. to 10

Place: St. Mary's Family Room.

BEREAVEMENT SUPPORT GROUP

Massena - Sacred Heart/St. Lawrence holds a Bereavement Support Group last Tuesday of each month.

Time: 2 p.m.

Place: Sacred Heart Convent

Contact: 315-769-3137

DIOCESAN EVENTS

DAYS OF DISCERNMENT

Potsdam - Discerning men are invited to come together & consider the call the Roman Catholic Priesthood.

Dates: Jan. 17 & 31; Feb. 14 & 28; March 13; April 3 & 17

Time: 3 p.m.

Place: St. Mary's Rectory

Features: Reflection and vespers.

Contact: Your Catholic Campus Minister or Father Howard Venette, pastor

@stmaryspatrick.net, 315-265-9680;

Father Douglas Lucia,

frdoug@twcny.rr.com or Father Bryan

Stitt, diocesan vocation director

bstitt@rcdony.org

For a New or Used Car
Mort Backus & Sons
On Canton-Ogdensburg Rd.
315-393-5899

CHEVROLET

Visit our website
www.northcountrycatholic.org

- Read Bishop LaValley's columns
- Search archived papers
- View diocesan events and much more

 Find us on Facebook!



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

mca missionary
childhood
association

Artwork contest

Hey Kids!!! Do you like to draw, paint or color? Announcing the 2015-2016 MCA Christmas Artwork Contest! Twenty-four winners will be selected nationwide. The winners' work will appear as e-greetings on the National Church website and at the Basilica of the National Shrine of the Immaculate Conception in Washington DC next Christmas.

Contest Guidelines:

Open to students grades k-8. Attach the entry form seen below to the back of the artwork. Please secure with tape - not staples, glue etc... Do not fold. The entry will become property of the MCA offices.

Artwork must be on 8.5x11 inch sheet of WHITE paper only. Can be either horizontal or vertical.

Students may use crayons, pastels, colored pencils, markers, or watercolors. NO LEAD PENCILS.

No tracings or direct copies of art will be accepted. Artwork must be that of the child's own doing.

Suggested Artwork Subjects:

The Nativity, Three Wise Men, Shepherds, Mother and Child (Mary and Jesus), Joseph and Mary traveling to Bethlehem, Newborn Jesus in the manger, the Angel Gabriel.

Helpful Hints:

Use eye catching color, bold colors reproduce the best. Erase all pencil markings. Do not include any text or lettering in the drawings. Fill up as much of the page as possible but do not have the main part of the drawing on the edge. Make sure that facial features on animals and people are bold to reproduce well.

For more information or to see prior contest winners visit <http://mcakids.org/>

Entry form: Cut below this line and mail with artwork taped to this entry form to:

Mission Office, PO Box 369, Ogdensburg, NY 13669 - DEADLINE IS JANUARY 31, 2016!

STUDENT NAME: _____
PLEASE CIRCLE: BOY GIRL GRADE: _____
PLEASE CIRCLE: CATHOLIC SCHOOL PARISH RE/CCD HOME SCHOOL

NAME OF SCHOOL/RELIGIOUS ED PROGRAM: _____

PRINCIPAL OR CCD INSTRUCTOR: _____
SCHOOL/PARISH ADDRESS: _____
NAME OF DIOCESE: _____

STUDENT ADDRESS: _____
PARENT/GUARDIAN SIGNATURE: _____
PARENT EMAIL ADDRESS: _____
PHONE NUMBER: _____

OBITUARIES

Alexandria Bay – JoAnn D. (Hicklin) Senecal, 75; Funeral Services Dec. 11, 2015 at St. Cyril's Church; burial in Barnes Settlement Cemetery.

AuSable Forks – Rui Brum, 61 Funeral Services Dec. 11, 2015 at Holy Name Church; burial in Haselton Cemetery, Wilmington.

Black River – Susan C. (Noone) O'Brien, 74; Funeral Services Dec. 10, 2015 at St. Paul's Church; burial in Black River Cemetery.

Glenfield – Dale E. Corbo, 67; Funeral Services at St. Mary's Church; burial in Brantingham Cemetery.

Gouverneur – Rosa Weiss McEathron, 89; Funeral Services Dec. 14, 2015 at St. James Church.

Long Lake – Francis Leon McConkey, 89; Funeral Services at St. Henry's Church.

Madrid – Beverly Ann (Raymo) Richards, 74; Funeral Dec. 9, 2015 at St. John the Baptist Church; burial Madrid Cemetery.

Malone – Gail Langlois Timmons; Funeral Services Dec. 5, 2015 at St. Joseph's Church; burial in parish cemetery.

Massena – Lorraine (Perras) Tyo, 93; Funeral Services Dec. 10, 2015 at Church of the Sacred Heart; burial in Calvary Cemetery.

Moers Forks – Roger Garrand, 90; Funeral Services Dec. 14, 2015 at St. Ann's Church; burial in Whispering Maples Memorial.

Moers Forks – Marjorie Ann (Stone) Rushford, 74; Funeral Services Dec. 4, 2015 at St. Ann's Church.

Ogdensburg – Leonard P. "Skip" Legault, Jr., 56; Funeral Dec. 7, 2015 at Notre Dame Church; burial in parish cemetery.

Potsdam – Jeanine (Lalonde) Jacot, 86; Funeral Services Dec. 11, 2015 at St. Mary's Church; burial in St. Mary's Cemetery.

Pyrites – Burton J. Bessette Sr., 87; Funeral Services Dec. 11, 2015 at St. Paul's Oratory; burial in North Russell Cemetery.

Saranak Lake – Barbara E. (Perry) Quinn, 85; Funeral Dec. 11, 2015 at St. Bernard's Church; burial in St. Bernard's Cemetery.

Watertown – Judy (Aubertine) Lyng, 65; Funeral Our Lady of the Sacred Heart Church; burial in Glenwood Cemetery.

Watertown – Sabatina "Dolly" (Marra) Smith, 86; Funeral Services Dec. 10, 2015 at Holy Family Church; burial in Glenwood Mausoleum.

Watertown – Donald R. Whitmore, 93; Funeral Services Dec. 11, 2015 at Frederick Bros. Funeral Home.

Christian persecution in Iraq at 'critical, violent' point

By Junno Arocho Esteves
Catholic News Service

ROME (CNS) - The survival of Christianity in the Middle East has reached such a critical point that the chances of dialogue and reconciliation in the region are being threatened, said Chaldean Catholic Patriarch Louis Sako of Baghdad.

"The situation is very bad, very critical and always violent," Patriarch Sako told Catholic News Service Dec. 10. "Last year in August, 120,000 Christian people were expelled from their homes, their villages and now they are living in some camps with nothing, but the church is helping them."

Patriarch Sako was among the keynote speakers at a Dec. 10-12 international conference on Christian persecution in the world.

He told CNS that the mass exodus of Christians in the region will only worsen the situation due to growing tensions between Sunni and Shiite Muslims who "are killing each other."

"We Christians, we always bridged the groups and we promoted dialogue, reconciliation and forgiveness," he said.

Archbishop William E. Lori of Baltimore, chairman of the U.S. bishops' Ad Hoc Committee for Religious Liberty, stressed the need for Catholics in the West to "speak up for the persecuted Christian minorities in the Middle East" who are often "omitted" and "not mentioned."

"We must not allow them to be forgotten. We must not engage in an unholy silence," he told CNS.

Archbishop Lori said religious persecution and threats to religious liberty are "two sides of one coin" and that it was crucial for Christians in the West to "keep the flame of religious liberty bright in solidarity with our suffering sisters and brothers in the Middle East, Africa and elsewhere."

The conference also touched upon the reasons why terrorist groups, like Islamic State, carry out brutal attacks against Christians

and religious minorities. Patriarch Sako said such fundamentalist ideologies are a "cancer not only for Islam, but other" religions in the region as well.

The Islamic State and "fundamentalists don't accept anything that doesn't fit with their vision of Islam," he said. "This is a kind of purification and, of course, Christians and other minorities are a target."

Patriarch Sako also said it was "very wrong" for Western politicians to label actions by the Islamic State as "violent extremism" rather than "Islamic extremism."

"This is not the truth because these groups, ISIS and others, are basing their actions on the holy Quran" and recited sayings of the prophet Muhammad. "Even when they burn (people) they recite" one of these sayings, he said.

"Of course, all Muslims are not fanatics or terrorists, but there are groups that want to establish an Islamic state with Islamic law as it was in the 7th century," the patriarch said.

Last in a series of biographies of 2015 religious jubilarians

Sr. Rita Frances - Grey Nun for 60 years

Sister Rita Frances Brady met the Grey Nuns when she attended A. Barton Hepburn School of Nursing in Ogdensburg. At the end of her first year, she knew she wanted to be a part of their joy and their Community.

She never returned to her nursing studies but instead spent almost all of her 60 years as a Grey Nun in the field of education, most of those years in the Diocese of Ogdensburg.

Sister Rita Frances has been a teacher, a principal and a librarian and has served in parishes in the Philadelphia area and the Queens area of Long Island.

Her years of study in the field of elementary education and administrative supervision served her well in each of those ministries.

By Sister Rita Frances Brady, GNSH
60 year jubilarian

My sixty years as a Grey Nun of the Sacred Heart have been blessed with many opportunities to see God working in my life. It is a joy to be a sister!

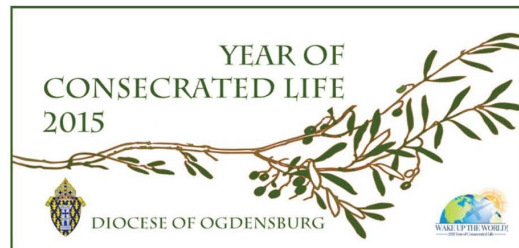
I can't believe how quickly the years have gone by and how many priests, sisters, families and students I have known. I am grateful for all the love and support of those who shared my ministry.

It was always the faces of the children that energized me as I taught and administered in the Catholic schools from Queens, N.Y. to the shores of the St. Lawrence River and recently the foothills of the Adirondacks.



Sr. Rita Frances Brady, GNSH

I always tried so help children become what God wanted them to be.



Although I have always loved teaching, coaching basketball through the years has been so rewarding.

The Diocese of Ogdensburg, where I have served 43 of my 60 years, has been one of the places I have loved. There is a strong sense of community in this Diocese and the priests and people are so loving and accepting. They

continue to challenge me to be the best Grey Nun I can be. I have followed in the footsteps of some of the "greats" who shared their ministry here in the North Country.

For me, JUBILEE is celebration; a time to give thanks for the priceless blessings that have "graced" my sixty years as a Grey Nun of the Sacred Heart.

BARSTOW

AN AMERICAN REVOLUTION BUICK PONTIAC GMC SUBARU

"Family owned dealership serving the North Country for over 56 years!"

For more information, visit our Website at: www.barstowmotors.com

MARKET ST., POTSDAM, NY • (315) 265-8800

Empire State Housing
We process all VA loans



New or Used Manufactured and Modular Homes

Located on Route 3 (next to the fair grounds)

518-563-8722 or 518-569-0890

www.pwmh.com

WE ARE OPEN ON SUNDAYS 11 A.M. TO 3 P.M.
YOUR BEST DEAL CAN BE FOUND ON SUNDAY!!

Special: 28x48 used Double, Excellent Condition.
\$49,900 Delivery and Setup, no tax.

JUDICIAL VICARS DISCUSS ANNULMENTS



PHOTO BY ELAINE SEYMOUR

The Judicial Vicars of the dioceses in upstate New York met in Syracuse Nov. 23 to discuss changes coming about with *Mitis Dominus Jesus*, Pope Francis' apostolic letter on the reform of the annulment process. Seated, from left are Mary Ellen Goverts, Case Instructor of the Diocese of Rochester; and Msgr. Harry K. Snow, JCL, Judicial Vicar, Diocese of Ogdensburg; standing, Father Matthew Frisoni, Diocese of Albany; Msgr. Salvatore Manganello, STD, JCL, Judicial Vicar, Diocese of Buffalo; Father Robert Hyde, Diocese of Syracuse; Father Louis A. Sirianni, JCL, Judicial Vicar, Diocese of Rochester; Father James I. Donlon, JCD, Judicial Vicar, Diocese of Albany; Father John P. Donovan, JCL, Adjutant Judicial Vicar, Diocese of Syracuse; Father Douglas Lucia, JCL, Adjutant Judicial Vicar, Diocese of Ogdensburg; Bishop Robert J. Cunningham, Bishop of Syracuse; and Msgr. Timothy S. Elmer, JCL, Judicial Vicar, Diocese of Syracuse.