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The Diocese of Ogdensburg Volume 70, Number 27

NORTH COUNTRY CATHOLIC

DEC. 9, 2015

Missionary spirit: giving witness

VATICAN CITY (CNS) - Missionary spirit is manifested by preaching love, humanity and faith through one's witness and not through proselytism, Pope Francis said.

Faith in Jesus Christ is shared first through "witness then with words," the pope

said Dec. 2 at his weekly general audience in St. Peter's Square.

The pope dedicated his audience to reflecting on his trip to Africa Nov. 25-30 when he visited Kenya, Uganda and the Central African Republic.

He said that his first stop, Kenya, was a country "that represented the global challenge of our time" in presenting a "model of development" that cares for creation in a "balanced, inclusive and sustainable" way.

However, he said, there

also is a noticeable situation of "wealth and misery" existing side by side.

"This is a scandal, not only in Africa but also here, everywhere," the pope said. "Coexistence between wealth and misery is a scandal, a shame for humanity."

Religious Retirement Appeal

The annual Religious Retirement collection "Share in the Care" will take place in all parishes of the diocese this weekend.

In anticipation of the appeal, Atonement Sister Ellen Donahue has prepared a report illustrating the importance of the collection.

Currently there are more than 33,000 Religious over age 70 living in the United States. By 2024, retired Religious (most of whom worked for small stipends through their lives) will outnumber wage-earning Religious by four to one.

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Charitable gift annuities

Diocesan development director explains their value to the donor and to the Church of Ogdensburg
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FAREWELL TO DEAR FRIENDS



PHOTO BY ELEANOR WALL

Bishop Terry R. LaValley presided at a celebration of thanksgiving and farewell for the Grey Nuns of the Sacred Heart Nov. 29 at St. Mary's Cathedral, honoring all the members of the religious congregation for their years of service in the Diocese of Ogdensburg. With the departure of Sisters Mary Teresa LaBrake and Joan McElwain for Philadelphia this month, over 140 years of Grey Nun ministry and 94 years of Grey Nuns of the Sacred Heart ministry will come to an end. Bishop LaValley thanked the sisters for their service to the people of the diocese as educators, health care and social workers and pastoral ministers. Several Grey Nuns returned to Ogdensburg for the event including, Sister Rita Frances Brady, left; and Sister Mary Looby, who most recently served in the Malone area. See pages 3 and 16 for more coverage.

YEAR OF MERCY

'Revolution
of tenderness'



CNS PHOTO/

ANDREA SOLARO, REUTERS POOL

Pope Francis stands in front of the Holy Door in early April prior to first vespers of Divine Mercy Sunday in St. Peter's Basilica at the Vatican. Pope Francis was set to open the Holy Door Dec. 8. After reciting verses from the Psalms, the pope planned to open the door and lead a procession of cardinals, bishops, priests, religious and laypeople through the door, arriving at the tomb of St. Peter. The pope says he wants the Year of Mercy to usher in a "revolution of tenderness."

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EDITOR'S NOTE

Showing our thanks for *our* Sisters

When Catholics in the city of Ogdensburg, make their donations to the annual Religious Retirement collection this weekend, I'm willing to bet that most will have one particular Religious order in mind.

The timing of the appeal coincides with the heartbreaking departure of the last two Grey Nuns of the Sacred Heart, a religious order which has served our community for generations.

Sister Mary Teresa LaBrake and Sister Joan McElwain are joining Sister Rita Frances Brady and other dear friends of

ours at the Holy Redeemer D'Youville assisted living facility in Philadelphia.



Mary Lou
Kilian

Earlier this fall, I talked with Sister Julia Lanigan, president of the Grey Nuns, who told me that the Holy Redeemer facility is designed for those who have been living independently but are on the verge of needing assistance as well as the sisters who can help them.

Fifty sisters, four at a time, have moved there since September.

Once they are all settled, the Grey Nuns will look for office space to relocate the general

offices from their longtime home in Yardley, Penn.

The motherhouse was sold in 2012 and leased back for five years to allow time for relocation.

Sister Julia said the difficult decisions had to be made because of the decrease in number of sisters and aging demographic.

There are now 110 Grey Nuns with a median age of 79. "We need to make plans now for the future," Sister Julia said. "We don't have years and years left with sisters who can manage big properties, serve as landlords and oversee large number of employees.

"The decision to leave Ogdensburg was a hard one," she

said, "but so many factors have to go into a decision. It's so hard to leave a place that's near and dear to our hearts for so many years."

And, for us, it's hard to say goodbye to these women who are near and dear to our hearts.

At least we know that we have a concrete way to show our appreciation to the Grey Nuns – and every other religious order with Sisters and Brothers who have lived their lives in service to Catholics in the North Country.

When we are asked to *Share in the Care* this coming weekend, we need to remember that we will be caring for people we actually know and love.

A PASTOR'S PERSPECTIVE

Sacrament of Penance in Year of Mercy

"Neither do I condemn you, go and sin no more."

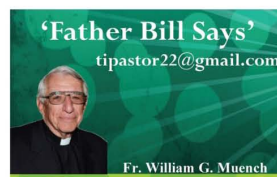
I am certain that you know the whole story however, we will never forget the words of Jesus. They are so important.

Pope Francis has everybody thinking about Mercy – God's Mercy – these days. Pope Francis has initiated a whole year, a Jubilee Year of Mercy – a time of prayer and celebration of God's Mercy, on the Feast of the Immaculate Conception of the Blessed Virgin Mary.

God's Mercy is a frequent focus of Pope Francis' preaching and teaching. He wants us to realize the importance of the message of God's Mercy for our Catholic Church. So we can realize Pope Francis is joining Jesus in teaching, "Neither do I condemn you, go and sin no more."

Today, I would like to speak with you about God's Mercy as brought to us in the Sacrament of Penance. I think this is important in this time of Advent as many of you prepare for your Christmas Confession.

As a priest, I have been chosen to minister the Mercy of God in this Sacrament of Penance. I find the questions and concerns about the Sacra-



Fr. William G. Muench

ment of Penance that I receive so interesting. However, I go to confession myself so I think I know the challenges of this sacrament – and also the experience of receiving the glorious grace of God that comes through this wonderful sacrament. I know the peace of being a forgiven sinner.

My prayer today is that each person who approaches me in confession will experience the peace and love of God through the Sacrament of Penance.

Now, I would like to share with you some things about the reception of this important sacrament. The preparation before receiving this Sacrament of Penance is truly an important part of this experience. Our time of prayer before approaching the priest is a moment to realize again our own personal holiness, our own goodness.

We are baptized people – we

are a blessed people in the Lord. The recognition of our sinfulness, of our failings, in no way cancels our holiness. Through our Baptism, God continues to be our Savior and continues to be part of our lives, part of all that we are. Christ continues to say to us, "Neither do I condemn you, go and sin no more."

So, how do I approach this Sacrament of Penance – this time of Confession? Each confession is my time to celebrate God's forgiveness, God's Mercy, God's love, God's place in my life. I come celebrating that the Lord finds me so loving and penitential that Christ wants to be part of my life – that Jesus willed to die for me on the cross. This Sacrament enlivens my life and dedication to live a good life. I need to know and experience God's forgiving love and Mercy.

So, why remember my sins and failings? I need a time of real conversion, of serious changes. So, I must make a plan. In preparing for confession, I must make a plan to bring new life into my own life – God's love and Mercy.

Each time I approach the priest in the Sacrament of

Penance, I must be ready to eliminate some things in my life; I must be ready to add some things to my life. In this way, I will continue to celebrate God's love for me.

As a confessor, when someone comes to confess their sins and failings I want to respond to them, "So, what are you going to do about this." I am hoping that this is my way of saying to this person that they must have a plan for their conversion in the Lord.

Advent is so special. This Advent is even more special as we begin Pope Francis' Jubilee Year of God's Mercy. This Year's Advent Confession is a very special celebration showing our readiness for a conversion in our lives because of God's Mercy, our readiness to change what must be changed in the Spirit of God's Mercy.

Through this celebration of the Sacrament of Penance each of us will immerse ourselves in the holiness that is ours. This means that we must live as Holy Ones blessed by God's forgiveness and Mercy. This is the challenge that we must be ready to accept each time we approach this Sacrament of God's love and Mercy.

FOLLOW ME

GNSH: their focus is 'ever on Christ'

Bishop LaValley's homily for the Mass of Thanksgiving & Farewell for The Grey Nuns of the Sacred Heart, First Sunday of Advent, Nov. 29

It's no secret that we live in a fast-moving society that has little patience with delay. What would we do without fast food and instant communication? Most people seem to be always in a hurry, including me. Watch me squirm in the checkout line as the person ahead of me takes forever, fumbling deep in his pockets to find that one nickel. It is constant activity, going somewhere, needing to get things done, and done quickly, that's important.

Given this reality, how do we approach the season of Advent that proposes four weeks of waiting in preparation for Christmas?

These days we are all being bombarded with messages telling us to hurry because there are only so many shopping days left to Christmas. After all, every year we only have 364 days of shopping and we've just got to open the doors of the stores on Thanksgiving Day. We can't wait for Black Friday.

How do you convince people, who are under great pressure from the powerful and persuasive modern media, of the redemptive value of waiting?

Advent is one of those times when it can seem that what we hear and experience within these sacred walls makes Church a totally different place from where we live our daily lives. If we think about it, Advent brings home to us the fact that most of us have divided loyalties—one foot in the world, so to speak, and one foot in the realm of the Spirit. Are we supposed to go through life trying to balance this tension, with sometimes the



PHOTO BY BETTY STEELE

The parishioners of St. Mary's Cathedral and Notre Dame in Ogdensburg held a farewell celebration in September for the final two Grey Nuns of the Sacred Heart to serve in the city. Sisters Mary Teresa LaBrake and Joan McElwain will be moving to Pennsylvania this month. From left are Father Joseph Morgan, cathedral rector; Sister Mary Teresa, Bishop LaValley, Sister Joan and Grey Nun Sister Julia Lanigan, president of the Grey Nuns of the Sacred Heart. Bishop LaValley's homily for the diocesan farewell to the Grey Nuns, held Nov. 29, is printed on this page; Father Morgan's reflection on the Grey Nuns' contribution to the faith life in the North Country appears on the back page.

values of the world winning out, and occasionally the values of our faith?

I don't think so. The Church is in the world. The truth of the Gospel is meant to shed light on the meaning of our experience. The values of the Gospel are meant to provide a guideline for our daily living in the world. Our faith should not make us schizophrenic, divided persons, but should be a source of inner unity that brings together what we experience and what we believe.

And that is a lesson about which we are reminded on this special occasion when we reflect upon how the Grey Nuns of the Sacred Heart have taught us for generations how to live in this world with our eyes and hearts fixed on the world to come.

With their focus ever on

the Christ, they helped educate and form our young, cared for our orphans, the sick and the elderly, the bereaved. They've established Hospice centers and founded and run hospitals and nursing homes; they've headed and taught in our Catholic schools, taught in our prisons, cared for us in our emergency rooms and clinics, and served our parishioners in a broad array of faith-filled ministries.

Yes, through the years these nuns have helped us connect what we believe with how we live in the real world.

In her inspiring book, *Paths of Compassion*, Sister Patricia Geary, GNSH tells us that the Grey Nuns have counted among their community 34 graduates of St. Mary's Academy here in Ogdensburg—that's in addition

to those who entered other religious congregations.

Just recently, Sr. Catherine Mary Cummings, RSM, a 60 year Jubilarian this year, wrote in the *North Country Catholic* of her vocation being "developed by the Grey Nuns of the Sacred Heart who were my teachers for 12 years at Bishop Conroy School and St. Mary's Academy."

In addition to the hundreds of Grey Nuns who served here in the St. Lawrence Valley, we have all those who served in the Champlain Valley, including those over at Champlain Valley Hospital before it merged with Physician's Hospital.

How do you say "thank you" to a community of holy women who, for generations, has so faithfully served our loved ones?

How do you say "thank

you" to women whose faith have inspired countless others to grow in holiness?

How does one thank these women whose faith sees them sacrifice material things, forsaking time with family and loved ones, married life and children of their own for the sake of the Kingdom?

How do you say 'thank you' to a community of holy women who, for generations, has so faithfully served our loved ones?

Perhaps during this Advent time of preparation and waiting, we might be inclined to ask, why can't the Grey Nuns just wait, why leave us now? Hold your horses! What's the hurry?

I know that, under Sr. Julia's leadership, these nuns, through much prayer and discernment, have been preparing well for this day.

I know from my own pastoral experience that times come when moves, when change becomes necessary and hearts become so heavy. But these can become hope-filled occasions to look ahead to the possibilities yet to be born.

I'm reminded of an image I've mentioned on other occasions that we might find helpful today. We must always, always keep our eyes focused on what lies in front of us as we seek to follow Jesus.

For instance, when we are driving a vehicle, we keep our eyes ahead of us. Yes, from time to time, we check out the rear view mirror to see where we've been, but our attention should be on what we see through the windshield in front of us. There's a reason why the windshield is bigger than the rearview mirror. We want to look at all the possibilities that lay in the future horizons ahead.

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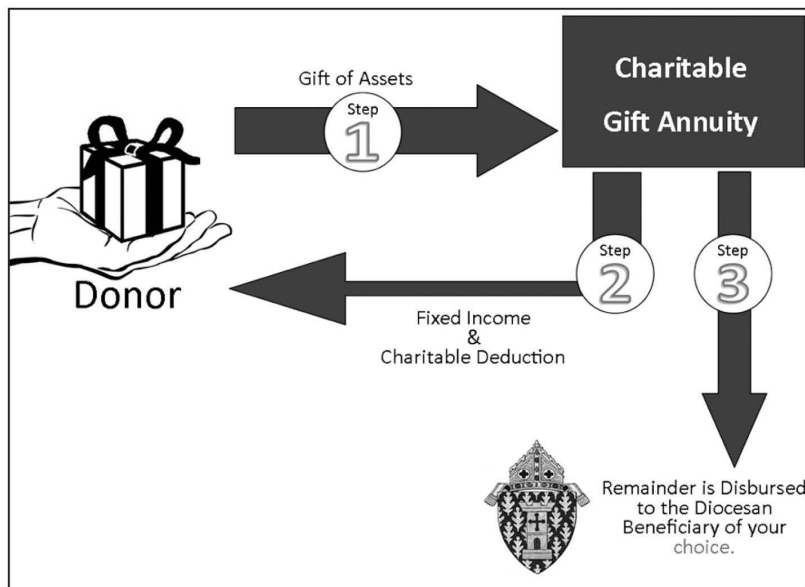
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Charitable gift annuities

By Scott Lalone
Diocesan development director

A Charitable Gift Annuity is a legal arrangement which you irrevocably transfer cash or securities to our segre-

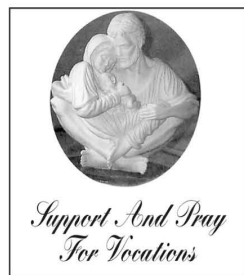
gated Gift Annuity fund in exchange for our promise to pay you a fixed amount each year for the rest of your life. The amount you receive is determined by the amount of your gift and your age at your nearest birthday at the time of your gift. The older you are when you make the gift, the higher the rate of return.

Once your annuity is established your income remains constant. It is not

affected by adverse economic conditions.

You receive an immediate income tax deduction which may be taken on your income tax return the year of the gift or in the following 5 years. A portion of your payments are tax-free.

Contact Development Office Executive Director Scott Lalone (315-393-2920 or slalone@rcdony.org) for a free proposal or if you have any questions.



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315-393-5899



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

Bishop's Schedule

Dec. 10 – 4:30 p.m., St. Lawrence Deanery Penance Service & Dinner at St. Mary's Cathedral

Dec. 11 – 10:50 a.m., Mass at St. Joseph's Home in Ogdensburg

Dec. 12 – 10:30 a.m., Diocesan Pastoral Council at St. Patrick's in Colton

Dec. 13 – 11 a.m., Mass & Opening of the Holy Door at St. Mary's Cathedral
7 p.m., Lessons and Carols at St. Mary's Cathedral

Dec. 14 – 7:15 p.m., Novena & Mass at St. Mary's Cathedral

Dec. 15 – 1 p.m., Lunch with Diocese of Ogdensburg Vocation Society at Sergi's Restaurant in Potsdam
7 p.m., Penance Service at Notre Dame Church in Ogdensburg

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

To Report Abuse

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

Victims Assistance Coordinator, Terri-
anne 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

Rest in Peace

This week marks the anniversary
of the deaths of the following

Dec. 9 – Rev. Edwin H. McCarthy, 1950; Rev. Arthur LaVigne, 1956
Dec. 10 – Rev. James Hogan, 1882
Dec. 11 – George Montreuil, 1914; Rev. Edward Tetrault, 1952; Msgr. George Henry Brisson, P.A., 1969
Dec. 12 – Msgr. Albert J. Farrell, 1967; Rev. Julian P. O'Brien, 1988; Deacon Floyd J. Barton, 1999
Dec. 15 – Rev. Leon P. Cochard, 1915; Deacon Joseph H. Gilbert II, 2010

Environmental Stewardship

You Light Up Our Lives

As the world leaders continue to meet in Paris for the COP21 Meeting to come to agreement on reducing carbon emission, we join in prayer with people around the world. We pray that they may make decisions for the good of our common home and with the compassionate heart of our creator in response to the "cries of the poor and the cries of the earth." Laudato Si

For a prayer based on *Laudato Si*, Google: pray4cop21. USCCB and Global Catholic Climate Movement web pages have updates on the Meeting.

Did you know that the U.S. ecological footprint is 6.8 global hectares? According to a BBC interview with Global Footprint Network President Mathis Wackernagel, a known climatologist, if everyone consumed as much as each person in the U.S. it would take almost 4 planets to sustain itself. The earth including forests and oceans cannot absorb all the carbon dioxide we are emitting. Currently we would need an extra half planet to absorb what we use. Two thirds of the average American footprint is made up of carbon emissions.

In the darkest time of year we prepare for celebration of Christmas with lights to symbolize that Christ is the Light of the World who came to dwell with us.

As much as we delight in the Christmas lights, we also notice that our energy bill usually rises.

Can we think creatively of ways to offset this increase of energy used? (i.e. purchasing LED lights, reducing heat loss, turning off lights and appliances when not needed) In lowering the demand for more energy, we lower our ecological or carbon footprint.

These actions bring the Light of Christ not only to our neighborhood, but also to our neighbors around the world that are most affected by the increased carbon emissions.

Bring on the Christmas lights and turn down the ones not needed!

Guide Light Essays
Inspirational Commentary
guidelightsays.blogspot.com
Hosted by Holly Middleton

RELIGIOUS RETIREMENT COLLECTION 2015

Share In The Care

December 12th and 13th

Join us in prayer ...



... and works of mercy.

*"Let us become agents of this mercy,
channels through which God can water the earth, ..."*



December 6, 2015

Dear Sisters and Brothers in Christ:

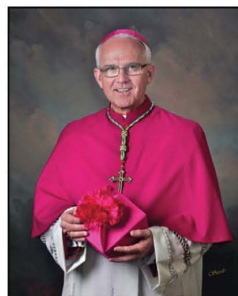
At our Masses next weekend, our parishes will be conducting the annual Retirement Fund for Religious collection. During this *Year of Consecrated Life*, Pope Francis calls on the faithful to recognize the special witness that consecrated women and men offer our Church and our world. Through the generations, our Diocese has been blessed by the consecrated religious who have so faithfully ministered to the folks of the North Country. Our generous response to next week's collection serves as an expression of our gratitude to these women and men who have educated our young, cared for our sick, provided pastoral care to our parishioners, and worked for justice for the oppressed.

Today, many of these sisters, brothers and religious order priests who have served us so faithfully are elderly and are in need of our assistance. While some continue in volunteer ministry, others are frail and need special personal care. Most worked for years for small stipends, leaving their religious communities without adequate savings to meet growing retirement and eldercare needs. Today a majority of the religious communities struggle to provide necessary medications, nursing care and basic services for their senior members.

Last year, we distributed the results of our Collection to the fourteen congregations who were serving in the Diocese of Ogdensburg and eighteen other congregations who have served us in the past. In addition to our continued prayers, next week let us offer our beloved consecrated Religious a generous contribution to this important annual Appeal. Thanking you for whatever donation you are able to make this *Year of Consecrated Life*, I am

Faithfully yours in Christ,

Most Reverend Terry R. LaValley
Bishop of Ogdensburg



Orders Serving in the Diocese

- Daughters of Charity of the Sacred Heart of Jesus
- Daughters of Charity of St. Vincent de Paul
- Dominican Sisters of Hope
- Franciscan Friars of the Atonement
- Franciscan Sisters of the Atonement
- Mid-Atlantic Community of the Institute of the Sisters of Mercy of the Americas
- Missionaries of the Sacred Heart
- Servants of Mary
- Sisters of Charity of St. Louis
- Sisters of the Cross of Chavanod
- Sisters Adorers of the Precious Blood
- Sisters of St. Joseph
- Ursuline Sisters of the Eastern Province

We are grateful for the dedicated lives of the Grey Nuns of the Sacred Heart who are leaving our Diocese. Thank you for the many institutions of Education and Mercy you established in our Diocese.



Signing the Pledge of St. Francis
Caring for Creation

*... protect all creation and make justice and peace flourish.
Ubi et Orbi message of Pope Francis*

*"Let us become agents of this mercy,
channels through which God can water the earth, ..."*



- There are more than 33,000 religious past age 70 living in the United States.
- By 2024, retired religious are projected to outnumber wage-earning religious by four to one.
- For most of their lives, elder religious worked for small stipends.
- The Diocese of Ogdensburg distributed \$113,206 among the religious congregations who served in our Diocese.



A little mercy makes the world



less cold and more just.



*... protect all creation and make justice and peace flourish.
Ubi et Orbi message of Pope Francis*

YOU SHARE IN THEIR PRAYER LIFE AND FREE OTHERS FOR MINISTRY ...



Grateful for all the support you have given us throughout the years.

Religious of the Diocese of Ogdensburg

... WHEN YOU GIVE TO THOSE WHO HAVE GIVEN A LIFETIME.



Amount Enclosed: \$ _____
 Name _____
 Address _____
 City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Make your tax-deductible check payable to your parish. Write *Retirement Fund for Religious* on the memo line and give it to your parish collection.

You can express your gratitude for all the religious have done and will continue to do by giving to your parish's annual collection for the Retirement Fund for Religious
 - OR -
 send your donation directly to:

RETIREMENT FUND FOR RELIGIOUS
 P.O. Box 369
 Ogdensburg, NY 13669

COMFORTING • NURTURING • TEACHING • NURSING • SHARING • LOVING • CARING

CATHOLIC WORLD AT A GLANCE

Through thick and thin: Pope urges youths to read the Bible

VATICAN CITY (CNS) -- Pope Francis said his Bible is old, beat up and worth more to him than anything money can buy. "If you saw my Bible, you would not be impressed," he wrote to young people. "You'd say, 'What? This is the pope's Bible? A book so old, so beat up?' You might even want to give me a gift of a new one, something that costs 1,000 euro. But I don't want it." Pope Francis wrote about his Bible and his Bible-reading habits in the preface to the German-language study guide, "Youth Bible for the Catholic Church." It was released in late October by the Germany-based Katholisches Bibelwerk and the YouCat Foundation. Other language versions are expected in 2016. The well-worn Bible has been with Pope Francis for half his life, wrote the pope, who will turn 79 Dec. 17. "It has seen my joy and has been bathed by my tears: it is my priceless treasure," the pope wrote, and "nothing in the world would make me give it up."

Father Joseph Girzone, author of 'Joshua' novels, dies at 85

ALTAMONT, N.Y. (CNS) -- Father Joseph Girzone, who became far more prominent in retirement than during active ministry because of his "Joshua" series of novels, died Nov. 29 at St. Peter's Hospice Inn in Altamont. He was 85. A funeral Mass will be celebrated Dec. 12 at St. John the Evangelist Church in Schenectady with Bishop Edward B. Scharfenberger of Albany as principal celebrant. Father Girzone, a priest of the Diocese of Albany, retired from active ministry in 1981 because of a heart ailment. After retiring, he picked up his pen and wrote "Joshua," which was published in 1983. It was a success, selling tens of thousands of copies in hardcover before a paperback edition was issued. The premise of "Joshua" and several novels that followed in the series is that Jesus comes back to earth disguised as itinerant carpenter Joshua, distilling simple wisdom and challenging the prevailing order on a variety of issues so that the books' characters can get closer to God. He told Catholic News Service in a long-ago interview that he wrote "Joshua" to heighten awareness that the church will "lose more of our people if we don't show more gentleness." "Christ was the good shepherd -- he used to bring people home, not drive them away," he said.

Mother Angelica on feeding tube, confined to bed at monastery

HANCEVILLE, Ala. (CNS) -- Mother Angelica, who spearheaded the founding of the Eternal Word Television Network, has been placed on a feeding tube as she continues to battle lingering effects of two strokes she suffered 14 years ago. A spokesman for her order, the Poor Clares of Perpetual Adoration at Our Lady of Angels Monastery in Hanceville, said the 92-year-old nun is doing as well as can be expected for someone her age who remains partially paralyzed. "From what I'm told, it's not that she's completely unable to eat. It's assisting her to get the nutrients she needs," said Luke Johnsen, director of pilgrimages at the monastery. Johnsen told Catholic News Service that she was fitted with the tube in recent weeks. "She's had some up and downs the last few months," he said. "She's a fighter." Johnsen added that Mother Angelica remained confined to bed, but that she acknowledges visitors to her room in the monastery. "She's able to communicate with a squeeze of a hand, make gestures with her eyes. She acknowledges people when they're there. The nuns say she does sleep a lot," he said.

Advent's focus is waiting for Christmas but also includes lots of feasts

By Carol Zimmermann
Catholic News Service

WASHINGTON (CNS) - Although the four weeks of Advent focus on waiting for Christmas, the church does not just sit around and wait for the main event.

It celebrates plenty of major feasts with lots of customs, traditions and even special foods during the month of December.

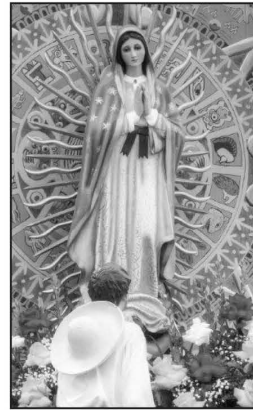
Early in the Advent season, Dec. 6, the church celebrates the feast of St. Nicholas, a fourth-century bishop from the region of modern-day Turkey, well known for his generosity. The day has customs similar to Christmas but with variations: Instead of gifts placed in stockings or under the tree, they are placed in children's shoes left outside their bedroom door the previous night.

The day is celebrated differently around the world and particularly emphasized in Eastern Europe, but in the United States, it is primarily focused on the shoe custom with an added emphasis on doing good things for others.

The St. Nicholas Center in Holland, Michigan, sponsors a traveling St. Nicholas exhibit and also has lots of information on its website, www.stnicholascenter.org, on history of the feast day, ways to celebrate and the distinction between Santa Claus and St. Nicholas.

Two days after the feast of St. Nicholas, the church celebrates the feast of the Immaculate Conception, the patroness of the United States. The feast is a holy day of obligation celebrating the belief that Mary was without sin from the moment she was conceived.

The day itself does not have anything to do with Advent but was chosen as the date nine months from the



CNS PHOTO/VICTOR ALEMAN, VIDA-NUOVA.COM
A statue of Our Lady of Guadalupe is pictured in 2014 in Los Angeles. Our Lady of Guadalupe's feast day is Dec. 12.

date the church celebrates Mary's birth, Sept. 8.

The other Marian feast in December is the feast of Our Lady of Guadalupe Dec. 12, which commemorates Mary's appearance to St. Juan Diego in 1531 at Tepayac, a hill northwest of modern-day Mexico City. The Mexican celebration of the tradition also has been adopted by many people from Central and South America and is described as one of the most popular religious feasts for Latinos in the U.S. Many parishes throughout the country celebrate the feast day with re-enactments of Mary appearing to Juan Diego. They also pray the rosary and present roses to statues of Mary, while mariachi bands sing Marian songs.

The very next day is the feast of St. Lucy, particularly observed in Scandinavian countries and Italy. Her feast day -- near the winter solstice -- and her name, which means light, has made celebrating the young girl martyred in the year 304 a

festival of lights.

In festivals in Norway and Sweden, the oldest girl in the family traditionally wears a white dress, a red sash as a sign of martyrdom, and a wreath crown with lighted white candles. Other girls also dress as Lucy and walk in procession singing traditional songs and carrying rolls and cookies that are later shared.

Other major church and cultural celebrations in December take place over a number of days such as the Latin American tradition of "posadas": the re-enactment of the pilgrimage to Bethlehem by Mary and Joseph in search of a room that takes place Dec. 16-24. The "posadas" traditions vary but usually involve groups going to from home to home singing traditional Advent and Christmas carols and being turned down until they find one house that gives them shelter and a place to join in prayer and celebration.

The Filipino Catholic community celebrates Simbang Gabi -- a novena of early morning Masses from Dec. 16-24 in the Philippines and Dec. 15-23 in the United States. After Masses, families share traditional holiday sweets and desserts. According to the tradition, families hang lanterns on doors, windows and branches.

The last major feasts of the Christmas season are the feast of the Epiphany, often called the feast of the Three Kings, followed a week later by the feast of the baptism of the Lord.

In most countries, including the U.S., Epiphany will be celebrated Jan. 3 in 2016. In many countries, children leave treats for the wise men and their camels and in turn, when the children are sleeping, gifts or candy is left for them.

SCRIPTURE REFLECTIONS

A day to rejoice as Year of Mercy begins

Today is called Gaudete Sunday, from the Latin word, "rejoice". For those of you with Advent wreaths, be sure to light the rose-colored candle as a sign of today's joyful spirit.

We may well wonder what we see in the world around us to bring us any joy.

On Dec. 8th, the Holy Father officially opened the Holy Door at St. Peter's as we began a very special Year of Mercy.



Monsignor
Paul E.
Whitmore

From the beginning of his Pontificate, Pope Francis has summed up his mission as one of seeing the mercy of the Father in the face of His Son, Jesus, of helping all experience the caress of Jesus touch as he forgives our sins and restores us to joy in His ever-present care. His burning desire is for us to practice the corporal and spiritual works of mercy toward our

brothers and sisters, especially the poor, the sick, and

the abandoned.

In the first reading, the prophet Zephaniah proclaims, "Shout for joy, O daughter Zion...be not discouraged!"

Even though his prophet had been very critical of the sins of the people and had foretold a harsh judgment, he now speaks of God's divine mercy.

As for Israel long ago, so too for us, God refuses to give up on our sinfulness. He even begs us to pull ourselves out of gloom and despair.

In the second reading, St.

DEC. 13

Third Sunday of Advent

READINGS

Zephaniah 3:14-18a

Philippians 4:4-7

Luke 3:10-18

Paul urges the Philippians - and us - "Rejoice in the Lord always. I shall say it again: rejoice!...The Lord is near--- by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, make your requests known to God".

In this Year of Mercy, we must redouble our efforts to

pray, to beg God for forgiveness and mercy, and to act with love and service toward all.

We listen to what John the Baptist tells the crowds in today's Gospel. He has advice for each group, from the soldiers to the rich, to the religious leaders, to the ordinary people.

Our joy is based on God's mercy and the fire of the Holy Spirit we have received in Baptism. Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, today, and tomorrow. What He has done in the past, He will do again. So indeed we have cause to rejoice!

VATICAN LETTER

Starting a gentle revolution

By Carol Glatz
Catholic News Service

VATICAN CITY (CNS) -- When Pope Francis planned the Year of Mercy and the opening of the Holy Door, he did not mean to give the starting signal for a frenzied wave of pilgrims to Rome.

More than call to sign up for an Eternal City package tour, the pope is inviting people to strike out on a yearlong spiritual journey to recognize a loving God who's already knocking on their door.

He says he wants the Year of Mercy to usher in a "revolution of tenderness."

Once people realize "I'm wretched, but God loves me the way I am," then "I, too, have to love others the same way," the pope said in an interview published just a few days before the Dec. 8 start of the jubilee year. Discovering God's generous love kick-starts a virtuous circle, which "leads us to acting in a way that's more tolerant, patient, tender" and just, he said.

Speaking with "Credere," an Italian weekly magazine run by the Pauline Fathers, the pope gave an in-depth look at why he sees such an urgent need to highlight God's mercy.

"The world needs to discover that God is father, that there is mercy, that cruelty is not the path, that condemnation is not the path," he said. "Because the church herself sometimes follows a hard line, she falls into the temptation of following a hard line, into the temptation of underlining only moral norms, but so many people remain on the outside," he said.

The pope said the thought of all those people - sinners, the doubtful, the wounded and disen-

franchised - conjured up that iconic image of seeing the church "as a field hospital after the battle."

Pope wants the Year of Mercy to 'tenderly transform the world'

The wounded are to be treated, helped to heal, not subjected to cholesterol tests," he said, meaning a too narrow scrutiny of minutiae delays staving off the broader disease of conflict and indifference. He once illustrated the same concept by painting a visual image of pastors who prefer to coil and comb the wool of the tiny flock in the pews rather than seek the sheep that are outside in danger or lost.

"I believe this is the time for mercy. We are all sinners, we all carry burdens within us. I felt Jesus wants to open the door of his heart," he said in the magazine interview.

The opening of the holy doors in Rome and around the world will be a symbol of how Jesus is opening the door of his heart.

In fact, dioceses have been asked to designate and open their own "Door of Mercy" in a cathedral, an important church or sanctuary. The pope also will send out from Rome "missionaries of mercy" -- priests mandated to the world's peripheries to show patience and compassion in their ministry.

To help people at home feel "just like being there" in Rome, the Vatican television center will start broadcasting major papal events during the Holy Year in latest generation "Ultra HD 4K" resolution as well as HD, 3D and standard definition.

With the appropriate displays or TVs, people will be able to watch events with increased depth

and detail, and, for the opening of the Holy Door in St. Peter's Basilica Dec. 8, 19 cameras were to be deployed to capture every angle, including a unique papal point of view.

The Vatican also planned to set up 4K screens in a prison in Milan, a hospital in Rome and possibly in the Holy Land so people who are physically confined could feel part of the opening ceremony.

From the very start of his pontificate, Pope Francis has been showing what the way of mercy means. The pope's very first Angelus address and homily in 2013 centered on mercy, as he explained God always waits for that day of awakening and conversion, then forgives everything. The real problem is people -- not God -- who give up on forgiveness, he said.

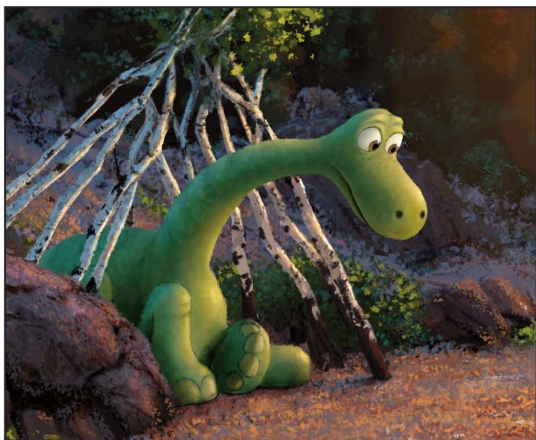
But mercy changes everything, he said; it "makes the world a little less cold and more just."

The pope's own religious vocation is rooted in that concrete experience of mercy, when he -- as a 17-year-old student -- walked out of a confessional "different, changed." It was the feast of St. Matthew, and like St. Matthew, he was overcome, feeling "God looked at me with mercy" and said, "Follow me."

Realizing God knows he's a sinner, but embraces him anyway lies at the heart of Pope Francis' ministry and his motto: "By showing mercy, by choosing," based on "The Call of St. Matthew."

He said in the magazine interview that one Friday of every month during the Year of Mercy "I will make a different gesture" that shows God's mercy. He had asked the world's young people to rediscover the corporal and spiritual works of mercy, like feeding the hungry and counsel the doubtful, and choose one to practice each month as they prepare for World Youth Day in July.

AT THE MOVIES



CNS PHOTO/DISNEY

Animated character in the movie "The Good Dinosaur."

THE GOOD DINOSAUR

By Joseph McAleer
Catholic News Service

"The Good Dinosaur (Disney), the latest 3-D comedy-adventure from the animation wizards at Pixar, can be thought of as a warm and fuzzy cousin to the "Jurassic" films.

Having conquered the mysterious world of the tween mind in "Inside Out," Pixar now turns back the clock 65 million years to explore the (purely imaginary) interaction between dinosaurs and man.

A warm and fuzzy take on the human-dino dynamic of the "Jurassic" films, "The Good Dinosaur" makes wholesome and hilarious entertainment for the entire family.

Director and co-writer Peter Sohn gleefully reworks history in proposing that the asteroid which may have caused the extinction of the dinosaurs never happened. Instead, they evolved in an anthropomorphic fashion, talking and acting just like humans.

In this topsy-turvy world, plant-eating dinosaurs farm the land, while carnivores - such as the mighty Tyrannosaurus rex - are cattle ranchers. The real threat is

not from fellow dinos or primitive man, but nature itself.

A young Apatosaurus (voice of Raymond Ochoa) is separated from his family, and must find his way home, with only a feral Neanderthal boy (voice of Jack Bright) as his companion.

A few intense moments may upset the very youngest viewers, but all ages will be inspired as our plucky hero rises to his challenges.

The film is preceded by "Sanjay's Super Team," directed by Sanjay Patel, about an Indian lad who comes to respect his father's devotion to Hinduism.

Parents will appreciate the short's affirmation of faith but may want to combat any potential confusion with an age-appropriate primer on the difference between even wisdom-graced speculation about the divine and revealed truth.

The film contains a few scenes of peril.

The Catholic News Service classification is A-1 -- general patronage. The Motion Picture Association of America rating is PG -- parental guidance suggested. Some material may not be suitable for children.

Bring the message of Christmas into your home all year long.

Enter a one year subscription of the *North Country Catholic* for yourself or a member of your family to enjoy.

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Parish _____

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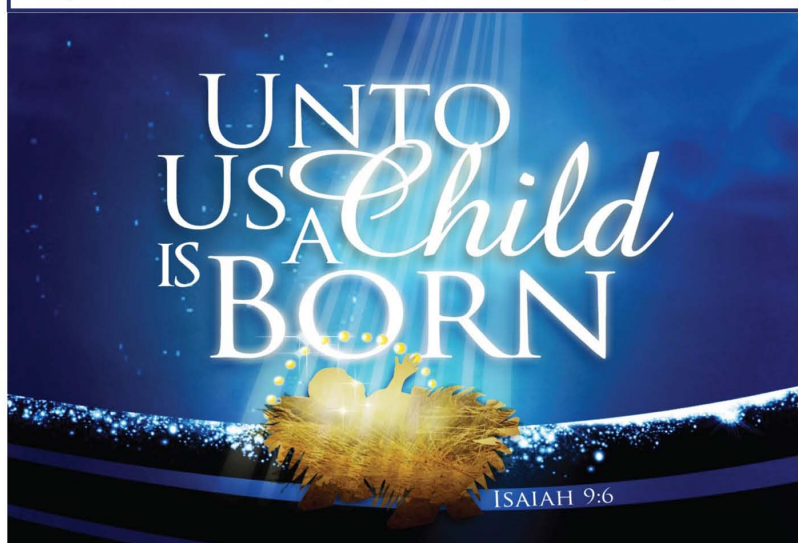
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 Check enclosed for \$27 Outside Diocese \$30

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



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

HANDBELL CHOIR

Saranac Lake - A Handbell Choir Christmas Concert and sing-a-long is set

Date: Dec. 13

Time: 2 p.m.

Place: St. Bernard's Church

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: Admission is a suggested donation of \$10.

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

EMPTY MANGER CAROLING

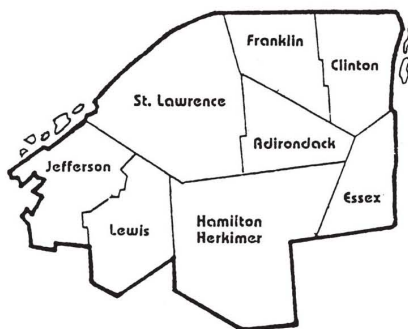
Plattsburgh - Empty Manger Christmas Caroling to be held.

Date: Dec. 10

Time: 10 a.m.

Place: Planned Parenthood

Features: carols, cocoa and cookies



The North County 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.

EUCCHARISTIC ADORATION

Plattsburgh - Eucharistic Adoration is 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

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

BEREAVEMENT MEETING

Watertown - Ecumenical Bereavement meeting to be held.

Date: Dec. 21

Time: 7 p.m.

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

JEFFERSON

LESSONS AND CAROLS

Watertown - Advent in Scripture and Song to be held

Date: Dec. 13

Time: 2 p.m.

Place: St. Patrick's Church

Features: Lessons and Carols, scripture and music to celebrate this Advent season.

Contact: Dc. Kevin Mastellon: 315-782-5045 or kmastellon@spwatn.org

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

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

LEWIS

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 Crêches-Nativities is set

Place: St. Hedwig's Church.

Dates: Dec. 13, 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.

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

LESSONS, CAROLS

OGDENSBURG - The Choral Union of Notre Dame Church and Saint Mary's Cathedral choirs is presenting a celebration of Lessons and Carols.

Date: Dec. 13

Time: 7 p.m.

Place: St. Mary's Cathedral.

Features: Group is directed and accompanied by Diocesan Director of Music Christopher Gould. The tradition dates to 1878 at Truro Cathedral in England, but the original liturgy has since been adapted and used by other churches all over the world. One of the most popular Lessons and Carols services happens each year at King's College in Cambridge
Contact: email cglgould@gmail.com, or call Cathedral, (315) 393-3930.

K OF C BRUNCH

Norfolk - The Knights of Columbus Council will be sponsoring a brunch.

Date: Dec. 13

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

Place: Fr. Amyot Parish Center

Cost: Adults, \$8; Children under 12, \$5; Under 5, Free; Family of 4, \$20, each additional \$3; Take-outs available

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: Dec. 13; 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, bstitt@rcdony.org

MARCH FOR LIFE PILGRIMAGE

Washington DC - College students and young adults from the Diocese of Ogdensburg are invited to join a pilgrimage to the annual March for Life

Date: Departure Tuesday afternoon, Jan. 19; return Jan. 22 after the March. (Register by Dec 15, 2015)

Cost: \$175 per adult

Features: The Pilgrimage will include the Vigil Mass for Life at the Shrine of the Immaculate Conception Jan. 21 as well as the March for Life Jan. 22, visits to shrines and memorials

Contact: Father Timothy Canaan, Diocesan Director of Campus Ministry frtim@broadstreetcatholics.org Space is limited. Registrations are only complete with payment no later than Dec. 15.



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

The Society for the Propagation of the Faith

Sr. Mary Ellen Brett, SSSJ, Director
622 Washington St., Ogdensburg, NY 13669
(315) 393-2920; fax 1-866-314-7296
mbrett@rcdony.org

50th anniversary of *Ad Gentes*

Pope Francis invites us to reflect on *Ad Gentes*, the Church's Decree on the Missionary Work of the Church. The 50th anniversary of *Ad Gentes* is December 7, 2015. Pope Francis reminds us: "As *Ad Gentes* says: 'The laity should cooperate in the Church's work of evangelization; as witnesses and at the same time as living instruments, they share in her saving mission.'" (*Ad Gentes*, #41)

In his World Mission Sunday message, Pope Francis highlighted the connection between Consecrated Life and *Ad Gentes* or the missionary call to go forth and proclaim the good news to all nations. "World Mission Sunday 2015 took place in the context of the Year of Consecrated Life. There is a clear connection between consecrated life and mission. As we follow Jesus closely, this leads to emergence of consecrated life in the Church, responds to his call to take up the cross, to imitate his dedication to the Father, and to lose our life so as to gain it. Since Christ's existence had a missionary character, we are called to follow him closely and possess this missionary quality.

As we prepare for Christmas, children immediately come to mind. As we want the best for our own children, we still know that so many children in our world are facing the challenges of extraordinary poverty suffering and violence. These are the "most vulnerable," as Pope Francis says. Children in our mission family need us through our support of the Society for the Propagation of the Faith / Missionary Childhood Association as Christmas approaches through both prayer and sacrifice.

There are 1,150 mission territories around the globe. One-third of the world. Most of these territories are located in Africa, Asia, Latin America and the Pacific Islands. The total amount of funds donated to the Society for the Propagation of the Faith in recent years is \$100,000,000.00. Over one-third of this comes from the United States. Europe contributes about one-third and the rest of the world contributes about one-third. These funds build churches, chapels, seminaries, convents and schools. Funds are used for training future native priests, and religious men and women and catechists. Also, funding is often used for transportation to remote areas for missionaries.

Modern technology and media have drawn the whole world together. But there is still need for us to go out to the nations. Mission, while making good use of technological advances in communications, is still a person-to-person ministry. Catholics want Christ's mercy to reach through his Church to the farthest corners of the world.

So on the 50th Anniversary of the signing of *Ad Gentes*, we are reminded that the light of Christ shines from the Church's mission efforts to fight evil and to bring people together through communion with God and each other. The Church in mission is the sign of our future good things to come.

Please remember "The Society for the Propagation of the Faith" when writing or changing your Will

OBITUARIES

Burke – Kathyeen M. (Tavernia) Rosa, 64; Funeral Dec. 3, 2015 at St. George's Church; burial in parish cemetery.

Cadyville – Anna J. (Rock) Miller, 77; Funeral Services Dec. 2, 2015 at St. James Church; burial in St. Peter's Cemetery, Plattsburgh.

Canton – Everett E. Prouty, 84; Funeral Services Dec. 5, 2015 at St. Lawrence Funeral Home & Cremation Services.

Carthage – David M. LaBarge, 55; Funeral Services Nov. 30, 2015 at Bezanilla-McGraw Funeral Home; burial in St. James Cemetery.

Champlain – Joseph A. "Tony" Filion, 95; Funeral Services Dec. 1, 2015 at St. Mary's Church; burial in Glenwood Cemetery.

Fort Covington – Glen F. Davis, 84; Funeral Services Dec. 2, 2015 at St. Mary's Church; burial in old St. Mary's Cemetery.

Heuvelton – Joy E. (Bush) Beaulieu, 79; Funeral Services Dec. 2, 2015 at St. Raphael's Church; burial in Pine Hill Cemetery.

Malone – Gail M. (Langlois) Timmons, 76; Funeral Services Dec. 5, 2015 at St. Joseph's Church; burial in St. Joseph's Cemetery.

Massena – Rene E. Gibeault, 80; Funeral

Services Nov. 28, 2015 at St. Joseph's Church.

Massena – Michelle A. (Dziewisz) Perras, 62; Funeral Services Dec. 5, 2015 at Church of the Sacred Heart; burial in Calvary Cemetery.

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

Morrisonville – Nancy L. LaBarre, 75; Funeral Services Dec. 4, 2015 at St. Alexander's Church; burial in St. Alexander's Cemetery.

Norfolk – Francis A. Bregg, 91; Funeral Services Dec. 1, 2015 at Church of the Visitation; burial in Visitation Cemetery.

Ogdensburg – Arlo G. Baker, 70; Funeral Services Dec. 2, 2015 at St. Mary's Cathedral; burial in St. Mary's Cemetery.

Ogdensburg – S. Erno Moore, 93; Funeral Services Dec. 5, 2015 at St. Mary's Cathedral; burial in Notre Dame Cemetery.

Peru – Barbara J. (Sawyer) Mousseau, 70; Funeral Services Nov. 30, 2015 at St. Augustine's Church; burial in parish cemetery.

Plattsburgh – John J. "Jack" Murphy, 83; Funeral Services Nov. 30, 2015 at Our Lady of Victory Church; burial in St.

Peter's Cemetery.

Plattsburgh – Erik Scott Willette, 38; Funeral Services Dec. 9, 2015 at St. Peter's Church.

Star Lake – Edward Gerald Drake, Jr., 55; Funeral Services Dec. 4, 2015 at French Funeral Home.

Ticonderoga – Cheryl Lynn (Jordan) LaRock, 59; Funeral Services Dec. 3, 2015 at the Wilcox & Regan Funeral Home.

Watertown – Quinta D. Smith Beutel, 83; Funeral Services Dec. 2, 2015 at Cummings Funeral Home.

Watertown – Marjorie L. Flavin, 96; Funeral Services Dec. 5, 2015 at Our Lady of the Sacred Heart Church; burial in Glenwood Cemetery.

Watertown – Joan D. (Harris) Morgia, 86; Funeral Services Nov. 30, 2015 at Cummings Funeral Home; burial in Glenwood Cemetery.

Watertown – Elaine F. Navarra, 69; Funeral Services Dec. 4, 2015 at Sacred Heart Church; burial in Glenwood Mausoleum.

Watertown – Joyce (Leo) Simmons, 79; Funeral services Dec. 4, 2015 at Our Lady of the Sacred Heart Church; burial in Brookside Cemetery.



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Cash for Christmas
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Drawing Date: December 20, 2015
at Sacred Heart Church 9:30 AM Mass

If you would like to purchase tickets, please send in this ad with the following information and your donation of **\$10.00 US** or **\$11.00 CDN** per ticket to:

Trinity Catholic School, 188 Main Street, Massena, NY 13662

Name _____

Address _____ Phone # _____

Winner is responsible for all taxes and must be 18 years of age. Federal ID#16-0959523

Please check here if you would like ticket stubs returned to you.

Grey Nuns have shared faith in the North Country since the 1860's

Ministry of presence, prayer, service

By Father Joseph Morgan
Rector, St. Mary's Cathedral

Did you know that the Grey Nuns have been with us in Ogdensburg since before we were even a Diocese? That is a long time! How blessed our local Church has been because of them.

Beginning in the 1860's, the Grey Nuns of Ottawa came to Ogdensburg to teach in our Catholic schools. They and their spiritual sisters, under the watchful eye of St. Marguerite d'Youville from Heaven, have been present among us ever since.

In 1921, the independent American branch of the Grey Nuns of Ottawa was founded, known as the Grey Nuns of the Sacred Heart (GNSH). They have a rich and varied history of ministry here.

The Sisters taught in our schools (here in Ogdensburg, at St. Mary's School in Potsdam, and St. Mary's School in Canton); cared for

our sick (at Ogdensburg City Hospital 1886-1961 and then at A. Barton Hepburn Hospital from 1902 until today, with representation on the Board of Directors; also at St. John's Hospital, Ogdensburg 1898-1955 and at Champlain Valley Hospital in Plattsburgh from 1910-1963); provided a home for orphans (1886-1961); and cared for our elders at St. Joseph's Home, beginning in 1961 and had representation on the St. Joseph's Home Board.

In addition, the GNSH Community has assisted with diocesan administration and served in parishes as Pastoral Associates.

Wherever there has been a need, the charisms of St. Marguerite d'Youville's spiritual daughters have found a way to meet it.

Yet, for all the good they have done for others in so many ways, their true gift to us has been their witness to Christ, and a call for all of us to live in the Sacred Heart of Jesus. These dedicated and faith-filled

women have touched the lives of countless people here in the North Country, leading us to embrace the Gospel and care for others during our pilgrimage to the Father's House.

They have shown us how to live the spiritual and corporal works of mercy, serving Christ who comes to us in each person.

How grateful we are, beyond words, for the many members of this religious congregation who have been with us throughout the years!

Over the years so many of our own sisters and daughters have discerned the call of God to live a vocation as Grey Nuns of the Sacred Heart. Ogdensburg and other North Country family names like Taylor, Martin, LaBrake, Sholette, Tavernier, Lalonde, Looby, Murray, Brennan, Hannan, McElwain, Boyer, Main, Doe, Fitzgerald, Brady, O'Donoghue, Allard, Gleason, Healey, Farrell, O'Marah, Elie, Brown and many others joined with GNSH's from other areas to

serve our people with generous hearts.

How grateful we are, beyond words, for the many members of this religious congregation who have been with us throughout the years!

I'm sure you have your "favorites": Sisters who have touched you or your family members with their friendship and devoted care.

Their convents, scattered throughout the Ogdensburg area, have been a vivid reminder that God calls each of us to a particular vocation and that, together, we form a vibrant body of believers.

Their homes of prayer in our neighborhoods were themselves a sign that we are made for holiness, and that each family has a place in the very heart of God.

We are all the richer when the many vocations abound! The Sisters have been

such an integral part of our lives that it is a deep sadness for us to know that they will no longer be living here in the Diocese of Ogdensburg.

As the last three GNSH members among us (Sister Rita Frances Brady, Sister Mary Teresa LaBrake, and Sister Joan McElwain) leave us this Fall, it is a time to remember the many blessings that are ours because of their faithful service to the Church and that of so many of their Sisters, generation after generation.

In our gratitude and as a sign of our love for them, may we keep them always in our prayers. May they, who have shared the Good News with us by their lives, be doubly blessed in return.

The ties that spiritually unite us can never be broken by distance, even all the way to Pennsylvania!

Thank you, dear Grey Nuns of the Sacred Heart. God bless you, and please remember that you always have a home in the North Country!

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Bishop

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 3

If we spend too much time looking at the past, focused on the rearview window, of how things used to be, we end up in the ditch, or worse. So, while we fondly remember and learn from the blessings of yesterday, we anticipate with much hope and joy what the Lord has in store for us and for the Grey Nuns of the Sacred Heart in the years to

come.

I'm reminded of a prayer by St. Francis de Sales: *"Do not look forward in fear to the changes in life; rather, look to them with full hope that as they arise, God, whose very own you are, will lead you safely through all things; and when you cannot stand it, God will carry you in His arms. Do not fear what may happen tomorrow; the same understanding Father who cares for you today will take care of you then and every day."*

He will either shield you from suffering or will give you unfailing strength to bear it. Be at peace, and put aside all anxious thoughts and imaginations."

And this is where we get to the nub of what Advent is really all about. Advent is an invitation to listen to the Gospel's challenge to reorient the direction of our lives—to make a new beginning as we begin a new Church year.

With gratitude and much love in our hearts for the Grey Nuns, we say thank you and promise our prayers, particularly at the altar, as we know that the Lord has much good in store for you, who love Him. St. Marguerite D'Youville pray for us all!

