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The Diocese of Ogdensburg Volume 71, Number 30

NORTH COUNTRY CATHOLIC

DEC. 7, 2016

'Compassion must live on'

VATICAN CITY (CNS) - The Year of Mercy and its series of papal reflections may be over, but compassion and acts of mercy must continue and become a part of everyone's daily lives, Pope Francis said. "Let us commit ourselves to praying for each other so that the corporal and spiritual works of mercy increas-

ingly become our way of life," he said Nov. 30 during his general audience in the Vatican's Paul VI hall.

Because the day also marked the feast of St. Andrew, brother of St. Peter and founder of the church in Constantinople, Pope Francis gave special greetings to his "dear brother," Ecumenical

Patriarch Bartholomew of Constantinople.

Pope Francis, the bishop of Rome and successor of Peter, said he was sending "a big embrace" to the patriarch and "this cousin church." The Vatican released a letter from the pope to the patriarch, which praised the way Catholics and Orthodox have

begun "to recognize one another as brothers and sisters and to value each other's gifts, and together have proclaimed the Gospel, served humanity and the cause of peace, promoted the dignity of the human being and the inestimable value of the family, and cared for those most in need."

PRO-LIFE EXPECTATIONS

For the next president

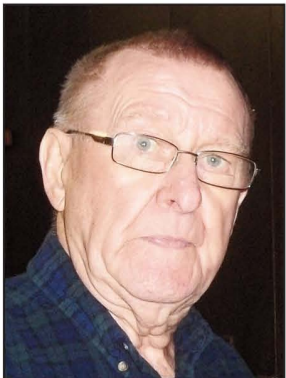


CNS PHOTO/GREGORY A. SHEMITZ

Donald Trump, then the Republicans' nominee for U.S. president, is shown during the 71st annual Alfred E. Smith Memorial Foundation Dinner at the Waldorf Astoria hotel in New York City Oct. 20. New York Cardinal Timothy M. Dolan hosted the dinner. The cardinal, who is the chairman of the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops' Committee on Pro-Life Activities, is among leading archbishops who have written columns for Catholic News Service addressing key issues facing the church and the new Trump administration. Cardinal Dolan says he hopes promises made by Trump, now president-elect, on life issues will become his administration's policies and that the pro-life community will hold him accountable to those promises.

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'It's time to enjoy the rest of my life'



Parish sacristan Paul McManaman retires as he turns 90

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Young faith in action

New Diocesan Youth Council holds first meeting, plans for year of faith-building events

FULL STORY, PAGE 4

SISTERS OF ST. JOSEPH 'GIVE A LIFETIME'



PHOTO BY SISTER MARY EAMON LYNG, SSI

The Sisters of St. Joseph of Watertown hosted diocesan vocation team members Catherine Russell and Father Thomas Higman, pictured at left, for an evening of prayer and discussion on vocations Nov. 27. The Sisters of St. Joseph, along with numerous other religious orders, have served the Diocese of Ogdensburg for generations in Catholic schools, hospitals and parishes. Today, many of these religious men and women have reached retirement age without enough wage-earning Religious to provide for their needs. Parishioners of the Diocese of Ogdensburg will have the opportunity to "give to those who have given and are giving a lifetime" in the Religious Retirement Collection Nov. 10-11. See special section, pages 7-10

CHRISTMAS ALL YEAR: A gift subscription to the *North Country Catholic*, p. 5

NORTH
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President

REV. JOSEPH A. MORGAN

Vice President

JAMES D. CROWLEY

Secretary-Treasurer

MARY LOU KILIAN

Editor/

General Manager



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EDITOR'S NOTE

For those who have given a lifetime

As we turn the page to December and move, all too quickly, towards Christmas we know it's time for Catholics of the Diocese of Ogdensburg to slow down a bit and consider the men and women who have given us some of the greatest gifts of our lives.

This coming weekend we will have the privilege of "sharing in the care" of Religious men and women who:

- taught us our A, B, C's as they taught us about Jesus,
- took care of us in hospitals across the diocese, and

- gave their hearts to parishes in every corner of the North Country.

Mary Lou
Kilian

Through the annual Retirement Fund for Religious, we will have the opportunity to give back to the Mercy Sisters and Grey Nuns, the Ursulines, our own beloved Sisters of St. Joseph and all the other religious orders who have served us, our parents, our grandparents and now our children and grandchildren.

Sadly, we aren't blessed with as many Sisters and Brothers as in the past.

For religious orders across the country, that's part of the

problem. There aren't nearly enough wage-earning Religious providing support for a pension plan for their aging members.

And, we all know that "Religious Sisters" and "living wage" were never mentioned in the same sentence when Catholic school classrooms were filled beyond capacity.

Those of us who grew up in those days can credit Sisters in every grade for providing a solid foundation of faith and academics upon which we've built our lives.

I'm sure we all believed it would ever be thus.

But, for the past couple of years, we've faced the unthinkable as religious orders pulled

out the last of their Sisters working in our midst.

I know that Catholics in Malone are still heartbroken about the July departure of the Ursulines since Catholics in Ogdensburg will never get over the fact that there are no Grey Nuns in our little city.

And, while we pray with great hope for more vocations for our future, we can never forget the vocations of the past and the present upon which we have built this diocesan church so full of faith.

The very least we can do is to respond to next weekend's collection with just a fraction of the generosity shown by the men and women who *gave their lives* for all of us.

A PASTOR'S PERSPECTIVE

The perfect patron saint for Advent

Let us talk about John the Baptist today since St. John the Baptist is the perfect patron saint for Advent.

It is that time of Advent, again, that time to open our hearts and spirit to prepare to celebrate the Birth of Our Savior, Jesus Christ.

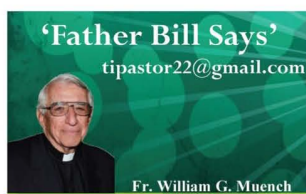
The Gospels tell us that John the Baptist came to this earth to announce to us all the coming of the Messiah, Our Savior – Jesus. John's message at that time is exactly the perfect Advent message for now: "Repent, for the Kingdom of Heaven is at hand."

I am certain you know the John the Baptist story. I find it a great story – he is certainly one of my favorite saints. Let me remind you.

After years of prayer and preparation, John began preaching at a spot on the River Jordan.

He preached to all who would listen; even the Pharisees and Scribes came to listen to him. His was a very challenging message but he proved to be a very appealing speaker.

The Gospels tell us that



many came to experience him. Many would change their lives because of him.

I imagine you have seen some of the paintings of John the Baptist. Many great artists have tried to capture his image. Matthew's Gospel describes him in this way: his clothing was made of camel's hair and he wore a leather belt. His food consisted of locusts and wild honey.

Definitely, he was a rather curious character.

Personally, I think I would have liked John the Baptist. However, I am certain he would have frightened me and I would be rather nervous in his presence.

Can you imagine John the Baptist as your confessor? He surely would profoundly affect my life.

Even now that is true.

John had such a great method. Many came to him and they are challenged. They were compelled to acknowledge their sins and resolve to change.

John wanted them to do something so that they would remember this moment. So, he walked them into the river and baptized them, plunging them into the water.

I know that John's baptism would have been quite an adventure for me.

John came to prepare others to find God.

Today, we again begin our Advent journey to Bethlehem and again this year John the Baptist is our guide. He leads us again to find repentance. We consider... how can I become a better person, a holier person? What has to be eliminated? What can I add to make my world a better place?

We are a baptized people. Our Baptism is the Baptism of Jesus. John the Baptist makes it very clear that Jesus was coming with his powerful invitation that would bring us into the Kingdom of God through the Sacrament of Baptism, the

Baptism of Jesus.

As a baptized people, we are called to change our world, to transform ourselves into the Spirit of the Lord. John says this, "I am baptizing you with water, for repentance, but the one who is coming after me is mightier than I. I am not worthy to carry his sandals. He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and fire."

It is Advent. What does preparation for Christmas mean – spiritual preparation? It is more than decorations, shopping and cards. They are a wonderful part of the season – I love them all. However, we must not allow ourselves to forget that there must be a spiritual preparation also.

A spiritual preparation means time. The shepherds came and looked upon the Christ child for a time. The magi came to Bethlehem and looked upon the Christ child and left transformed.

When we go through Advent, it must be a time to take another long look at Jesus, a time to spend with the Christ Child.

Will I be able to truly make myself like Jesus?

At age 90, parish sacristan decides it's time to retire

WATERTOWN - Paul McManaman turned 90 on Thanksgiving Day and retired as sacristan of Our Lady of the Sacred Heart Church on the following day.

Sacred Heart Church, where he and his wife, Thelma, were married in 1948, has always been an important part of McManaman's life.

He remembers cutting the grass with his own push mower in the years that followed and jokes that he was replaced by riding lawnmowers. He then moved "inside" and began working as sacristan. He still was occasionally seen on the roof fixing leaks.

McManaman has served under several bishops starting with Bishop Navagh in 1957.

His decision to retire came one day while sitting in his chair thinking, "I am turning 90, it is time to relax and enjoy the rest of my life".

McManaman has arrived at the Church around 6:30 am seven days a week for years, filling candles, checking holy water, ordering supplies, preparing for Mass, checking heat and lights etc.

Nothing gets past him, said a member of the parish staff, noting that he keeps the Church running smoothly. He even consults with the



Parishioners of Our Lady of the Sacred Heart Church of Watertown honored Paul McManaman Nov. 6 as he prepared to retire after serving the parish for nearly 60 years. He turned 90 on Nov. 24 and retired as parish sacristan the following day. McManaman is shown above with his wife, Thelma, his daughters and pastor, Missionary of the Sacred Heart Father Jonas Tandyu.

priests on the rules and regulations of the Church.

The nonagenarian has always worked on a voluntary basis, acknowledging that his only reward is waiting for him in the next life.

A "thank you" coffee and

donut breakfast was held after the Sunday Masses on Nov. 6 giving the parishioners a chance to thank McManaman for all he has done over the years and let him know that he will be missed.

A record crowd attended.

Appeal set for retired Religious

The annual Retirement Fund for Religious collection will be held Dec. 10-11 in parishes of the Diocese of Ogdensburg. Now in its 29th year, the collection is coordinated by the National Religious Retirement Office (NRRO) and benefits nearly 33,000 elderly Catholic sisters, brothers and religious order priests whose religious communities lack adequate retirement funding.

The U.S. bishops initiated the Retirement Fund for Religious in 1988 to address the significant lack of retirement funding among religious communities in the United States. Proceeds are distributed to eligible communities to help underwrite retirement and health-care expenses. Since the collection began, almost 95 percent of donations directly support senior religious and their communities.

Information about the diocesan collection appears on pages 7-10 in this week's NCC.



The Students, Staff and Faculty of



Trinity Catholic School

thank Father Mark Reilly, Father Tojo Chacko and Bishop Terry LaValley for **Being our Miracle!**

Your dedication, love and humility are beautiful examples of how we can bring simple miracles to those around us everyday.

We thank you and wish you a beautiful Advent season!



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YOUNG FAITH

Youth Council gathers for retreat, first meeting

By Kelly Donnelly
Diocesan director of youth ministry

A newly established Diocesan Youth Council (DYC) held an opening retreat Nov. 11 in Malone.

The council is comprised of 10th-12th graders who have shown themselves to be strong leaders active in living out the Catholic faith. The council members are appointed to serve on the council for the 2016-2017 academic year.

At the opening retreat, DYC members had a chance to get to know one another and focused on the council's theme for the year, "Come, follow me, and I will make you fish-



Members of the new Diocesan Youth Council, led by Kelly Donnelly, diocesan director of youth ministry, are from left, Grace Furnace, Massena; Kathryn Larson, Plattsburgh; Maureen Pierce, Heuvelton; Noah Arevalo, Moriah; and Michaela Valley, Malone. Missing are Kennedy Boyea, Chateaugay; and Hans Xu, Plattsburgh.

ers of men," through prayer and discussion.

These teens will participate

in a variety of meetings and workshops throughout the year that are designed to

help them deepen their faith and learn a variety of leadership skills that they can put

into action at their parishes.

Additionally, the council members will help plan and facilitate daylong Lenten retreats for their peers. One retreat will be held in Malone on March 25, and a second in in Massena on March 26.

DYC members will also plan and lead parts of the high school youth rally that will be held at Immaculate Heart Central School in Watertown May 6.

The seven members of the council are Noah Arevalo of Moriah, Kennedy Boyea of Chateaugay, Grace Furnace of Massena, Kathryn Larson of Plattsburgh, Maureen Pierce of Heuvelton, Michaela Valley of Malone, and Hans Xu of Plattsburgh.

Bishop urges confirmed to reach out to others

WELLS- As the choir softly sang "Come Holy Ghost," seven boys and girls and two adults received the sacrament of Confirmation Nov. 6 at St. Ann's Church.

After Bishop LaValley's in-

unction, each candidate was anointed with the Oil of the Holy Chrism in the sign of the Cross, and, after revealing their confirmation name, sealed with the gift of the Holy Spirit.

Those confirmed were Logan Allen, Chase Smith, Parker Abrams, Sebastian Beach, Kelly Driscoll, Caitlyn Driscoll, Byron Stuart and Sandy and Cindy Tortorello.

Sharing personal stories in his homily, Bishop LaValley spoke of the importance being aware of the needs of others and always looking for opportunities to be of help.

Confirmation in the Catholic Church builds on what was begun in Baptism and nourished in the Holy Eucharist, completing the process of initiation into the Christian community, and maturing the soul for the work ahead.

Wendy Allen, religious education teacher, told the bishop know that every confirmand had already chosen

to take part in one of the church ministries such as lector, usher or Eucharistic minister.

The bishop congratulated those who were confirmed as

well as their parents, guardians and Mrs. Allen for their help and guidance in preparing them for receiving the sacrament.

Father Sony Pulickal, pas-

tor of St. Ann's; and Msgr. Edward Barry from St. Barnabas Church in the Bronx, celebrated the Mass.

A brunch reception at the Inn in Speculator followed.



Pictured after the Nov. 6 confirmation at St. Ann's Church in Wells are front, from left, Kelly Driscoll, Caitlyn Driscoll, Cindy Tortorello and Sandy Tortorello; back, Logan Allen, Msgr. Edward Barry, Parker Abrams, Sebastian Beach, Bishop Terry LaValley, Chase Smith, Father Sony Pulickal and Byron Stuart.

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CDA SCHOLARSHIP WINNERS



Shaylee Staves and Ashton Guay, students at Seton Catholic Central School, are each the recipient of a \$500 scholarship awarded by the Catholic Daughters of the Americas Court Mary Immaculate #479 of Plattsburgh. Pictured are Shaylee and Ashton receiving their award certificates, from Court Vice Regent Dianne Martineau.

Rest in Peace

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

Dec. 8 – Rev. Patrick J. McGuinness, 1931; Msgr. Cornelius J. Crowley, 1946; Rev. John Leo Hammill, 1949; Rev. John Harvey, 1961
Dec. 9 – Rev. Edwin Hanlon McCarthy, 1950; Rev. Arthur LaVigne, 1956
Dec. 10 – Rev. James Hogan, 1882
Dec. 11 – George Montreuil, 1914; Rev. Edward Tetrault, 1952; Msgr. George Henry Brisson, P.A., 1969
Dec. 12 – Msgr. Albert J. Farrell, 1967; Rev. Julian P. O'Brien, 1988; Deacon Floyd J. Barton, 1999



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UNTO
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ISAIAH 9:6

Development office offers guidelines for year-end gifts

By Scott Lalone
Diocesan development director

There are many factors to consider when making your year-end gifts. The obvious one is what organization(s) am I choosing to support. A second is what giving method should I utilize for this/these gifts.

For those who may be considering their faith as something they wish to support, there are many giving options you can choose from.

Some which can benefit you as well in a variety of ways.

Outright cash gifts provide an immediate impact while stock gifts can often avoid capital gains tax.

Wills & Bequests are considered often times by donors this time of the year which can provide possible estate tax deductions.

Charitable Gift Annuities provide a stream of income back to the donor with the balance going to its beneficiary choice upon the donor passing. Two-Life Annuities

are also an option.

Insurance Policies have tax advantages and your designation can be listed in the beneficiary of the policy itself.

Real Estate Gifts can be given without incurring tax appreciation and there is a way to donate your home and remain living in it until passing.

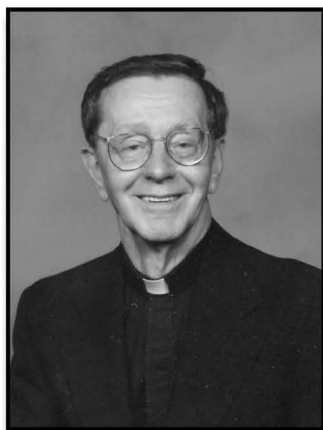
Retirement/IRA's are a giving method with tax savings as well.

Endowment gifts make a lasting gift with a permanent legacy.

The type of gift, the form of the gift, the benefit to the organization and the benefit to you are all the things to consider when making your year-end contribution.

Beneficiary choices you can consider can include: your Parish or Catholic School, the Diocese, the Foundation, Education of Priests and Seminarians, Priests Retirement Fund, Bishop's Fund, Missionary Projects of the Diocese of Ogdensburg, Catholic Charities, St. Joseph's Nursing Home or any Ministry or program of the Diocese.

If you have any questions regarding making a gift to your Parish, Catholic School, the Diocese, a particular Priests Fund or Ministry, contact Scott Lalone, Development Executive Director at the Diocese of Ogdensburg at 315-393-2920 or slalone@rcdony.org.



Fr. Normand Cote



Thank you for starting the
Sacred Heart Secular
Franciscan Order
and your years of
guidance and care.

Bishop's Schedule

Dec. 7 - 9:30 a.m., Diocesan Department Heads Meeting at Wadhams Hall in Ogdensburg

Dec. 8 - 12 p.m., Mass of the Immaculate Conception at St. Mary's Cathedral in Ogdensburg

Dec. 9 - 9:30 a.m., Mass and Pastoral Visit to St. James School in Gouverneur

4:30 p.m., St. Lawrence Deanery Clergy Penance Service and Dinner at St. Mary's Cathedral

Dec. 12 - 7:15 p.m., Novena and Mass at St. Mary's Cathedral.

Dec. 13 - 9:30 a.m., Mass at Altona Correctional Facility in Altona

Dec. 15 - Retreat Day at Christ the King Retreat House in Syracuse

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

Dec. 17 - 4 p.m., Mass at St. Mary's Cathedral.

Dec. 18 - 8 a.m., Mass at St. Mary's Cathedral
2 p.m., Advent Penance Service, Notre Dame Church in Ogdensburg

Dec. 20 - 2 p.m., Episcopal Council Meeting at the Spratt Conference Room followed by Dinner at the Bishop's Residence

Protecting God's Children

The Diocese of Ogdensburg has scheduled sessions for Protecting God's Children for Adults. Pre-registration online is required in order to participate. Participants may pre-register at www.virtus.org by selecting the registration button and following the directions. Further information is available from Atone-ment Sister Ellen Donahue, 315-393-2920, ext. 1440. Upcoming sessions:

Dec. 14 - 6 p.m., Father Amyot Parish Center, Norfolk

Dec. 15 - 1 p.m., St. James School, Gouverneur

Dec. 17 - 6 p.m., All Saints Church, Chaumont

Environmental Stewardship

What Do You Want for Christmas?

This question 'what do you want for Christmas?' may often be on our lips these days, as we want to find just the right gift this Christmas for someone we care for.

When someone asks us that question, our first response may be to think of 'what will make my life happier?'

Our culture today seems to tell us that our happiness is dependent on owning the latest gadget, product, or experience.

Yet, when we take time to look around at all the 'stuff' we already have, we may find that we are not really all that much happier.

In fact the more stuff we have the more time it takes to care for or dispose of it, and the less time we have for what our heart truly desires and what the world desires... a deep sense of peace that overflows into all of our relationships.

"Christian spirituality proposes an alternative understanding of the quality of life, and encourages a prophetic and contemplative lifestyle, one capable of deep enjoyment free of the obsession with consumption."

Rooted in Scripture, we find the conviction that 'less is more.' "Christian spirituality proposes a growth marked by moderation and the capacity to be happy with little.

"Laudato Si #222

*Here is a contemplative practice to begin to get in touch with our impulses:

1. Notice your impulse to want more, buy more, eat more, do more things that are not essential.

2. Pause and take a breath. Find a phrase... "Less is more," "Jesus is the reason" or even "Do I need to get/do this?" as a reminder of your commitment to live simply, so that others may simply live.

3. Make a choice based on your commitment to live simply, in order to create space and time to focus on what is essential: God, relationships with others and our common home.

** Adapted from Global Catholic Climate Movement*

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, PO Box 2446, Plattsburgh, NY, 12901; e-mail: terriannyanulavich@yahoo.com Phone: 518-483-3261; or Father James Seymour, the Episcopal Vicar for Clergy at 315-393-2920, ext. 1340



Retirement Fund for Religious

*Please give to those who have given
and are giving a lifetime*

December 10th and 11th

“Agents of mercy, channels through which God watered the earth”... (Pope Francis)



Dear Sisters and Brothers in Christ:

Once again, it is time for the annual **Retirement Fund for Religious** collection which will be taken up at all our Masses next weekend. Earlier this year, at the closing Mass marking the end of the *Year of Consecrated Life*, Pope Francis remarked, “I so enjoy when I come across those elderly women and men religious with eyes that shine, because they have the flame of spiritual life alight.” For generations, folks from our North Country and beyond have been blessed by this flame of faith.

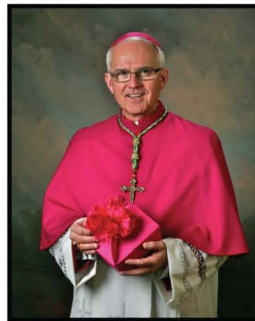
Our consecrated religious are aging and many require special care, even as they continue to share their love of God and neighbor through volunteer ministry and dedicated prayer. Our generous response to next week’s collection serves as an expression of our gratitude to these women and men who have educated our young, cared for our sick, provided pastoral care to our parishioners, and worked for justice. Numerous religious communities struggle to provide for their senior members. Proceeds from this collection offer supplemental support for bolstering retirement savings and meeting such day-to-day needs as prescription medications and nursing care.

Today, many of these sisters, brothers and religious order priests who have served us so faithfully are frail and in need of our assistance. Most worked for years for small stipends, leaving their religious communities without adequate savings to meet growing retirement and eldercare needs. The need is great.

Last year, we distributed the results of this collection to the congregations currently serving in the Diocese of Ogdensburg and twenty 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 offer, I am

Faithfully yours in Christ,

Most Reverend Terry R. LaValley
Bishop of Ogdensburg



Orders Serving in the Diocese

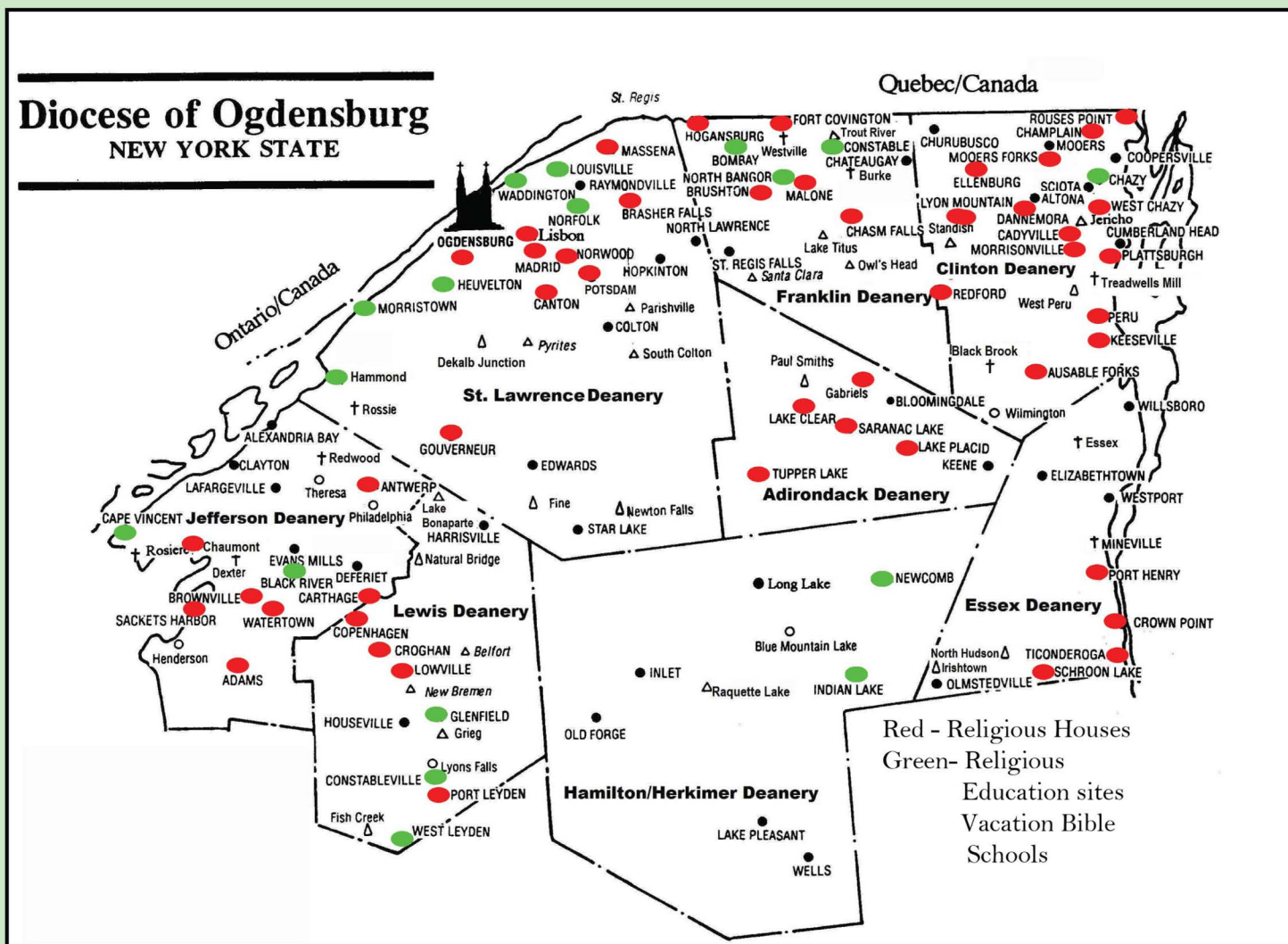
- Daughters of Charity of the Sacred Heart of Jesus
- Daughters of Charity of St. Vincent de Paul
- Dominican Sisters of Hope
- Franciscan Friars of the Atonement
- Franciscan Sisters of the Atonement
- Mid-Atlantic Community of the Institute of the Sisters of Mercy of the Americas
- Missionaries of 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

We are grateful for the dedicated lives of the Grey Nuns of the Sacred Heart and the Ursuline Sisters of the Eastern Province who left our Diocese this year. We are extremely thankful for the religious listed above who continue to serve our Diocese.

- There are more than 33,000 religious past age 70 living in the United States.
- In 2024, retired religious will outnumber wage-earning religious by four to one.
- For most of their lives, elder religious worked for small stipends.
- The Diocese of Ogdensburg distributed \$123,331 among 28 religious congregations

...through the many religious men and women who came to our Diocese.

"Agents of mercy, channels through which God watered the earth" ... (Pope Francis)



Parishes and Sites where Religious ministered past and present.

...through the many religious men and women who came to our Diocese.

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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.



Sr. Rosy Soosairaj, SCC and co-workers at Samaritan Hospital



Sister Debbie Blow, OP & Eyling (Guatemala)



Gathering, Sisters Of Charity of St. Louis of Quebec Our Lady of Victory Parish, Plattsburgh

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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

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send your donation directly to:

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CATHOLIC WORLD AT A GLANCE

When God calls, he always walks with his disciples, pope says

VATICAN CITY (CNS) — Through individual vocations, God calls men and women to be touched and transformed by his love, not use his gift for personal comfort, pursuing business opportunities or self-promotion, Pope Francis said. "All Christians are called to be missionaries of the Gospel," the pope said in his message for the 2017 World Day of Prayer for Vocations. The message was released at the Vatican Nov. 30. As disciples, "we do not receive the gift of God's love for our personal consolation, nor are we called to promote ourselves, or a business concern. We are simply men and women touched and transformed by the joy of God's love, who cannot keep this experience just to ourselves." The day of prayer will be celebrated May 7 at the Vatican and in many dioceses around the world; the theme for 2017 is: "Led by the Spirit for Mission." In his message, the pope said commitment to mission is essential to the faith since "a relationship with the Lord entails being sent out into the world as prophets of his word and witnesses of his love."

Miami archbishop recalls Catholic persecution in Cuba, prays for peace

MIAMI (CNS) — On the day the news of Fidel Castro's death spread, Archbishop Thomas G. Wenski of Miami was one of the first Catholic Church officials to respond early Nov. 26. "Fidel Castro is dead," he wrote in a statement. "The death of this figure should lead us to invoke the patroness of Cuba, the Virgin of Charity, calling for peace for Cuba and its people." Later that day at Ermita de la Caridad, a Miami shrine that honors Cuba's patron Our Lady of Charity of El Cobre and one built, he said in his homily, "with the sacrifices of the (Cuban) exiles," he focused on the suffering of Catholic Cuba and the news of Castro's death. The 90-year-old former leader of Cuba reportedly died late at night Nov. 25. "The Cuban people are a noble people, but also a people who suffer," Archbishop Wenski said. "And now, on the eve of this first Sunday of Advent, to emphasize the words of Christ 'at the hour you least expect, the Son of Man will come,' we have learned that Fidel Castro has died." He continued: "Each human being, each of us, will die. We will all be judged one day. Today, it is his (Fidel Castro's) turn. God's judgment is merciful, but it doesn't cease to be just."

Pope recognizes martyrdom of Oklahoma priest killed in Guatemala

VATICAN CITY (CNS) — Pope Francis has recognized the martyrdom of Father Stanley Rother of the Archdiocese of Oklahoma City, making him the first martyr born in the United States. The Vatican made the announcement Dec. 2. The recognition of his martyrdom clears the way for his beatification. Father Rother, born March 27, 1935, on his family's farm near Okarche, Oklahoma, was brutally murdered July 28, 1981, in a Guatemalan village where he ministered to the poor. He went to Santiago Atitlan in 1968 on assignment from the Archdiocese of Oklahoma City. He helped the people there build a small hospital, school and its first Catholic radio station. He was beloved by the locals, who called him "Padre Francisco." Many priests and religious in Guatemala became targets during the country's 1960-1996 civil war as government forces cracked down on leftist rebels supported by the rural poor.

VATICAN LETTER

Pope Francis sees God of surprises at work in 2016

By Cindy Wooden
Catholic News Service

VATICAN CITY (CNS) — Pope Francis described 2016 as a "packed year," one full of initiatives that helped Catholics "see and touch with their hands the fruits of the mercy of God."

"The Lord always surprises us and goes beyond our expectations," the pope said Nov. 28, looking back at what happened over the past 12 months, especially in events related to the Year of Mercy.

While the jubilee celebrations dominated the papal calendar, they did not halt other activities and responsibilities, nor other surprises.

After decades of work and hope and prayer, Pope Francis finally was the first pope to meet with the Russian Orthodox patriarch. He and Patriarch Kirill of Moscow met briefly in Cuba in February and signed a joint declaration.

In April, after visiting with refugees on the Greek island of Lesbos, Pope Francis — without prior announcement — brought 12 of them back to Rome with him. The Vatican is providing the funds needed for their living expenses and the Rome-based Sant'Egidio Community is helping them with language lessons and logistics.

In May, Pope Francis held a dialogue with the superiors general of women's religious orders from around the world. One of the women asked him to establish "an official commission to study the question" of the identity and role of the women described as deacons in the New Testament and early Christian writings.

The pope agreed and later named six men and six women to the commission, in addition to commission

president Archbishop Luis Ladaria Ferrer, secretary of the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith.

Pope Francis described 2016 as a 'packed year,' one full of initiatives that helped Catholics 'see and touch with their hands the fruits of the mercy of God'

Here's a look back at some other items from the pope's 2016 diary:

- In January, Pope Francis became the third modern pope to visit Rome's main synagogue. He told the congregation that while the Catholic Church affirms that salvation comes through Jesus, it also recognizes that God is faithful and has not revoked his covenant with the Jewish people. He paid special tribute to a handful of Holocaust survivors present for his visit, saying, "their sufferings, anguish and tears must never be forgotten."

- In March, Pope Francis continued his practice of holding a Lenten penance service in St. Peter's Basilica, going to confession and hearing confessions. The sacrament was a centerpiece of the Year of Mercy celebrations.

- In April, the Vatican released Pope Francis' post-synodal apostolic exhortation on the family, "Amoris Laetitia," insisting that God's plan for the family is that it be built on the lifelong union of one man and one woman open to having children. The pope called for an overhaul of marriage preparation programs and for the prayerful accompaniment of Catholic couples whose marriages have failed.

- In June, in a small, family-like gathering, Pope Francis helped retired Pope Benedict XVI celebrate the 65th anniversary of his

priestly ordination. Even in retirement, he said, Pope Benedict continues to serve the church and "truly contributes with vigor and wisdom to its growth" from the "little 'Mater Ecclesiae' monastery in the Vatican."

- In July, Pope Francis joined hundreds of thousands of Catholic young people in Krakow, Poland, for World Youth Day and, like many of them, he paid a silent, prayerful visit to Auschwitz, the nearby Nazi death camp.

- In September, Pope Francis canonized St. Teresa of Kolkata in the presence of hundreds of Missionaries of Charity, thousands of poor people assisted by the order and tens of thousands of Catholics from around the world. Mother Teresa, he said, was "a generous dispenser of divine mercy, making herself available for everyone through her welcome and defense of human life, those unborn and those abandoned and discarded."

- In October, Pope Francis flew to Sweden to join Lutheran leaders beginning a yearlong commemoration of the 500th anniversary of the Protestant Reformation.

- In November, the pope closed the Year of Mercy, but before doing so, he created 17 new cardinals, including three from the United States: Cardinals Blase J. Cupich of Chicago; Kevin J. Farrell, prefect of the new Vatican office for laity, family and life; and Joseph W. Tobin, recently appointed archbishop of Newark, New Jersey.

Meeting Nov. 28 with people who had been involved in coordinating Year of Mercy events, Pope Francis said: "Something truly extraordinary happened and now it must be inserted into our daily lives so that mercy becomes a commitment and a permanent lifestyle of believers."

SCRIPTURE REFLECTIONS

The special reason for our joy this Sunday

The joy that fills this Sunday's liturgy is the closest we have to Christmas itself.

We're always surprised to see the celebrant process into the Mass this week dressed in rose-colored vestments, and to hear the lector proclaim in the second reading, 'Rejoice', again I say to you 'Rejoice'.

The whole message is one of hope.

But, we say, we don't feel like joy. Of course, we can get pleasure out of the Christmas shopping, the lights, receiving Christmas cards from peo-



Monsignor
Paul E.
Whitmore

ple we haven't heard from since last year. That's a real human joy, but where can we find that fulfilling, serene joy that stays with us long into the New Year?

The key is found in St. Paul's advice in that second reading.

He advises us to pray without stopping, say 'thank you' over and over, and don't quench the Spirit.

Two weeks ago we agreed to humbly let God be the potter to mold us into a new shape. It's when we pray and meditate each day that

we let go and let God's Spirit do the work of flooding our souls with His light.

This Sunday's Gospel assures us that John the Baptist came to give testimony to the Light. Fear thrives in darkness. Just as turning a light on in a dark room can take fear away from a child, so the light that increases in us each day of Advent can shrink our fears and bolster our hopes.

When the light intensifies to radiance, then we know joy. Of course, it takes patience on our part - patience to wait in rock-solid faith. Humble faith. The only legitimate fear we're allowed to cling to is the fear of not appreciating enough what

Dec. 11

Third Sunday of Advent
READINGS

Isaiah 35:1-6a,10

St. James 5:7-10

Matthew 11:2-11

the coming of this Child into the world really means - historically, it was truly an earthshaking event. Nothing would ever be the same again. Sin and darkness fled when the Son of God was born in Bethlehem.

Of course, people can and do close their eyes to the light, and chose to live without His Light.

Only when we refuse to

repent of our sin and hang on to the darkness can we have reason to fear.

When John in prison sends emissaries to Jesus to ask if He is really the Messiah, Jesus sends back the answer that He has fulfilled that prophecy He read in the Synagogue in Capernaum (and that we heard read in today's first reading). He tells John that the blind now see, the deaf hear, the dead are raised, and the poor have the Good News preached to them!

John must have been filled with joy, even in prison when the messenger brought that message back.

That's the reason for our joy today as well.

A CARDINAL'S VOICE

For life: conception through natural death

By Cardinal Timothy M. Dolan
Chairman of the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops' Committee on Pro-Life Activities

The last several years have clearly been challenging for the pro-life movement. The abortion industry, exposing its false rhetoric of choice, increasingly seeks to coerce Americans to be complicit with abortion, even insisting that abortion is a social good to be celebrated, subsidized and uncontrolled.

Its coercive agenda seeks to force taxpayer funding of abortion by repealing the popular, long-standing and bipartisan federal policy known as the Hyde Amendment. It includes a campaign to force health care providers and plans to participate in or pay for abortion. The abortion industry even succeeded in getting the Supreme Court to invalidate common-sense abortion clinic regulations that protect the health and safety of women seeking abortion.

Sadly, the Obama adminis-

tration has been an ally to abortion advocates in advancing such oppressive policies.

What the pro-life community wants from the Trump administration

It imposed the so-called HHS mandate forcing even religious organizations to cover contraceptives, sterilization and abortion-inducing drugs in their health insurance plans.

It refused to enforce federal conscience protections on abortion and it is currently proposing regulations intended to prohibit states from denying funding to Planned Parenthood through the Title X family planning program.

Given all of this, it is fair to say that the presidential election offers the pro-life movement some cautious optimism.

At least at the level of rhetoric, President-elect Donald Trump indicated support for renewed oppor-

tunities to protect women and children from abortion and to protect pro-life Americans from forced complicity in it. The president-elect said he would make the Hyde Amendment permanent law, would sign a ban on late-term abortions, would defund Planned Parenthood and would nominate pro-life justices to the Supreme Court.

On his transition page, www.greatagain.gov, he promises to "protect individual conscience in health care" and "protect innocent human life from conception to natural death, including the most defenseless and those Americans with disabilities."

We certainly hope that the policies pursued by the president-elect and his administration will match these promises. In particular, we are eager to see immediate enforcement of federal conscience protections on abortion and elimination of the contraceptive mandate.

We also hope to see progress toward a majority

of Supreme Court justices who will reform the injustice and travesty of *Roe v. Wade*.

We hopes promises made by Trump, now president-elect, on life issues will become policies and that the pro-life community will hold him accountable to those promises

Pro-life Americans cannot be complacent in the months and years to come. It will be essential that we hold our new president and his administration accountable to the pro-life promises they've made.

As for Congress, it appears that the election left intact a pro-life majority (at least with regard to abortion) in both the House and Senate (albeit a somewhat slimmer majority).

The House has a solid pro-life majority and, as in re-

cent years, should be able to advance pro-life policies. The Senate will continue to be a challenge for advancing pro-life legislation because of its 60-vote threshold for overcoming a filibuster.

Unfortunately, one tragic outcome of the Nov. 8 election was the legalization of doctor-prescribed suicide by the voters in Colorado, making it the fifth state to formally legalize the practice. And just one week after the election, the District of Columbia became the next jurisdiction to embrace assisted suicide.

Proponents have made no secret of their strategy to advance assisted suicide one state at a time. They are well-funded, persistent and working in every state to advance their deadly agenda.

The pro-life movement must match or exceed their efforts and put a stop to this encroachment of the culture of death, offering in its place a renewed commitment to real compassion and solidarity through quality end-of-life care. (CNS)

AT THE MOVIES

MOANA

By Joseph McAleer
Catholic News Service

The same tropical setting that provided the backdrop for the 1949 musical "South Pacific" now lends its exotic flavor to the animated feature "Moana" (Disney).

As for the feminism-friendly story of the movie's eponymous heroine, well, as Rodgers and Hammerstein's lovelorn Seabees so famously declared, "There is nothing like a dame."

The spunky heroine of Disney's 56th animated film is a 16-year-old Polynesian princess (voice of Auli'i Cravalho) who seeks not a boyfriend but a grand adventure on the high seas, all to save her world from destruction.

There's no mistaking the entertainment value of "Moana," gloriously rendered in 3-D, with a delightful array of characters and toe-tapping songs co-written by Lin-Manuel Miranda of Broadway's "Hamilton." The film also offers good lessons about family, friendship and the need to be responsible.

But Christian parents may be concerned to find that Jared Bush's screenplay is steeped in indigenous mythology. "Moana" presents a view of creation at odds with the biblical account, and could confuse impressionable minds. Well-catechized teens, however, will likely slough these elements off as mere fantasy.

As "Moana" tells it, in the beginning was not God but

a comely goddess named Te Fiti, who commanded the oceans and brought life to the world.

Te Fiti was joined by a demigod (half-god, half-human) named Maui (voice of Dwayne Johnson). Maui had a nifty talent of pulling islands up from the sea with his trusty fishhook. But he was greedy, and stole the magical "heart" of Te Fiti. Darkness covered the world, and Maui was banished.

Fast-forward several centuries to the tranquil island of the so-called "Chosen One," Moana. Since her name means "ocean," it's no wonder that Moana is drawn to the open waters beyond her island's protective reef, despite the warnings of her father, Chief Tui (voiced by Temuera Morrison).

"No one goes beyond the reef," he says. "It keeps us safe."

But the ocean has a mind of its own, and the sea pokes and prods Moana into seeking her destiny. Her quest is to locate Maui, transport him across the sea (demigods don't swim), and restore Te Fiti's heart before the encroaching darkness reaches Moana's island.

Maui is more surfer dude than classical Greek god.

He's also accustomed to adulation, not the commands of a teenager. The tattoos covering his ample girth spring to life, acting either as a voice of approval or an admonishing, Jiminy Cricket-like conscience.

Throw into the mix Moana's pet, a dimwitted rooster named Heihei (voice of Alan Tudyk), and you have the recipe for a chaotic but amusing journey across the sea.

With previous helming credits like "The Little Mermaid" and "Aladdin," co-directors Ron Clements and John Musker represent the aristocracy of Disney animation. Yet "Moana" does feel derivative at times, with echoes of previous films. And storm sequences as well as creature battles may be too intense for younger viewers.

The film contains non-scriptural religious ideas, mildly scary action sequences and occasional bathroom humor. The Catholic News Service classification is A-II-- adults and adolescents. The Motion Picture Association of America rating is PG -- parental guidance suggested. Some material may not be suitable for children.



CNS PHOTO/DISNEY

Characters are shown in a scene from the animated movie "Moana."

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315-608-7556



ADIRONDACK

NAVE LESSONS, CAROLS

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

Date: Dec. 18

Time: 4 p.m.

Place: St. Agnes Church

Features: 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. NAVE's Festival of Lessons and Carols follows the traditional model of those performed annually on Christmas Eve (since 1928) at King's College Chapel in Cambridge, England. The customary format is built around nine short Bible readings from the Old and New Testaments that trace the story of the fall of humanity and the promise of a Messiah to the birth of Jesus. Anthems, carols, and hymns are liberally interspersed throughout to musically illuminate the narrative.

Price: Suggested donation of \$10.

Contact: drew.benware@gmail.com; and on Facebook.

CLINTON

MODEL UN BENEFIT CONCERT

Plattsburgh - Seton Catholic Central to present Patrick Fitzsimmons, an RCA recording artist and indie/folk legend.

Date: Dec. 10

Time: 6:30 p.m. to 9:30

Cost: Adults, \$10; Students, \$6

Features: Proceeds benefit Model UN's trip to Boston and NCCS.

LESSONS, CAROLS BY NAVE

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

Date: Dec. 17

Time: 7:30 p.m.

Place: St. Peter's Church

Features: (See information above, Adirondack Deanery)

Price: Suggested donation of \$10.

Contact: drew.benware@gmail.com; and on Facebook.

SPAGHETTI DINNER

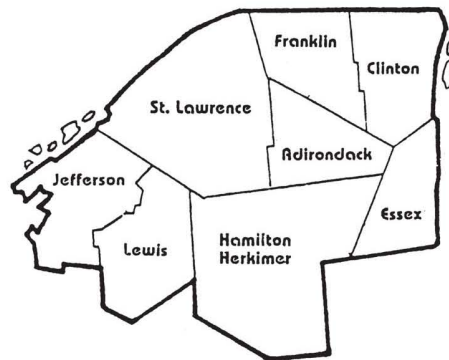
Morrisonville - St. Alexander's Church and the Knights of Columbus 7248 will host a spaghetti dinner fundraiser.

Date: Jan. 14

Time: 4 p.m. to 7

Place: St. Alexander's Jubilee Hall

Cost: Adults, \$8; Children 6-12, \$3; under 5, Free



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.

EMPTY MANGER CAROLING

Plattsburgh - "Empty Manger" Christmas Caroling days are set

Date: Dec. 9 and 17

Time: 10 a.m. to 2 p.m.

Place: Planned Parenthood

Contact: Nancy Belzile at 518-593-6024

EUCHARISTIC 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 ohnsadoration@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

ESSEX

DAYS OF DISCERNMENT

Old Forge - Discerning men are invited to consider the call to the priesthood.

Dates: Jan 29; Feb 12; Mar 5; Apr 2 and 23; May 7

Time: 3 p.m.

Place: St. Bartholomew's Rectory

Features: Reflection, Vespers & dinner. Juniors in high school and older.

Contact: Fr. Howard Venette, pastor-stbars@roadrunner.com/ 315-369-3554;

JEFFERSON

LESSONS AND CAROLS

Watertown - Lessons and Carols to be presented.

Date: Dec. 11

Time: 2 p.m.

Place: St. Patrick's Church

Features: The Festival of Lessons and Carols is a service of Scripture and song that dates to the late 19th century. In this service, we listen to nine Scripture lessons which recount the fall, the promise of a Messiah, the Incarnation, and the Great Commission to preach the Good News. Each lesson is followed by a carol or other song that reflects on the lesson's message and a brief prayer.

IHC MYSTERY PLAYERS ADVENT

Watertown - IHC Mystery Players to present "The Birth of Jesus."

Schedule:

Dec. 11, at St. Peter's Church, Hammond at 6:30 p.m.;

Dec. 18, Holy Family Church, Watertown at 7:15 p.m.

Contact: Mystery players is also currently looking for spots to perform during Lent 2017. Interested churches please contact Terry at tburgess@spar-tanpride.org

ADVENT TIME PRAYER

Sackets Harbor - Advent Time of Prayer with Fr. Kevin O'Brien is set

Date: Dec 10

Time: 11 a.m. - 1:30 p.m.

Place: St. Andrew's Parish Center

Features: A light lunch of soup, no charge and all are welcome.

FRANCISCAN MYSTERY PLAYERS

The Franciscan Mystery Players of St. Mary's in Clayton and St. John's, LaFargeville, will present "The Birth of Jesus - A Franciscan Christmas".

Schedule:

Dec. 11 at 6:30 p.m. at St. Peter's, Syracuse

Dec. 18 at 6 p.m. at St. Anthony's, Watertown

Features: dramatic meditation on the birth of Jesus, using special lighting and sound. A free-will offering

Contact: parish office at 315-686-3398

JINGLE BELL RUN

Carthage - Augustinian Academy to have a 5K Fun Run and 1.5 mile walk

Date: Dec. 10

Time: 10 a.m.

Cost: \$30 for 5K; \$25 for 1.5 mile walk;

Features: Register online at imathlete.com and search for Jingle Bell Run. To benefit Augustinian Academy.

WEEKLY EUCHARISTIC ADORATION

Sackets Harbor - St. Andrew's Church has scheduled weekly exposition and Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament on every Friday.

Time: 5 p.m. to 6

HOLY HOUR FOR VOCATIONS

Watertown - Holy Hour for vocations

Date: Mon.-Fri.

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

Place: Holy Family Church

LEWIS

INTERNATIONAL NATIVITY EXHIBIT

Houseville - An international exhibit of Christmas Creches-Nativities Will be seen at St. Hedwig's Church.

Schedule: The display may be seen on Dec. 11, 18, and 25 and Jan. 1 and 8 (2017), after the 11 a.m. Mass, or between 1 p.m. and 3 on the above dates with the exception of Christmas Day when the exhibit will close at 1 p.m. The exhibit may also be seen by appointment. Contact 348-6260.

Features: The exhibit is free

OPLATEK 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.

Contact: 348-6260.

ST. LAWRENCE

DAYS OF DISCERNMENT

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

Dates: Jan 29; Feb 12; Mar 5; Apr 2 and 23; May 7

Time: 3 p.m.

Place: St. Mary's Rectory

Features: Reflection and vespers. No reservation necessary. Open to men who are Juniors in high school and older.

Contact: Your Catholic Campus Minister or Father Stephen Rocker, pastormsp@gmail.com, 315-265-9680; or Fr. Doug Lucia, froudug@twcny.rr.com

DIOCESAN EVENTS

VOCATIONAL DISCERNMENT

The Vocation Office has scheduled three Operation Andrew dinners and two women's discernment retreat days.

For men: Operation Andrew Dinners for Discerning Men will be Dec 13 in Canton.

For women: Women's Discernment Retreats will take place Jan. 7 in Morrisonville

Contact: Please contact Cathy Russell, Vocation Coordinator: 315-393-2920 or crussell@rcdny.org with any questions or to register.

NEIGHBORING DIOCESES

SILENT RETREAT

Syracuse - Silent Directed Retreat Weekend to be held.

Date: Jan. 6-8

Place: Christ the King Retreat Center

Cost: \$250, \$25 non refundable fee

Features: The retreat begins with supper at 6 p.m., and concludes at noon on Sunday. Each retreatant will meet individually with an assigned director from the Center staff several times over the weekend. The director will suggest material to guide the retreatant's times in prayer. The fee includes a two-night stay, meals, snacks and individual direction. A Catholic liturgy will be available on Saturday evening. Directors will be Ms. Lana Riley, Rev. Lou Sogliuzzo, SJ, Sr. Mary Ellen Schopfer, CSJ, Mr. Jim Krisher, and Sr. Marise May, OSF.

Contact: register online at spiritualrenewalcenter.com/events or contact the center at (315) 472-6546 or mail@spiritualrenewalcenter.com



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

Advent is upon us

From the director's desk
Sister Mary Ellen Brett, SSJ
Diocesan Mission Director

As we prepare to celebrate the birth of Jesus, I offer you gratitude for your "humble gifts" to the Missions and your prayers of support. Know that my prayers are offered for you and your intentions.

As we think about Christmas, children to come to mind, those in our own lives and around the world. Many children in the Missions live with immense suffering and violence, facing poverty and despair. How can we be like the shepherds at that first Christmas, as Pope Francis asks us to be, moving in haste to offer generous help? In one part of Bangladesh, there's a way to do just that.

In northwestern Bangladesh, tribal children in remote areas barely have the basic needs for their existence. Many are forced into child labor to support their families. But the Church there, with your assistance through the Society for the Propagation of the Faith, is making an amazing difference for these little ones.

The parishes there are reaching out by providing food, medicine, tuition fees and textbooks. Children learn about Jesus, and experience His love through the service of priests, religious Sisters and Brothers, and lay catechists. "And the children respond with enthusiasm and cheerful hearts," says Sister Clara who works with children and families in one small parish. "We are continuously extending a helping hand," she adds.

Will you extend your hand to help children in Bangladesh and throughout the Missions this Christmas? Will you be like the shepherds, offering your humble gifts in celebration of Jesus' birth? Whatever you are moved to provide makes you a special angel of mercy and love to these children half a world away.

Know that those you help in the Missions remember you in prayer. I too promise prayers, throughout Advent and especially at Christmas – for you and your families, and for the "gift" that you are to one another and to the world.

Please remember "The Society for the Propagation of the Faith" when writing or changing your Will.
<http://www.rcdony.org/mission-office.html>



OBITUARIES

Ausable Forks – Viola Susanne (Byers) Farley, 70; Funeral Services Dec. 3, 2016 at Holy Name Church; burial in parish cemetery.

Ausable Forks – Gerald "Jerry" Arthur Mitchell, 80; Funeral Services Nov. 28, 2016 at Holy Name Church; burial in Holy Names Cemetery.

Brushton – Stephanie B. (Mayville) Potter, 48; Funeral Services Dec. 2, 2016 at St. Mary's Church; burial in parish cemetery.

Canton – Darrell Paul Monette, 80; Funeral Services Dec. 2, 2016 at St. Mary's Church; burial in Notre Dame Cemetery, Malone.

Carthage – Jana (Malette) Patchin, 63; Funeral Services Dec. 3, 2016 at St. James Church; burial in St. James Cemetery.

Croghan – Isaac W. Plantz, 36; Funeral Services at St. Stephen's Church; burial in Beaches Bridge Cemetery.

Ellenburg – Lloyd Thomas Siler, 88; Funeral Services Dec. 1, 2016 at St. Edmund's Church; burial in St. Edmund's Cemetery.

Hogansburg – Linda Marie Tessier, 77; Funeral Services Nov. 29, 2016 at St. Regis Church; burial in Calvary Cemetery, Massena.

Lowville – Clorinda Anna Pagliaro Edrick, 84; Funeral Services Nov. 30, 2016 at St. Peter's Church; burial in St. Joseph's Cemetery, Dolgeville.

Massena – Rita Margaret (Yaddow) Davis, 87; Funeral Services Dec. 3, 2016 at Church of the Sacred Heart; burial in Calvary Cemetery.

Norfolk – Dawn Elizabeth (King) LaBarge, 78; Funeral Services Dec. 3, 2016 at the Church of the Visitation; burial in Visitation Cemetery.

Ogdensburg – Robert Bouchard, 86; Funeral Services Nov. 29, 2016 at Notre

Dame Church.

Plattsburgh – Leon S. "Lee" Harding, 82; Funeral Services Dec. 2, 2016 at St. Peter's Church; burial in Holy Name Cemetery, Ausable Forks.

Plattsburgh – Karen A. (Mannix) Johnston, 79; Funeral Services Nov. 30, 2016 at St. John's Church.

Saranac Lake – Barbara A. (Sutherland) Simonson, 69; Funeral Services Dec. 3, 2016 at the Fortune-Keough Funeral Home.

Watertown – Merle L. (Hamilton) Hludzinski, 93; Funeral Services Nov. 30, 2016 at Our Lady of the Sacred Heart; burial in Glenwood Cemetery.



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ADVENT REFLECTION

ADVENT HOPE

By Andrew Lauria
Staff writer

It is the beginning of Advent and this year I feel the same as the past; sort of sad, generally disinterested (thank you perpetually grey sky), and pretty lonely. Add to that the constant feeling of being full due to the endless dinners and celebrations that initiate the holiday marathon at Thanksgiving.

This has been a very difficult time of year for me for some time and the loss of my mom a few years ago certainly hasn't improved the mood around the holidays.

I think a lot of people have emotions that appear to be a bit out of whack around Advent because this time of year calls us to recollect our lives and our own personal pasts. I know that I think of my deceased family and friends more between the end of November and the middle of December more than the rest of the year combined.

I used to really fight myself and try to be happy all of Advent, as if in some Hallmark Christmas movie. But I have learned to allow that sadness to be a testament to the impact and love these deceased people have given me and to offer that back to God in praise and thanksgiving for their lives.



CNS PHOTO/LISA JOHNSTON, ST LOUIS REVIEW

The Advent wreath, with a candle marking each week of the season, is a traditional symbol of the liturgical period.

The interesting thing that I notice though is that there is hope, a huge hope that seems to be buoyed somewhere in the center of my chest. I

don't think it is in my heart because there is a lot of hopelessness in there and depression and there isn't enough space left for the thing I am trying to describe.

I had a good friend once explain that hope is seeing the world as it really is and not giving up anyway. I agree that we can choose not to give up but there is a power that sustains this commitment of our will and that power is a gift. Just like the phenomenon of inspiration that seems to "hit" us, the power to sustain the decision to be hopeful comes from outside of us.

Hope is often described to be the gift of accompaniment of a loving, providential Father God. I agree with this idea because I simply cannot internally generate such a thing myself. Hope seems to originate from outside of myself in a way that ideas or feelings simply don't. Furthermore, I lack the sheer power necessary to remain hopeful about the current state of the entire universe. We cannot create or sustain things that are beyond our human capacity to do so.

So, I think that Advent hope is real because I am experiencing it right now and have for a few years. And I know that it is a gift because I am feeling a lot of loneliness and hope is the opposite of this.

Advent hope is a gift that is freely given to us by a loving Father who, amidst our own personal stories, is calling to us to prepare the way of the Lord.

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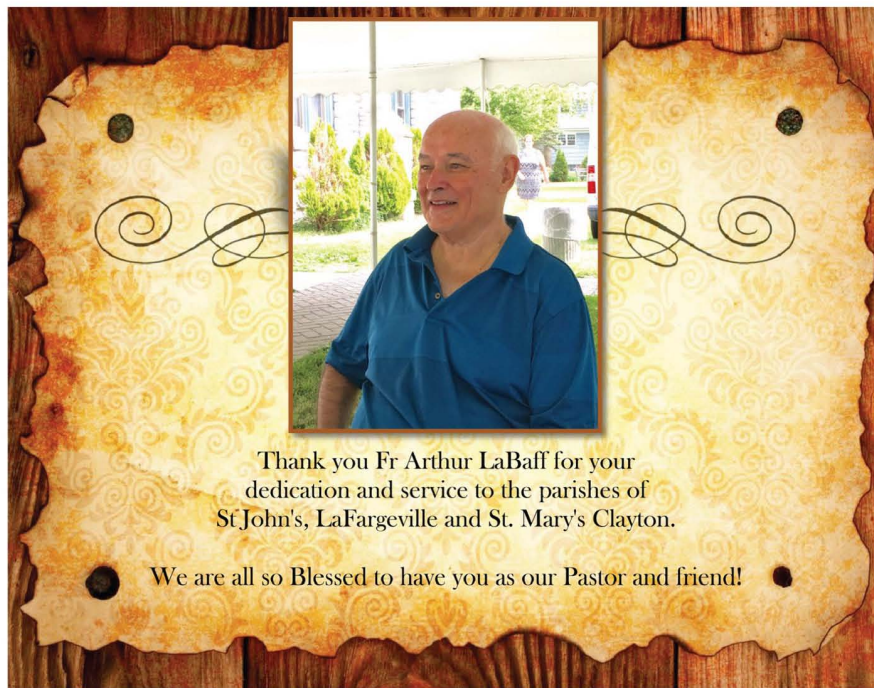
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