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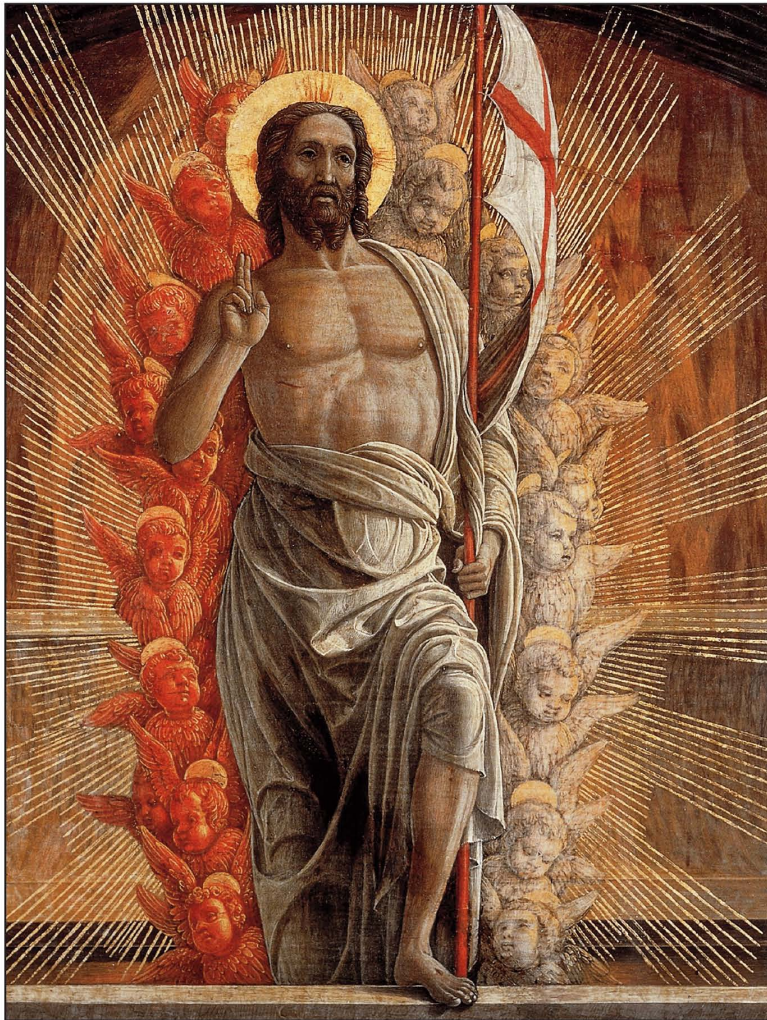
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The Diocese of Ogdensburg Volume 70, Number 40

NORTH COUNTRY CATHOLIC

MARCH 23, 2016

EASTER BLESSINGS



CNS/BRIDGEMAN IMAGES

The Risen Christ is depicted in the painting "Resurrection" by 15th-century Italian master Andrea Mantegna. Easter, the chief feast in the liturgical calendars of all Christian churches, commemorates Christ's resurrection from the dead. Easter is March 27 this year.

Jubilee of Mercy Easter 2016

Dear Sisters and Brothers in Christ:

Christ is risen! Alleluia! Alleluia!

That Easter morn, the stone was rolled back for Jesus' followers to see that the tomb was empty. The God of Mercy would not remain in darkness nor be stopped by the chains of death. As a resurrection people, we will not be immobilized by the frustration or paralyzed by the gloom and doom that weigh heavily on our minds and hearts these days. No, we are Christ-led, Christ-fed and Hope-filled!

Pope Francis urges us on: "Christ's resurrection is not an event of the past; it contains a vital power which has permeated this world. Where all seems to be dead, signs of the resurrection suddenly spring up... However dark things are, goodness always re-emerges and spreads. Values always tend to reappear under new guises, and human beings have arisen time after time from situations that seemed doomed. Such is the power of the resurrection, and all who evangelize are instruments of that power...for the resurrection is already secretly woven into the fabric of this history, for Jesus did not die in vain. May we never remain on the sidelines of this march of living hope!" (The Joy of the Gospel, cf. 276, 278)

Easter is the event that lifts our spirits and strengthens our resolve not to remain on the sidelines of this march of living hope. This Jubilee Year of Mercy is an especially graced time for us to join this march because it invites you and me to be keenly aware of God's tender mercy for each one of us. We are equipped with resurrection power to share that divine mercy, particularly with those who harbor hurting and hardened hearts.

Our Holy Father reminds us that Easter is cause for celebration and determination. When the baptismal candle was lit at our baptism, promises were made that you and I would keep the flame of faith burning brightly all the days of our life. Our graced response to this baptismal call continues to shed the Easter light of life in a darkened world. Praise God for living the mission (your vocation) with Gospel joy!

May you and your loved ones rejoice in the hope and tender mercy that our Risen Savior yearns to bring you. A blessed Easter to you and your family!

Faithfully yours in Christ,

Most Reverend Terry R. LaValley
Bishop of Ogdensburg

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EDITOR'S NOTE

At the Chrism Mass in this Year of Mercy

Over the past several years, the annual Chrism Mass has become an important liturgical celebration for Catholics in the Diocese of Ogdensburg.

Now that the Mass is scheduled *before* rather than during Holy Week, it's easier for priests, Catholic school students and many parishioners to make the trip to the cathedral.

Hundreds of us filled St. Mary's on St. Patrick's Day for this year's celebration.

We heard and endorsed the priests' renewal of commitment.

We listened to Bishop LaVal-

ley's Year of Mercy message.

(See page three)

And we watched the intriguing rite as the bishop blessed the oils of the sick, catechumens and chrism.

The Chrism Mass has also become a bit of a family reunion.

Personally, I was delighted to see friends from Keeseville, Clayton and Carthage.

And, while we wish there were more of them, it was stirring to

hear the rows of our holy fathers promise to "be faithful stewards of the mysteries of God in the Holy Eucharist and other liturgical rites and to dis-



Mary Lou
Kilian

A PASTOR'S PERSPECTIVE

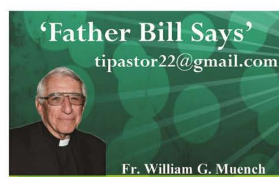
Easter Vigil: liturgy that fills us with joy

I would like to share with you some thoughts about the Easter Vigil.

We have journeyed through several weeks of Lent to prepare ourselves for this celebration of Easter. The special Masses and services of Holy Week allow us to walk with Jesus through his Passion and Death. We celebrate the institution of the Blessed Eucharist on Holy Thursday; we celebrate the crucifixion of Jesus on Good Friday; then on Holy Saturday, we celebrate the Easter Vigil.

The Easter Vigil is an evening service and Mass that is filled with the excitement and praise in celebration of the Resurrection of Our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ. The thrill of the Resurrection of Jesus comes as a glorification of Jesus. Jesus comes to new life. Jesus lives. Jesus always lives.

The Easter Vigil service and Mass is the holiest, most meaningful celebration of the entire liturgical year of the Catholic Church. I sincerely encourage you to attend and participate in this Easter Vigil. In days gone by, there was a belief that Jesus would return in the Second Coming on this Easter Vigil, so, the vigil service lasted



Fr. William G. Muench

all night until the early morning. Many communities still celebrate a sunshine service of the Resurrection. The Easter Vigil does not last that long now.

The Easter Vigil involves the celebration of Baptism, especially the Baptism of those who have chosen to become members of the Catholic Church. During this Mass, the priest blesses again the Baptismal Font in the Church and the water that will be used in the celebration of the Sacrament of Baptism.

Easter is about Resurrection, the Resurrection of Jesus to new life. The Sacrament of Baptism is a celebration of our new life in the Lord, a rebirth in the Spirit of our God.

The Easter Vigil is the anniversary of our Baptism, everyone's anniversary of Baptism. So, in preparation for the Baptism of the catechumens at

charge faithfully the sacred office of teaching, following Christ the Head and Shepherd, not seeking any gain, but moved only by zeal for souls."

At Communion time, my prayer was enhanced as I watched so many faith-filled souls, some familiar, some not, some young, some not, walk back to their pews.

How blessed we are to have each other in our faith community.

But, I confess to a tinge of sadness as I remembered so many who, on this side of heaven, would never have missed a diocesan celebration in the cathedral.

There were so many faces I wish I could have seen.

So my prayer for the living at this Chrism Mass – for the bishop, priests, musicians, my faithful photographer Betty Steele and all who joined in the celebration – expanded to include a prayer for the dead, my relatives, my friends...

While I didn't think about it at the time, I realized later than I had been drawn to embrace one of the spiritual works of mercy at this Year of Mercy Chrism Mass – "pray for the living and the dead." As we make our way through this holiest of weeks, when we are surrounded by opportunities to pray together, I'm sure I won't be alone in making this prayer, a prayer for every soul.

Happy Easter!

the Vigil, we all renew our Baptismal promises, our readiness to follow Jesus and to reject all that keeps us from the following of Jesus.

The services that initiate the Easter Vigil are a very dramatic ritual to prepare us to celebrate Jesus' Resurrection. The Church is in darkness. The pastor and the services go out of doors in the front of the Church. (I encourage all of you to join them outside for these beginning ritual.)

First there is the lighting of the new fire. Jesus' Resurrection is like a new blaze that enters our world and Church. Something new is happening. The new Paschal candle is lit and this candle will be burning throughout the Easter season. The priest or deacon carries the Paschal candle into the darkened Church. The people of the congregation light their candles from the new Paschal candle, the symbol of the resurrected Jesus.

The darkened Church bursts into light.

At this moment, as the new Paschal candle is placed in the sanctuary, the solemn Exultet is sung. This hymn of praise is sung in honor and praise of our Savior. This is a proclama-

tion to all that Christ is risen, indeed he has risen.

Then follows the readings of Sacred Scripture. At this special Vigil Mass, there are several readings going back to Genesis, the message of creation. Then we hear the readings of the Hebrew Exodus, the story of Moses who took the Hebrew people from slavery of Egypt to the Promised Land. Jesus leads our Exodus to the mercy and love of God by his living among us, suffering for us, dying on the cross and rising to new life.

Then the Easter Glory is sung in praise and exultation of God. Next, the Gospel acclamation is sung. This is the powerful Great Alleluia as the reality of the Resurrection is proclaimed and joyfully announced. Then the Easter Gospel is read which calls us to remember the discovery of the empty tomb. The stone has been removed from the front of the cave of burial of Jesus and The Resurrection is fully evident to us all.

The Easter Vigil is a powerful liturgy that will fill each one of us with the joy and the happiness of Jesus' Resurrection.

The message is that one day each of us will share in this new life in our own Resurrection.

FOLLOW ME

'Just be serene and trust in God'

Bishop LaValley's homily
for the 2016 Chrism Mass
March 17 at St. Mary's Cathedral

After informing me of Pope Benedict's decision to appoint me Bishop of Ogdensburg, Archbishop Sambri counseled me: "*Just be serene and trust in God.*" I thought, *Serene?* I wondered, why in the world did he give me those words of advice? Did he know something about me? Did he think, somehow, that I was un-serene-like? Google says that the word '*serene*' means: calm, composed, tranquil, untroubled, at ease.

How can a person be passionate, yet calm? Can a person be zealous for the Lord yet composed and tranquil? When confronted with society's veritable tsunami of behaviors and decisions that smack of indifference and irreverence for the sacred, are we to remain untroubled and at ease? Maybe, we can see that serenity and zeal are not irreconcilable differences when we come to realize that our world, our families have a tremendous need for the Lord's anointing. From the most ancient of days, anointings brought healing and strength. Our folks need the anointings of our sacraments. Sacraments are focused moments of real encounter with the Risen Christ.

Healing, strength, divine encounter—all ingredients necessary for one to be "serene." As you know, anointings and sacraments are fundamental dimensions of the Church's Chrism Mass. This Mass of the oils equips us all for serenity in a world of such danger, confusion and uncertainty, in a nation where the political arena has become an arena, all right—a shameful one. Oh, the gift of Serenity. "*The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he has anointed me to bring glad tidings...*"

In many ways, we are losing the sense of awe for the Lord's Spirit. Our wonder and awe can fade in life's routine and in life lived at breakneck speed. Tragically, sometimes the sacraments are seen as casual occasions of minimal import, hohum events with little appreciation of the privileged grace-filled moment of encounter with the divine—truly mystical moments. An underlying theme of our diocesan priorities is to heighten our awe for, and therefore, our active participation in the Sacraments.

Creating a Culture of Vocations...

...is about increasing our awareness of the tremendous gift we have in the Sacrament of Baptism. Our baptismal anointings, as the prayers of the ritual tell us, help us accept the challenge of Christian living and are signs of inward transformation. So, as we address this priority, every person in our parish family is challenged to reflect on and to live the universal call to holiness, inviting our neighbor to join us on the journey. That's what our Vocations Sum-

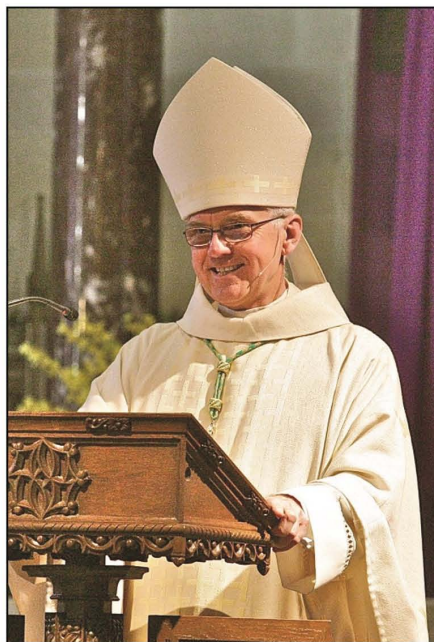


PHOTO BY BETTY STEELE

Bishop LaValley delivers the homily at the annual Chrism Mass held March 17 at St. Mary's Cathedral. During the liturgy, the bishop blessed the oils of the sick, catechumen and chrism. He also led the priests of the diocese in a renewal of their priestly commitment.

mit, *Inspire Called to Love*, in Lake Placid later this fall, is all about. This priority also places before us the great urgency we have in the Diocese for even greater efforts to grow and tend to Church vocations.

This Chrism Mass we pray in a particular way for our priests here in the Diocese of Ogdensburg whose pastoral ministry continues to inspire us all. For the sacraments to be made available to a world in desperate need of them, we rely on our priests whose anointed hands bless us and confect for us Jesus' very Body and Blood, food for the journey. Particularly with so many young faces here today, I ask our youth to pray for open ears and generous hearts to consider a Church vocation.

Strengthening Faith Formation in Family Life ...

...is crucial to the building up of the Body of Christ. Solid Catholic instruction, and the preparation for and celebration of the sacraments, enriched through ongoing adult faith formation, makes for a vibrant Church, a mission-oriented parish and holy women and men. When embraced, the anointings of our Baptism and Confirmation, empower us with the gifts of God's Holy Spirit to follow Jesus. As we have been liberally

lathered with the sacramental oils, we have been blessed and charged as disciples in mission. So, we reach out to our neighbors, especially the vulnerable, the hurting and poor.

This Jubilee of Mercy, we are keenly aware of the truly awe-some gift we have in the Sacrament of Penance. Through *The Light is On*, our recent *24 hours with the Lord*, and other local pastoral efforts, the healing balm of God's mercy and forgiveness is experienced. When Pope Francis introduced this Jubilee of Mercy, he wrote: "How much I desire that the year to come will be steeped in mercy, so that we can go out to every man and woman, bringing the goodness and tenderness of God." God's mercy is not an abstract idea, but a concrete reality." My sisters and brothers, we are determined to make the sacramental graces and anointings of our God even more available from a Church that is approachable and compassionate.

Building Parishes with Living Stones...

... means we are keeping hope alive, inaugurating a new springtime in the life of our Church. As we continue to survey the soul-scape across our expansive diocese, we will ensure the faithful that the sacraments are available to them, particularly Holy Eucharist, Anointing of the Sick and Reconciliation. Our parish censuses have been truly remarkable occasions of grace for both visitor and neighbor. With the experience under our belts and the data in our hands, the Door of Mercy has been opened and the Church goes out and invites back through that door, those who have been estranged from our parish families.

My dear brother priests, to dare to trust oneself completely to God's word, is still today, and always will be, the indispensable condition of apostleship, of the call to priestly service. We, like Peter, shall always have to cast the nets over again and again at His word even when it might seem pointless. God's Word must be held more real than statistics or public opinion. As Pope Francis urges: "Let us not fall into humiliating indifference or monotonous routine that prevents us from discovering what is new." Thank you for warding off destructive criticism or an indifference that might inhibit zeal in our priestly ministry. Thank you for your prayerful support and your zealous pastoral ministry.

My sisters and brothers all, let us continue to whet our appetite for the sacred and reawaken the deep longing which exists in every human heart for what is above. We have been anointed. So, we have within us the strength and the grace to evoke the mystic grandeur of the Call, "Follow Me" and arouse in all our hearts the desire to be transformed in Christ. We continue to be nourished by the sacraments and so become clay in our Father's hands. Our energies will not dissipate, our resolve lessen, nor our faith wane because the Church of Ogdensburg continues to be Christ-led, Christ-fed, and Hope-filled. So, yes, we will *just be serene and trust!*

Annual campus ministry retreat held Feb. 26-28 at Wadhams Hall

'The World is Thy Ship, Not Thy Home'

By Amanda Conklin
Contributing Writer

OGDENSBURG - Clarkson graduate student Chamil Perera was one of 26 collegians from across the diocese who took part in a campus ministry Lenten retreat Feb. 26-28 at Wadhams Hall.

"I entered through the doors of Wadhams last weekend as a confused person who was lost in the world of secularism and in a world which constantly gives me a different definition about God compelling me to filter God from science," Perera told the *North Country Catholic*.

"But it struck my heart when I saw the theme of the retreat: 'The world is thy ship not thy home.' (a quote of St. Therese Lisieux)," he said. "This was perfect in every aspect with the toils and confusions that I was going through in my life...."

"The workshops we had re-fueled my spirit and mind to be energized with the Holy Spirit and time of prayer, mass and adoration lifted my soul to be in communion with God," he said.

The retreat weekend opened with adoration of the



PHOTO SUPPLIED

Bishop Terry R. LaValley is shown in Wadhams Hall chapel with college students who took part in the diocesan campus ministry Lenten retreat in February.

Blessed Sacrament. Fathers Douglas Lucia, Bryan Stitt, Howard Venette, Scott Belina and Justin Thomas were available for confessions during adoration.

On Saturday workshop topics included: moral relativism, led by Seth Conklin, teacher at Immaculate Heart Central High School in Watertown; human relationship and same-sex attraction, led

by Andrew Lauria of Wells; and the vocation of love/Year of Mercy.

Saturday night featured a viewing of the movie "Les Misérables," followed by an in-depth discussion of the Catholic moral theology woven through the film.

Anna Padovani, a senior at St. Lawrence University, said she was particularly impressed by the workshop on moral relativism.

"I think the topic of moral

relativism is an important one that needs to be talked about more," she said. "Today you have to be so careful with what you say so you don't offend someone and I think a lot of people could benefit from understanding that you can explain why an idea or action is wrong while still respecting the person."

The weekend also included praying the Stations of the Cross and a Mass celebrated

Editor's note

NCC reporter Amanda Miner is the director of campus ministry at St. Mary's Church in Canton. She shares the following personal message: *Thank you to all who support Campus Ministry throughout the year. Please continue to pray for our students who benefit from this ministry. Please also keep our Campus Ministers in your prayers as we strive to bring Christ's light and mercy to our students.*

by Bishop Terry LaValley. Bishop LaValley joined the students for dinner following Mass and had the opportunity to chat with many of them.

In keeping with the Jubilee Year of Mercy, each student was randomly assigned a spiritual and corporal work of mercy and they were encouraged to try and practice those specific works, or others of their choosing during this holy year.

Colleges represented were: Jefferson Community College in Watertown, SUNY Canton, SUNY Plattsburgh, SUNY Potsdam/Crane, St. Lawrence University in Canton and Clarkson University in Potsdam.

JOB OPENING

Director of Christian Formation

St. André Bessette Parish in Malone, NY, is seeking a faith-filled, energetic, and versatile Catholic to direct the parish's Christian Formation Program for youth. The Director is responsible for catechetical instruction (grades K-5), sacramental preparation for First Penance/First Holy Communion (grade 2) and Confirmation (grades 6-7), and would collaborate with a team of parish missionaries for small group faith formation (grades 8-12). Current total enrollment in the program is 200 youth. The position includes the recruitment and coordination of volunteer catechists, oversight of curriculum and programming, scheduling, and record keeping, and regularly involves evening and weekend commitments. The parish is keenly interested in implementing the Catechesis of the Good Shepherd in the next few years. The preferred candidate will be a practicing Catholic in good standing, have experience in the field and a solid Catholic education, possess excellent organizational, communication, and team working skills, and be able to begin on July 1, 2016. Applications (current résumé and cover letter) or inquiries should be sent to fjoe@twcny.rr.com.



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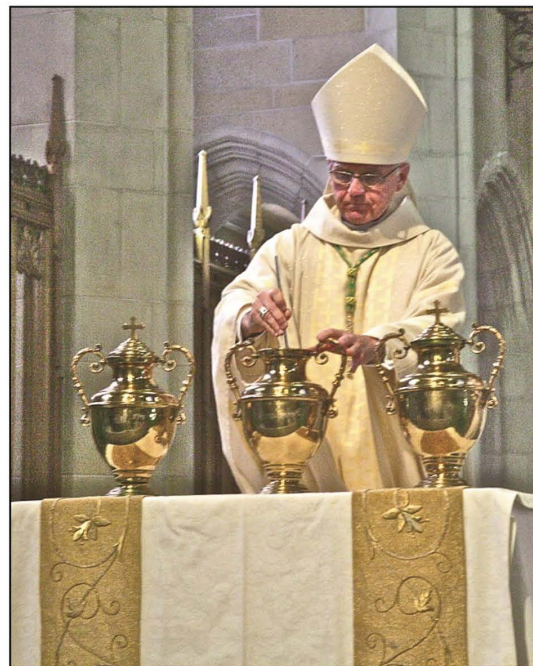
BISHOP LAVALLEY PRESIDES... MARCH 17... ST. MARY'S CATHEDRAL

AT THE CHRISM MASS



PHOTOS BY BETTY STEELE

Priests of the diocese renewed their commitment to priestly service during the Jubilee Year of Mercy Chrism Mass held March 17 at St. Mary's Cathedral.



Bishop LaValley stirs the sacred chrisms which is oil scented with the fragrance of balsam. The chrisms is used in the sacraments of baptism, confirmation and holy orders as well as for the dedication of a church and consecration of an altar



The bishop breathes over the vessel of chrisms oil symbolizing the Holy Spirit coming down to consecrate the oil.



Bishop LaValley prays over the oil of the sick, oil of catechumens and chrisms as servers Nicholas Olley of St. James Parish in Carthage and Dillan Helser from St. Peter's in Lowville; and Father Douglas Lucia, episcopal vicar for Worship and family life, look on.

Catholics urged to join the Catholic Action Network

Catholics in the Diocese of Ogdensburg are encouraged to join the Catholic Action Network, sponsored by the New York State Catholic Conference.

The New York State Catholic Conference was founded to translate Catholic Social teachings into action in the public policy arena. Those Who sign up for the Catholic Action Network will receive periodic emails about issues coming before the leg-

islature affecting religious liberty, life, education and other social justice issues impacting human dignity.

Catholic Action Network also makes it easy to contact state representatives on these issues by offering sample letters and one-click emails.

Registration is available at www.nyscatholic.org by clicking on the "join the Catholic Action Network" on the top right of the page.

Pre-Cana ministry volunteers sought

Deacon Henry and Dayna Leader, diocesan pre-cana coordinators, are seeking volunteers for the ministry.

"There are many ways married couples can participate in Pre-Cana ministry in our diocese," Mrs. Leader said.

"Newly married couples and couples married for many years all have something to offer to engaged couples."

Further information is available from the Leaders at 315-287-2874 or 315-323-0827 or dleader@rcdony.org.

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Bishop's Schedule

March 24 – Holy Thursday

9 a.m., Morning Prayer at St. Mary's Cathedral
7 p.m., Mass of the Lord's Supper at St. Mary's Cathedral

March 25 – Good Friday

9 a.m., Morning Prayer at St. Mary's Cathedral
3 p.m., Celebration of the Lord's Passion at Notre Dame Church in Ogdensburg

March 26 – Holy Saturday

9 a.m., Morning Prayer at St. Mary's Cathedral
8 p.m., Easter Vigil at St. Mary's Cathedral

March 27 – Easter Sunday

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

March 28 – 7:15 p.m., Novena & Mass at St. Mary's Cathedral

March 30 – 9 a.m., St. Joseph's Board of Managers Meeting at St. Joseph's Home in Ogdensburg

Announcements

Father Bernard D. Menard has been granted a Leave of Absence by Bishop LaValley for reasons of health.

Father Adrian Gallagher, pastor of St. Ann's Church in Mooers Forks and St. Joseph's Church in Mooers, with the permission of the Provincial of the Franciscan Conventuals, has been accepted by Bishop LaValley for incardination into the Diocese of Ogdensburg effective immediately.

Rest in Peace

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

March 23 – Msgr. Paul T. Joly, 1987

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

March 25 – Rev. Michael D. Charbonneau, 1909

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

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

March 28 – Rev. Francis McShane, O.S.A., 1932; Rev. Walter C. McMahon, 1978; Rev. Lawrence A. Mallette, 1989; Rev. Joseph P. Trombley, 2001

March 29 – Rev. Joseph Taney, 1880; Rev. J. Aime Troie, 1955; Rev. Ross A. Garnsey, 1986; Rev. Euclid Marier, 2003

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 Atone Sister Ellen Donahue, 315-393-2920, ext. 1440. Upcoming sessions:
April 7 - 6:30 p.m., St. Alexander's, Morrisville
April 14 - 6:30 p.m., Church of the Holy Name, AuSable Forks

To Report Abuse

If you have a complaint of suspected misconduct involving diocesan clergy, religious, employees or volunteers, contact: **Victims Assistance Coordinator**, Terriane Yanulavich, Adult & Youth Counseling Services of Northern New York, 413 Ryan Road, Churubusco, NY, 12923; e-mail: terrianeyanulavich@yahoo.com Phone: 518-483-3261; or Father James Seymour, the Episcopal Vicar for Clergy at 315-393-2920, ext. 1340

Environmental Stewardship

Water – Precious Gift

At the Easter Vigil the priest will bless the waters for baptism with these words: "Lord our God, you created water to make the fields fruitful and to refresh and cleanse our bodies. You also made water the instrument of your mercy for through water you freed your people from slavery and quenched their thirst in the desert, and through water, which Christ made holy in the Jordan, you have renewed our corrupted nature in the bath of regeneration."

We see in the Scriptures that the image of water is often used to depict our physical and spiritual dependence upon God for life. "Like the deer that yearns for running streams, so my soul is yearning for you, my God." Ps.42:1 Jesus tells us "Whoever drinks the water I shall give will never thirst." Jn. 4:14. As faithful Christians we are challenged to protect its purity and to use it wisely. Pope Benedict XVI states "Attention needs to be paid to the worldwide problems of water and to the global water cycle system . . . The ecological problem must be dealt with not only because of the chilling prospects of environmental degradation on the horizon; the real motivation must be the quest for authentic world-wide solidarity inspired by the values of charity, justice and the common good."

We need only to turn on the daily news to witness the devastating effects suffered from water pollution and from extreme drought.

During this Holy Week, when we are plunged into the Paschal mystery of passion, death and new life, let us spend some time with the Lord in thanksgiving for this precious gift and ask for his guidance to know how we might be better caretakers of it.

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IN THE MONTH OF MARCH

FACES OF FAITH



PHOTO BY BETTY STEELE

Bishop LaValley greets some of the hundreds of people who traveled from all parts of the diocese for the March 17 Chrism Mass at St. Mary's Cathedral in Ogdensburg.



Bishop Terry R. LaValley was a guest at the March 13 Day of Discernment for men considering the priesthood held at St. Mary's in Potsdam. Pictured at the gathering are, front, Carter Pierce, Bishop LaValley and Father Howard J. Venette, pastor in Potsdam and Colton; middle, Father Bryan D. Stitt, diocesan director of vocations; Zachery Monson, Calvin Schirmer and Lukas Gruber; back, Doug Schirmer, Andrew Uttendorfsky, Wally Poupore and Colin Myers.



St. Joseph Sister Sharon Ann Dalton, principal of St. Mary's School in Ticonderoga; and Father Kevin McEwan, pastor of St. Mary's Parish, were each honored as "Irishman of the Year" by Council #333 Knights of Columbus in Ticonderoga. This title was bestowed upon them both at a March 12 dinner party of corned beef and cabbage held at the K of C hall. Sister Sharon and Father McEwan were then toasted by parishioners.

From the Catholic Bishops of New York State

Statement on Political Responsibility

Bishop Terry R. LaValley joined Cardinal Timothy M. Dolan and bishops of the other six diocese of New York State in releasing a statement on political responsibility March 18.

The statement follows:

The good of a democratic republic like ours depends on the participation of its citizens. This may seem obvious but it needs to be insisted upon in today's American society.

The most fundamental action of a good citizen is to vote. All other activities in the political sphere depend on the exercise of this most fundamental right – which is equally a solemn responsibility.

Regrettably, in our country today an alarming percentage of citizens do not exercise this right. In New York State, on average over the past four years, only 40 percent of eligible voters carried out their civic duty.

As the Catholic Bishops of New York State, we urge every eligible adult Catholic, without exception, to be sure that he or she is registered to vote and that all exercise their solemn responsibility of voting in this year's elections.

If you are not registered to vote, or not sure if you are registered, please go to www.elections.ny.gov or call



PHOTO SUPPLIED

State Senator Patty Ritchie welcomed Bishop Terry LaValley to the State Capitol this past week. The bishop was in Albany for a meeting with leaders of the eight dioceses of New York State. During the meeting, Cardinal Dolan and the bishops approved a statement of political responsibility, printed here.

1-800-FOR-VOTE.

You may also go to our own New York State Catholic Conference website at www.nyscatholic.org and select "Register to Vote."

We thank you for doing that.

Now we want to invite you to prepare to vote by becoming familiar with both the candidates and the issues. Just voting for a name

you recognize or a party you belong to does not fulfill your responsibility to build up a good society where human dignity, personal freedom, care for one another – especially the vulnerable – and the common good prevail as values which should be cherished in our democracy.

Sadly, determining who to vote for is not always easy. Pressure groups, especially

the loudest ones, seek to shout down anyone who disagrees with them. Calm and thoughtful responses to issues are often drowned out. That makes the challenge to choose good candidates and support good programs even more difficult than in the past. But it makes these decisions even more important. We do have resources to help you.

One trustworthy resource

is the booklet published this year by the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops, *Forming Consciences for Faithful Citizenship*. To locate this resource, go to www.faithfulcitizenship.org.

Based on four of the principles of Catholic Social Teaching – human dignity, subsidiarity, solidarity and the common good – this document will help you evaluate the candidates and the programs they support on the basis of our shared Catholic vision of the good society.

Forming Consciences for Faithful Citizenship can also help you in supporting candidates who are pro-life, pro-family and supportive of those policies that promote the common good of our society.

If we want to have a good, healthy and virtuous society, we ourselves need to be good citizens, dedicated to the truth and promoters of the common good. We can contribute significantly to a positive political process and reverse the negative spiral of today's politics. But that means we must all be one in promoting human life and dignity; families that care for the vulnerable of any age or condition; and freedom and security for all our fellow citizens, as well as for all men and women in every nation throughout the world.



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Day of prayer for vocations

Father Bryan D. Stitt, diocesan director of vocations, has invited Catholics of the diocese to join Pope Francis in prayer on the 53rd World Day of Prayer for Vocations, April 17.

The prayer follows:

Father of mercy, who gave your Son for our salvation and who strengthens us always with the gifts of your Spirit, grant us Christian communities which are alive, fervent and joyous, which are fonts of fraternal life, and which nurture in the young the desire to consecrate themselves to you and to the work of evangelization. Sustain these com-

munities in their commitment to offer appropriate vocational catechesis and ways of proceeding towards each one's particular consecration. Grant the wisdom needed for vocational discernment, so that in all things the greatness of your merciful love may shine forth. May Mary, Mother and guide of Jesus, intercede for each Christian community, so that, made fruitful by the Holy Spirit, it may be a source of true vocations for the service of the holy People of God.

Further information is available from Father Stitt at bstitt@rcdony.org or, by phone at 518-593-6044

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ON

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VATICAN LETTER

In the words of Pope Benedict

By Cindy Wooden
Catholic News Service

VATICAN CITY (CNS) - Although he lives a relatively hidden life in a villa in the Vatican Gardens, retired Pope Benedict XVI continues to study modern theological questions and, occasionally, to comment on them publicly.

Yearning for mercy is sign of longing for God's love

The attention Pope Francis and many Christians are giving to the theme of divine mercy is a "sign of the times" that shows how, deep down, people still experience a need for God, the retired pope told Belgian Jesuit Father Jacques Servais in a written interview.

"Mercy is what moves us toward God, while justice makes us tremble in his sight," Pope Benedict said in the interview published in mid-March.

Archbishop Georg Ganswein, the retired pope's personal secretary, read Pope Benedict's German text in October at a conference on the doctrine of justification and the experience of God. The retired pope approved the Italian translation of the text, which was published along with other papers presented at the conference.

The doctrine of justification - how people are made righteous in God's eyes and saved by Jesus - was at the heart of the Protestant Reformation, which will mark its 500th anniversary in 2017.

In the interview, Pope Benedict said, "For people today, unlike at the time of (Martin) Luther and from the classical perspective of the Christian faith, things have been turned upside down in a certain sense: Man no longer thinks he needs to be justified in God's sight, but



CNS PHOTO/STEFANO SPAZIANI, POOL

Retired Pope Benedict XVI prepares to greet Pope Francis during the opening of the Holy Door of St. Peter's Basilica at the Vatican in this Dec. 8, 2015, file photo. In a written interview, the retired pope commented on the theme of mercy. "Mercy is what moves us toward God, while justice makes us tremble in his sight," Pope Benedict said.

rather he is of the opinion that it is God who must justify himself because of all the horrendous things present in the world and in the face of human misery."

The extreme synthesis of such an impression, he said, could be formulated as: "Christ did not suffer for the sins of men, but in order to cancel the faults of God."

"Even if today the majority of Christians would not share such a drastic overturning of our faith, you could say that it indicates a basic tendency," the retired pope said.

Another sign of a strong change in general thinking that challenges at least medieval Christian thought, he said, is "the sensation that God cannot simply allow the perdition of the majority of humanity."

Yet, Pope Benedict said, there still exists a general

perception that "we need grace and pardon. For me it is one of the 'signs of the times' that the idea of God's mercy is becoming increasingly central and dominant" in Christian thought.

St. Faustina Kowalska's promotion of the divine mercy devotions in the early 1900s and the ministry and writings of St. John Paul II, "even if it did not always emerge in an explicit way," both gave a strong push to a popular Christian focus on mercy and to theological explorations of the theme.

From his experience as a youth during World War II and his ministry under communism in Poland, St. John Paul "affirmed that mercy is the only true and ultimately effective reaction against the power of evil. Only where there is mercy does cruelty end, only there do evil and violence stop," said

the retired pope, who worked closely with the Polish pope for decades.

"Pope Francis," he said, "is in complete agreement with this line. His pastoral practice is expressed precisely in the fact that he speaks continuously of God's mercy."

The fact that so many people are open to that message, Pope Benedict said, shows that "under the patina of self-assurance" and a conviction of self-righteousness, "man today hides a deep awareness of his wounds and his lack of worthiness before God. He is waiting for mercy."

In many ways, he said, the focus on divine mercy is a modern way of speaking about "justification by faith," knowing how important God's mercy is.

The role explicit faith in Jesus plays in one's salva-

tion is an area where "we are before a profound evolution of dogma," Pope Benedict said. "In the second half of the last century an awareness that God cannot allow the perdition of all the non-baptized was completely affirmed."

"If it is true that the great missionaries of the 16th century were convinced that one who was not baptized was lost - and that explains their missionary commitment - in the Catholic Church after the Second Vatican Council that conviction was definitely abandoned," he said.

Theologians are still trying to work out full and valid explanations that would affirm the Christian certainty that salvation comes through Christ without insisting baptism and an explicit profession of faith in him is needed, the retired pope said.

In the meantime, though, it is clear that the church - the entire Christian community - is the body of Christ and that body must reach out to offer help, healing and an invitation to a deeper relationship with God, he said.

"The counterbalance to the dominion of evil can consist only in the divine-human love of Jesus Christ that is always greater than any possible power of evil," Pope Benedict said. "But we must insert ourselves into this response that God gives through Jesus Christ."

"Even if the individual is responsible only for a fragment of evil," he said, he or she is therefore "an accomplice in its power."

Like Pope Francis, Pope Benedict urged a return to the sacrament of reconciliation. That is where, he said, "we let ourselves be molded and transformed by Christ and continually pass from the side of one who destroys to that of the one who saves."

CATHOLIC WORLD AT A GLANCE

Mother Teresa to be canonized Sept. 4

VATICAN CITY (CNS) — Pope Francis will declare Blessed Teresa of Kolkata a saint at the Vatican Sept. 4. The date was announced March 15 during an "ordinary public consistory," a meeting of the pope, cardinals and promoters of sainthood causes that formally ends the sainthood process. At the same consistory, the pope set June 5 as the date for the canonizations of Blessed Stanislaus Papiński of Poland, founder of the Marian Fathers of the Immaculate Conception, and Blessed Mary Elizabeth Hesselblad of Sweden, who re-founded the Bridgettine sisters. In addition, Pope Francis declared that Oct. 16 he would celebrate Mass for the canonizations of Argentina's "gaucho priest," Blessed Jose Brochero, and Blessed Jose Sanchez del Rio, a 14-year-old Mexican boy martyred for refusing to renounce his faith during the Cristero War of the 1920s

The joy of hope brings light in the darkest times, pope says

VATICAN CITY (CNS) — Hope is a humble, yet powerful virtue that gives Christians peace in life's darkest moments, Pope Francis said at his morning Mass. "Hope is a humble virtue; that virtue which flows beneath the water of life but that keeps us from drowning in so many difficulties," the pope said March 17 during the Mass in the chapel of the Domus Sanctae Marthae. The pope reflected on the day's Gospel (Jn. 8:51-59), in which Jesus tells the scribes, "Abraham your father rejoiced to see my day; he saw it and was glad." Jesus' reference to Abraham, the pope said, underlines the importance of hope in Christian life. Although Abraham experienced temptations along the way, "he believed beyond all hope." "When there is no human hope, there is that (supernatural) virtue that brings you forward. It is humble, simple, yet it gives you joy -- at times great joy, at times only peace -- but it gives you the assurance that that hope does not deceive. Hope does not deceive," he said.

Church must encourage couples who remain faithful, pope says

VATICAN CITY (CNS) — While the Catholic Church tries to help people whose marriages have failed remain or return to an active Catholic life, it also must express its admiration for people who remain faithful to their marriage vows despite great difficulty, Pope Francis said. "Witnesses to marital fidelity must be encouraged and held up as examples to imitate," Pope Francis said March 12 in a meeting with participants in a course sponsored by the Roman Rota, a Vatican court that deals mainly with marriage cases. The course focused on documents issued by Pope Francis in September to simplify procedures for determining whether or not a marriage was valid, doing away with the automatic appeal of tribunal decisions, establishing an abbreviated process when the nullity is clear and ordering a reduction in the cost to couples. The pope told the students and Rota officials that the consultations leading up to the 2014 and 2015 synods of bishops on the family made it clear there was strong support "for making the procedures for the declaration of matrimonial nullity more agile and effective."

Kerry says Islamic State is committing genocide against Christians, others

By Barb Fraze
Catholic News Service

WASHINGTON (CNS) — U.S. Secretary of State John Kerry said that atrocities carried out by the Islamic State group against Yazidis, Christians and other minorities were genocide, the first U.S. declaration of genocide since Sudanese actions in Darfur in 2004.

Kerry said he was not judge and jury, but the Islamic State had self-defined itself as genocidal because of its actions against Yazidis, Christians, Shiite Muslims and other minorities.

A 66-member coalition is "working intensively to stop the spread of Daesh," Kerry said, using the Arabic acronym for Islamic State. He said the world must "marginalize and defeat violent extremists, once and for all," so they were not replaced by another extremist group with a different acronym.

"We must recognize and hold the perpetrators accountable," Kerry said in a March 17 statement that included a litany of atrocities such as rape and murder. He said Christians often were given the choice of converting to Islam or death, which was a choice between two types of death.

Kerry said military action to defeat Islamic State was important, but so were other actions. He said the coalition against Islamic State was working to strangle the group's finances and to ensure that people who fled would someday be able to return.

Reaction was swift from two organizations and a religious community with ties to the region.

Supreme Knight Carl Anderson, CEO of the Knights of Columbus, welcomed the declaration, saying it is "cor-

rect and truly historic." The Knights and In Defense of Christians released a report March 10 detailing accounts of rape, murder, torture, kidnapping and forced removals experienced and witnessed by hundreds of Christians.

"By joining its voice to that of the House of Representatives, the American people and the international community, the United States today makes clear to ISIS that its attempt to stamp out religious minorities must cease," he said in a statement. "The United States and the world are united on this and simply will not look the other way."

In Defense of Christians said in a statement that Kerry's declaration "used the word that has the moral authority to raise the international consciousness and compel the international community of responsible nations to act."

By acknowledging that religious and ethnic minorities are victims of genocide, the organization said, "the United States has done a great justice to the victims of the atrocities committed by ISIS, including the over 1,100 Christians who have been killed because of their faith."

The Iraq Coordinating Committee of the North American Dominicans' Justice and Peace Promoter's office, also hailed the declaration in a statement, saying it gives "moral weight" for the organization's years-long call for increased protection of refugees and the responsibility of countries around the world to fund and staff refugee programs to internally displaced Iraqis.

The Dominican order has been committed to justice in Iraq for more than 20 years after the United Nations adopted economic sanctions against the regime of former Iraqi leader Saddam Hussein

and has sent delegations to work alongside suffering and displaced communities.

On March 14, the House of Representatives, in a bipartisan 393-0 vote, approved a nonbinding resolution that condemns as genocide the atrocities being carried out by Islamic State militants against Christians and other religious and ethnic minorities in the areas it occupies in Iraq and Syria.

They gave Kerry until March 17 to decide whether to make a formal declaration of genocide.

The European Parliament passed a similar resolution in February.

State Department spokesmen had said Kerry was studying volumes of information before deciding on the genocide information. Last October, they hinted that a genocide designation was coming for the Yazidi minority in the region, but not for Christians.

The comments led to a firestorm of protest from Christian groups that resulted in the congressional action.

Archbishop Joseph E. Kurtz of Louisville, Kentucky, president of the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops, asked U.S. Catholics to sign a pledge calling for an end to the slaughter of Christians and members of other religious minority groups in the Middle East.

"As a people of faith, we must convince the U.S. Department of State to include Christians in any formal declaration of genocide," he said March 14, just days before Kerry's deadline.

In his remarks, Kerry said the U.S. government did not have total access to everything going on but was basing its decision on intelligence and military sources and outside groups.

SCRIPTURE REFLECTIONS

Celebrating the feast of feasts

Today is Easter, the "Feast of feasts," the climax to our forty-day journey to struggle with sin and to seek God's mercy.

It is also day for us celebrate, not only the resurrection of the Lord from the dead, but also our own promise of immortality. True, we do not yet have a new, glorious body like Jesus, but we have a renewed surge of grace and light, of hope and joy.

Today is the day when we celebrate light coming into the gloom of our world, and new energy for us to proclaim the good news of this day to all who are in doubt and despair.

It is Easter, and Alleluias ring out not only in the Church today, but in each day that follows.



Monsignor
Paul E.
Whitmore

The first Easter came as a total shock to those who had loved and followed Jesus through his public ministry. They knew Him to be a totally good and holy man, with wonderful teachings about the goodness of their Father who had created them in love, a merciful and forgiving God, who wanted only their faith and obedience.

They had seen Jesus as a mirror of the Father in His compassion for the sick and the deformed, and for those troubled in spirit and body. And now He was dead! How could their own religious leaders have conspired with the Romans to torture and kill Him!? How could they!

If His followers had slept at all since His arrest, it

must have been a troubled sleep, filled with nightmares and darkness.

And now, early this Sunday morning, an hysterical Mary Magdalene pounded on their door, trying to convince them that she had seen Jesus alive!

Peter and John ran to the tomb to see for themselves. Could it be true?

And so, like the Apostles, we struggle once more to absorb its meaning.

Malicious evil had done its worst to the sacred body of God's Son. Then, before dawn on Sunday, Christ had broken through the rock, shattered the power of sin. That morning, the dawn marks his appearances for 40 days to over 500 people.

In the Mass for Easter day, the first reading is taken from the very words of an early sermon of St. Peter. What a change from that Peter who denied he ever knew the man!

MARCH 27

Easter Sunday

READINGS

Acts 10:34a, 37-43; Colossians 3:1-4
or 1 Corinthians 5:6b-8;
John 20:1-9 or Luke 24:1-12

He comes fresh from the fiery tongues of Pentecost to publically spread the Word. Peter now preaches to both Jew and Gentile the forgiveness and mercy of God through Baptism in which their souls will be given completely new life.

Thus the word spreads through the whole countryside and beyond. Resurrection is the hope of every living person.

No wonder he and the other apostles preached without thought of the danger to themselves.

They preached about a God who cared first for people

who were poor and powerless, and to all, rich and poor alike.

Through the Holy Spirit, all could now live by the power of resurrection, and share it with others.

The Scripture readings during these 50 days between Easter and Pentecost are among the most exciting in the Church year. We surrender to "Alleluias" and joyful shouts of "Christ has Risen," and then settle in for a new time of reflection on our own program for resurrection in these very troubled times.

After all, it is our mission to bring new life and hope to a needy world.

That first Easter changed the ancient world, and Easter 2016 can change our own troubled world if we radiate the Christ-life within us. As He has always been, Christ is our only light and hope. Christ is truly risen, Alleluia!

MAKING SENSE OF BIOETHICS

Catholics and acceptable uses of contraceptives

Contraceptives include drugs and devices like condoms, the Pill, and spermicides. It might come as a surprise to some to learn that the Catholic Church does not always oppose the "use of contraceptives."

A couple of trivial examples can help explain this point. The Church would not oppose the use of a contraceptive spermicidal gel to lubricate the axle of a bicycle tire to improve its rotation, nor would it specifically oppose the use of inflated condoms as party balloons.

The particular context is important. More serious examples of acceptable contexts and uses for contraceptives would include using the Pill medically to treat serious gynecological problems, or using the Pill to block the

release of an egg from a woman's ovary in a situation of rape to protect her from becoming pregnant from the attack.

Contrary to popular confusion, as we can see, the Church does not always oppose the "use of contraceptives." What the Church does always oppose, however, are *acts of contraception*.

An *act of contraception* is a very particular type of disordered human action that involves the decision freely to engage in marital intercourse, while pursuing countermeasures in anticipation of, contemporaneously with, or after the completion of the sexual act, to try intentionally to block it from achieving its proper finality, namely, the engendering of new human life.

These countermeasures can include, to borrow the words of Pope Paul VI, "any action which either before, at the moment of, or after sexual intercourse, is specifically intended to prevent procreation—whether as an end or as a means" (*Humanae Vitae*, n. 14).

Pope Francis, in a recent interview, pointed out that Pope Paul VI, in a difficult situation in Africa, "permitted nuns to use contraceptives in cases of rape."

This use of contraceptives by a group of nuns occurred during an exceptional wartime situation in the Belgian Congo. Although no document has ever been found in the Vatican indicat-

ing that permission was actually given by the Pope, these women were given the Pill by their physicians because they appeared to be in imminent danger of sexual assault during the uprisings of 1960.

The Pill was provided to prevent their ovaries from releasing an egg, so that if they were raped during the chaos, the attacker's sperm would not be able to fertilize any of their eggs, and a pregnancy would not occur.

This "use of contraceptives" would clearly not be an *act of contraception*, because there would be no consensual sexual act, but only an *act of violence and*

brutality forcibly directed against the women.

Hence, this use of contraceptives constituted, in its essence, an act of self-defense, not an *act of contraception*.

A rapist, of course, has absolutely no right to forced sexual intimacy with his victim, nor does he have any right to bring about her impregnation, and the woman has absolutely no moral duty to make her eggs available to an attacker's sperm.

Hence the use of contraceptives in an emergency situation like this would be morally permissible precisely because it would not constitute, morally speaking, an *act of contraception*, but would rather represent a defensive and self-protective maneuver in a situation of grave imminent danger.

CONTINUED ON NEXT PAGE



Father Tadeusz
Pacholczyk Ph.D.

AT THE MOVIES

MIRACLES FROM HEAVEN

By John Mulderig
Catholic News Service

The fact-based drama "Miracles From Heaven" (Columbia) tells a remarkable story.

Though director Patricia Riggen's screen version of Christy Beam's 2015 memoir is clearly designed for believers - and sometimes feels padded - even dedicated skeptics may have trouble dismissing its underlying narrative.

A wife and the mother of three daughters, Christy (Jennifer Garner) is going about her everyday life in the Fort Worth area of Texas when tragedy strikes without warning: Her 10-year-old middle daughter Annabel (Kylie Rogers) develops an unexplained but seemingly unshakable illness.

Alarmed, Christy refuses to accept the series of more or less casually delivered misdiagnoses from unfo-

cus doctors with which she's presented. And eventually, the grim truth emerges. Annabel's symptoms are identified as stemming from pediatric chronic intestinal pseudo-obstruction, or CIPO, a rare, painful and incurable condition that prevents the body from digesting food.

Persistent Christy now focuses on obtaining the care of one of the few specialists in CIPO, Dr. Samuel Nurko (Eugenio Derbez). However, although kindly and caring, Dr. Nurko proves powerless to combat the disease - and Annabel's death sentence stands.

Although Christy and her easygoing veterinarian husband, Kevin (Martin Henderson), are dedicated churchgoers - John Carroll Lynch plays their good-humored pastor - Christy's faith crumbles in the face of Annabel's current torment and impending demise. She finds herself unable to pray. She's also deeply angered



CNS PHOTO/COLUMBIA PICTURES

Jennifer Garner, Queen Latifah and Kylie Rogers star in a scene from the movie "Miracles From Heaven."

by the misguided notions of some fellow parishioners who seem to entertain a pre-Christian understanding of the connection between sin and misfortune.

Yet a startling, almost inexplicable, turnaround awaits Christy - one which is certainly providential if not indeed miraculous.

Though it may be aimed at a self-selecting audience of the already convinced, screenwriter Randy Brown's script minimizes neither its

protagonist's crisis of doubt nor the larger mystery of innocent suffering.

The dialogue also takes a wide view of what counts as a divinely inspired marvel, highlighting the above-and-beyond kindness shown to Christy and her clan by an ensemble of secondary characters. The most significant of these is Angela (Queen Latifah), a gregarious waitress who takes an instant -- and cheering -- shine to Annabel.

While squeaky clean as far as the normal array of objectionable elements is concerned, "Miracles From Heaven" nonetheless includes subjects and sights that make it inappropriate for the youngest viewers.

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.

Contraceptives

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 12

The use of contraceptives can be morally acceptable in other contexts as well, again, because such uses do not constitute *acts of contraception*.

For example, when a woman has severe menstrual bleeding, or pain from ovarian cysts, the hormonal regimen contained in the Pill may sometimes provide a directly therapeutic medical treatment for the bleeding or the pain.

This use of contraceptives is an *act of medical therapy* to address a pathological situation, not an *act of contraception*. The secondary effect from the treatment, namely, marital infertility, is

only tolerated, and should not be willed, desired, or intended in any way by the couple.

It is worth noting that it would not be acceptable to make use of contraceptives like the Pill for these medical cases if other pharmaceutical agents or treatments were available which would offer the same therapeutic benefits and effects *without* impeding fertility.

In sum, while the Church has always taught that marital *acts of contraception* are morally wrong, the use of contraceptives can sometimes be acceptable within certain other contexts outside of consensual conjugal

acts. Janet Smith has succinctly summarized the issue this way: "The Church teaches that acts of contraception are always against the plan of God for human sexuality, since God intended that each and every act of spousal intercourse express both the intention to make a complete, unitive gift of one's self to one's spouse and the willingness to be a parent with one's spouse. These meanings of the spousal act are, as *Humanae Vitae* stated, inseparable."

Rev. Tadeusz Pacholczyk, Ph.D. is a priest of the diocese of Fall River, MA, and serves as the Director of Ed-

ucation at The National Catholic Bioethics Center in Philadelphia. See www.ncb-center.org

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CLINTON

LOBBY FOR LIFE DAY

Albany - Champlain Valley Right to Life is sponsoring a bus trip to the Lobby for Life Day at the state Capitol.

Date: April 13

Time: 6:30 a.m. to 5:30 p.m.

Place: Legislative Building

Cost: \$20

Features: Premier Coach from St. Peter's Church, Plattsburgh

Contact: Applications for the trip can be found at church entrances or call Kitty at 518 563 2943.

FIRST SATURDAY DEVOTIONS

Ellenburg Center - First Saturday devotions are invited to be held.

Date: April 2

Time: 11 a.m. with Rosary (Confessions) and Mass at 11:30

Place: Our Lady of the Adirondacks House of Prayer

ALL-YOU-CAN EAT BREAKFAST

West Chazy - St. Joseph's Men's Club will host an All-You-Can-Eat Breakfast.

Date: April 3

Time: 8:30 a.m. to Noon

Place: the Parish Center.

Prices: \$7.50 per adult, \$3 for children 6-10; and free for ages five and under.

Menu: pancakes with real North Country maple syrup, ham, scrambled eggs, sausage, home fries and beverages

PAINT AND SIP

Chazy - Paint and Sip party to be sponsored by the Gals of Sacred Heart.

Date: March 30

Time: 6:30 p.m.

Place: Sacred Heart Parish

Cost: \$30 per person includes all supplies, snacks and "sipping"

Contact: 518-846-7650 or 518-570-7747 or send check to Sacred Heart, PO Box 459, Chazy, NY 12921 by March 23

DIVINE MERCY SUNDAY

Plattsburgh - A Divine Mercy Sunday observance is set

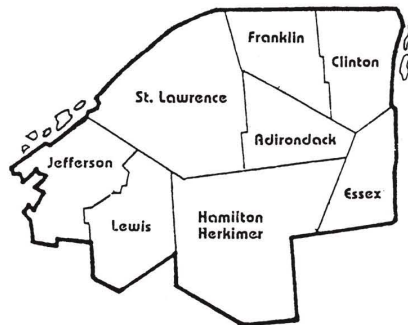
Date: April 3

Schedule: Beginning at St. Peter's Church, Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament at 12:15 p.m. in the main church;

Lecture Series: Three different lectures 12:30, 1:15, 2:00 in the Emmaus Room;

Sacrament of Reconciliation: 1:15 p.m. to 2:15 in the chapel; 2:30 p.m.: Chaplet of Divine Mercy in the main church followed by a Procession to St. John's Church for closing benediction

Features: Sponsored by St. Peter's, St. John's and OLV for Year of Mercy.



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.

SPRING BRUNCH

Altona - Holy Angels to have a Spring Brunch.

Date: April 10

Time: 8 a.m. to 1 p.m.

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

Features: Brunch, bake sale, craft tables

Contact: Call 236-5848 to reserve craft tables.

PRAYER SERVICE

Plattsburgh - Annual Good Friday prayer Service to be held.

Date: March 25

Time: 10 a.m.

Place: In front of Planned Parenthood

Features: Prayer for the sanctity of life. Rain or Shine

MONTHLY PRAYER GROUP

Mooers - Monthly prayer group held to pray for all of the sick in our parishes.

Date: Meets every second Friday

Time: 1 p.m.

Place: Senior Housing

Features: Prayer for all the people added to our list each month. The Rosary and Divine Mercy Chaplet are recited within the prayer service. Prayer and snack lasts about an hour.

Contact: Nancy Monette at nmonette@charter.net

PANCAKE BREAKFAST

Treadwell Mills - St. Alexander & St. Joseph's Church will hold an all you can eat pancake breakfast.

Date: April 3

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

Place: St. Joseph's Church parish hall

Cost: Adults, \$7; Children 6-12, \$3; under 5, Free

SPAGHETTI DINNER FUNDRAISER

Morrisonville - St. Alexander Church and the Knights of Columbus 7248 and 6067 will host a spaghetti dinner fundraiser for vocations to the priesthood.

Date: April 30

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

Place: St. Alexander's Jubilee hall

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

LENTEN ADORATION

Plattsburgh - St. Peter's will offer Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament during Lent on Mondays and Tuesdays in the Chapel. Will conclude with Benediction on Tuesday of Holy Week at 7 p.m..

Schedule: Mon. and Tues

Time: 7:30 a.m. until 9 p.m.

FRANKLIN

DINNER THEATER

Brunston - The North Franklin Theater Group and St. Mary's Catholic Church presents its annual dinner theater.

Date: April 2

Time: 6 p.m.; arrive no later than 5:30

Place: St. Mary's Parish Center

Cost: \$30 per person pre-paid. Payment must be received no later than March 23.

Features: "Murder at Rutherford House".

Choice of Roast Turkey or Roast Pork

Contact: Mail reservations to Eileen Miller, PO Box 214, Moira, NY 12957.

518-529-7713. Be sure to include the number of Pork or Turkey Meals

DIVINE MERCY SUNDAY

Malone - Divine Mercy Sunday to be celebrated.

Date: April 3

Schedule: 11 a.m., Mass; Following the Mass from 12:00 noon until 3:00 p.m.

The Blessed Sacrament will be exposed for individual adoration. Confessions will be heard beginning at 1:00 p.m. and continue up until 2:50 p.m. At 3:00 p.m. Devotions for Divine Mercy Sunday will begin. The Chaplet of the Divine Mercy will be sung and there will be Benediction of the Blessed Sacrament.

Place: Notre Dame Church

Features: All are welcome to join in any or all of the above times of prayer and praise as your schedule permits.

Contact: Fr. Joseph Giroux, at the St. André's Parish Office, (518) 483-1300

JEFFERSON

ENVIRONMENT PRESENTATION

Watertown - A program on "Care for our Common Home: Inspired by Pope Francis' Laudato Si'" will be given.

Date: April 24

Time: 9:30 a.m. to 11

Place: Our Lady of the Sacred Heart

Speaker: Dr. Gerry Gacich, NYS Catholic Climate Ambassador and Chief of Cardiology at Rochester General Hospital

Features: This opportunity to learn more about the Encyclical and what we can do to better care for God's Creation is free and open to the public. Light refreshments will be available. Sponsored by the Parish, Diocesan Faith and Ecology Groups, and Sisters of St. Joseph Social Justice Committee.

Contact: To reserve a seat, please call: 315-212-6592 or 315-782-1474.

DAY OF ADORATION

Carthage - The team that represented the Diocese of Ogdensburg at the World Meeting of Families is presenting a day of Adoration.

Date: April 8

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

Place: St. James Church

Features: The Day of Adoration begins immediately following the 9:30am Mass. There will be a Spaghetti Dinner

from 6p.m. to 7, followed by a Holy Hour with a short presentation from 7 p.m. to 8, and ending with a light reception where you can meet the team members, ask questions and receive resources from the World Meeting of Families. This is a regional event and everyone is invited.

Contact: In order to prepare enough food, those that wish to attend the free spaghetti dinner need to RSVP by calling the St. James Rectory at 315-493-3224 by April 6th

BEREAVEMENT MEETING

Watertown - Bereavement meeting to be held.

Date: March 28

Time: 7 p.m.

Place: Motherhouse of the Sisters of St. Joseph, Hearshide Hospitality Room.

Speaker: Diane Ferrucci, a certified Personal Life Coach, on "Moving from Darkness into Light"

FRANCISCAN MYSTERY PLAYERS

Clayton - The Franciscan Mystery Players of St. Mary's and St. John's Churches present "The Way of the Cross", a dramatic presentation of the Passion and Death of the Lord.

Date: March 25

Time: 7:30 p.m.

Place: St. Mary's Church

Contact: St. Mary's Parish office, 686-3398 or Christine Woodley, 778-5125.

DIVINE MERCY SUNDAY

Watertown - Our Lady of the Sacred Heart Church will hold a Divine Mercy Sunday Celebration.

Schedule: Beginning Good Friday March 25 at 3 p.m. the Divine Mercy novena will begin by praying in the Chapel in Our Lady of the Sacred Heart.; Divine Mercy Sunday will be celebrated April 3 at 3 p.m., there will be Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament, Singing of the Chaplet of Divine Mercy, & a procession. You may bring your own Divine Mercy picture to be specially blessed.

Contact: For more information on Mercy Sunday call Judy at 315-783-7349 or visit thedivinemercy.org

CONTINUED ON BACK PAGE

IMMACULATE HEART CENTRAL SCHOOL MYSTERY PLAYERS

LENT 2016: "Oh, The Places We'll Go Tour"

Date	Place	Time
March 25	St. Patrick's Church	Watertown
		7:30 p.m.

www.ihcschools.org/spiritual-life/mystery-players



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

The Society for the Propagation of the Faith

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

Follow the journey: Lent leads to Easter

The Missionary Childhood Association teaches that the road Jesus walked from Jerusalem to Calvary is called the Way of the Cross. The privilege to follow the steps Jesus took and contemplate the suffering He experienced makes us consider the suffering in our own world, especially amongst the most vulnerable in the Mission Lands.

Day after day, we find suffering of all kinds like devastation wrought by natural disaster, famine, drought and violence. The internet has shrunk the world and reminds us daily of profound hunger, poverty, illness, disease and war. Let us not forget that there is suffering that comes from not knowing of the great love of our Lord.

Despite all of this, the Missions, made up of local priests, Religious Sisters, Brothers and lay catechists, reach out to the suffering in Jesus' name, offering them His love and His message of hope. They remind us all that God does not abandon us. When we help them experience Good Friday in the Mission world, it only makes the hope and joy of Easter Sunday even more promising.

Missionaries are the first line of defense to the negative impacts of globalization on the integrity of human beings and their cultures. We pray for missionaries in our World and we remember that we are neighbors in a global village that is the Catholic Church.

On behalf of the Pontifical Mission Societies, my staff and I pray that you have a blessed Holy Week and a beautiful Easter celebration. This Holy Week, most importantly, pray. Pray for our world. Pray for Peace. Pray for the Missions. Take the time to remember the Journey that Jesus took for us.

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

Visit our website
www.northcountrycatholic.org

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

Find us on Facebook!



OBITUARIES

Gertrude Ann Kelly

Buffalo – A Mass of Christian Burial for Gertrude Ann (Considine) Kelly, 98, mother of Father Paul Kelly of Tupper Lake, was held March 18 at St. John the Baptist Church. She died March 12.

In addition to Father Kelly, she is survived by her children Mary Sanford, Joseph (Holly) and Nancy J. Kelly; grandchildren, Molly, Daniel (Gemini), Kelly (Bruce), Brendon (fiancee Ellie), Casey and Brett; and great grandchildren, Thomas, Matthew, Keira, Juliana, Moira, Aidan, Tobin, Anthony and Demery. She is pre-deceased by her husband, John H. Kelly; her parents, Leo and Florence (Sharp) Considine and a brother and sister-in-law John and Veronica Considine.

Mrs. Kelly was a teacher at St. Mary's School for the Deaf, Buffalo School #84 and many others.

Memorial contributions may be made to Coronation Church, 348 Dewitt St., Buffalo, NY 14213.

Brushton – Ronald J. "Ronnie" Deon, 74; Memorial Services March 15, 2016 at St. Mary's Church.

Canton – Mary E. (Majer) Austin, 48; Funeral Services March 15, 2016 at the O'Leary Funeral Home.

Chateaugay – Leon J. Trombley, 91; Funeral Services March 14, 2016 at St. Patrick's Church; burial in St. Patrick's Cemetery.

DeKalb Junction – Morris R. Davis, 76; Funeral Services March 13, 2016 at the Allen Denesha Funeral Home.

Gouverneur – Daniel H. "Bishop" Sheen, 82; Funeral Services March 19, 2016 at St. James Church; burial in Foxwood Memorial Park, Ogdensburg.

Church; burial in Calvary Cemetery.

Lowville – Jean (Moltz) Bouchard, 84; Funeral Services March 18, 2016 at the Sundquist Funeral Home; burial in Calvary Cemetery.

Lowville – Clarinda Lyn Jantzi Chambers, 49; Funeral Services March 14, 2016 at St. Peter's Church; burial in Beaches Bridge Cemetery.

Lyons Mountain – Anthony Benware, 63; 85; Funeral Services March 15, 2016 at St. Bernard's Church.

Lyons Mountain – Mary E. (Waldron) Bourey, 88; Funeral Services March 15, 2016 at St. Bernard's Church; burial in St. Michael's Cemetery, Standish.

Madrid – Ronald A. Burns, 88; Funeral Services March 19, 2016 at St. John the Baptist Church; burial in parish cemetery.

Morrisonville – Hedy B. Strauss, 63; Funeral Services March 15, 2016 at St. Alexander's Church.

Newcomb – Leo J. Kushi Jr., 41; Funeral Services March 15, 2016 at St. Therese Church; burial in parish cemetery.

Newcomb – Lorraine G. Stickney; Funeral Services March 14, 2016 at St. Therese Church; burial in parish cemetery.

Norwood – Patsy M. Trimboli, 90; Funeral Services March 15, 2016 at St. Andrew's

Ogdensburg – Francis "Chappy" L. Demers, 86; Funeral Services March 18, 2016 at Notre Dame Church; burial in Foxwood Memorial Park.

Ogdensburg – John A. West, 60; Funeral Services March 16, 2016 at Frary Funeral Home.

Plattsburgh – Robert Alfred DeGray, 75; Funeral March 14, 2016 at St. Peter's Church; burial in St. Peter's Cemetery.

Plattsburgh – Lucille N. (Duquette) Rabideau, 81; Funeral Services March 14, 2016 at the Brown Funeral Home; burial in St. Peter's Cemetery.

St. Regis Falls – Paul E. Charron, 85; Funeral Services March 19, 2016 at St. Ann's Church.

Watertown – Mary V. Piccoli, 87; Funeral Services March 19, 2016 at Holy Family Church; burial in Glenwood Cemetery.

Westville – Darwin V. Fleury, 69; Funeral Services March 15, 2016 at Our Lady of Fatima Church; burial in St. Francis of Assisi Cemetery.

GO GREEN!

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Around

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JEFFERSON

LENTEN ADORATION

Brownville - Immaculate Conception will offer Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament on Monday's following Mass and Benediction.

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

IHC OPEN HOUSES

Watertown - IHC and St. John Bosco Pre-School to have open houses.

Primary School: March 30, May 23 at 6:30 p.m.; call 315-788-7011 to make an appointment for Kindergarten screening
Intermediate: April 12, July 19 and Aug. 9 at 6:30 p.m.;

Junior/Senior High School: March 16 at 6:30 p.m. 7th Grade Orientation; March 29 at 6:30 p.m.

SPAGHETTI SUPPER

Watertown - The Altar Rosary Society will be having a spaghetti supper.

Date: March 31

Time: 4:30 p.m. to 7

Place: St. Anthony's Msgr. Sechi Hall

Cost: Adults, \$8; Children, \$4.50; under 3, Free; Sauce, \$5 per quart; Meatballs, \$.75 each

Features: Take-outs begin at 4 p.m., please bring your own containers.

EUCARISTIC ADORATION

Watertown - St. Patrick's Church in Watertown sponsors weekly Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament on Thursdays. The Monstrance is placed on the Altar at the end of Noon Mass. Our doors remain open until 8:00 pm. All are welcome.

Contact: Dc. Mastellon at 315-782-6086

IHC 1976 CLASS REUNION

Watertown - The Immaculate Heart Central High School Class of 1976 Reunion Committee has plans for their 40th reunion.

Schedule: July 8, Meet and greet at Colemans; July 9, dinner at Savory Café

Features: This will be in conjunction with Watertown High School Class of 1976 although we will have separate rooms on Saturday evening.

Contact: Please reach out to us on FB - <https://www.facebook.com/groups/110430185653057/> or contact Aileen Dawley at 1976lhcreunion@gmail.com or Steve Fazio at stevenmfazio@gmail.com

LEWIS

SPAGHETTI DINNER

Port Leyden - There will be a spaghetti dinner sponsored by the St. Martin's / St. John's Altar and Rosary Societies.

Date: March 31

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

Place: Port Leyden Fire Hall

Cost: Adults, \$8; Children, \$4; under 5, Free

Contact: Take-outs and deliveries are available by calling 348-8945

DIVINE MERCY SUNDAY

Houseville - Divine Mercy Sunday Celebration to be held.

Date: April 3

Schedule: Reconciliation will begin at 2:15 p.m., and the DVD, Divine Mercy 101, with Fr. Chris Alar, MIC, at Stockbridge, MA., will be shown in the church hall at 2 p.m.. At 3:00 p.m., The Divine Mercy Sunday Celebration will include:

Blessing of The Divine Mercy Image and holy cards, presentation of petitions, Exposition of the Most Blessed Sacrament, The Divine Mercy Chaplet and Benediction.

Place: St. Hedwig's Church

Speaker: The Rev. Mark A. Pasik, M.A., Pastor of St. Mark's Church in Utica

Features: A cover-dish reception will follow in the church hall.

Contact: 348-6260 for more info

ST. LAWRENCE

DINNER THEATER

Brasher Falls - The North Franklin Theater Group presents "Murder at Rutherford House", an interactive dinner theater experience.

Date: April 16

Time: 6 p.m., arrive no later than 5:30

Place: Brasher Falls K of C hall

Cost: \$30 per person pre-paid. Reservations deadline is April 7th.

Contact: Call Terry Grant at 315-389-4116 or Phil Davis at 315-389-4627

LENTEN ADORATION

Massena - St. Mary's & St. Joseph will be offering Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament on Mon. & Fri. during Lent.

Time: 6 a.m. to 10 p.m.

Features: Spend some extra time with God in prayer. Adoration will be held in the side Chapel here at St. Mary's

FIRST SATURDAY DEVOTIONS

Raymondville - First Saturday devotions to be held.

Date: April 2

Time: 8:30 a.m. with Rosary (Confessions) and Mass at 9

Place: St. Raymond's Church

ABOUT THE ENVIRONMENT

Canton - A program on "Care for our Common Home: Inspired by Pope Francis' Laudato Si'" will be given.

Date: April 23

Time: 10 a.m. to 12

Place: SUNY Canton in Nevaldine Engineering Building, Rm 102

Speaker: Dr. Gerry Gacchio, NYS Catholic Climate Ambassador and Chief of Cardiology at Rochester General Hospital
Features: This opportunity to learn more about the Encyclical and what we can do to better care for God's Creation is free and open to the public. Light refreshments will be available. Sponsored by the Parish, Diocesan Faith and Ecology Groups, and Sisters of St. Joseph Social

Justice Committee.

Contact: To reserve a seat, please call: 315-212-6592 or 315-782-1474.

MANICOTTI MONDAY

Norfolk - Manicotti Monday is the first Monday of every month.

Time: 4 p.m. to 6:30

Place: Fr. Amyot Parish Center

Cost: Adults, \$9.75; Under 5, Free

Contact: Laurie at 315-384-4242

FISH & SHRIMP

Gouverneur - Fish & Shrimp Fry to be held every Friday.

Date: through March 25

Time: 4:30 p.m. to 6:15

Place: St. James School

Cost: Adults, \$10; Children 12 and under, \$5; under 5, Free

Features: Take-outs available, phone ahead for faster service and deliveries, 287-0130.

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

DIOCESAN EVENTS

INSPIRE: CALLED TO LOVE

Lake Placid - The diocesan vocation summit With internationally known speakers has been set

Date: Sept. 25

Time: 9 a.m.

Place: Olympic Center Complex

Features: INSPIRE: Called to Love, is a free all day conference with keynote speaker Bishop Robert Barron, the creator and host of the Catholicism series. Other speakers include George Weigel (biographer to Pope St. John Paul II), Mrs. Jennifer Fulwiler (author and radio host), Bishop Christopher Coyne (Bishop of Burlington, VT and Chairman of the USCCB Communications Committee). Come pray together and be inspired by our speakers and each other so that together we can cultivate a culture of vocations.

Contact: For more information, full schedule and to register for this free event, go to www.inspirecalledtolove.org.

CATHOLIC HEART WORKCAMP

Ogdensburg - Catholic HeartWorkcamp (CHWC) has announced that it will be re-

turning to Wadhams Hall

Date: June 26 to July 1

Cost: The cost is \$375 per person, which includes meals, lodging, transportation to the work sites, t-shirts and snacks.

Features: CHWC is a national organization whose mission is to inspire young people to live as disciples of Christ through serving others and to foster the Catholic faith of each participant. During the week, campers will volunteer at various sites throughout the Ogdensburg area during the day and participate in fun, faith-building programs in the evening. Daily Mass, adoration, penance and prayer nourish campers for their work in the community.

Contact: For information about the Ogdensburg camp or to register, please contact managers Jocelyn Kelly and Samantha Poulin at chwc.ogdensburg@gmail.com. For additional information, www.heartworkcamp.com.

DAYS OF DISCERNMENT

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

Dates: April 3 & 17

Time: 3 p.m.

Place: St. Mary's Rectory

Features: Reflection and vespers.

Contact: Your Catholic Campus Minister or Father Howard Venette, pastor @stmaryspatrick.net, 315-265-9680; Father Douglas Lucia, frdoug@twcny.rr.com or Father Bryan Stitt, diocesan vocation director bstitt@rcdony.org

RACHEL'S VINEYARD

Saranac Lake - The spring Rachel's Vineyard after-abortion healing retreat will be offered.

Date: June 3 - 5

Place: Guggenheim Lodge

Features: A Rachel's Vineyard retreat offers a safe, non-judgmental environment of hope and healing for those suffering after abortions. The chaplains for the spring retreat are Father Mark Reilly and Father Thomas Higman

Note: The fall Rachel's Vineyard retreat will be held over Labor Day weekend Sept. 2 - 4. Confidential registration forms will be available soon.

Contact: For a list of retreat locations or for more information about Rachel's Vineyard visit www.organdforlocalinformationwww.rcdony.org/pro-life.

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