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The Diocese of Ogdensburg Volume 71, Number 36

NORTH COUNTRY CATHOLIC

JAN. 25, 2017

'Prayer brings light of hope'

VATICAN CITY (CNS) -- Prayer has the power to awaken hope in men and women, even in the face of death and destruction, Pope Francis said. People often feel unworthy to turn to God when they are in need "as if it were a self-interested prayer and, thus, imperfect," the pope said Jan.

18 during his weekly general audience.

"But God knows our weakness; he knows that we remember him to ask for help and, with the indulgent smile of a father, he responds graciously," he said. Greeting thousands of people in the Paul VI audience hall, the

pope seemed to lose his balance several times as pilgrims clasped his hand and tried pulling him toward them, hoping for a hug or a blessing.

Still, the pope took time to greet people, stopping to bless a pregnant woman's belly and embracing a young

boy in tears, who was overcome with emotion at meeting him.

The audience took place at the beginning of the annual Week of Prayer for Christian Unity, which for 2017 had the theme: "Reconciliation: The love of Christ compels us."

Invitation to join 9 Days for Life

9 Days for Life (January 21-29) is the U.S. bishops' annual period of prayer and action focused on cherishing the gift of every human life. Cardinal Dolan, has urged all Catholics to participate.

While the overarching intention of the novena is the end to abortion, each day focuses on a different aspect of respecting each other's God-given dignity.

Receive the novena any of four ways: free mobile app, text message, email, or social media. For a daily text message, text 9DAYS to 55000.

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Liturgy of the Hours

Knights work with parish leaders in Norfolk and Norwood to promote Liturgy of the Hours
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REMEMBERING MARTIN LUTHER KING



SCHOOL PHOTO

Fourth grade students at Trinity Catholic School in Massena recently led a Mass honoring Martin Luther King, Jr. Fourth grader Alexa Westmacott, brought gifts to celebrant Father Tojo Chacko, who began his homily by having students close their eyes, just for one minute, so they could hear God's peace, the peace that Dr. King worked for during his life

FILLED WITH JOY: 'A soul on fire with joy of the Lord'... p. 12

LIVING THE VISION

Creating a culture of vocations



Sisters Kelly Francis and Grace Marie, Capuchin Sisters of Nazareth, prepare to hand out scapulars after their Advent presentation at St. Andre Bessette Parish in Malone. An interview with the Sisters is the first article in a new series "Living the Vision" in which the *North Country Catholic* explores how parishes of the North Country are implementing the diocesan pastoral vision. With the invitation to the Capuchin Sisters, St. Andre Bessette Parish offers a program to meet the priority "Creating a Culture of Vocations."

FULL STORY, PAGE 4

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COUNTRY
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EDITOR'S NOTE

Prayers of the faithful

It's not easy to get around when the snow and ice take charge of our world.

It's not easy to maintain our sunny personalities when gloom descends outside our windows.

But, in my ongoing effort to remain joyful in January, I recognize that the slow pace of the month has certain advantages.

For one thing, it gives us much more time to... pray.

And, boy, do we have a lot to pray for!

This week, we are certainly mindful of the need to pray for our new president and our country.

President Trump begins his administration faced with

daunting challenges. We pray that he will move forward with wisdom and grace.

We pray for our country, so divided, that we will move forward with patience and hope.

In these last weeks of January, our Catholic attention is drawn to the unborn as we mark the 44th anniversary of the Roe v. Wade decision. While some of us can give our prayer a physical dimension by taking part in pilgrimages and marches, all of us can pray.

We even have the opportunity to pray as part of a national community of pro-lifers.

The 9 Days for Life, a Jan. 21-29 prayer campaign launched

by the U.S. bishops, may have already begun but I don't think God will mind if our nine days start today!

This is also a timely week to focus our prayer on our Catholic schools.

In our diocese, Catholic Schools Week begins on Sunday. Bishop LaValley will mark the occasion as he celebrates Mass at St. Mary's in Canton.

The NCC will mark the occasion with a special issue next week.

We can all mark the occasion

with - you guessed it - prayer.

And, since I always like to bring Pope Francis into the conversation, it's very convenient that he had something to say about prayer at his weekly audience last week.

"Prayer has the power to awaken hope in men and women, even in the face of death and destruction, he said. People often feel unworthy to turn to God when they are in need "as if it were a self-interested prayer and, thus, imperfect. But God knows our weakness; he knows that we remember him to ask for help and, with the indulgent smile of a father, he responds graciously."

Amen!



Mary Lou
Kilian

FATHER MUENCH SAYS

Musings from Florida on MLK and unity

First of all, I must confess to you that I am writing to you today on a sunny, rather warm afternoon in Florida. I am here visiting my brother and sister-in-law who live here in Boynton Beach. Their parish here is St. Thomas More Church and the Church is immediately next to the major seminary for several dioceses in Southern Florida.

This is the Diocese of Palm Beach and the Bishop is familiar to most of you: Bishop Barbarito.

This week we are celebrating the National Holiday in honor of Rev. Martin Luther King, Jr. and also it is the beginning of the week of Prayer for Christian Unity.

I attended a Mass at the local parish on Martin Luther King Day and the celebrant was a visiting priest, Father Mark, a tall, young, African American priest, ordained a priest just seven months ago.

Father Mark had grown up here in this very parish; he had made his Confirmation here and also graduated from a

local public high school. After high school, he joined the Navy.

During his time in the Navy he developed a strong faith and a deep interest in pursuing a vocation to become a priest. He found strong support and encouragement from a chaplain at his base. He described an important experience for us. On one particular day, he decided to go to confession. After receiving the sacrament, the priest - a chaplain - came out of the penitential room and began to talk with

him very seriously about becoming a priest.

There was to be a retreat soon, especially for service men who might be considering a call to priesthood. This chaplain wanted to make arrangements for him to attend the retreat; he was prepared to make all the travel plans for him to be there.

This retreat had a profound influence on the young man to enter the seminary and then to be ordained a priest. At pres-

ent, he is now an associate pastor in a parish in the Diocese of Brooklyn and is beginning the process of becoming a Navy chaplain.

I found it rather interesting that the Navy would lead someone to the priesthood. I did remember that our Bishop, Bishop LaValley, served in the Navy before finding his way to the seminary and to priesthood.

And, as many of you know, Father Mark Reilly, who had also served in the Navy after college, before he began his studies leading to ordination as a priest.

Mentioning the Navy, I must also give a tip of the cap to my classmate, Father Joe Sestito, who served many years as a Navy Chaplain.

Thinking about MLK day, I must admit that being up in Northern New York, I have never been involved in concerns about race and such questions. So it was particularly interesting for me to be at that Mass here in the South on this holiday, especially at a Mass celebrated by an African American priest who had been raised here.

His homily was impressive. He shared much of his own life story and called upon us to be concerned and to do something to remove anything divisive from our hearts and lives. He urged us to make our world a better place by reaching out to others that we might consider somehow different.

This, of course, fit in well as we consider joining with all Christians in a time of prayer for unity and striving to work together. The Second Vatican Council, now sixty years past, urged our Catholic Church to become truly ecumenical. Since then, we, Catholics have joined in discussion groups and prayer groups with members and clergy of Protestant Churches. This has produced a deeper and better understanding with each other.

I know, personally, ecumenism has been an important part of my priesthood to develop friendships with ministers of other Christian Churches.

I know that these opportunities have been good for me and have opened my understanding of others and their concerns.



Rev. William G.
Muench

Cardinal invites Catholics to join 9 Days for Life

Cardinal Timothy M. Dolan of New York, chair of the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops' Committee on Pro-Life Activities, invited Catholics and others to join the nationwide "9 Days for Life" campaign.

"We're praying for a lot of things this month, including racial harmony, Christian unity, and the protection of all human life," Cardinal Dolan said.

"As we pray for that unity, I invite our brothers and sisters in Christ to join in the '9 Days for Life' prayer campaign," Cardinal Dolan said. "Together, our prayers and actions can witness to the dignity of the human person."

9 Days for Life is the U.S. bishops' annual prayer and action campaign around the anniversary of Roe v. Wade, the 1973 Supreme Court decision that legalized abortion throughout the nine months of pregnancy.

It occurs this year from Saturday, Jan. 21 to Sunday, Jan. 29.

Each day treats a different aspect of respecting the dignity of the human person—from the beginning of life to its natural end.

At a time when many are attending demonstrations and marches in person, novena participants are encouraged make a kind of "virtual pilgrimage."

In solidarity with tens of

thousands, they can pray daily, gather for fellowship and discussion, and share their experiences on social media with the hashtag, #9daysforlife.

The website, www.9daysforlife.com, features a video with Cardinal Dolan calling the campaign "a great way to put our faith into action."

The site offers four ways to receive the daily prayers, suggested reflections, and practical actions, including links to the free "9 Days for Life" smartphone app.

The campaign will be featured on the People of Life Facebook page, on Twitter @USCCBprolife, and in the bishops' Instagram feed.

Deacon formation info sessions set

The Deacon Formation Program for the Diocese of Ogdensburg is offering informational sessions for pastors and those interested in a new class of deacon formation.

Members of current class are scheduled to be ordained in October.

The sessions are scheduled as follows:

- Feb. 22, 6:30pm, Church of the Visitation Parish Center, Norfolk;
- March 8, 6:30pm, Sister of St. Joseph Motherhouse, Watertown;
- March 15, 6:30pm, St. Peter's Church (Emmaus Room), Plattsburgh.

The sessions should last approximately one hour each.

For more information or to register for a specific session, contact Deacon John White at jwhite@rcdony.org

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SINGING A SONG UNTO THE LORD



SCHOOL PHOTO

The St. Mary's School Junior High Choir in Ticonderoga is pictured here with Father Kevin McEwan, pastor, and Bishop Terry LaValey after Mass during the bishop's recent school visit. The choir serves us by leading the congregation in song at all First Friday and Holy Day Masses attended by the school community.

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-Pope Francis

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LIVING THE VISION.... CREATING A CULTURE OF VOCATIONS

I love our life!

By Suzanne Pietropaoli
Staff writer

MALONE- St. Francis of Assisi famously remarked: "Preach the Gospel. If necessary, use words." He might have been thinking of some of his newest daughters, the Capuchin Sisters of Nazareth, three of whom visited Malone in December.

They brought with them the infectious joy that comes from loving Jesus with one's whole heart, and they happily discussed their vocations with the *North Country Catholic*.

Founded in 1995

The life they share at their convent in Pennsylvania is primarily contemplative, but includes apostolic outreach. Founded in 1995 in the Diocese of Fall River Massachusetts, the Capuchin Sisters received the title "of Nazareth" from then-Bishop Sean O'Malley in recognition of the hiddenness of their life.

Sister Kelly Francis explains: "In Nazareth, Our Lady conceived Jesus, and followed him. Jesus lived the first 30 years of his life in Nazareth, and on the cross he died as 'Jesus of Nazareth.' With God, great things happen in littleness, in hiddenness."

Grounded in their vows of poverty, chastity and obedience, the sisters' days are divided between prayer (5-7 hours) and manual labor.

The order prays all the hours of the Divine Office, including matins - for which the bell rings at 1:55 a.m.

"We pray at that hour as spiritual mothers," says Sister Kelly Francis, "for our spiritual children who need graces they do not even know they need."

After matins, the sisters



Father Joseph W. Giroux, pastor of St. Andre Bessette Parish in Malone, is shown with Capuchin Sisters of Nazareth Kelly Francis, Grace Marie and Francis. The sisters visited religious education classes in the parish the weekend of Dec. 4 and offered an evening Advent presentation Dec. 5.

sleep until 6 a.m. Their day begins with morning prayer and an hour of adoration; a second hour of eucharistic adoration follows vespers at 6 p.m.

Amid the many hours devoted to prayer, the sisters do all their own work: household chores, gardening, canning, chopping and burning wood. Last year they even helped build their new chapel.

The sisters cheerfully live on divine providence: all groceries are donated, so there is always an element of surprise.

"Certain people take you on," Sister Grace Marie explains. "They want to be part of helping us, and it is very humbling because they are doing it for the Lord."

Vocation journeys: Sister Francis

What draws young women to such a radical way of life?

Sister Francis describes the journey which brought her to the Capuchins of Nazareth

six years ago. She hails from "a good Catholic family in Minnesota. I always knew God had a plan for my life, and my mom always encouraged me to find it."

At Ave Maria University, through daily Mass, adoration, and the rosary, she sensed that "God was calling me to be his in that way, to be his bride."

"The Capuchins' website attracted me," said Sister Francis. "When I visited, a sister asked if I had found what I was looking for. I screamed, 'YES!' I left college to enter and found more joy than I knew was possible."

"All I could think was, 'Jesus, I want to be yours,'" she said. "Now several times every day I find myself saying, 'I love our life!'"

Sister Grace Marie

Sister Grace Marie likewise grew up in a strong Catholic family - in North Dakota. She studied pre-med in college, focused on good grades.

Then the suicide of a high school classmate set her thinking - about where he was now, and about what was really worth living for.

"I began to pray in front of the tabernacle, and soon transferred to another college, praying for good Catholic friends," she said. "My experience in prayer really transformed me. I began to fall in love with God because I knew I was loved. When asked if I had ever thought of becoming a sister, I knew I had to find out."

"I visited several communities and found something in each," Sister Grace Marie said. "But it was never quite right until I met these Capuchin sisters. One of them told me, 'Let God surprise you.' During a Holy Hour there, I realized, 'This is the way I pray.' I knew I had come home to this beautiful life, which has now been mine for ten years."

Sister Kelly Francis

Moving often as part of a military family, Sister Kelly Francis first encountered religious life in sisters teaching CCD and told her mother that she wanted to be a sister.

By 7th grade, she was in Catholic school and already knew: "I wanted to be a teaching sister, like my teachers. I wanted to join right after high school, but the order wanted at least a year of college—so I went, and then joined at 19."

"In prayer, I learned I was called to religious life, but not that one," Sister Kelly Francis said. "That was difficult. I had come, and stayed, because I loved the Lord—yet I was afraid to leave because of what people might think. But I did leave, and returned to college."

"Then I visited the Capuchin Sisters of Nazareth and I knew this was it," she

Editor's Note

This article is the first in the series "Living the Vision" in which the *North Country Catholic* explores how the diocesan pastoral vision is being embraced by parishes of the North Country. Here, St. Andre Bessette Parish offers a program to meet the priority "Creating a Culture of Vocations."

said. "Sports were always a big part of my life, and I was coaching at a Catholic school at the time. I had a funny conversation with God: the moment I said yes felt better than a touchdown!"

"These 24 years have been so blessed," she said. "I wouldn't change anything."

For Sister Kelly Francis, "There is not a vocations crisis, but a generosity crisis. Young people are not saying yes because they don't know how, and parents don't encourage them."

Sister Grace Marie agrees. "One priest asked me about my family. I told him I was one of five children, adding that my sister is a Carmelite. He asked what my parents' secret was. I gave him my mother's answer: Natural Family Planning. Our family has remained open to a lot of graces because of our obedience to the teaching of the Church."

When God calls, Sister Kelly Francis concludes, young people need to know and hear his voice:

"Start with 15 minutes a day, a time of silence," she said. "Bring your bible with you, talk to God and listen to him. Start small and build up. Our Lady will lead you to her Son."

(Further information about the Capuchin sisters is available on their Website: www.capuchinfranciscansisters.org.)



The Norfolk Council Knights of Columbus helped promote the daily practice of the Divine Office and supported a solemn Evening Vespers Service on the Feast of the Holy Family Dec.30. Those who participated included servers, pictured from left, Shannon and Courtney McDonald, of Norwood, and Stephanie Bock and Stephen Wagstaff of Norfolk. In back are Father Andrew Amyot, Deacon John Levison, and Msgr. John R. Murphy. They are shown with the Icon of the Holy Family provided by the Knights of Columbus Supreme Council.

Knights promote Liturgy of the Hours in parishes

NORFOLK - Knights of Columbus Msgr. F. J. Connors Council 11544 of Norfolk partnered with the Adult Faith Enrichment joint committee of the Parish of the Visitation and St. Raymond's and of St. Andrew's Church in Norwood to promote the practice of the daily recitation of the Liturgy of the Hours.

Four daily Masses each week incorporate the appropriate morning or evening prayer, taken from the book *Shorter Christian Prayer*.

With Christmas and New Year's Day both falling on Sunday, the Feast of the Holy Family was celebrated this year on Friday, Dec. 30. This presented a unique opportunity to tie the practice of the Divine Office with a celebration of this feast, according to Dr. Charles Robinson, Council 11544's treasurer and former New York State Secretary, and other members of the faith committee.

The service also complied with the Knights' Supreme Council's initiative to promote devotion to the Holy Family.

Fellow Knights on the com-

mittee were Msgr. John R. Murphy, Norwood Council 2309's chaplain; Father Andrew Amyot, 11544's chaplain; Deacon Lawrence Connelly, 11544's founding and Past Grand Knight; and Phillip Regan, 2309's Deputy Grand Knight.

Carol Gonthier, Visitation's director of religious education and wife of 11544's PGK Gil Gonthier, was also on the committee, as were others from the joint parishes.

The Knights of Columbus Supreme Council via the NY State Council had given the Knights in the Ogdensburg Diocese an ornately framed Icon of the Holy Family that was a sketch of a 17th century painting by Giovanni Balestra Salvi of Sassoferrato.

Over a two-year period, this icon has been travelling around to parishes within the diocese.

Dr. Robinson was able to secure the icon for local display during the Solemn Vespers service on the Holy Family feast day.

Msgr. Murphy led the service, assisted by Father Amyot and Deacon John Levison.

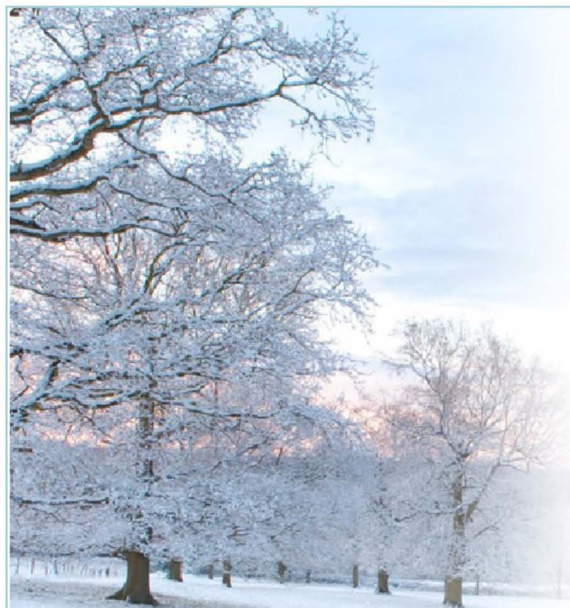
Knight Lukas Gruber of

Potsdam Council 340 was the organist and Ellie Prashaw, daughter of 2309's DGK Phil Regan, served as cantor. Over 40 parishioners were in attendance.

Council 11544 sponsored a wine and cheese reception that followed in the Fr. Andrew Amyot Parish Hall.

"I was truly pleased with the number of parishioners who took part when we shared Solemn Vespers on the Feast of the Holy Family," Msgr. Murphy said. "This was a rich experience of prayer for all of us who took part, and I certainly benefited from it personally. Our Adult Enrichment Committee has done something very positive for our people in encouraging that we pray the Liturgy of the Hours in common."

"The support of the Knights was critical here, and our prayer was enriched by the presence of the lovely Holy Family icon," he said. "Hopefully Solemn Vespers will become a part of our tradition in Norwood, Norfolk, and Raymondville in both the Christmas and Easter seasons."



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Campus ministry retreat Feb. 10-12

OGDENSBURG – The annual Catholic campus ministry

spring retreat will be held Feb. 10-12 at Wadhams Hall.

The theme for the retreat, open to all area college students, is "Fearfully and Wonderfully Made."

Amanda Miner, campus minister in Canton said, "Come take a rest from the business of campus for faith, fellowship, and formation."

The cost is \$20 and includes meals and lodging.

Registration may be made through local campus minister or with Mrs. Conklin at aconklin@stlawu.edu or 315-386-2543

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Rest in Peace

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

Jan. 25 – Rev. Eugene Gauvin, O.M.I., 1890

Jan. 26 – Rev. Antoine Paillier, O.M.I., 1916; Rev. Henry Thameling, O.F.M.Conv., 1929; Rev. Leon Lamothe, O.M.I., 1937; Rev. Daniel E. Cahill, 1945; Rev. John Emmett Weir, 1990;

Rev. Earl W. Nichols, 2002

Jan. 27 – Rev. Emile H. Mission, O.S.A., 1973; Rev. Mr. Adam S. Crowe, 2009

Jan. 28 – Rev. James A. McKenna, 1895; Deacon Richard E. Winter, 2004

Jan. 29 – Msgr. James T. Lyng, 1965

Jan. 30 – Rev. John T. Sullivan, 1884;

Rev. Eusebius Schlingmann, O.F.M., 1937

Jan. 31 – Rev. B. J. O'Connell, O.S.A., 1925; Rev. James S. McGowan, 1961; Rev. Timothy M. Ladden, 2003

Bishop's Schedule

Jan. 22 to 26 - New York State Bishops' Retreat in N. Palm Beach, Florida

Jan. 27 - March for Life in Washington, D.C.

Jan. 29 - 9a.m., Mass for beginning of Catholic Schools Week at St. Mary's, Canton

Jan. 30 - New York State Catholic Conference Board Meeting in Douglaston, N.Y.

Jan. 31 - Installation of Bishop John Barres, as 5th Bishop of Rockville Centre, N.Y.

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

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 Atonement Sister Ellen Donahue, 315-393-2920, ext. 1440. Upcoming sessions: Jan. 26 - 7:30 p.m., Wakefield Hall, SUNY Potsdam
Feb. 2 - 5:30 p.m., Holy Family School, Malone

Environmental Stewardship

'Youth Demand Change'

In the introduction to *Laudato Si'* Pope Francis states that "Young people demand change. They wonder how anyone can claim to be building a better future without thinking of the environmental crisis and the suffering of the excluded." (#13)

Recently members of the diocesan Faith and Ecology group who meet monthly in St. John in the Wilderness Parish Center, Lake Clear, were privileged to hear the "voice" of one Catholic young adult, Gina Floride, a native of Saranac Lake.

A student at University of Vermont, she was in Paris last year for the signing of the COP 21 Global Climate Agreement. She is the coordinator of the Climate Program at the Wild Center in Tupper Lake during the summer.

Gina shared her efforts in creating the Youth Climate Summit held annually at the Center that attracts hundreds of students locally and nationally.

When asked what her concerns were around the wellbeing of our "common home," she responded, "I am proud of my Catholic faith and I recognize that Creation is one of the greatest gifts mankind has ever received. . . I am most passionate about the issue of climate change.

"As a Catholic, I am a defender of life in every form," she said. "Climate change is a serious threat to life in every form.

"It will exacerbate life-threatening issues of water insecurity, food insecurity, and it will increase natural disasters," she said. "It will place burdens on developing nations and poverty-stricken individuals who will be impacted by climate change the most although they are contributing to the issue the least. Climate change and other environmental issues are not political issues, they are human issues. We are one Church. It is our duty as Catholics to step up and protect life and Creation."

Her advice: "Speak to the youth who are inheriting this earth and let them know that you care about having a livable planet for those yet to be born."

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CATHOLIC WORLD AT A GLANCE

U.S. abortion rate at its lowest since 1973 Supreme Court ruling

WASHINGTON (CNS) -- The U.S. abortion rate is down to its lowest level since the Supreme Court made abortion legal virtually on demand in 1973, and the rate is half of its early-1980s peak. According to a study issued Jan. 17 by the Guttmacher Institute, the abortion rate for U.S. women ages 15-44 is 14.6 per 1,000 in 2014, the last year for which statistics are available. The figure represents a 14 percent decline from the 2011 numbers, and less than half of the 1981 rate of 29.4 abortions per 1,000 women of child-bearing age. The percentage of pregnancies ending in abortion is down to 18.8 percent, a decline of nearly two-fifths below its 1983 peak of 30.3 percent. A statement by the Guttmacher Institute, which supports legal abortion, said the study "did not directly investigate reasons behind the declining abortion rate," but suggested "the wave of abortion restrictions passed at the state level over the last five years" could have contributed at least in part to the decline. A Jan. 17 statement from Carol Tobias, president of National Right to Life, attributed the decline to more women looking "for life-preserving solutions" because of ultrasound and other technologies that allow them to "see the child moving in the womb" and "hear the heartbeat of the unborn child," along with knowing there are "programs available to help them with a new baby and new circumstances."

Bishops visiting Holy Land: Christians must oppose settlements

JERUSALEM (CNS) -- Christians have a responsibility to oppose the construction of Israeli settlements in Palestinian territories, said bishops from the U.S., Canada and Europe. "This de facto annexation of land not only undermines the rights of Palestinians in areas such as Hebron and East Jerusalem but, as the U.N. recently recognized, also imperils the chance of peace," said bishops who participated in the Holy Land Coordination Jan. 14-19. "So many people in the Holy Land have spent their entire lives under occupation, with its polarizing social segregation, yet still profess hope and strive for reconciliation. Now, more than ever, they deserve our solidarity," said the statement, issued Jan. 19, at the end of the visit. Bishop Oscar Cantu of Las Cruces, New Mexico, chairman of the U.S. bishops' Committee on International Justice and Peace, was among the 12 bishops who signed the statement. Bishop Lionel Gendron of Saint-Jean-Longueuil, Quebec, represented Canadian bishops. The statement also was signed by representatives of the Council of European Bishops' Conferences, the Commission of the Bishops' Conferences of the European Community and the Southern African Catholic Bishops' Conference, as well as bishops from the United Kingdom and other European countries.

Christian living requires constant battle with devil, pope says

VATICAN CITY (CNS) -- Moving closer to Christ means facing daily struggles against temptation and battling against evil, Pope Francis said. When Jesus approaches the people who have come to hear him and be healed, "the unclean spirits try to stop him, they wage war," which is why those who seek to follow the Lord will face obstacles, too, the pope said Jan. 19 during his early morning Mass in the chapel of the Domus Sanctae Marthae. Looking at the day's Gospel reading from Mark (3:7-12), the pope said it is "curious" how the passage ends with the unclean spirits shouting at Jesus, "You are the son of God," after describing the enthusiasm and large number of people who came to see, hear and be healed by Jesus. "This is the truth. This is the reality that each one of us feels when Jesus approaches," he said, referring to the presence and persistence of evil.

Congress urged to keep health care gains, protect life, conscience rights

WASHINGTON (CNS) -- The chairman of the U.S. bishops' domestic policy committee said Jan. 18 that a repeal of the federal health care law should not take place without immediate passage of a plan that preserves people's access to adequate health care and also protects human life, conscience rights and the poor.

"Important gains brought about by the Affordable Care Act must be preserved" as millions of people now rely on the law for their health care, said Bishop Frank J. Dewane of Venice, Florida, chairman of the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops' Committee on Domestic Justice and Human Development.

At the same time, he said, any replacement measure also must safeguard human life from conception to natural death, protect conscience rights and provide adequate health care for immigrants, the poor and others on society's margins.

Bishop Dewane made the comments in a letter sent to members of the U.S. House of Representatives and the U.S. Senate.

The U.S. bishops "supported the general goal of the law to expand medical coverage for many poor and vulnerable people," but they "ultimately opposed the Affordable Care Act because it expanded the role of the federal government in finding and facilitating abortion and plans that cover abortion," Bishop Dewane wrote.

"It also failed to provide essential conscience protections and access to health care for immigrants," he added.

"We recognize that the law has brought about important gains in such coverage and those gains should be protected," he continued. In the days ahead, the U.S. bishops

"will examine health care proposals in greater depth and from various perspectives in the days ahead," he said.

Any replacement measure must safeguard human life from conception to natural death, protect conscience rights and provide adequate health care for immigrants, the poor and others on society's margins.

President Barack Obama signed the Affordable Care Act into law March 23, 2010.

"We remain committed to the ideals of universal and affordable health care and to the pursuit of those ideals in a manner that includes protections for human life, conscience and immigrants," Bishop Dewane told the lawmakers. "We urge you to approach the important debates in the days ahead seeking also to honor these principles."

The bishop's letter pointed out that U.S. Catholic bishops have "consistently advocated for access to decent health care that safeguards and affirms human life and dignity from conception until natural death."

He quoted a 2009 letter to Congress from a previous chairman of the USCCB's Committee on Domestic Justice and Human Development that said: "All people need and should have access to comprehensive, quality health care that they can afford, and it should not de-

pend on their stage of life, where or whether they or their parents work, how much they earn, where they live or where they were born."

The 2017 letter also quoted Pope Francis and St. John Paul II's remarks on health care.

Bishop Dewane said that in a 2016 address to doctors, Pope Francis said health care is "not a consumer good, but a universal right which means that access to health care services cannot be a privilege." The bishop also noted that St. John XXIII's encyclical "Pacem in Terris" said people have the right to "food, clothing, shelter, medical care, rest, and, finally, the necessary social services."

In the days ahead, Bishop Dewane said the U.S. Catholic bishops will continue to "examine health care proposals in greater depth and from various perspectives" looking that a replacement health care plan would provide "adequate health care for the millions of people who now rely upon it for their well-being."

Of particular concern, he said, are those with limited resources "to meet basic needs such as food and shelter rather than seek medical care." For this group, he said, "an introduction of great uncertainty at this time would prove particularly devastating."

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CHEVROLET



SCRIPTURE REFLECTIONS

Christian living in the messiness of life

With this Fourth Sunday, we're up to our necks in "ordinary time" - living the Christian life in the messiness of every day life.

No more sweet angelic voices in the sky, no more thunder from the clouds and doves descending. We're in the boring grind of "just living."

And the recommended equipment for the "faithful remnant"?

Just tough faith, tough love, and lots of humility!

If we think the ten commandments are demanding, try the beatitudes on for size! They make the Decalogue look like a piece of cake! With even more au-

thority than Moses, Jesus is pictured in the Gospel as sitting down, the traditional posture for delivering solemn edicts. He turns middle-class values upside down.



Monsignor
Paul E.
Whitmore

Have you ever had your picture taken while standing on your head? You'd look pretty foolish, wouldn't you?

Well, that's the way the beatitudes make a comfortable, easy-going Christian look - just rather foolish!

"What do you mean," we protest, "that I have to sit down on the street and cry with a homeless person, or a poor woman just evicted

from her apartment. Or-or?"

Perhaps nothing so dramatic. But have you ever in your life written to your congressman about unjust rental practices for the poor, or unjust treatment of those on disability? Have you ever taken the time to visit a home for the elderly, or volunteer your time as an auxiliary at your local hospital, or....?" Have you ever asked your pastor for the names of some shut-ins who need a phone call, or a note, or a sick person who could use a bowl of soup, or someone to bring them Holy Communion? It's a question of attitude, looking at those less fortunate from the conviction that you yourself have been incredibly blest by the Lord, and hoping to give just a little bit back in

JAN. 29

Fourth Sunday of the Year

READINGS

Zephaniah 2:3, 3:12-13

1 Corinthians 1:26-31

Matthew 5:1-12a

thanksgiving.

And what are the rewards?

Zephaniah says the faithful remnant will live a life of peacefulness, and Jesus says such a person is "blessed", and will have unimaginable rewards in the kingdom.

Americans have a great reputation for being a generous people. Yet, in terms of remedying the colossal poverty, hunger, and disease in other areas of our

world, we actually give only one-fifth of one percent of our income.

It would be impossible to assess the influence of the Sermon on the Mount on the history of Christianity.

Those who have taken seriously the "option for the poor" have suffered some loss economically, politically, and personally.

Jesus told us to expect that treatment. After all, He is the prime example for the martyrdom that results when Truth confronts Power.

Only God's grace can give us the courage to imitate the Lord in whatever ways our circumstances will suggest.

But He promises us joy and peace of heart when we do.

WASHINGTON LETTER

U.S. policy and Middle East's Christians in '17

By Mark Pattison
Catholic News Service

WASHINGTON (CNS) - A wide variety of issues, both domestic and foreign, have been raised during the presidential transition. One that hasn't received much notice is the situation of the beleaguered Christian community in the Middle East.

Given the interest in, and media coverage of, those other issues, it's an open question as to just what the United States would do for the Middle East's Christian minorities under the presidential administration of Donald J. Trump.

Rep. Chris Smith, R-New Jersey, said he would reintroduce a bill he first introduced in September that would ensure U.S. aid specifically reaches Christian refugees and internally displaced people in the region.

Another feature would be to allow genocide victims -- "at least the persecuted

Christians," Smith said -- to apply as a family and get asylum in the United States. "It gives him the ability to get the interviews. It doesn't guarantee that they will become an asylee in the United States, but it gives them the opportunity."

Stephen M. Colecchi, director of the Office of International Justice and Peace at the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops in Washington, was leaving for a mid-January fact-finding mission in the region, with the first stop being Irbil, Iraq, a Kurdish-controlled zone in the northern part of the country where many Iraqi Christians have fled.

"I imagine we will meet with a fair number of internally displaced Iraqi Christians. We will also be meeting with some Syrians who have fled to the Kurdish region because of the violence there," Colecchi told Catholic News Service.

The U.S. bishops' stance on policy matters relies in

large part on the experiences of the bishops in the affected region or country. "We look for situations where there is clear church teaching, guided by the local church," Colecchi said. "We consult with the Holy See and make sure our positions are consistent with the Holy See. And we look for situations where the United States can make a difference. The United States is heavily involved in the region and needs to take leadership to help those who are suffering."

"There's lots of confusion" when it comes to consensus on solutions, said Michael LaCivita, communications director for the Catholic Near East Welfare Association, a Vatican agency.

"There's lots of folks advocating for their people to return to their native communities, the ones that have been freed or liberated. The problem is that 80 percent of these places have been destroyed. There's a

lot of rubble. In order for people to return to their villages and their towns, they need proper housing, and they need infrastructure and they need security - and guarantees that they're not going to be exposed as they were a few years ago."

"No one knows what the future will hold," LaCivita added. "Should we have safe havens? Christians are saying no," he said. "How can we be Christian witnesses to the Gospel if we live in the Christians-only zones?" Others are calling for the swift emigration of Christians out of the Middle East.

"Washington will talk and talk and talk, as Washington often does, but I can stay this: Unilateral action by the United States in that part of the world typically has had consequences for the vulnerable communities, often for the communities these unilateral actions are intended to help."

The Department of State's declaration of the Islamic

State's murderous spree since 2014 as genocide "allowed the international community to come full circle and really realize the gravity of the situation. Communities were being wiped off the face of the earth. They were going extinct, basically," said Philippe Nassif, executive director of In Defense of Christians.

Nassif said the fate of Christians will improve in some places, but likely not in others, citing "fundamentalism" in Egypt directed against the nation's Coptic Christians.

In Defense of Christians has the creation of a Christian autonomous region in the Nineveh Plain of Iraq as one of its legislative priorities. Another is to have Congress recognize the genocide with aid money to relieve its effect. A third is to support the security and stability of Lebanon, "the most populous and stable Christian population" and which could serve as a

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AT THE MOVIES



CNS PHOTO/FOX
Janelle Monáe stars in a scene from the movie "Hidden Figures."

HIDDEN FIGURES

By John Mulderig
Catholic News Service

The struggles of the civil rights era provide the backdrop for the appealing fact-based drama "Hidden Figures" (Fox 2000).

Along with a personalized insight into the injustices that still prevailed in American society in the early 1960s, director Theodore Melfi's adaptation of Margot Lee Shetterly's book - which centers on three extraordinarily gifted mathematicians working for NASA - successfully re-creates the tension of the Cold War space race.

For all their genius, this trio of colleagues and close friends faced an uphill professional fight. That's because they were not only women in a field dominated by men, but African Americans living and working in pre-integration Virginia.

Their story is told primarily from the perspective of Katherine Goble (Taraji P. Henson), a "computer" (as the number crunchers were then known) whose career gets a boost when she's assigned to the prestigious unit tasked with working out the logistics of manned space flight.

There she gradually wins the respect of her well-meaning but initially unenlightened boss, Al Harrison (Kevin Costner).

Both of Katherine's pals, meanwhile, have challenges of their own to confront. Manager Dorothy Vaughan (Octavia Spencer) does all the work of a department supervisor but enjoys neither the title nor the salary of that position. And Mary Jackson (Janelle Monáe) has set her sights on an engineering degree, but will

have to obtain a court order to be allowed to take the necessary courses.

Besides the social changes slowly unfolding, and the suspense of the effort to catch up with the Russians post-Sputnik, "Hidden Figures" also gives viewers a glimpse of the early age of mechanical computers.

As representatives from IBM set up a massive device at NASA headquarters, Dorothy masters the programming language Fortran, already foreseeing that she and her co-workers will need to shift from making calculations on their own to entering data instead. (The textbook Dorothy uses to learn Fortran is purloined from a local library, but only because she's not allowed to take it out -- as a white person would be.)

Melfi uses scenes detailing the main characters' personal lives to showcase family values and Christian piety. He also works in some wholesome romance by chronicling widowed Katherine's blossoming relationship with National Guard Col. Jim Johnson (Mahershala Ali).

Given the positive morality on display as well as the historical understanding to be gained from "Hidden Figures," many parents may consider it suitable for older teens, despite screenwriter Allison Schroeder's occasional resort to light swearing for rhetorical emphasis.

The film contains at least one use of profanity, several milder oaths and a vague sexual reference. The Catholic News Service classification is A-III -- adults. The Motion Picture Association of America rating is PG -- parental guidance suggested. Some material may not be suitable for children.

U.S.

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 8

model for political cooperation between Christians and the majority Muslim populations elsewhere in the region.

"To be honest, I find that politicians from both parties and the Congress seem to be very concerned about the crisis in the region," Colecchi said. "I know there have been dramatic increases in U.S. assistance." However, Smith complained to CNS about U.S. funds being sent to U.N. High Commissioner for Refugees camps, where very few Christians have gone.

Colecchi added, "What I'm fearful of is that political commitment will come up against fiscal challenges. It's in our best interest that the fabric of those communities be re-knit. It will be interesting to see. Most Americans, if you ask them, are quite supportive of federal aid, and they think it's about 20 percent of the federal budget. When you ask them how much it should be, they think, not that much, about 10 percent. When you tell them that it's less than 1 percent of the budget, they're shocked."

ALSO PLAYING



CNS PHOTO/LIONSGATE

"Patriots Day" is an effective but unsparing dramatization of the 2013 Boston Marathon bombing and its violent aftermath. Director and co-writer Peter Berg approaches these events from multiple perspectives, predominantly that of fictional police Sgt. Tommy Saunders (Mark Wahlberg, pictured), who is among the first responders to the chaos unleashed by brothers Tamerlan (Themo Melikidze) and Dzhokhar (Alex Wolff) Tsarnaev. Berg ratchets up the suspense as authorities scramble to identify and capture the fugitives before they can carry out further attacks. The bloody carnage caused by the assault is not kept off-screen, nor are viewers shielded from a torrent of tension-induced swearing. The Catholic News Service classification is L -- limited adult audience, films whose problematic content many adults would find troubling. The Motion Picture Association of America rating is R -- restricted. Under 17 requires accompanying parent or adult guardian.

ADIRONDACK

SPAGHETTI DINNER

Saranac Lake – Catholic Daughters Court St. Bernard #787 and Knights of Columbus Council #599 Saranac Lake will sponsor a fundraising dinner.
Date: Feb. 4
Time: 4 p.m. to 7
Place: St. Bernard's School
Cost: Adults, \$10; Children under 8, Free
Features: Proceeds will support the school and local programs.

CLINTON

PANCAKE BREAKFAST

West Chazy – St. Joseph's Men's Club will host a pancake breakfast.
Date: Feb. 9
Time: 8:30 a.m. to Noon
Place: Parish Center
Cost: Adults, \$8.50; Children 6-10, \$3; under 5, Free

DONATIONS REQUESTED

Ellenburg – K of C Council 4441 is promoting 4th degree candidates for the Knights. The uniforms and paraphernalia is costly. The council is seeking donations of used equipment
Contact: Phalon Miner at 518-492-2368 or Ed Landry at 518-594-7251 E-Mail: aelandry121@yahoo.com

CDA TEA PARTY

Peru – Tea Party to be held to honor women serving in WWII sponsored by the CDA Court St. Monica #2598.
Date: Feb. 12
Time: 1 p.m. to 4
Place: St. Augustine's Church
Cost: \$10; 50% of the proceeds will go to the Plattsburgh Honor Flight.
Contact: Jane Woods 518-834-5324 or Janice at 518-643-2435 ext. 101

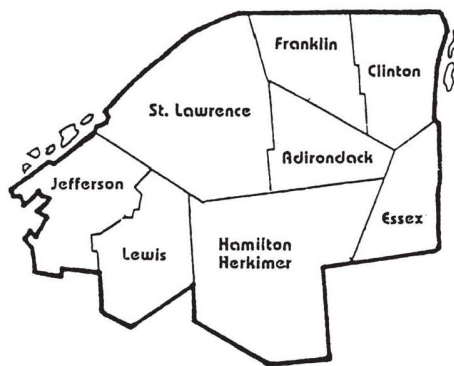
PANCAKE BREAKFAST

Treadwell Mills – St. Alexander and St. Joseph to hold pancake breakfasts.
Dates: Feb. 5, March 5, April 2 and 23
Time: 8 a.m. to Noon
Place: St. Joseph's Hall
Cost: Adults, \$7; kids, \$3; under 5, Free

HAMILTON-HERKIMER

DAYS OF DISCERNMENT

Old Forge – Discerning men are invited to consider the call to the priesthood.
Dates: Jan 22; Feb 5&19; March 5&26; April 9 and 23; May 7 & 21
Time: 3 p.m.
Place: St. Bartholomew's Rectory
Features: Reflection, Vespers & dinner. Juniors in high school and older.
Contact: Fr. Howard Venette,



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@northcountycatholic.org.

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

pastor.stbarts@roadrunner.com/ 315-369-3554;

JEFFERSON

SPAGHETTI SUPPER

Watertown – St. Anthony's Altar Rosary Society to have a spaghetti dinner.
Date: Jan. 26
Time: 4:30 p.m. to 7 p.m.; Take-outs begin at 4 p.m., bring containers
Place: Msgr. Sechi Hall
Cost: Adults, \$8; Children, \$4; Children under 3, Free; Sauce, \$5 per quart; Meatballs, \$.75 each

PANCAKES FOR PARKINSON'S

Sackets Harbor – Pancakes for Parkinson's will be held to benefit North Country Coalition for Parkinson's and movement Disorders.
Date: Jan. 29
Time: 8 a.m. to 12 p.m.
Place: Sackets Harbor American Legion
Cost: Adults, \$8; Children, 6-12 \$4; under 5, Free

PANCAKE BREAKFAST

Watertown – To kickoff Catholic Schools week, IHC Intermediate will host a pancake breakfast.
Date: Jan. 29
Time: 9 a.m. to 12:30 p.m.
Place: IHC Intermediate School (Previously St. Patrick's School)
Cost: Adults, \$5; Children 6-12, \$3; Children under 5, Free; Seniors (65 and older), \$2; family of 4 or more, \$15

FASHION SHOW

Watertown – The 10th annual "Teens for

Miracles" fashion show to be held.
Date: Jan. 29
Time: 2 p.m.
Place: IHC High School Auditorium
Cost: \$10 (tickets available at A Touch of Grace, CMN Office or at the door)
Features: to benefit Children's Miracle Network Hospitals, Samaritan Health.

FAMILY BALL

Watertown – IHC to host their 3rd Annual Family Ball.
Date: Feb. 4
Time: 6 p.m. to 9
Place: IHC High School
Cost: \$25 for Adult and Child; \$10 each additional Child, \$15 each additional adult; \$50 Family ticket (2 adults and children from family)
Features: Semi Formal attire required. All IHC families and Staff grades Pre-K thru 12 grade welcome.

SPAGHETTI AND MEATBALL DINNER

Evans Mills – Spaghetti and Meatball dinner to be held and benefit the Indian River Knights of Columbus.
Date: Feb. 4
Time: 4 p.m. to 7
Place: St. Mary's Parish Center

LIFERIGHT MEETING

Watertown – Liferight of Watertown meets the first Wednesday of the Month.
Time: 1 p.m.
Place: 870 Arsenal Street.
Features: The office has a variety of pro-life videos, books and educational materials which may be borrowed.
Contact: Phone 315-788-8480

CURSILLO MEETINGS

Carthage – The Jefferson/Lewis Cursillo holds its monthly meeting on the third Tuesday of every month.
Time: 6 p.m. to 8
Place: Community Room of St. James Church
Features: All Cursillistas are encouraged to attend. We also welcome those interested in deepening a personal relationship with Jesus Christ.
Contact: Anne Seegebarth
 ams2962@gmail.com, 315-783-4596

WEEKLY EUCHARISTIC ADORATION

Sackets Harbor – St. Andrew's 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

DIVINE MERCY

Houseville – Divine Mercy Devotions for the month of February to be held.
Date: Feb. 5
Time: 3 p.m.
Place: St. Hedwig's Church
Features: The program includes: Vespers (Evening Prayer), Exposition of the Most Blessed Sacrament, Adoration, The Divine Mercy Chaplet and Benediction.
Contact: 348-6260 for information.

ST. LAWRENCE

WINTER RETREAT DAY

Morristown – Sister Bethany Fitzgerald, SSJ will lead a retreat day on the theme "Praying With the Psalms."
Place: Cedarhaven
Date: Feb. 4 from 9:30 a.m. to 4 with option of overnight for extended retreat
Suggested offering: \$25 for day (includes lunch); Additional \$25 for overnight (dinner, breakfast included)
To register: Call 315-212-6592 or email srbrthssj@gmail.com by Feb. 1

DAYS OF DISCERNMENT

Potsdam – Discerning men are invited to come together & consider the call to the Roman Catholic Priesthood.
Dates: Jan 29; Feb 12; Mar 5;
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, pastorsmsp@gmail.com, 315-265-9680; or Fr. Doug Lucia, fdoug@twcny.rr.com

EUCHARISTIC ADORATION

Massena – St. Mary's & St. Joseph's hold Benediction and Adoration every Friday
Time: 9 a.m. to 10
Place: St. Mary's Family Room

DEACON FORMATION INFORMATION

The Deacon Formation Program for the Diocese of Ogdensburg is offering Informational Sessions for Pastors and all interested parties.
Schedule: Feb. 22, 6:30 p.m., Church of the Visitation, Norfolk
 March 8, 6:30 p.m., Sister of St. Joseph Motherhouse, Watertown
 March 15, 6:30p.m. St. Peter's Church (Emmanuel Room), Plattsburgh
Contact: For more information or to register for a specific session, please contact Deacon John White at jwhite@rcdony.org.

DIOCESAN EVENTS

LENTEN RETREAT FOR YOUTH

Diocesan Youth Council is hosting a peer-led Lenten retreat open to all students in grades 6-12.
Dates: March 25 in Malone; March 26 in Canton
Features: The event is free, but participants must pre-register and bring a bagged lunch.
Contact: Details and registration can be found at www.rcdony.org/lentenretreat.

COLLEGE SPRING RETREAT

Ogdensburg – If you are an area college student, please join us for our annual Catholic Campus Ministry Spring Retreat.
Date: Feb. 10 – 12
Place: Wadhams Hall
Cost: \$20, includes meals and lodging
Features: Come take a rest from the business of campus for Faith, Fellowship, and Formation.
Contact: Please contact your local Campus Minister or Amanda Conklin at aconklin@stlawu.edu or 315-386-2543 for more information or to register.

CAMP GUGGENHEIM REGISTRATION

Registration for 2017 season for Camp Guggenheim is now open through www.rcdony.org/camp
Contact: For more information contact the Office of Youth Ministry at 315-393-2920 or vlalonde@rcdony.org or visit camp website: www.rcdony.org/camp/guggy



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

Gratitude for your gifts to Missions

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

"Who are we, as we stand before the Child Jesus? Who are we, as we stand before today's children? Are we like the shepherds, who went in haste to kneel before Him in worship and offer Him their humble gifts?"

Pope Francis

I offer you many thanks for your "humble gifts" to the Missions, particularly your prayers of support but especially for the gift of sacrifice. Know that my own prayers are offered for you and for your intentions.

As we think about Christmas, even though it is now behind us, children often to come to mind. With those in our own lives and around the world. So many children in the Missions live with immense suffering and violence, facing extraordinary poverty and its related challenges. 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 Bangladesh, tribal children in remote areas barely have the basic needs for their existence. Many are even forced into child labor to support their families. But the Church there, with your assistance through the Society for the Propagation of the Faith / Missionary Childhood Association, is making an amazing difference for these little ones. The Church there is reaching out, providing everything from food and medicine, to tuition fees and textbooks. Children also learn about Jesus, and experience His love through the service of priests, religious Sisters and Brothers, and lay catechists. The children respond with enthusiasm and cheerful hearts and are continuously extending a helping hand as their love for Jesus and knowledge of his works continues to grow.

Extending your hand to help children in places like Bangladesh and throughout the Missions at Christmas makes us shepherds while offering your humble gifts in celebration of Jesus' birth. Your generous gifts this Christmas will provide care for tuition fees and textbooks and food and medicine too. Your acts of kindness and generosity 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, for you and your families, and for the "gift" that you have made possible to so many in the world.

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

OBITUARIES

Adams – Warren Mark Brown, 59; Funeral Services Jan. 21, 2017 at Cecilia's Church.

AuSable Forks – Alberta Mary (Dennett) Gray, 97; Funeral Services Jan. 24, 2017 at Holy Name Church.

Bloomingdale – Genevieve M. (Zareski) Goff, 89; Funeral Jan. 20, 2017 at St. Paul's Oratory; burial in Union Cemetery.

Cadyville – Charles Ross Johnson, 68; Funeral Services Jan. 18, 2017 at St. James Church.

Cadyville – Susan A. (Leroux) Sabin, 72; Funeral Services Jan. 16, 2017 at St. James Church.

Carthage – Janet L. (Ferris) Lamendola, 77; Funeral Services Jan. 18, 2017 at the Bezanilla-McGraw Funeral Home.

Carthage – Leslie "Red" Nevills, 93; Funeral Services Jan. 8, 2017 at the Bezanilla-McGraw Funeral Home.

Chazy – V. Lucille (Budlong) Dagoon, 88; Funeral Services Jan. 18, 2017 at Sacred Heart Church; burial in Sacred Heart Cemetery.

Croghan – Paul J. Martin, 91; Funeral Services Jan. 12, 2017 at St. Stephen's Church; burial in St. Vincent DePaul Cemetery, Belfort.

Houseville – Albina N. (Wiczczak) Gyore, 91; Funeral Services Jan. 19, 2017 at St. Hedwig's Church; burial in Lowville Rural Cemetery.

Malone – Lee W. Dumas, 70; Funeral Services Jan. 14, 2017 at Notre Dame Church.

Malone – Judith Ann McClain Moon, 77; Funeral Services Jan. 21, 2017 at St. John Bosco Church; burial in St. Joseph's Cemetery.

Massena – Veronica "Ronnie" Mary Tyo Sedlock, 94; Funeral Services Jan. 17, 2017 at St. Mary's Church; burial in Calvary Cemetery.

North Bangor – Joseph Z. Trippany, 89;

Follow Pope Francis on Twitter!
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Funeral Services Jan. 23, 2017 at St. Augustine's Church; burial in St. Augustine's Cemetery.

Peru – Jeannette Claire (Langlois) Kelley, 90; Funeral Services Jan. 17, 2017 at St. Augustine's Church.

Plattsburgh – Josette (Pinquet) Faiella, 80; Funeral Services Jan. 23, 2017 at Our Lady of Victory Church; burial in St. Peter's Cemetery.

Plattsburgh – Tomas C. Fleming, 77; Funeral Services Jan. 5, 2017 at St. John's Church; burial in Mt. Carmel Cemetery.

Plattsburgh – Arthur E. Frennier, 84; Funeral Services Jan. 16, 2017 at St. Peter's

Church; burial in parish cemetery.

Sackets Harbor – James P. Webb, 84; Funeral Jan. 21, 2017 at St. Andrews Church; burial in Lakeside Cemetery.

Saranac Lake – Germaine M. Miller, 87; Funeral Services Jan. 19, 2017 at St. Bernard's Church.

Star Lake – John "Jack" M. Dolan, 82; Funeral Services Jan. 20, 2017 at St. Hubert's Church; burial in St. Hubert's Cemetery.

Waddington – Robert Lee McAllister, 70; Funeral Services Jan. 18, 2017 at the Phillips Memorial Home; burial in Flackville Cemetery, Lisbon.

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Replace him with yourself.

Incline him to constant adoration and thanksgiving; pray in and through him. Let him live in you and keep him in this intimate union always. O Mary, Immaculate Conception, Mother of Jesus and Mother of priests, pray and intercede for (...) Amen.

February
 The Passion of our Lord

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A VOICE OF FAITH

'A soul on fire with the joy of the Lord'

By Tracy Leonard
Contributing writer

Recently, while attending a Women of Grace gathering in Brownville, I heard an interesting story from a wise woman by the name of Anne as we discussed the topic of joy. It went something like this... a father comes home from a long day of work discouraged and upset. He fights with his wife. His wife yells at the son and the son kicks the dog. The dog then chases the cat and the cat knocks over a glass dish.

Does this type of chain reaction sound somewhat familiar?

As I heard this, I began to think about our daily lives which unfortunately are too often impacted by the stressors of life whether it be work, school, politics, social media, relationships or some other event.

Negative attitudes can be contagious and poison our internal spirit. As a result, it creates friction with others – a friction that many times sadly occurs with those closest to us or those we care most deeply about.

Perhaps you may be asking yourself how this story relates to joy.

While we discussed the meaning and our experiences of joy, we began to further share on this



Author Tracy Leonard of Watertown enjoys a moment of joy with her niece Lily.

idea of a chain reaction. Conversation included how we bring joy to others especially when faced with adversity, disrespect, grief or anger.

When faced with challenging moments, do you allow others' negativity to seep into the fibers of your being and then poorly deflect that attitude onto others, or do you kill this poison with kindness, hope, joy and compassion?

Not only that, but do you take it one step further and extend joy onward?

Better yet, perhaps you are the spark that starts a whole blaze with a soul that's on fire with the joy of the Lord. If so, do you fan your flame with simple acts of kindness that make it grow and burn brightly so that everyone around can see the beauty of Christ's light in your life?

This type of blaze can leave lasting imprints, for it is in ordinary moments like this that extraordinary things happen.

Next time you are troubled, hurt or bothered by things that bring down your spirit, turn those negative thoughts, feelings or words into birds and allow them to fly away. Choose joy and rise up in splendor!

Let God's glory shine upon you and let your heart throb and overflow with His goodness. From you, the riches of the sea will be emptied out and through you, others will come to know, proclaim and praise the Lord!

TWENTY FIVE YEARS OF PARISH MIDDLE SCHOOL RETREATS



This year marks the 25th anniversary of the Up+Word retreat sponsored by the St. Francis Faith Formation Center at St. Stephen's Parish in Croghan. Every year since 1992 middle school teenagers, high school leadership team members and adult facilitators have gathered to spend a weekend at Beaver Camp sharing faith, fun, and encouragement. This adventure-based experience includes low and high ropes course challenges, the celebration of Mass, workshops, and prayer. The Up+Word retreat's name is itself a reminder that the young people's time together focuses on positivity and is rooted in Gospel living.