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The Diocese of Ogdensburg Volume 73, Number 31

NORTH COUNTRY CATHOLIC

DEC. 19, 2018



Merry Christmas!

CNS PHOTO/PAUL HARING

A Nativity scene made of sand is seen in St. Peter's Square. Sand sculptors Radovan Zivny from the Czech Republic, Susanne Ruseler from the Netherlands, Ilya Filimontsev from Russia, and Rich Varano from the United States created the "Sand Nativity," unveiled in St. Peter's Square on Dec. 7.

CHRISTMAS MESSAGE



In his annual Christmas message, Bishop Terry R. LaValley reminds us of the words of Matthew's Gospel, read at the Christmas Vigil, "The virgin shall be with child and give birth to a son, and they shall call him Emmanuel, 'a name which means God is with us' (Mt. 1:22-23). Sometimes, when faced with the uncertainties and anxieties of life, it's difficult to remember this awesome mystery of our faith: throughout all life's struggles, God is with us!

FULL STORY, PAGE 3

Pope: Don't be afraid to ask for things in prayer

VATICAN CITY (CNS) — No one should be afraid to turn to God with prayer, especially in times of great doubt, suffering and need, Pope Francis said.

Jesus does not want people to become numb to life's problems and "extinguish" those things that make them human when they pray, the pope said Dec. 12 during his

weekly general audience in the Paul VI audience hall.

"He does not want us to smother our questions and requests, learning to put up with everything. Instead, he wants every pain, every apprehension to rise up to heaven and become a dialogue" with God, the father, he said.

Continuing a new series of audi-

ence talks on the Our Father, the pope reflected on the simplicity of the prayer and the way it addresses God with intimate familiarity.

With this prayer, Jesus shows an "audacious" way to address God immediately as "our Father" without any pomp and "preambles," the pope said.

"He doesn't say to turn to God

calling him 'O, the All-Powerful' or 'O, the One on high,' or 'O, You who are so far from us and I am the wretched one'"

"No. He doesn't say that, but simply (uses) the word, 'Father,' with great simplicity, like children who turn to their daddy. This word, 'Father,' expresses intimacy, filial trust," he said.

NORTH
COUNTRY
CATHOLIC

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EDITOR'S NOTE

'I'm not very good at Christian love'

Christmas is the season of love. It's when we celebrate that God loves us so much, He sent His Son to the world to save us and give us eternal life.

It's also when we share our love with the people closest to us, sharing gifts with family, friends and beloved colleagues.

The Catechism of the Catholic Church, borrowing a line from St. Thomas Aquinas, says "To love is to will the good of another." Reflecting on that concept, I discovered something: I'm not very good at Christian love.

Often, in the context of a

friendship or relationship of any type, I'm instinctively looking for reciprocity. If I do a favor for a loved one, I often find myself expecting that favor be returned when I'm in need. That's not willing the good of another, it's willing the good of another with the expectation that they'll do something good for me. That's not love.



Darcy L.
Fargo

If you had asked me several months ago, I would've told you my marriage is a 50-50 partnership. Lately, however, it hasn't been so balanced. As I struggled with my recent health problems, my husband kept our family and

household running. The balance was tipped. Instead of both of us carrying the load and dividing duties, and supporting each other equally, he had to handle almost everything, including providing care for me. The split was closer to 95-5.

The same is true in friendships. While it would be awesome if our friends could be available to help and support us every time we need them, that's not always possible. Sometimes, there's an imbalance. Sometimes one friend needs the other more. Sometimes one has more – more time, more emotional energy, more resources – to give.

It's those times when love is imbalanced, the times when

someone needs us but can't give anything in return, that we show real love. And isn't that the most important gift we can give?

Speaking of gifts, as we celebrate Christmas this edition, I'd like to thank you, the readers of *The NCC*, for your continued support.

Your kind notes, Christmas cards, compliments and even occasional criticism have been gifts to me this year. I cherish them,

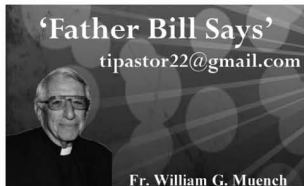
On behalf of myself, Editorial Assistant Christine Ward, and all the NCC columnists, contributing writers and photographers, *The North Country Catholic* wishes you all a merry and blessed Christmas.

Christmas greetings from Father Bill

Happy Christmas! Today's column will be my Christmas card to you all!

I want to use this opportunity to wish you all, who join me each week, a happy and peace-filled celebration of the Birth of Jesus. Our Christmas celebration is a time to remember that Jesus, the Son of God, came to our world to show us how sacred and blessed this race of people is. Jesus is one of us. Jesus came to make our world a better place. At Christmas, we are reminded that we, as disciples of Jesus, must live as blessed people; Jesus was one of us, and we can do so much to make our world happier and a better place.

I want to thank you all for being a part of my family each week as readers of this column. I think of you each time I sit down to write the next edition. Today, at this Christmas time, I promise to remember you all in a special way in my Christmas Masses. My prayer is that God fills this New Year with happiness for you and your families.



Christmas is all about gratitude. I know that I have so much to be grateful for this Christmas. I hope you do, also. I thank God for Jesus' presence in my life and this world. Jesus came to transform this world. Jesus transforms my world; he supports and bring his peace and love into all that I do. Jesus strengthens my faith, and his forgiving love brings peace to all that I do. Each Christmas as I celebrate the birth of my Savior, I celebrate with gratitude for all that the Lord brings into my life – so many gifts. I know how blessed we are. Jesus was one of us.

There are so many others in my life that I think of and pray for in gratitude each Christmas. I want to send my gratitude to my two editors this year, my two bosses. The

North Country Catholic has gone through a smooth transition this year. I want to thank Mary Lou Kilian, my editor for many years. She was the one who invited me to write this column and was always there to support my efforts. I was truly blessed to work for her. Thanks, Mary Lou.

And now, a note of gratitude to our present editor, Darcy Fargo. She is becoming an excellent part of our diocesan staff. I have noticed her love for the North Country Catholic and for the Diocese of Ogdensburg. Thank you, Darcy.

As I continue along this Christmas Card, I would like to add my gratitude to our Bishop, Bishop Terry LaValley. Bishop LaValley has demonstrated often his loving spirit and dedicated concern for the Diocese of Ogdensburg. He has met this challenging time for our Catholic Church with courage and boldness. I thank him for this. We are fortunate as a diocese to have such a great Bishop. Thank

you, God, for sending us, Bishop LaValley.

So many more that I am grateful for this Christmas. I thank God for the many dedicated and hardworking priests, my brothers in the Lord's ministry. I remember also the many dedicated deacons in our parishes. I thank God for the many loving and faith-filled Sisters who minister in the parishes of this diocese. They add so much enthusiasm and life to the Church's work.

I want to add a note of gratitude to God for the many wonderful families that make our parishes such great communities. I have been privileged to know and work with so many families as a pastor. Now, as I travel around to other parishes helping pastors, I continue to meet and recognize so many great families. We are so blessed in this diocese. They make the life of this diocese alive and Christ filled.

Finally, a quick thank you to my own family who are such a support to me.

FOLLO ME

Emmanuel: God is with you!

Dear Sisters and Brothers in Christ:

At the Christmas Vigil Mass, we will hear St. Matthew tell us that "All this happened to fulfill what the Lord had said through the prophet: 'The virgin shall be with child and give birth to a son, and they shall call him Emmanuel,' a name which means God is with us" (Mt. 1:22-23). Sometimes, when faced with the uncertainties and anxieties of life, it's difficult to remember this awesome mystery of our faith: throughout all life's struggles, God is with us!

To migrant families who are frightened and feel so vulnerable because government leaders have failed you - Emmanuel: God is with you! To children robbed of innocence because Church leaders have failed you - Emmanuel: God is with you! To moms, dads and children in Latakia and so many other places who are terrorized and feel isolated because you courageously live your Christian faith - Emmanuel: God is with you! Yes, believe it: God is with us! Our God never fails us.

Christmas 2018 is a beautiful occasion to recommit ourselves to embracing this truth of our faith. God has entered our world, was born among us, never to abandon us. Our God's unconditional love and boundless mercy became flesh in the Person of Jesus Christ so that we might touch and see God's constant compassion for every one of us.

In many ways, this has been a painful year. However, the upcoming days



Blessed Christmas!

Bishop Terry R. LaValley and Bishop Antoine Chbeir of Latakia, Syria are pictured with students from St. James in Gouverneur in the Bishop's 2018 Christmas greeting.

of the Christmas season are a graced time for you and me to focus our prayerful attention on all who yearn to experience, in a tangible way, God's Presence in their lives. In this moment, when the Babe of Bethlehem brings light into gloom and darkness and the heavenly choirs sing of God's Peace, we seek forgiveness and conversion of heart for the times we have failed to be instruments of God's loving and merciful presence...when we have fostered polarization rather than reconciliation and healing.

Advent, Christmas, 2019 - all indicators that this is a time of new beginnings. May the Christ Child bring you and your loved ones the Gift of Love, the Blessing of Hope and the Promise of Peace. A blessed Christmas and joy-filled New Year!

Faithfully yours in Christ,

Terry R. LaValley

Most Reverend
Terry R. LaValley
Bishop of Ogdensburg

Syrian bishop notes gratitude

The following is a correspondence from Bishop Antoine Chbeir, bishop of Latakia, Syria. The Diocese of Ogdensburg has been engaged in a "Solidarity in Faith" partnership with the Syrian diocese, offering support and prayers to the war-torn Syrian diocese.

Bishop Terry,

Thank you very much for your lovely Christmas card putting Syrian Christians in the spot light; Bishop Gregory Mansour was the first one to point it out.

I hope everybody is doing well, in particular your clergy.

I am profoundly touched by your gesture. You are bringing to Syrians a lot of consolation, support, comfort and relief.

I cannot help but ask Christmas Child to bring to you and your people joy, peace, serenity and times of great blessings.

I will remember you, your clergy and faithful at Christmas Mass, in particular the sick. May the souls of the deceased ones rest in peace!

Please know that you, your clergy and faithful are always in our thoughts and prayers. Merry Christmas and Happy New Year!

Bishop Antoine Chbeir

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Merry Christmas

and a

Blessed

New Year

From the Staff of the
Tribunal Office
Fr. Douglas Lucia, JCL
Fr. Garry Groux, JCL
Elaine Seymour



Environmental Stewardship**Feasting on the fruits of the earth and the Spirit**

Have you ever given or received a basket of fruit for Christmas? At the turn of the last century, good children received their only orange for the year as a Christmas gift. This was a real treat as tropical and fresh fruits were not readily eaten by the average family.

How might this custom of giving fruit as a gift be connected to our celebration of Christmas?

As we read the Scriptures, we often see that celebrating the Lord's presence among them was symbolized by feasting on the delicious fruits of the earth.

For example:

"And I brought you into a plentiful land to enjoy its fruits and its good things." - Jeremiah 2:7

"On this mountain the LORD of hosts will make for all peoples a feast of rich food, a feast of well-aged wine, of rich food full of marrow, of aged wine well refined." - Isaiah 25:6

"As a Christmas symbol, fruit recalls the twelve Fruits of the Holy Spirit. These Fruits result from the activity of the Gifts of the Holy Spirit in our lives. The Twelve Fruits of the Holy Spirit are: Charity (love), Joy, Peace, Patience, Benignity (Kindness), Goodness, Long-suffering (Patiently Bearing Suffering over a Long Period of Time), Mildness, Faith, Modesty, Purity, Chastity." - Galatians 5:22

As we enjoy the fruits of the earth that bedeck our tables at Christmas and the many gifts of the Spirit that help us to live as followers of the Lord Jesus, let us call to mind our many blessings.

Let us pray:

We praise You, Lord God, for teaching us that the earth and its fullness belong to you and we thank you for giving us the most urgent of tasks: to protect, heal and honor your gift of Creation and the Gifts of your Spirit to know how to do it. AMEN

Bishop's Public Schedule

Dec. 19 – 10:50 a.m. – Mass at St. Joseph's Home in Ogdensburg

Dec. 21 – 12:15 p.m. – Diocesan Staff Christmas Party at Bishop's Residence

Dec. 22 – 4 p.m. – Mass at St. Mary's Cathedral

Dec. 24 – 4 p.m. – Christmas Vigil Mass at St. Mary's Cathedral (Children's)

Dec. 25 – Midnight – Midnight Mass at St. Mary's Cathedral

9 a.m. – Christmas Mass at Notre Dame in Ogdensburg

Dec. 26 – Noon – Mass at St. Mary's Cathedral

Rest in Peace

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

Dec. 20 – Rev. Luke Harney, 1892; Rev. Jean B. A. Barette, O.M.I., 1955

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

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

Dec. 23 – Rev. John B. P. Honorat, O.M.I., 1862

Dec. 24 – Rev. Jean Claude Leonard, O.M.I., 1868

Dec. 25 – Rev. Patrick Lyons, 1911; Rev. Oswald L. Bentley, 1940

Protecting God's Children

The Diocese of Ogdensburg has scheduled sessions for Protecting God's Children for Adults. Pre-registration online is required. Participants may preregister at www.virtus.org.

Upcoming sessions:

Jan. 24 – 7:30 p.m., Wakefield Recital Hall at SUNY Potsdam

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**Letters to the Editor**

We welcome letters from readers of the *North Country Catholic*.

•Due to space limitations, we ask that the number of words be limited to 300.

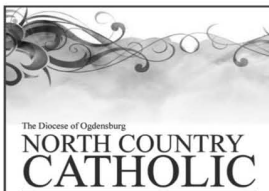
•We cannot accept letters which support ideas which are contrary to the teachings of the Catholic Church.

•Send letters to North Country Catholic, PO Box 326, Ogdensburg, NY, 13669 or e-mail to news@northcountrycatholic.org

•Join the conversation!

To Report Abuse

If you have a complaint of suspected misconduct involving diocesan clergy, religious, employees or volunteers, contact **Victims Assistance Coordinator**, Terrianne Yanulavich, Adult & Youth Counseling Services of Northern New York, 618 Lake Rd, Chateaugay, NY 12920; terrianneyanulavich@yahoo.com Phone: Day: 518-651-2267, Night: 518-569-0612; or Father Christopher Carrara, the Episcopal Vicar for Pastoral Personnel at 315-393-2920



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**'TIS THE SEASON**

Students in the Faith Formation program at St. John's Church in Morriston recently made Advent wreaths.



Christmas Blessings



Pictured above with Bishop Terry LaValley are Fr. Daniel Keefe from Plattsburgh and Msgr. Paul Whitmore from Watertown. They are among the 46 retired priests of the Diocese of Ogdensburg who will benefit from the 2018 Christmas Collection.

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

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



MERRY CHRISTMAS



Itinerant preacher: Capuchin leads bishops' retreat

VATICAN CITY (CNS) – For more than 38 years, Capuchin Father Raniero Cantalamessa has preached to the pope and top officials of the Roman Curia. In early January, he will lead the weeklong retreat of the U.S. bishops.

As they continue to study and discuss ways to respond to the clerical sexual abuse crisis, the bishops will gather for the retreat Jan. 2-8 at Mundelein Seminary near Chicago.

Pope Francis suggested the bishops hold the retreat and offered the services of the 84-year-old Father Cantalamessa, who has served as preacher of the papal household since 1980.

In an email Dec. 6, the Capuchin declined to be interviewed about the retreat, saying, "At this delicate moment in the life of the U.S. church, I don't believe it would be

opportune for me to give interviews."

The theme of the U.S. bishops' retreat will be "the mission of the apostles and of their successors" and will draw from Mark 3:14, which says Jesus "appointed 12 – whom he also named apostles – that they might be with him and he might send them forth to preach."

Greg Burke, director of the Vatican press office, told Catholic News Service, "You can see why the pope asked the bishops to make the retreat together in what he told the bishops of Chile: without faith and without prayer, fraternity is impossible."

"At a moment like this, the bishops need to be united in prayer, and Catholics in the U.S. should see them at prayer," Burke said Dec. 13. "A retreat is always a time for conversion, and perhaps

there's been no time in the U.S. with more need for conversion than now."

The job of "preacher of the papal household" is not a fulltime position; each year it requires the priest to give an average of eight meditations – one each on most Fridays of Advent and Lent – and the homily during the pope's Good Friday celebration of the Lord's Passion.

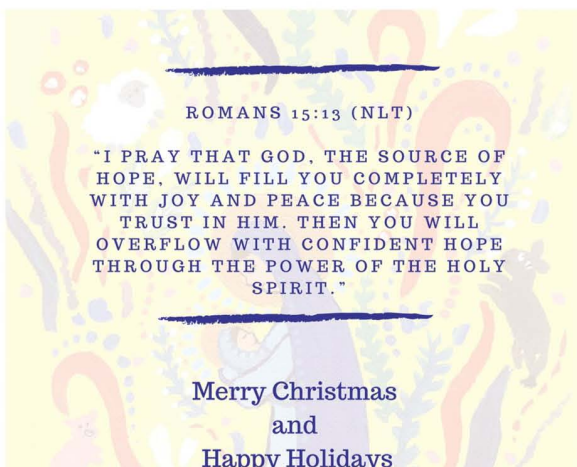
The title, and the ministry, has a very long history. Superiors of different religious orders took turns preaching to the pontiff and his aides during Advent and Lent until the mid-1500s, when Pope Paul IV appointed the first preacher of the papal household; his successors followed suit, always choosing a religious-order priest for the job. Pope Benedict XIV decided in 1743 to be more specific, decreeing that

the preacher of the papal household always be a Capuchin friar.

St. John Paul II asked Father Cantalamessa to take the job in 1980; since then, the Capuchin has given more than 300 spiritual talks and homilies to the popes and their closest aides in the Roman Curia.

When he is not preaching to the pope, Father Cantalamessa leads retreats around the world, writes books and articles and works with charismatic Catholics; in late October, he was named ecclesial adviser of "Charis," the new international coordinating body for the Catholic charismatic renewal.

In a 2015 interview with CNS, he said the first time he climbed the steps to the lectern in St. Peter's Basilica to preach to the pope on Good Friday, "It felt like I was climbing Mount Everest."



SCRIPTURE REFLECTIONS

Our families can learn from the Holy Family

Every year, the church celebrates the Feast of the Holy Family – Jesus, Mary, & Joseph – on the Sunday within the Octave of Christmas. And that means a celebration of family life – births, weddings, funerals, anniversaries.

In the first reading, we hear about a joyful birth, that of Samuel. After years of prayer, Hannah and Elkanah are granted a son. As soon as Samuel is weaned, the mother fulfills her promise and gives him up to the Lord's service at the shrine at Shiloh.

What's the point? Trusting in the Lord bears fruit. Children are a gift from God, and they always belong to God. Parents do not own their children. They are guardians to whom God

entrusts their education and upbringing.

So we call Jesus, Mary and Joseph the Holy Family, and paintings always place a halo over their heads.

In order for us to see how this family encountered problems just like other families, the Gospel chosen for this

Sunday is about Jesus' boyhood years.

Joseph is by now a carpenter in Nazareth, and Mary is a busy housewife and mother of a teenager! As parents, Mary and Joseph are well aware of their responsibilities. Being God's divine Son does not prevent Jesus, however, from acting with all the inexperience and spontaneous behavior of any normal 12-year-old boy.

What an exciting experience for a boy from a



Monsignor
Paul E.
Whitmore

December 23

Holy Family of Jesus,
Mary & Joseph

READINGS

Zephaniah 3:14-18a

Philippians 4:4-7

Luke 3:10-18

small town to travel to Jerusalem for the feast.

Fascinated with the learned teachers He found in the Temple, he loses track of time and, like most teenagers, doesn't think about the terror that a missing child can cause for parents.

After three frantic days of searching, they find him, only to hear Jesus rather naively ask, "Didn't you realize I had to be in my Father's house?"

No, they don't understand, but they tuck it away in their hearts, along with a lot of other unanswered questions. Mary and Joseph, like

millions of other parents, were acting as good, responsible care-givers who are having difficulty understanding their son.

So what else is new! Teenagers don't understand themselves either. Was Jesus just carried away with impatience to start His ministry?

For Joseph and Mary, the fact that Jesus was divine made his actions all the more mystifying to them.

What Jesus did after that is really the great lesson for all families: He humbly bowed to their authority. When he saw how upset they were, he promptly left the Temple, and went back obediently to Nazareth where he "advanced in age and grace and wisdom."

The second reading gives a great recipe for successful family relationships. What makes a family "holy?"

It's all so simple! Just

love, communicate with, and forgive one another, and keep the commandments!

Of course, simple answers like that are the hardest to accept!

John says we must believe in the Son and keep his commandments.

Joseph was totally committed to heading this "holy family" because the Angel told him to; Mary, at the risk of her reputation, gave birth to Jesus and was a faithful, protective mother because God wanted it. And Jesus was a faithful son, subservient to human parents because his heavenly Father willed it so!

Our families would find their disagreements, stressful relationships, and resentments that spoil the joy of family harmony so much easier to solve by imitating the faith and loving trust of the Holy Family.

Charity is our business this Christmas season

The following editorial, provided by Catholic News Services, was originally published by the Rhode Island Catholic, the newspaper of the Diocese of Providence.

Charles Dickens' novella "A Christmas Carol," which was published in 1843, is a story that transcends the time in which it was written.

Even though it was a

fictional story, Dickens depicted the cultural influences, steeped in Victorian mores, which formed the Western ideal for the celebration of Christmas.

The protagonist in the story is Ebenezer Scrooge, a miserly London-based money lender, is described in the story as "a squeezing, wrenching, grasping, scraping, clutching, covetous old sinner!"

He represents today the person who hates humanity: He's pro-choice, selfish, self-centered and looked at others as mere tools for his pleasure.

Scrooge was visited by the ghost of Jacob Mar-

ley, his old partner, who wanders the earth entwined by heavy chains and money boxes forged during a lifetime of greed and selfishness.

Scrooge did not understand why Marley was in such a state of suffering stating, "But you were always a good man of business, Jacob," Marley cries out.

"Business!" exclaims the ghost, wringing its hands again. "Mankind was my business! The common welfare was my business; charity, mercy, forbearance and benevolence were all my business. The dealings of my trade were but a drop of water in the comprehensive

ocean of my business!"

Scrooge would be later visited by three "spirits" who reminded Scrooge of the true meaning of Christmas.

He became a changed man who made humanity his business.

As we prepare this Advent for the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, let us be mindful of those who are struggling, suffering and looking to us for help.

Charity is our business, and may we give generously to those who are needy during this season, imitating the love of God and love of our neighbors.

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AT THE MOVIES

MORTAL ENGINES

NEW YORK (CNS) – The phrase "a city on the move" is usually just an expression. Not so in "Mortal Engines" (Universal), director Christian Rivers' screen version of Philip Reeve's novel for young adults.

In this adventure's dystopian far future, huge mobile cities roam around battling one another for scarce resources.

It's a bit of spectacle Rivers pulls off nicely. But once the wow factor has worn off, it becomes apparent that the emphasis on special effects has marginalized the human element in the movie.

Throw in some flat dialogue from screenwriters Fran Walsh, Philippa Boyens and Peter Jackson and the whole project winds up registering as visually impressive but dramatically sterile.

The odd-couple love story at the center of the plot involves Tom Natsworthy (Robert Sheehan), a contented citizen of the film's locomotive London where he works in the equivalent of the British Museum and rebel warrior Hester Shaw (Hera Hilmar).

After attempting to kill



CNS PHOTO/UNIVERSAL

Robert Sheehan, Jihae and Hera Hilmar star in a scene from the movie "Mortal Engines."

one of the British metropolis' leading citizens, archaeologist Thaddeus Valentine (Hugo Weaving) – in vengeance, she claims, for Valentine's long-ago murder of her mother – Hester makes her escape. Only moments later, Valentine decides Tom has heard too much of Hester's story and secretly tries to liquidate him.

Though Tom survives, he falls off London in the process, and he and Hester find themselves fighting for their lives in the wilderness.

They eventually put aside their differences and join forces to fight Valentine's attempt to gain dominance for London by reviving the doomsday armaments that long ago destroyed

all civilization.

They're aided in the later stages of their struggle by Anna Fang (Jihae), a glamorous outlaw. But they're also stalked doggedly by Shrike (Stephen Lang), an unstoppable human-android amalgam Valentine unleashes to pursue them.

Despite the appealing leads and the innovative gesture of featuring a

heroine whose face is disfigured by scars – Hester was wounded in Valentine's attack on her mother – the picture, though lavish, comes across as wanting.

Christian viewers, moreover, may feel somewhat uneasy about the fact that Valentine's lab is housed in St. Paul's Cathedral, though the dialogue indicates that this is meant to be seen as an incongruous setting for his evil activities.

As a cautionary tale about the dangers of advanced weaponry with relatively few objectionable elements, "Mortal Engines" is probably acceptable for older teens.

The film contains much combat and other violence with some gore, a mild oath, a few scatological jokes and at least one crass term.

The Catholic News Service classification is A-III – adults.

The Motion Picture Association of America rating is PG-13 – parents strongly cautioned.

Some material may be inappropriate for children under 13.

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- The Office of Family Life

CLINTON

FISHERS CLUB

Plattsburgh – Fishers Club Discernment event to be held.

Date: Jan. 4-5

Place: Start with Mass at St. Peter's Church on Jan. 4. Jan. 5 depart for Montreal at 8 a.m. with events planned for the day.

Features: Rosary and confession, Mass, lunch, visit Abby, Vespers and dinner. Participants are responsible for obtaining their own meals for lunch and dinner. Passport or enhanced license is mandatory for admission into Canada; if you do not possess the necessary documentation, please join us for the Friday night session.

Contact: Father Howard Venette (hvenette@gmail.com) or Father Doug Lucia (dlucia@rcdony.org), by Dec. 28, if you plan to attend.

BOARS HEAD FEAST & FESTIVAL

Altona – Boars Head feast and festival to be held.

Schedule: Jan. 5 at 5 p.m. will be the meal and Jan. 6 at 2 p.m. and 6 p.m. will be the festival.

Place: Holy Angels Hall and Church
Cost: Feast Only, \$25; Festival Only, \$20; Both, \$40; Children, \$10; under 5, Free

Features: Two evenings that celebrate the End of the Christmas Season and the Feast of the Epiphany. A medieval jubilation of Light from Darkness.

Contact: For more information call 518-236-5632

PANCAKE BREAKFAST

Treadwell Mills – The Knights of Columbus will hold an all you can eat Pancake Breakfast.

Date: Jan. 6

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

Place: St. Joseph's Church Parish Hall
Cost: Adults, \$8; Children 6-12, \$4; under 5, Free

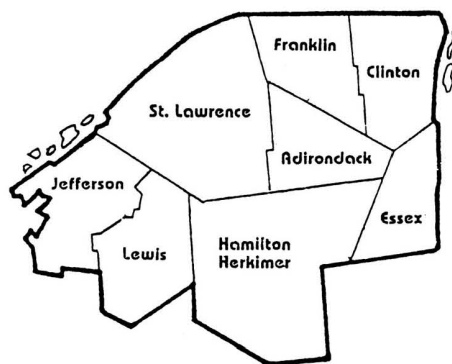
CLOTHES, SHOES DONATION CENTER

Plattsburgh – Drop unwanted clothes, shoes, sheets, blankets, bedspreads, towels, curtains and stuffed animals in our BLUE drop box.

Place: Seton Catholic

Features: Seton receive 5 cents per pound of donations. You can also donate cans and bottles in our redemption box.

BLESSED SACRAMENT



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.

ADORATION

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

Time: 1 p.m. to 4

Place: Immaculate Conception Church

EUCCHARISTIC ADORATION

Plattsburgh – Eucharistic Adoration is held throughout the year every Wednesday, Thursday, and Friday.

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

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

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

JEFFERSON

SPAGHETTI & MEATBALL DINNER

Evans Mills – Knights of Columbus to have a Spaghetti and Meatball dinner.

Date: Jan. 5

Time: 4 p.m. to 7

Place: St. Mary's Parish Center

Cost: Adults, \$7; Senior Citizens, \$6; Children under 12, \$5; under 5, Free
Contact: For more information call 315-629-4678

LEWIS

EUCCHARISTIC ADORATION

Lowville – Eucharistic Adoration to be held.

Date: Dec. 20

Time: 4 to 5 p.m.

Place: St. Peter's Church

Features: To Thank God for & To Honor the Most Blessed Sacrament, all are invited to celebrate one hour of Exposition, the Divine Mercy Chapel,

silent adoration, and Benediction.

INTERNATIONAL CRECHES-NATIVITIES

Houseville – All are welcome to an exhibit of International Creches-Nativities.

Date: Dec. 16, 23, 30 Jan. 6

Time: The display may be viewed before or after the 11 a.m. Masses or between 1 to 3 p.m. or by appointment during the week.

Place: St. Hedwig's Church,

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

Contact: 315-348-6260

OPLATKI-POLISH CHRISTMAS WAFER

Houseville – The Polish Christmas Wafer or OPLATEK is available from St. Hedwig's Church.

Cost: \$3 per package plus postage.

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

this Holy Night.

Contact: 315-348-6260.

DIVINE MERCY DEVOTIONS

Houseville – Divine Mercy Devotions to be held for the month of Jan.

Date: Jan. 6

Time: 3 p.m.

Place: St. Hedwig's Church

Features: The program includes, Vespers (Evening Prayer), Exposition of the Most Blessed Sacrament, the Divine Mercy Chaplet and Benediction. All are welcome. Begin the new year by asking for Mercy for ourselves and the whole world.

Contact: 315-348-6260.

ST. LAWRENCE

CHRISTMAS HAM DINNER

Ogdensburg – A Christmas Ham dinner will be served by the Ogdensburg Knights of Columbus.

Date: Dec. 25, Christmas Day

Time: Dinner will start at noon

Features: Transportation to the club will be provided from Cennetenial, Riverview and Parkview Towers. Delivery will be given to shut-ins only. Take out will be available.

Contact: 315-393-7990 for reservations.

ICE SKATING

Canton – The Canton Knights of Columbus is sponsoring their Annual Free Public Skating.

Date: Dec. 25, Christmas Day

Time: 3 p.m. to 5

Place: Canton Pavilion

Features: Skate rentals will be available.

BINGO

Canton – The Canton Knights of Columbus will be having BINGO.

Date: Dec. 31, New Year's Eve

Time: 6 p.m.

Place: 30 Miner Street

GALA

Gouverneur – Save the date for the St. James Gala.

Date: Feb. 9

Features: Join for a taste of "The Sweet Life" in rich Tuscan style. The Italian themed dinner will be presented by chef Joe Pistolessi and family.

Contact: Tickets will be available Jan. 1 by calling 315-287-0130

DIOCESAN EVENTS

FESTIVAL OF LESSONS & CAROLS

Northern Adirondack Vocal Ensemble

(NAVE) will give two performances of A Festival of Lessons and Carols.

Schedule: Dec. 22 at St. Peter's Church, Plattsburgh at 7 p.m. and Dec. 23 at St. Agnes Church, Lake Placid at 4 p.m.

Cost: \$10 Donation

Features: Anthems, carols, and hymns illuminate the Christmas story with community readers and congregational singing.

SURVIVING DIVORCE

Surviving Divorce groups to be held for 12 weeks.

Schedule: Jan. 22 at St. Anthony's Church, Watertown and Jan. 24 at St. Peter's Parish in Massena

Time: 6:30 to 8:30 p.m.

Features: The Surviving Divorce Program offers support and healing for people who are separated or divorced.

Contact: Contact Stephen Tartaglia at 315-393-2920 or starttaglia@rcdony.org. To register go to:

<https://www.rcdony.org/family-life/surviving-divorce-support-group.html>

DOVS MEMBERSHIP CAMPAIGN

D.O.V.S (Diocese of Ogdensburg Vocation Society) as a group, are dedicated to promoting and fostering vocations to the priesthood and religious life in our diocese. Funds that we raise through our membership campaign helps us to raise awareness for vocations in our diocese.

Cost: Annual dues are \$50 per year or \$75 per married couple.

Contact: Any questions please call Connie Randall at 315-265-2762 or email connierandall47@yahoo.com

NEIGHBORING DIOCESES

NEW EVANGELIZATION SUMMIT

Ottawa – The Annual New Evangelization Summit will take place in Ottawa.

Date: May 4, 2019.

Cost: Free

Features: The speakers for this year will be Father James Mallon, Cardinal Gerald C. Lacroix, Michael Dopp, Father John Bielawski, Michelle Thompson and Michelle Moran. Office of the New Evangelization would like to reserve a block of seats for participants from the Diocese of Ogdensburg.

Contact: If you are at all interested in attending this one-day summit, please contact Marika Donders, Director of the New Evangelization, at mdonders@rcdony.org or 315-393-2920 so we can keep you updated.



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

What is Christmas?

*It isn't just a starry night
Or Snowflakes on the ground.
It isn't just a merry hearth
With good friends gathered 'round.*

*It isn't just a Christmas tree,
Or gifts that play the part;
But Love and Peace
The Season brings
To touch the seeking heart.*

— By Roxie Lusk Smith

There is love and peace in the developing countries because of missionaries.

Yes, missionaries like yourselves let the love of Christ shine in the lives of people in the missions as they receive your generous donations.

On behalf of missionaries and the people they serve who benefit from the Society for the Propagation of the Faith, the Holy Childhood Association and the Missionaries Projects of the Diocese of Ogdensburg, I thank you for your support.

Your continued generosity touches the needy hearts of the suffering and poor in the mission lands.

"The Lord has done great things for us, and we are filled with joy." Psalm 126:3 On behalf of the mission office, please accept our prayers of gratitude for you. God bless you and your loved ones.

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

www.rcdony.org/mission

OBITUARIES

Altona — Anna R. (Peryea) Forkey, 86; Mass of Christian Burial Dec. 10, 2018 at Holy Angels Church; burial in parish cemetery.

Gouverneur — Shirley (Spring) Maloy, 86; Mass of Christian Burial Dec. 12, 2018 at St. James Church; burial in East Riverside Cemetery.

Gouverneur — Anna Marie (Seitz) Reilly, 95; Funeral Services Dec. 8, 2018 at Green Funeral Home; burial in New St. Francis Cemetery.

Lowville — David F. "Sam" Kelley, 67; Funeral Services Dec. 13, 2018 at Iseneker Funeral Home; burial at Sea.

Malone — Jeanne (Robinson) Tupia, 87; Funeral Services Dec. 15, 2018 at the Spaulding Funeral Home; burial in St. Francis Cemetery, Constable.

Massena — Anna Mae (Eldridge) Gray, 81; Mass of Christian Burial Dec. 14, 2018 at Sacred Heart Church; burial in St. Patrick's Cemetery, Brasher Falls.

Massena — Robert L. Wilson, 89; Mass of Christian Burial Dec. 11, 2018 at St. Mary's Church; burial in Chapel Hill Cemetery, Parishville.

Massena — Thomas G. Wilson, 60; Funeral Services Dec. 15, 2018 at Phillips Memorial Home; burial in St. Lawrence Cemetery, Louisville.

Massena — Georgia I "Skip" (Hitsman) Wood, 71; Memorial Services Dec. 12, 2018 at St. Mary's Church; burial in Calvary Cemetery.

Ogdensburg — Ann M. Kelly, 68; Mass of Christian Burial Dec. 13, 2018 at

Notre Dame Church; burial in Calvary Cemetery.

Ogdensburg — Patricia (Burns) Kocyla, 87; Mass of Christian Burial in Spring at Notre Dame Church; burial in St. Mary's Cemetery.

Ogdensburg — Alberta M. (Bouchard) Scott, 91; Mass of Christian Burial Dec. 10, 2018 at St. Mary's Cathedral; burial in St. Mary's Cemetery.

Plattsburgh — Patricia A. (Trombley) Davies, 71; Mass of Christian Burial Dec. 12, 2018 at St. Peter's Church.

Plattsburgh — Susan M. (Rougier) Dumas, 61; Mass of Christian Burial Dec. 13, 2018 at St. Peter's Church; burial in parish cemetery.

Plattsburgh — Francis "Sonny" Senecal, 85; Mass of Christian Burial

Dec. 15, 2018 at St. Peter's Church; burial in parish cemetery.

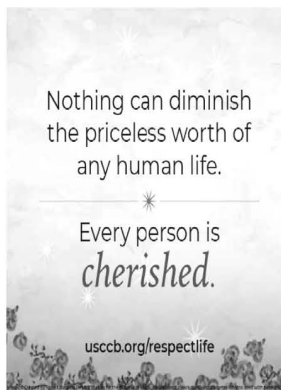
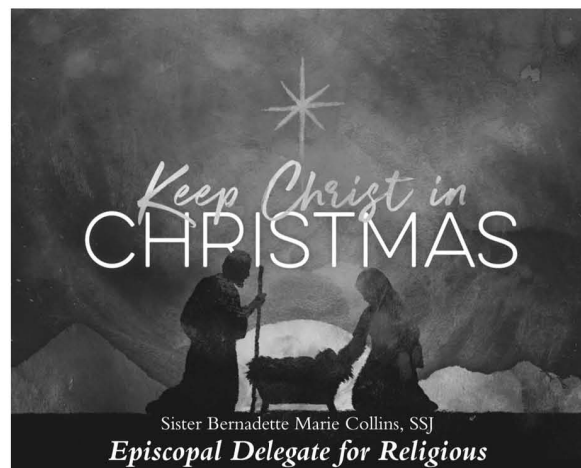
Plattsburgh — Charlene (Bolvig) Wolff, 68; Memorial Services Dec. 21, 2018 at St. Peter's Church.

Port Henry — Rose "Doris" (Gaddor) Trombley, 76; Mass of Christian Burial Dec. 8, 2018 at St. Patrick's Church.

Ticonderoga — Pauline A. (Robbins) Hill, 90; Mass of Christian Burial Dec. 14, 2018 at St. Mary's Church; burial in Valley View Cemetery.

Watertown — Frederick W. Clarke, 71; Funeral Services Dec. 13, 2018 at the Reed & Benoit Funeral Home.

Watertown — Lucy Catherine (Fratelli) Trumble, 90; Mass of Christian Burial Dec. 10, 2018 at St. Anthony's Church; burial in Glenwood Cemetery.



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*And the Word became flesh
and dwelt among us.*



Merry Christmas from the Respect Life Office
 (Image used with permission from The Saints Project)

Faith advocates see victories in new farm bill

WASHINGTON (CNS) – The farm bill that passed both houses of Congress by wide margins doesn't have money in it to protect endangered species, but it did preserve one that had been on the threatened list: bipartisanship.

"We were so excited that the Senate acted like grown-ups," said Sister Simone Campbell, executive director of Network, a Catholic social justice lobby.

"They actually did governance, and they had hearings, and Sen. (Pat) Roberts (a Republican) from Kansas: I rarely agree with him on anything, so this was an amazing project he led, focused on the needs of the people involved," Sister Campbell said Dec. 13. "It was far beyond partisanship in actually trying to make government work."

Jim Ennis, executive director of Catholic Rural Life, was happy Congress acted relatively swiftly. This was the first time a farm bill passed without needing an extension of the expiring version since 1990, when George H.W. Bush was president.

Not all farmers will reap benefits from the farm bill. "We've got lots of folks hurting in rural communities," Ennis told CNS Dec. 14, "but you can't put everything in one bill. You just can't."

Sister Campbell, a Sister of Social Service, gave Roberts, chairman of the Senate Agriculture Committee, credit for "listening to many of the agricultural workers in Kansas who use SNAP (the federal Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program) in the off-season."

Farmers who hire the farmworkers, she said, "depend on their workers being able to eat," and Roberts saw this "through the eyes of the farmworkers and the farmers."

She added Roberts was "helped by the changing politics in Kansas, which has moved significantly away from the hyperpartisan, punitive approach. ... I think it was a combination of his experience, the experience of his people, and the November election."

Sister Campbell also lauded Roberts' Democratic counterpart on the committee, Sen. Debbie Stabenow of Michigan: "She has worked hard to put together a very collaborative relationship with him, so together, they could create a bill they could be proud of."

The Senate passed the farm bill in a 87-13 vote Dec. 11. The House passed

it 369-47 Dec. 12. The bill was awaiting the signature of President Donald Trump.

One point of contention between the original House and Senate versions was a provision in the House bill that would have imposed stricter work requirements for SNAP eligibility, with stretches of SNAP ineligibility growing longer each time a recipient failed to report their work, or looking for work, in a timely manner. The House ultimately removed that from its version of the bill.

"We actually got most of the stuff that we wanted," Sister Campbell told CNS in a telephone interview. While she said she sees farm subsidies as "a little excessive," the final bill "maintained pretty much the existing protections for farm runoff and the fertilizers used and that sort of thing. So I don't have complaints on that side. Certainly, after what we were facing in the House, I'm certainly not complaining about the nutritional title."

"It's a rare day for me to not complain about something."

"They decided we can't keep doing that to our farmers," Ennis said of the extensions lawmakers passed in all the previous farm bills over close to the last 30 years.

"It helps, too, that the (Republican-led) House felt under pressure due to the change in leadership (in January)," he told CNS. "They have the control now, but in the future, they would be losing control. So they made some concessions, but passed something they can live with."

Having a farm bill in place, he added, gives farmers "stability for planning for next year."

Dairy farmers, while they will see gradual opening of Canadian markets as sources for their goods under this bill, would be one focus of a future bill should one be submitted, Ennis said.

"There are a lot of dairy farmers hurting right now because of low prices," he added. "It's just very difficult to find markets that will pay a reasonable price."

Ennis said the future of family farms, with a focus on dairy farmers, will be the main topic in a future issue of Catholic Rural Life's quarterly magazine.