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THIS ISSUE**

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# NORTH COUNTRY CATHOLIC

DEC. 26, 2018

As we continue our celebration of the Christmas season, there will be no NCC on January 2.

*Merry Christmas & Happy New Year*

## A look back on highlights of 2018

In this, the final edition of the North Country Catholic for the year, we're taking an opportunity to look back at the people and happenings that made the paper's headlines in 2018.

FULL STORY, PAGE 3

## AWAY IN A MANGER



Students at Trinity Catholic School in Massena recently staged a Living Nativity. The youth were joined by three sheep and a goat from Para-A-Docs in Heuvelton and the Pierce family.

## SEASON OF GIVING



Students at St. Mary's School in Canton, working with local Knights of Columbus, helped provide food and a donation to the Church & Community Program.

FULL STORY, PAGE 4

# Pope: Being holy is what brings joy

VATICAN CITY (CNS) – This Christmas will people go to adore and be amazed by Jesus, or will they let themselves be detoured by distractions? Pope Francis asked.

In fact, one sign of holiness is being able to "be astonished, to feel wonder before God's gifts, his 'surprises.' And the greatest gift, the ever-new surprise is Jesus," he told Vatican employees and their family members during a

meeting Dec. 21 in the Paul VI audience hall.

The pope continued a tradition he began in 2014 of offering Christmas greetings to people who work at the Vatican. The special audience comes right after a longer-held tradition of the pope meeting with officials of the Roman Curia.

Christmas cheer was in the air as Vatican employees and their families, many dressed in festive

clothes, greeted the pope and gave him Christmas cards, gifts and hugs.

Christmas is the season of joy because the source of true joy – Christ the savior – has come, the pope said.

"But often we realize that people and perhaps we ourselves are caught up in so many things and, in the end, there is no joy or, if there is, it is very superficial. Why?" he asked.

Joy, he said, comes from

being holy or at least trying to be good, being close to Jesus and letting oneself be touched by wonder and "contaminated" by the joy that surrounds him.

Mary, Joseph, the shepherds and all the others gathered at the manger, gazing at the Christ child, are "overflowing with holiness and, therefore, with joy," he said.

Mary and Joseph had so many things to worry about, but they were

happy because "they welcomed this gift from God with so much faith and so much love."

He told the employees that his wish for them this Christmas was "to be saints, to be happy."

People must not be superficial saints, just "normal saints," that is, people who are holy even with all their defects and sins because "we ask for forgiveness and go forward," he said.

NORTH  
COUNTRY  
CATHOLIC

Box 326

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R. LAVALLEY  
PresidentREV. JOSEPH A. MORGAN  
Vice President  
JAMES D. CROWLEY  
Secretary-Treasurer  
DARCY L. FARGO  
Editor &  
Communications Director

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Telephone:  
(315) 608-7556

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## EDITOR'S NOTE

## 'The lambs are going rogue'

My family's home parish stages a children's Christmas pageant prior to the vigil Mass on Christmas Eve. My son, Jake, adores the pageant. He looks forward to it ever year.

This week, the organizers gathered interested participants for the first of two pageant rehearsals. The kids were given their roles – Joseph, Mary, innkeeper, angels, wise men, emperor... – and fitted with costumes.

Traditionally, the smallest children are cast as animals, lambs mostly. In years past, we've had one tiny, adorable lamb. This year, we have

three tiny, adorable lambs (and maybe an even tinier cow).

As the little lambs practiced processing down the aisle with the older boy cast as a shepherd, I hear one of the lambs making a strange noise.



Darcy L.  
Fargo

"I think he's chomping hay," another parent said, laughing.

"The lambs are going rogue," I replied.

Once they arrived at the manger scene, the lambs proceeded to be toddlers. They were climbing. They were running to their moms. They were gesturing

for the shepherd to pick them up. The young shepherd was literally herding these little lambs.

To me, the scene was hysterical. It was beautiful. It's everything I hope for in a children's Christmas pageant. I'm almost 100 percent certain there are going to be rogue lambs on Christmas Eve (I heard one lamb's father has been coaching him to bleat like a sheep). I can't wait!

A theater professional would probably consider rogue lambs during a performance a failure. They're ad libbing lines, they're not standing where they're supposed to... But because they're tiny children, we find

it funny and endearing.

I'm the kind of person who dwells on my failures and struggles. I tend to define my story based on what's written on the worst pages – the moments I go rogue and struggle with my sinfulness and the less-than-awesome parts of my personality.

While we may wish the toddlers would behave more predictably and strive to help them progress, we love them for what they are in the moment – beautiful kids doing what beautiful kids do. Similarly, we struggle. We fail. And while we're called to continue to strive for holiness and work to do better, God loves us where we are. Even if we go rogue.

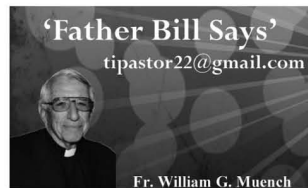
## Sacrament of Penance is a new beginning

On the first Sunday of Advent, our Catholic Church begins a new liturgical year. We start all over to follow the story of our salvation. We again celebrate the life, death and resurrection of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ.

Now, we are approaching the beginning of a new calendar year on New Year's Day. Again, we begin to start another year of our own life – a time of new adventures.

I am not a person who makes New Year's resolutions, as many traditionally do. Now don't get me wrong, I know that often I have to make changes in my life. There have been many times when I have realized personally that I need a conversion. Actually, this happens often. In fact, I recognize that as a disciple of Jesus, almost every day I must consider who I am and ask if there are any changes I should make in my life. This is time for us all.

It is for this that our church has developed the Sacrament of Penance. The Sacrament



Fr. William G. Muench

of Penance is meant to be a lifetime process. This sacrament is not meant to be a series of isolated confessions. Rather this is a lifetime of opportunities to consider our own lives and recognize the need for improvement. This sacrament begins best by considering the good things that we have been part of in our own life – our accomplishments. The Sacrament of Penance must always begin in a positive way.

We must then notice our failings and our sins – after all, we are human. We must recognize what is keeping us from our relationship with God; we must recognize our sins. What is it that keeps us from making our world a better place? What challenges have we refused to accept? What opportunities

have we missed? How can we become a better person?

In the Sacrament of Penance, we do something so that we may remember our decision for conversion. We confess to a priest. It is important that we put our failings into words. In this way we acknowledge our sins and failings. We confess so that we are ready for conversion. We want to remember this moment as we change what must be changed.

The important question for us to ask ourselves is: "So, now, what am I going to do?" Nothing happens in this sacramental experience unless we make a plan. How must my path to sanctity change?

The United States Catholic Catechism for Adults has an interesting review on the various names that our church assigns to this important and helpful sacrament. I would like to share this with you:

"It is called the Sacrament of Conversion because it

makes (us) sacramentally present Jesus' call to conversion, the first step in returning to the Father from whom one has strayed by sin. It is called the Sacrament of Penance, since it consecrates the Christian sinner's personal and ecclesial steps of conversion, penance, and satisfaction. It is called the Sacrament of Confession since the disclosure or confession of sins is an essential element of this Sacrament. In a profound sense, it is also a "confession" – acknowledgment and praise – of the holiness of God and of his mercy toward sinful man. It is called the Sacrament of Forgiveness, since by the priest's sacramental absolution, God grants the penitent 'pardon and peace.' It is called the Sacrament of Reconciliation because it imparts to the sinner the love of God who reconciles: 'Be reconciled to God.' He who lives by God's merciful love is ready to respond to the Lord's call: 'Go, first be reconciled to your brother.'

# A look back on the highlights of 2018

*Editor's note: This is the final edition of the North Country Catholic for 2018. Here's a look back at some of the highlights of the year, divided by theme.*

**Catholic Charities:** Catholic Charities of the Diocese of Ogdensburg received a \$10,000 grant from Catholic Charities USA to assist the victims of flooding in Clinton County. Sister Donna Franklin, the former director of Catholic Charities, received the agency's annual Caritas Award. Ciara LeRoy, a youth from Malone, received the Legacy Award.

**Catholic Schools:** New principals were named: Lynise Lassiter at Immaculate Heart Central in Watertown; and Joyce Giroux at Trinity Catholic School in Massena. Margaret Trainor from St. Mary's School in Canton was the 2018 Outstanding Catholic School Teacher for the Diocese of Ogdensburg.

**Priests:** Father Normand C. Cote and Father Pierre Aubin, MSC, celebrated 60 years of priesthood; Father Douglas Decker, Father Alan Lamica and Father Alan Shnob celebrated 40 years; and Father Timothy Canaan celebrated 25 years. Missionaries of the Sacred Heart Father Jonas R. Tandy was named the local Superior for the Watertown and Northern New York Missionaries of the Sacred Heart community.

**Deacons:** Deacon Thomas Yousey was named director of the Office for Ecumenism for the diocese; Deacon Richard Burns joined the diocesan staff as Campus Ministry Coordinator; and Deacon John Drollette of Plattsburgh has been appointed

associate director of deacon formation. Deacons and their wives traveled to Lake Placid May 2 and 3 for the Deacon Convocation. The keynote speaker was Bishop Christopher Coyne of Burlington.

**Religious:** Sister Bernadette Collins, a Sister of St. Joseph, has been named Episcopal Delegate for Religious; Daughter of Charity Sister Donna Franklin, who served as director of Catholic Charities for the Diocese of Ogdensburg for more than two decades, was honored upon her retirement with the Cross Pro-Ecclesia et Pontifice, (Cross for the Church and the Pontiff), the highest medal that can be awarded to the laity by the pope. After nearly 24 years, the Daughters of Charity ended their ministry in the Diocese of Ogdensburg. Sister Mary Catherine Pham made her Perpetual Profession as a Sister Adorer of the Precious Blood on Sept. 14 at St. Patrick's Church in Watertown. Jubilees were celebrated by Sister Cindy Sullivan, Sisters of Charity of the Blessed Virgin Mary, 40 years; Sister Elizabeth Washburn, Sisters Adorers of the Precious Blood, 40 years; Sister Jennifer Votraw, Sisters of St. Joseph, 50 years; Sister Mary Louise Fiedler, Sisters of St. Joseph, 60 years; Sister Marilyn McGillan, Sisters Adorers of the Precious



NCC FILE PHOTO

A teen navigates through the obstacle course during week four of Guggenheim summer sessions.

Blood, 60 years; Sister Mary Patrick Murphy, Sisters of St. Joseph, 60 years; Sister Elizabeth Menard, Dominican Sisters of Hope, 60 years; Sister Claire Michel Fortier, Sisters of Charity of St. Louis - 60 years; Sister Mary Teresa Magdalen Nicholas, Sisters of St. Joseph, 70 years; and Sister Mary Monica Flaherty, Sisters of St. Joseph, 70

years.

**Lay Leaders:** Darcy Fargo was named communications director for the diocese and editor of the North Country Catholic; John Morrison of Ogdensburg is the new director of Safe Environment Office and charter compliance coordinator; Thomas Semeraro was named director of Youth Ministry.

**Diocesan events:** On

April 14, the diocese hosted authors, radio personalities and speakers Dr. Greg and Lisa Popcak for "Marriage: God Calls, We Respond," an event focused on marriage and family. Eighteen men gathered in June for prayer, teaching and camaraderie at the annual Men's Retreat held at the Guggenheim Lodge. The Blue Mass, an opportunity to pray with and for law enforcement, was held Sept. 30 at St. Peter's Church in Plattsburgh. "Catholic Families: God's Answer for Our Time," an event for families featuring Johnette Benkovic Williams, Susan Brinkmann and Thomas K. Sullivan, was held Oct. 13 at St. Mary's Cathedral. On Sept. 23, religious and married couples from around the diocese gathered at St. Mary's Cathedral in Ogdensburg for the annual jubilee Mass for Married Couples and Consecrated Religious.

**Vocations:** Ten seminarians are continuing their studies for the priesthood. Operation Andrew and Fishers Club meetings have been held around the diocese, and Operation Miriam events were held

CONTINUED ON PAGE 4

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# Highlights

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 3

around the diocese, and Operation Miriam events were held at the Sisters of St. Joseph Motherhouse in Watertown. Vocations retreats were held for middle school students.

**Reconciliation & Healing:** In March, the Diocese of Ogdensburg voluntarily established an Independent Reconciliation and Compensation Program (IRCP) to assist victims of clergy abuse in their healing process. In October, an IRCP report noted 37 victims resolved claims, receiving nearly \$5.5 million in compensation. In November, the diocese released a list of priests the Diocesan Review Board and/or Bishop Terry R. LaValley found reasonable grounds to remove from ministry under the Charter for the Protection of Children and Young People. Also in October, an independent audit found the Diocese of Ogdensburg to be in compliance with the Charter for the Protection of Children and Young People.

**Respect Life:** More than 100 youth and young adults from around the diocese traveled to the nation's capital for the annual March for Life, themed "Love Saves Lives." Twenty-one Respect Life grants were awarded to organizations and events around the

diocese as a result of the Respect Life Second Collection.

**Youth:** The diocesan youth rally was held April 28. Bob Perron, director of the Office of Youth & Young Adult Ministry for the Diocese of Wheeling-Charleston, served as keynote speaker. Lenten retreats were held in Saranac Lake and Lowville. Youth from around the diocese and nation gathered in Plattsburg June 24 to 30 for Catholic Heart Work Camp, a program focused on the corporal works of mercy and building faith and connections. Altar servers from around the diocese gathered at the Cathedral in August for the Altar Servers' Mass and picnic.

**Finances:** The diocese kicked off the "It's Our Church, It's Our Future," an effort to raise \$16 million, of which 75 percent will remain at the parish for its local needs such as programs and capital improvements. The remaining 25 percent benefits the entire diocese supporting retired priests, seminarians, Camp Guggenheim and St. Mary's Cathedral.

**Rest in peace:** The diocese mourned the loss of Msgr. Robert J. McCarthy, who died Jan. 11; and Father Mark McDonald, a Missionary of the Sacred Heart, died April 2.

## St. Mary's School students give to others for Advent

By Amanda Conklin  
Contributing Writer

CANTON – Students at St. Mary's School used this Advent Season to help others in need.

Last year, the class helped to collect 4,200 pounds of food for the Church and Community program in Canton. The Knights of Columbus State Council donates \$100 for every 1,000 pounds of food collected.

On Nov. 28, the students were presented with the \$400 check, which will go to the Church and Community Program.

The students revived the effort this year, collecting food again this Christmas season in conjunction with the Knights of Columbus Food for Families program.

Fourth grade teacher Meg Trainor, also the Diocesan Outstanding Teacher of the Year, was instrumental in starting this project with the students.

"This initiative is a part of a Religion and ELA Unit that I use with the fourth-grade students in the month of December," Trainor said. "The students read the classic story 'The Family Under the Bridge' by Natalie Savage Carlson about a homeless family in Paris, France. The students par-



John Taillon, Grand Knight for the Knights of the Columbus Sarto Council, Connie Jenkins, Director of the Church and Community Program in Canton, NY, Meg Trainor, fourth grade teacher at St. Mary's School, and Dan Sweeney, former Grand Knight for the Knights of Columbus Sarto Council, are pictured with the St. Mary's School fifth and sixth graders.

ticipate in an activity where they review census data, which gives facts about poverty rates and homelessness of children in St. Lawrence County. The students learn about reasons why families might need assistance. We discuss how the Church and Community Program is available for families who are experiencing a need."

For fifth grade student, Emma Dodge, this project had a special meaning.

"It was great giving back to people who don't have much," she said. "It empowered me. I went through a time in my life where we didn't have much, but God was there through friends. We felt God during that time."

Gavin Schryver, also a fifth grade student at SMS, especially appreciated the timing of the class project.

"A lot of people don't have a lot at Christmas, and this will hopefully help them make a nice meal," he said. "If I were in

that situation and didn't have enough food, I'd want others to treat me the same."


Both students also shared that they were appreciative of their Catholic School education and the ability to not only give back, but also connect that service with the love of God and neighbor through their schooling and faith.

Not only do they collect the food, they also deliver it.

"At the end of the food drive the students deliver the boxes and get a tour of the Church and Community Program," said Trainor. "It is important that students see for themselves how their actions can impact other families in our community. I also think it is important for them to understand that people that use this program are people that are experiencing a crisis or difficulty in their life, and this is a program available for people who are struggling."

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*Support And Pray  
For Vocations*

**Environmental Stewardship****What's on your list?**

What is on your 'to-do' list in these last days of 2018? Does it include time to consider the blessings and the challenges of being a good steward of God's creation during the year?

If so, here are a few suggestions: (1) Spend some time with the Lord reflecting on what experiences of God's creation has brought joy to your heart. Then, pray the "Canticle of the Three Young Men" (Daniel 3:57-88). They found an abundance of aspects of creation for which to "Bless the Lord" Even "ice and snow, frost and chill, along with light and darkness, birds of the air and all water creatures."

You can make up your own prayer of praise and thanksgiving for the gifts that bring joy to your heart!

(2) Choose one practical way to become a better steward of "our common home" in this coming year.

Pope Benedict XVI, tells us that "we must awaken...and face up to this great challenge and find an ethical capacity to change the situation of the environment for the good."

We find that he took a very concrete way of being a good steward by placing solar panels on the roof of the Paul VI auditorium.

Ask God to inspire you with the wisdom and courage to make a new year's resolution that will help heal the world.

Finally, on New Year's Day, the Feast of Mary, Mother of God, we are asked to join in prayer on the World Day of Prayer for Peace.

In Pope Francis' message this year, he expressed deep concern about the growing threat to peace in today's world. He lists several sins that permeate political life in many countries; among those listed included racism, lack of concern for the natural environment, the plundering of natural resources for the sake of quick profit and "contempt for those forced into exile."

Let us unite our prayers and efforts with those around the world to bring about a more peace-filled new year for all.

**Bishop's Public Schedule**

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

**Dec. 28** – Noon – Mass at St. Mary's Cathedral

**Dec. 30** – 8 a.m. – Mass at St. Mary's Cathedral

4:30 p.m. – Evening Prayer and Christmas dinner with seminarians and their parents at St. Mary's Parish Center in Waddington

**Jan. 2-8** – Bishops Retreat at Mundelein Seminary in Chicago

**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, 618 Lake Rd, Chateaugay, NY 12920; terrianeyanulavich@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

**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](http://www.virtus.org).

Upcoming sessions:

**Jan. 16** – 3:30 p.m., St. James School, Gouverneur

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

**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](mailto:news@northcountrycatholic.org)

•Join the conversation!

**Rest in Peace**

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

**Dec. 26** – Rev. Aloysius Hyacinth McMahon, 1936

**Dec. 27** – Rev. Hollis David Burns, 1936; Rev. Henry Gilbeau, O.F.M.Conv., 1978; Rev. Wilfred L. DeRoche, 2013

**Dec. 28** – Rev. Nicolaus Burtin, O.M.I., 1902; Msgr. John M. Waterhouse, 1995; Rev. Eugene J. Beaudet, 2004; Rev. Howard P. McCasland, 2010

**Dec. 29** – Rev. John A. Mullen, 1887

**Dec. 30** – Rev. Jean Baptiste Lemerrier, 1863; Rev. Sam D'Angelo, O.S.A., 1961; Deacon Victor Demers, 2003

**Dec. 31** – Rev. Joseph Butler, 1894; Rev. Benedict Granottier, 1930; Msgr. Clarence A. Kitts, 1949

**Jan. 1** – Rev. Earl Leo Taylor, 1974

**Jan. 2** – Rev. Henry William McFadden, 1978; Deacon Robert J. LeClair, 2009

**Jan. 3** – Rev. A. J. M. Viau, 1966; Rev. Hilary Neal, O.P., 1986

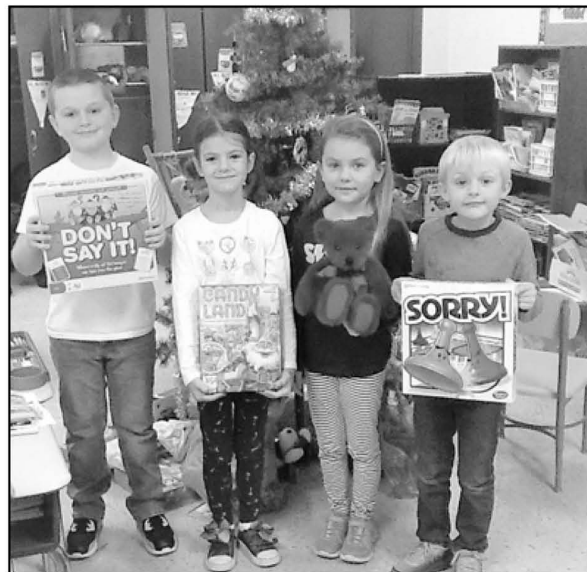
**Jan. 4** – Rev. James Edwin O'Haire, 1877; Rev. Michael Walsh, M.S.C., 1977; Rev. Charles E. Chase, 2011

**Jan. 5** – Rev. Louis Lebrett, O.M.I., 1903; Msgr. Dennis E. Lynch, 1979; Rev. Raoul J. Poirier, M.Afr., 1997

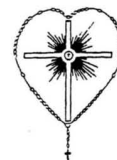
**Jan. 6** – Rev. James Dennis Phalon, 1974; Deacon George W. Carroll, 1994; Rev. Benoit Dostie, M.S.C., 2007; Msgr. Robert J. McCarthy, 2018

**Jan. 7** – Rev. Leonidas Geoffrion, 1954

**Jan. 8** – Rev. Michael Moris, 1893; Rev. Frederick C. Hatch, 1961; Msgr. Robert John Arquette, 1969; Rev. Leo McCarthy, O.S.A., 1975; Rev. Roland Gaulin, O.M.I., 1984; Rev. Anthony F. Pease, 1997; Msgr. Morris L. Dwyer, 2004

**THINKING OF OTHERS**

Instead of exchanging Christmas gifts, Immaculate Heart Central School second grade students collected toys, games and school supplies for the Water-town Urban Mission. Pictured are, from left, second grade students Jaxon Buttenschon, Haven Zikowitz, Genavieve Bartlett and Carter Durand.

**Adirondack Center For PEACE**

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*These Masses for Life are co-sponsored by*  
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and  
**Knights of Columbus Council #255**

2019	St. Peter's Church			St. John's Church		
	Day	Date	Time	Day	Date	Time
JAN	Sat.	1/5/2019	8:15 a.m.	Wed.	1/9/2019	9:00 a.m.
FEB	Sat.	2/2/2019	8:15 a.m.	Sat.	2/9/2019	5:15 p.m.
MAR	Sat.	3/2/2019	8:15 a.m.	Sat.	3/9/2019	5:15 p.m.
APR	Sat.	4/6/2019	8:15 a.m.	Tues.	4/9/2019	9:00 a.m.
MAY	Sat.	5/4/2019	8:15 a.m.	Fri.	5/10/2019	9:00 a.m.
JUN	Sat.	6/1/2019	8:15 a.m.	Sun.	6/9/2019	8:30 a.m.
JUL	Sat.	7/6/2019	8:15 a.m.	Tues.	7/9/2019	9:00 a.m.
AUG	Sat.	8/3/2019	8:15 a.m.	Fri.	8/9/2019	9:00 a.m.
SEPT	Sat.	9/7/2019	8:15 a.m.	Mon.	9/9/2019	9:00 a.m.
OCT	Sat.	10/5/2019	8:15 a.m.	Wed.	10/9/2019	9:00 a.m.
NOV	Sat.	11/2/2019	8:15 a.m.	Sat.	11/9/2019	5:15 p.m.
DEC	Sat.	12/7/2019	8:15 a.m.	Mon.	12/9/2019	9:00 a.m.

**Our Lady of Victory:**

**One per month, date and time TBA**

*Please join us in prayer for a greater reverence for all human life!*



# THANK YOU FOR SHARING IN THE CARING

*The Religious of the Diocese Wish to Thank All  
of the Generous People Who Contributed to the  
2018 Retirement Fund Collection.  
You Will Be Remembered in Our Prayers.*

*Franciscan Friars of the Atonement  
(SA)*

Brother Alan LeMay  
Brother Paschal Steen

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Sister Noel Chabanel Hentz  
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Sister Mary Eamon Lyng  
Sister Gabriel Marie Meyer  
Sister Cathleen Moore  
Sister Gregory Munger  
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Sister Diane Marie Ulsamer  
Sister Jennifer Votraw

*Daughters of Charity of the Sacred  
Heart of Jesus (FCSCJ)*

Sister Mary Ann Gour

*Franciscan Sisters of the Atonement  
(SA)*

Sister Carol Daul

*Dominican Sisters of Hope (OP)*

Sister Deborah Blow  
Sister Stephanie Frenette  
Sister Barbara Langlois  
Sister Elizabeth Menard



*Mid-Atlantic Community of the  
Institute of the Sisters of Mercy of the  
Americas (RSM)*

Sister Catherine Cummings  
Sister Mary Audrey Hallahan  
Sister Brian Marie Latour  
Sister Carolyn Madden  
Sister Mary Camillus O'Keefe  
Sister Carolyn Parker  
Sister Janet Peters  
Sister Mary Denise Wilke

*Servants of Mary (OSM)*

Sister Doris Durant

*Sisters of Charity of the Blessed  
Virgin Mary (BVM)*

Sister Cindy Sullivan

*Sisters of Charity of St. Louis (SCSL)*

Sister Bernadette Ducharme  
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Sister Deepali Karbhari Banker  
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Sister Jessintha Xavier

THANK YOU FOR SHARING IN THE CARING

THANK YOU FOR SHARING IN THE CARING

# THANK YOU FOR SHARING IN THE CARING

# Pope to Curia: Church will spare no effort to end abuse

VATICAN CITY (CNS)—Acknowledging the gravity of the clerical sexual abuse crisis, Pope Francis told members of the Roman Curia that the church's strength does not depend on its members' perfection, but on the willingness to recognize its failings and correct them.

"Let it be clear that before these abominations, the church will spare no effort to do all that is necessary to bring to justice whosoever has committed such crimes," the pope said Dec. 21 during his annual pre-Christmas meeting with officials of the Curia.

And speaking directly to clerics who have abused children, Pope Francis said: "Convert and hand yourself over to human justice and prepare for divine justice."

While it is "undeniable" that in the past many allegations of abuse were not handled with the necessary "seriousness and promptness," the pope said, "that must never happen again."

"The church," he said, "will never seek to hush up or not take seriously any case."

Pope Francis' 35-minute speech to the Curia included a review of the "joys and afflictions" of the church in the past year and a meditation on the message Christmas proclaims to the church and its members.

"Christmas gives us the certainty that God's light will continue to shine, despite our human misery," he said. "It gives us the certainty that the church will emerge from these tribulations all the more beautiful, purified and radiant."

The pope's list of "joys" in 2018 included the Synod of Bishops on young people, the ongoing reform of the Roman Curia and the many canonizations and beatifications that were celebrated; he specifically mentioned the beatification in December of 19 martyrs in Algeria, including the monks of Tibhirine.

The joys, he said, also include "the great number of faithful who each year receive baptism" or return to active church life, parents who pass on the faith to their children, young people who enter the priesthood or religious life and the "great number of consecrated men and women, bishops and priests, who daily live their calling in fidelity, silence, holiness and self-denial."

The "afflictions" of the church include the afflictions of the world, Pope Francis said, mentioning specifically growing

anti-immigrant sentiment, war, religious persecution and famine.

But the bulk of his talk was devoted to the abuse crisis and the obligation to address it clearly and decisively.

Pope Francis has called the presidents of the world's bishops' conferences, the heads of the Eastern Catholic churches and leaders of religious orders to a meeting at the Vatican Feb. 21-24 to discuss the scandal.

The meeting, he told the Curia officials, will reaffirm the church's "firm resolve to pursue unstintingly a path of purification" and, with the help of experts, will examine "how best to protect children, to avoid these tragedies, to bring healing and restoration to the victims, and to improve the training imparted in seminaries."

"An effort will be made to make past mistakes opportunities for eliminating this scourge, not only from the body of the church but also from that of society," he said, noting that sexual abuse is a problem not only within the church.

Many Catholics have accused the media of covering the abuse scandal in a way that gives "the false impression that this evil affects the Catholic Church alone," the pope said. But he added, "I myself would like to give heartfelt thanks to those media professionals who were honest and objective and sought to unmask these predators and to make their victims' voices heard."

"Even if it were to involve a single case of abuse — something itself monstrous — the church asks that people not be silent but bring it objectively to light, since the greater scandal in this matter is that of cloaking the truth," he said.

Without naming names, Pope Francis also referred in his speech to those who betray the church by hiding "behind good intentions in order to stab their brothers and sisters in the back and to sow weeds, division and bewilderment. They always find excuses, including intellectual and spiritual excuses, to progress unperturbed on the path to perdition."

In this speech, Pope Francis said clerics sully each other's reputations "is nothing new in the church's history. St. Augustine, in speaking of the good seed and the weeds, says: 'Do you perhaps believe, brethren, that weeds cannot spring up even on the thrones of bishops? Do you perhaps think that this is found only lower down and not higher up?'"

## CATHOLIC WORLD AT A GLANCE

### Irish president signs abortion law

DUBLIN (CNS) — Although Ireland's new abortion law takes effect Jan. 1, by mid-December only 8 percent of family doctors had signed up to provide the terminations. Irish President Michael D. Higgins signed the legislation into law Dec. 20, paving the way for wide-ranging access to abortion in the country. In a May referendum, voters opted by a margin of 2-1 to lift the country's constitutional protection of the right to life of unborn children. The new law will permit abortion on demand up to 12 weeks' gestation. It also will permit abortion up to 24 weeks on unspecified grounds for the health of the mother, and up to birth where the child is diagnosed with a life-limiting condition that means he or she may not live long after birth. According to figures released by the Department of Health, just 200 of some 2,500 family doctors have signed up to provide abortions. Many doctors have expressed concern that while the law recognizes a limited right to conscientious objection, doctors could be forced by the law to refer a patient to another doctor who will provide the abortion. The Irish bishops' conference said it was "dismayed that, for the most part, the voices of those who voted against abortion in May's referendum have been ignored."

### Christians working with Syrians: U.S. withdrawal puts minorities at risk

AMMAN, JORDAN (CNS) — Several Mideast-based Christians working on the Syria crisis have joined a growing chorus about U.S. President Donald Trump's decision to pull some 2,000 American troops from Syria. They say it puts Christians at risk and could force them to flee again, and they want the decision reversed. They added their voices to other Christian voices in Washington and Europe calling on Trump to reverse his decision, citing concerns for the fate of minorities and the risk they face from Islamic State. "This U.S. decision to withdraw with no guarantees opens up the gates of hell" for the people of northern Syria, said Father Emanuel Youkhana, a priest, or archimandrite, of the Assyrian Church of the East. He spoke to Catholic News Service by phone, pointing to the controversial military threats already made by Turkey to attack the area. "I expect this decision will force the Christian community to flee, to migrate once again. They still have fresh in their collective memory the genocide that took place against them by the Ottoman Turks in 1915," the priest said. "It will lead to more fears, concerns and a bleeding of the Christian population to leave Syria."

### Vietnam, Vatican agree to upgrade diplomatic relations in the future

VATICAN CITY (CNS) — Delegations from the Vatican and from Vietnam reported continued progress in their discussions, including agreeing on "upgrading" relations with a permanent papal representative "in the near future," a Vatican press statement said. "They shared the belief that this step will help relations between the two sides grow and develop further," said the statement, released Dec. 20. The two official delegations met in Hanoi Dec. 19 for the seventh meeting of the Vietnam-Holy See joint working group, which is trying to pave the way for full diplomatic relations between the Vatican and the communist government. The last working group meeting was at the Vatican in 2016. "The two sides agreed that relations between Vietnam and the Holy See should continue to be maintained based on the mutually agreed principles and fruitful dialogue in order to build confidence and bolster relations in the interest of both sides and of the Catholic community in Vietnam," the Vatican statement said.

## SCRIPTURE REFLECTIONS

## Experiencing the joy of Elizabeth in our lives

*Editor's note: Due to an editorial error, the Scripture Reflections for the Fourth Sunday of Advent was inadvertently skipped. We are presenting it here.*

How many times have we said to a small child, "Now, close your eyes and don't peek!" Then, as we bring out the birthday gift he has wanted so badly, we say, "Now, open your eyes!"

What joy we experience as we hear his gasp of delight, and see his eyes sparkle and dance!



**Monsignor  
Paul E.  
Whitmore**

How happy God must have been to hear the cry of joy from Elizabeth as she greeted her cousin Mary in today's Gospel. Elizabeth's joy doubled as John the Baptist leaped in her womb at the presence of the unborn Jesus.

Both Micah and Luke proclaim that through a woman, the Saviour of the world will appear on earth. When Mary traveled to the hill country to aid her cousin, both women, filled with the Holy Spirit, reveal the

**December 23**

**Fourth Sunday of Advent**

READINGS

Micah 5:1-4a

Hebrews 10:5-10

Luke 1:39-45

greatest miracle the world has ever known. Elizabeth is the very first in Scripture to announce that Mary is the Mother of the Redeemer, and she proclaims her blessed because she has believed what God said he would do in her. And Mary, also through the Holy Spirit, sings, "My soul proclaims the greatness of the

Lord...from now on will all ages call me blessed...the Mighty One has done great things for me."

The Fourth Sunday of Advent is always a happy one, and even more so this year, since the day after, on that evening, everything changes. The Church puts away the violet, and dons white and gold vestments to celebrate the Christmas eve and the Solemn Mass of Christmas itself. There is only one proper response – joy, gratitude, and sharing love with everyone around us. Let both body and spirit sing, for God has broken into his world

once more to repair the damage done by satanic forces masquerading under the mask of religion, as well as the confusion of our leaders and the weak faith and paralyzed hearts of many good people.

May all whom we visit this Christmas recognize in us, as Elizabeth did in Mary, a bearer of the Divine Child, ready to give birth to God's love in our hearts. And, in the days and months ahead, may we help ourselves and others translate that Christmas lone into effective action in our families and communities.

## CATCHING UP WITH AN OLD FRIEND

## 'Still finding my way through this new world'

A couple weeks ago, I was taken aback by a comment about a photo that had been posted on Facebook by a local parish: "The NCC editor would like permission to print your picture in the paper."

For a second – just a second – I tried to remember when I had made the request. Then, thank goodness, I found my way back to reality.

For decades, any reference to the NCC editor was a reference to me. I guess a piece of my brain hasn't completely let go. But now – hooray – there's a new editor in town.

Since the first day of June, Darcy Fargo has been the one reaching out to parishes, priests and area reporters to fill the pages of the diocesan newspaper. It's been a

pleasure to sit on the other side of those pages, opening my favorite email every Monday morning.

It seems our new editor has kept up the tradition of looking back at the previous year in the diocese as the new calendar year begins. For some reason she thinks that I could make a contribution to this issue with some thoughts of my new life as the former editor.

In the months before I left my much-loved job, I heard lots of comments and advice about retirement: "you'll be busier that ever," "it's the best job you'll ever have," and "now you can sleep as late as you like."

Six months after handing in my keys and contacts, I'm still finding my way through this new

world of mine. While I'm thrilled that Darcy has had responsibility for the paper and wider communications efforts during these tumultuous months for our church, I really miss my daily conversations with co-workers who care so much about the diocese and about me. I miss the regular communication with reporters across the North Country who became my friends. And, I miss the opportunities to let Bishop LaValley know exactly how I think he can handle every challenge that comes before him!

As it turns out, I'm not (yet) busier than ever. The best job I ever had is still the one I had for 40 years and I definitely don't sleep any later than I did last year.

As the months go on, my (also newly retired) husband and I have started to settle into a rou-

tine that nourishes our bodies and souls. Invariably, our days begin with 6:45 a.m. Mass, a choice that would have shocked me a couple years ago. What started as a Lenten sacrifice now anchors each day with prayer and fellowship including breakfast with some of our early bird friends.

After that, the question is where we will take a morning drive. Usually we pick up our pup and explore the back roads of St. Lawrence County, fully aware of what a stereotype of retired life we present.

The days continue with major decisions about what we need at the grocery store, what we'll do for dinner and where we'll take the dog for her run.

In my new life I've been able to revert to my childhood days when my mother often lamented that "Mary Lou always has

her nose in a book." I think I've read more books in the past six months than I did in the previous six years! What a luxury this is.

The greatest luxury, though, is the chance to spend more time with our beloved babies. Since leaving the paper, we've been blessed with a new one. I just hope Jane Kimberly doesn't feel too deprived that her Grammy didn't announce her July arrival in a column in the NCC.

God only knows whether this simple life of ours will continue as it's been or if this time is merely a transition period before a different kind of adventure. Whatever the future brings, we appreciate the days of love, friendship and time that we have today. And I appreciate my many years of work for the Diocese of Ogdensburg that made this all possible.



**Mary Lou  
Kilian**



AT THE MOVIES

# WELCOME TO MARWEN

NEW YORK (CNS) – The story behind the fact-based tale "Welcome to Marwen" (Universal) is a compelling one. And it provided the subject matter for "Marwencol," a highly-regarded 2010 documentary by filmmaker Jeff Malmberg.

Why, then, does director and co-writer Robert Zemeckis' dramatization turn out to be so painfully unengaging?

In the spring of 2000, upstate New Yorker Mark Hogancamp, an artist who had had some success as an illustrator, was savagely attacked by a group of thugs. The near-fatal assault deprived him of much of his memory as well as the ability to draw.

Channeling his imagination in a new direction, Hogancamp eventually created a miniature World War II-era Belgian village in his yard called Marwen which he populated with dolls.

His photographs of these figurines have become celebrated both in gallery exhibits and in print.

Steve Carell makes a dedicated effort in his portrayal of Hogancamp. But his performance fails to redeem this project, weird as it is in all the wrong ways.

While Hogancamp's plight is one that ought to elicit sympathy, and there are vague undertones of Catholicism in his life, his eccentricities, including a fondness for wearing women's shoes, are off-putting. And his panic attacks, as depicted here, are sometimes so over-the-top as to be unintentionally funny.

Additionally, Zemeckis ill-advisedly devotes



CNS PHOTO/UNIVERSAL

Steve Carell star in a scene from the movie "Welcome to Marwen."

whole sequences to life among Hogancamp's Barbies and Kens. Their interactions may work in his skillfully shot stills, but they fall flat on the big screen.

Playing out his own elaborate psychodrama in Marwen, moreover, may have been therapeutic for Hogancamp; it proves tedious for viewers.

There's also something vaguely unhealthy – or at least immature – about the town's pulpy proceedings.

The central personage in Marwen is Hogancamp's alter ego, American fighter pilot Capt. Hogie.

He's surrounded, supported and protected by an ensemble of gun-toting tough girls, each based on a real lady in Hogancamp's life.

The most prominent of these are Roberta (Merritt Wever), a clerk at the hobby store he patronizes, and his new neighbor Nicol (Leslie Mann), for whom he swiftly falls. His attackers, meanwhile, are represented by sadistic Nazis who are brought

back to life as often as Hogie and the gals mow them down due to the black magic of Belgian witch Deja Thoris (Diane Kruger).

The screenplay, which Zemeckis penned with Caroline Thompson, is at pains to point out that, far from the symptom of homosexuality his gay-bashing assailants took it for, Hogancamp's high-heels habit is of a piece with his very active interest in women.

This finds another outlet in his taste for ludicrously scripted pornography, one relatively tame scene of which the audience is made to witness.

Decked out in his aviator jacket and Air Force cap, Capt. Hogie may re-

mind viewers of a certain age of Bob Crane's genial and ingenious title character on the 1960s sitcom,

"Hogan's Heroes." They – and others of a more recent vintage – would be well advised to stay home and channel-surf for reruns of that fine program rather than venture into this deeply flawed version of Marwen.

The film contains glimpses of a violent, gory beating, brief rear and images of upper female nudity, a benign view of pornography, a couple of profanities, a few milder oaths and about a dozen crude or crass terms.

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.

## THE MONTHLY PRAYER REQUEST FOR PRIESTS

WOULD YOU PRAY FOR A PRIEST EACH DAY?

— PRAYER SUGGESTION —

Eternal Father,  
we lift up to you these  
and all the priests of the world.  
Sanctify them.  
Heal and guide them.  
Mold them into the likeness and  
holiness of your Son, Jesus,  
the Eternal High Priest.  
May their lives be pleasing to  
you. In Jesus' name we pray.  
Amen

(With ecclesiastical approval)

Mass  
Rosary  
Fasting  
Day Offering  
Eucharistic Adoration  
Offering of Sufferings  
Divine Mercy Chaplet  
Or whatever the Lord  
inspires you to offer Him

January  
JESUS  
Holy Name  
Of Jesus

### JANUARY

2019

DIOCESE OF OGDENSBURG, NY		SUNDAY		MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
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For more information visit us online at: [www.mprpapistolate.com](http://www.mprpapistolate.com)

A donation to help support THE MONTHLY PRAYER REQUEST FOR PRIESTS will be appreciated.  
The Monthly Prayer Request for Priests is graciously underwritten by:  Diocese of Ogdensburg Vocational Society [www.myvocation.net](http://www.myvocation.net)



## ADIRONDACK

## CATHOLIC MEN'S GROUP

Saranac Lake – A Catholic Men's Group meets on the first Saturdays of the month for a time of fellowship, prayer, and discussion.

**Time:** 8 a.m. to 10

**Place:** St. Bernard's Chapel

**Features:** Mass followed by coffee and refreshment, some discussion and prayer.

**Contact:** Father Mark Reilly (518-891-4616)

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

## BOARS HEAD FEAST &amp; 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, 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

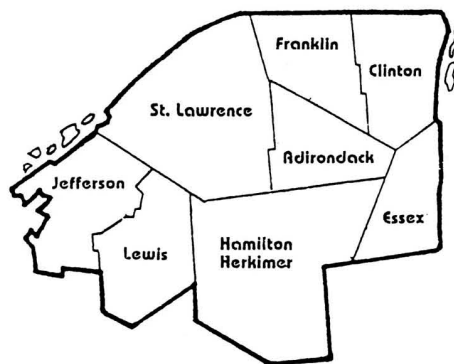
## PANCAKE BREAKFAST

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



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.

Cost: Adults, \$8; Children 6-12, \$4; under 5, Free

## MARCH FOR LIFE

Plattsburgh – March for Life to be held.

**Date:** Jan. 13

**Time:** 12:30 p.m.

**Place:** Begin at St. John's Newman Center and end at St. John the Baptist Church

**Features:** For those unable to march you may attend the prayer service and Benediction at 1 p.m. at St. John's Church. A reception will follow in the parish center.

**Contact:** Deacon Jack at 518-562-1175 for more information.

## FRANKLIN

## HEARTS ON FIRE

Malone – Hearts on Fire to be held the first Friday of the month.

**Schedule:** 7 p.m., Praise & Worship Holy Hour; 8 p.m., Bonfire, snacks & Fellowship

**Place:** Notre Dame Church

## DEVOTION AND HOLY HOUR

St. Regis Falls – First Saturday Devotion and Holy Hour to be held.

**Date:** First Saturday of each month.

**Time:** Immediately following the 4:30 anticipated Mass.

**Place:** St. Ann's Church

**Features:** Prayer after Mass, Night Prayer, Prayer for All Souls and the Holy Souls, Novena in Honor of Our Lady of the Miraculous Medal, Chaplet of Divine Mercy, the Reparation Rosary of

the Blessed Virgin Mary, private meditation on the 15 Mysteries of the Rosary, adoration of the Blessed Sacrament reposed in the Tabernacle, prayers for the Holy Father and his intentions, and refreshments are provided in the Church Hall.

**Contact:** 518-856-9656

## JEFFERSON

## SPAGHETTI &amp; MEATBALL DINNER

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

**Date:** Jan. 5

**Time:** 4 to 7 p.m.

**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

## SPAGHETTI SUPPER

Watertown – St. Anthony's Church Altar Rosary Society to have a spaghetti dinner.

**Date:** Jan. 31

**Time:** 4:30 to 7 p.m.

**Place:** Msgr. Sechi Hall

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

**Features:** Take-out available at 4 p.m., please bring your own containers

## CURSILLO MEETING

Carthage – The Jefferson/Lewis Cursillo holds its monthly meeting on the First Friday 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

## LEWIS

## INTERNATIONAL CRECHES-NATIVITIES

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

**Date:** Dec. 30 to Jan. 6

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

## 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

## EPIPHANY LUNCHEON

Norfolk – The Diocese of Ogdensburg Vocations Society (DOVS) to host an Epiphany Luncheon.

**Date:** Jan. 9

**Time:** 11:30 a.m.

**Place:** Church of the Visitation

**Contact:** Connie Randall at 315-265-2762 or  
connierandall47@yahoo.com or Marilyn DeCelles at 315-769-2587 by Jan. 5 to RSVP.

## GALA

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

**Date:** Feb. 9

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

**Contact:** Tickets will be available Jan. 1 from any Gala Gal or by calling 315-287-0130

## DIOCESAN EVENTS

## DAY OF PRAYER

Day of prayer and fasting to be held for legal protection of unborn children.

**Date:** Jan. 22

**Features:** In all the Dioceses of the United States, January 22 shall be observed as a particular day of prayer for the full restoration of the legal guarantee of the right to life and of penance for violations to the dignity of the human person committed through acts of abortion. "As individuals, we are called to observe this day through the penitential practices of prayer and fasting."

**Contact:** Resources are available here: <http://www.usccb.org/prayer-and-worship/resources/january-22-day-of-prayer-leaderresources.cfm>

## 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 startaglia@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 Vocations Society (DOVS) as a group, are dedicated to promoting and fostering vocations to the priesthood and religious life in our diocese. The annual campaign provides a major source of revenue for our organization and its success is vital to our Diocese. Funds raised through our membership campaign help 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 Anne Miller at 315-353-2950 or email Connie at connierandall47@yahoo.com



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

The Society for the Propagation of the Faith

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

# Sweet memories of the past

*It is nice to re-read the beautiful words of those who are no longer with us. One of those inspirational people is the late Reverend George F. Maroun, Mission Office director and diocesan priest. Gone since 2016, we still have his words. Let's start 2019 with a column he wrote for the Millennium in January 2000.*

The New Year began in the church this week with the celebration of the Octave of Christmas and the Solemnity of Mary, Mother of God. Words of blessing and peace greeted us from the Book of Numbers:

*The Lord bless and keep you!  
The Lord let his face shine upon you,  
and be gracious to you!  
The Lord look upon you kindly  
and give you peace!*

How important it is to hear and experience this blessing, believing that God is indeed with us as we mark the beginning of another year! What a difference it makes to view the New Year within the context of God's loving and saving presence! Even the most faith-filled believer finds that human hopes and desires for union with God are continually exceeded by the reality of God's presence with us.

The fullness of God's blessing in our lives is experienced in the proportion to the openness of our hearts and the depth of our faith. The message of God's total love for us revealed in the coming of Jesus as the Word made flesh comes to be understood more fully as we live the Christian life. It is our choice year after year, day after day, to accept the grace and peace assured us as we face the responsibilities with which modern life confronts us. In this Christmas season, we continue to celebrate this wondrous mystery of the incarnation with a special focus today on Mary, Mother of God.

Paul says in his letter to the Galatians, "God sent forth his Son born of a woman... so that we might receive our status as adopted sons [and daughters]." Mary, in simple humility and profound trust in God, accepted the invitation to be mother of the Incarnate Word, Jesus the Christ. Mary was not able, any more than we are, to comprehend fully this

mystery of God's love for the human community. With a faith uniquely strong and deep, Mary could and did believe that a human person – a woman – was called by God to participate thus in his redemptive plan. Mary accepted God's choice of her as the one through whom the ultimate expression of God's love of humanity would become human flesh in her child, Jesus.

At the beginning of each calendar year, the secular press and television media would have us focus our view of the New Year on the many potentially frightening and depressing predictions for the coming year. Often with a strong tone of cynicism the New Year's editorial and feature articles discuss the tradition of making resolutions. They place the emphasis on the poor record of accomplishment many people report for fulfilling resolutions beyond a few days or weeks. These encounters with the "bad news" of human failure strongly contrast with the "good news" of Jesus. As Christians, we believe in and celebrate the desire and potential to grow and change — that is inherent in the human person. Good has, and will, prevail over evil because God is with us.

Perhaps the first resolution Christians ought to make each New Year, is to confirm and deepen their faith in God's presence with us in Jesus. The good news of the Scriptures is that we begin this New Year with God believing in us, and speaking words of blessing and peace. If we were to make the resolution of this year while "pondering in our hearts" the blessings we have known thus far as Christians, we would begin with a new and freeing energy and hopefulness. In faith we can be as open to the working of God's grace in us as were Mary and the shepherds of the first Christmas season. As this year begins we are invited to image God blessing us with all the gifts of this earth and human life, and especially with Jesus, born of Mary, in whom we know God's presence fully. May you have a Blessed New Year!

*Sincerely in Christ, Reverend George F. Maroun, Diocesan Director (written for the NCC in January 2000)*

## OBITUARIES

**Carthage** – Bessie R. (Cook) Trembley, 91; Mass of Christian Burial Dec. 22, 2018 at St. James Church; burial in St. James Cemetery.

**Champlain** – Kenneth K. Place, 69; Mass of Christian Burial Dec. 18, 2018 at St. Mary's Church.

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

**Hogansburg** – Beatrice "Tekaroni-ahkwa" Bero, 78; Mass of Christian Burial Dec. 21, 2018 at St. Regis Church; burial in Kateri Cemetery.

**Massena** – Norma M. (Piquette) Dupee, 84; Mass of Christian Burial Dec. 19, 2018 at St. Mary's Church.

**North Bangor** – Dr. Carlisle W. Van Deusen, 97; Mass of Christian Burial Dec. 22, 2018 at St. Augustine's Church.

**Ogdensburg** – Colleen Ann Moran Lago, 75; Mass of Christian Burial Dec. 17, 2018 at Notre Dame Church; burial in Notre Dame Cemetery.

**Redford** – Francis B. Perry, 89; Mass of Christian Burial Dec. 18, 2018 at Church of the Assumption; burial in

parish cemetery.

**Saranac Lake** – Robert W. Winderl, 86; Funeral Services Dec. 14, 2018 at the Fortune-Keough Funeral Home; burial in St. Bernard's Cemetery.

**Star Lake** – Rosann LeBel Collins, 71; Mass of Christian Burial Dec. 21, 2018 at St. Hubert's Church; burial in St. Hubert Cemetery.

**Ticonderoga** – Michael Francis Arthur, 53; Mass of Christian Burial Dec. 22, 2018 at St. Mary's Church.

**Watertown** – Allen Albert Benway, 70; Funeral Services Dec. 22, 2018 at the Reed & Benoit Funeral Home.

**Watertown** – Kenneth L. Parker, 91; Funeral Services Dec. 21, 2018 at the Reed & Benoit Funeral Home; burial in Glenwood Cemetery.

**West Chazy** – Doris M. (Sayah) Fagan, 84; Mass of Christian Burial Dec. 21, 2018 at St. Joseph's Church; burial in Whispering Maples Memorial Gardens, Plattsburgh.

**West Chazy** – Aline C. (Tetreault) Fesette, 87; Mass of Christian Burial Dec. 18, 2018 at St. Joseph's Church; burial in parish cemetery.

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## SCENES OF THE SEASON



Students of Holy Family School in Malone recently performed in the school's Voices of Christmas prayer service.



As the weather starts to get cold, the Port Henry Knights of Columbus heat up their commitment to the community with free winter coat distributions for Moriah Central School students. The coats were purchased through the Knights of Columbus Coats for Kids program. Councils throughout the United States and Canada have donated over 500,000 coats as part of the program. Pictured are, from left, Social Studies teacher and K of C member Tom Anderson, Grand Knight Bill Callahan, High School Principal Alison Burch and Past Grand Knight Chuck Kolodzey.

## Pope issues message for World Day of Peace

VATICAN CITY (CNS) – In today's climate of mistrust, rejection and nationalism, the world urgently needs peacemakers and politicians who protect and lovingly serve others, Pope Francis said in his annual message for the World Day of Peace Jan. 1.

"Terror exerted over those who are most vulnerable contributes to the exile of entire populations who seek a place of peace," he said, and "political addresses that tend to blame every evil on migrants and to deprive the poor of hope are unacceptable."

Instead, political life can and should be "an outstanding form of charity" when it is exercised with a "basic respect for the life, freedom and dignity of persons," the pope said.

Holding political office and having political responsibility "constantly challenge those called to the service of their country to make every effort to protect those who live there and to create the conditions for a worthy and just future," he said.

"One thing is certain: good poli-

tics is at the service of peace," Pope Francis wrote. "It respects and promotes fundamental human rights, which are at the same time mutual obligations, enabling a bond of trust and gratitude to be forged between present and future generations."

The pope's message, which focused on "good politics at the service of peace," was released Dec. 18 at a Vatican news conference led by Cardinal Peter Turkson, prefect of the Dicastery for Promoting Integral Human Development.

Peace is a gift freely offered by God to all people, who are then called upon to be open to peace and to cooperate, making peace real in one's home, family, community and country, the cardinal said.

The pope's message, which the Vatican sends to heads of state around the world, invited politicians in particular to manage and administer resources for the well-being of "all dwellers in the house," Cardinal Turkson said.

Pope Francis' wish and prayer for peace in 2019, he said, "is that poli-

tics – this oversight, through policies and laws, of resources of domestic, national and global households – may bring peace to all the citizens of the households, especially its youth, who may not be robbed of their hope in the future, because politics is so badly done that it deprives them of peace."

In his message, Pope Francis said politics is the essential path for building up a "human community and institutions, but when political life is not seen as a form of service to society as a whole, it can become a means of oppression, marginalization and even destruction."

"The thirst for power at any price leads to abuses and injustice," he said, highlighting the harm caused by "political vices."

"Whether due to personal incompetence or to flaws in the system and its institutions," the pope wrote, political vices "detract from the credibility of political life overall, as well as the authority, decisions and actions of those engaged in it."

"These vices, which undermine

the ideal of an authentic democracy, bring disgrace to public life and threaten social harmony," he said.

Such vices include "xenophobia, racism, lack of concern for the natural environment, the plundering of natural resources for the sake of quick profit and contempt for those forced into exile," he said. They also include many forms of corruption: "the misappropriation of public resources, the exploitation of individuals, the denial of rights, the flouting of community rules, dishonest gain, the justification of power by force or the arbitrary appeal" to national interests and the "refusal to relinquish power."

War and "the strategy of fear" are also contrary to politics at the service of peace, he said.

"To threaten others is to lower them to the status of objects and to deny their dignity," which is why any "escalation of intimidation and the uncontrolled proliferation of arms is contrary to morality and the search for true peace."