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The Diocese of Ogdensburg Volume 73, Number 37

NORTH COUNTRY CATHOLIC

FEB. 13, 2019

Vermont Bishop: Abortion bill goes too far

BURLINGTON, Vt. (CNS) – The bishop of the Diocese of Burlington said an abortion bill working its way through the Vermont Legislature "goes too far."

Bishop Christopher J. Coyne said the proposal, H. 57, "goes far beyond Roe v. Wade," the U.S. Supreme Court decision legalizing abortion, by "guaranteeing unrestricted abortion through all nine months of pregnancy."

This, he added, "means that a baby in the womb can be terminated right up to the moment of natural birth. My friends, that is not abortion. That is infanticide."

The bill's sponsors say it isn't intended to change or pre-empt abortion law but simply "codify current access."

FULL STORY, PAGE 6

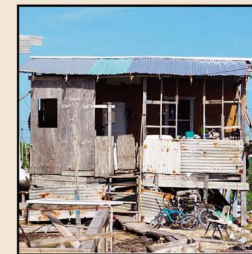
GRAND ROSARY, GRAND INTENTION



St. Mary's School (Ticonderoga) staff and students were presented with a hand crafted rosary as a gift from the Diocesan Vocations Office. The rosary will be sent home with students on a rotating schedule so families can pray the rosary on behalf of persons discerning a vocation. This rosary, and 80 others, have been made in memory of Deacon Adam Scott Crow. Sister M. Gregory Munger, a Sister of St. Joseph, brought the rosary and presented it to students and staff at St. Mary's School in Ticonderoga on January 30. Pictured with Sister Gregory are, back row, Brooklyn Huestis, Jonah Giordano, Madelyn Holman, Talon Blasdel, Aubrey Whitford, Mrs. Karlene Gonyeau, front row, Julianna Porter, Ayden Trepanier, Lauren Andersen, and Emmi Charboneau.

MISSION JOURNEY

Malone woman bolsters faith in Belize



In San Mateo, Belize, residents live in homes built on stilts above a trash-filled marsh. Malone resident Meagan Rousell, a member of St. André Bessette Parish, recently traveled to San Mateo with a short-term mission trip sponsored by Believers World Outreach. Rousell said the trip strengthened her faith, something with which she's struggled as a teen and young adult.

FULL STORY, PAGE 3

Pope: Humility needed to heal wounded hearts

VATICAN CITY (CNS) – Those who proclaim the Gospel must embrace humility and poverty to give an authentic witness to faith and not use others to climb the ladder of success, Pope Francis said.

Just as Jesus sent the apostles out to preach telling them to take nothing but a walking stick, Jesus wants pastors to be shepherds who feed their flock and "do not try to take the milk of the sheep, who do not try to

take the wool of the sheep," the pope said Feb. 7 in his homily during Mass at the Domus Sanctae Marthae.

Recalling St. Augustine's warning to pastors about feeding themselves rather than their flocks, the pope said that one who looks for milk is "seeking money and one who seeks wool likes to dress with the vanity of his office. He is a climber."

"If an apostle, an envoy, one of us – there are many

of us envoys here – goes around with his nose in the air a bit, believing himself superior to others or looking for some form of human gain or, I don't know, looking for a position in the church, he will never heal anyone, he will never be able to open anyone's heart, because his word will have no authority," he said.

The pope centered his homily on the day's Gospel reading from St. Mark in which Jesus sends

the apostles out two by two with "no food, no sack, no money in their belts" to heal the sick and drive out demons.

To be healed, he said, one must be willing to convert, to open one's heart to God's word.

If the heart is closed, the pope said, "it cannot be healed. If someone is sick and tenaciously does not want to go to the doctor, he will not be healed. And to them, (Jesus) says, first, 'Convert, open your

hearts.' Even if we Christians do many good things, if the heart is closed, it's all paint on the outside."

The authority needed to heal wounded hearts, he added, comes from following the footsteps of Christ who walked the path of poverty, humility and meekness.

Christians, "not just a priest or a bishop" but "each one of us, has the power to heal" those who are ailing, the pope said.

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EDITOR'S NOTE

‘Write me a lead that doesn’t stink’

“Hey, Monkey,” I said. “Open your story about tonight’s village board meeting? Got it? Now write me a lead that doesn’t stink.”

Jonathan Monfiletto chose the nickname “Monkey” over what we had been calling him in the newsroom: “New Guy.” The name was first proposed by a Watertown Times editor who called our newsroom in Malone and asked that I send him “Monkey Stiletto’s story” about a topic of regional interest. When Jonathan indicated he preferred “Monkey” to “New Guy,” it became his newsroom identity.

A recent college graduate, Monkey had solid writing

skills, strong understanding of government structures and systems, and a fun personality – all great attributes for a reporter. But, like any of us, he also made mistakes.



Darcy L. Fargo

Some mistakes were repeated with some frequency. One of Monkey’s mistakes: He wrote boring leads – the single sentences or paragraphs that open news stories.

As the news editor, I was tasked with editing copy produced by reporters on the night shift. As my first editor did with me, I would correct a reporter’s frequently occurring mistakes and explain the mistakes to the reporter two or three times. After that, I’d make the reporter correct the

error. That way, he or she would learn. Usually, reporters trained this way would stop making those mistakes or at least make them less frequently.

After the first few times I told him to “write a lead that didn’t stink,” Monkey became more attentive to his leads and wrote stronger stories that required less editing, though he still gave me the occasional opportunity to bust out my favorite line and a smile.

Monkey was given the gift of being a strong writer (and a great person, I might add), but he still had to put in the work to improve. He had to make the conscious effort to focus on his leads and to write leads that didn’t stink.

Similarly, God blesses us

with gifts and talents. It’s our job to cooperate with Him to cultivate those talents, to grow them, and to put them to work for His glory. While being open to God’s graces and opportunities, we still have to put in the work.

And we all make mistakes as we strive for holiness. While I think we would all love to experience a miracle and have our sinfulness, struggles and moments of doubt taken from us, I think we all know it doesn’t often happen that way. Instead, we’re called to be open to God’s graces, but we usually need to work to cooperate with those graces, and it’s generally not easy or comfortable work.

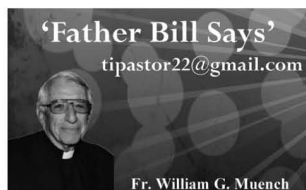
But the work helps God make us holier people, and that never stinks.

The laity have formed my priesthood

Today, I would like to begin with a remembrance of my friend and classmate, Nelson Sholette, who died recently. Nelson lived in Ogdensburg and was a very active parishioner of St. Mary’s Cathedral parish. Nelson touched and helped many as a counselor and psychologist. He used his many talents in support of his pastor and parish. Nelson was a good friend, and I was fortunate to have him as my friend.

I know only too well that strong and alive parishes are due to the involvement and support of the men and women of the parish – the laity. The challenge of every pastor is forming a parish into a community. Each and every person in the parish is essential to making a real community.

Just today I came upon a published paper that summarized the discussions of a series of meetings of religious educators, theologians and church ministers at Boston College. This publication was



entitled, “To Serve the People of God – Renewing the Conversation on Priesthood and Ministry.” This booklet truly has a message for us all in the Catholic Church. However, it focuses on the preparation of seminarians for priesthood. The message begins with the importance of the recognition for Catholics that Baptism comes first, then Holy Orders. They write that the priest in today’s church needs skills forming communities and working with baptized faithful, particularly women.

One of their first messages is a warning against priests placing themselves above lay people. Actually, I learned this message rather early in my priesthood. It took me only a short time as a priest to realize the holiness and saintli-

ness of the people of the parish where I was assigned.

In those first days of my priesthood, I met older folks who had dedicated their lives in forming a powerful faith that made their lives profound examples for their families and for their parish community. I learned what prayer was all about from these folks, these grandparents. It helped me to understand what it means to be a real person as a priest – not come sort of clerical celebrity.

I learned so much about God and life from the sick and the dying. I still remember well a bed-ridden woman who suffered so much. And yet when I needed faith and a renewed confidence as a priest, I would visit her. She helped me to truly find God and God’s help in my need.

To this day, I learn more about preaching from the men and women of the various parishes I have been assigned to. They openly show me the way; they help me understand how to communi-

cate well. I would like to sign some of those folks up to present a class or two to seminarians.

I know how much young people helped to form my priesthood. Their honest wisdom helped me understand what I needed to know and understand – things that I somehow did not realize. In addition, there have been so many parents who helped me understand just what a saint is. I have learned so much, and I am deeply grateful for their wisdom.

This paper urges more study of Pope Francis’ reflections on the priesthood. Pope Francis has soundly condemned clericalism. The Catholic Church has been very good to me. The only time I have had problems was when I thought I was only one to know all the answers because I was the priest. This publication reminds us of this earthly image of Pope Francis that is quoted widely to be a shepherd who takes on the smell of the flock.

A mission journey to Belize and deeper faith

By Darcy Fargo
Editor

MALONE – “I always wanted to go on a mission trip,” said Meagan Rousell. “I knew something was drawing me to that work, but I became that person who thought about it and thought about it, even talked about it sometimes, but I never did it.”

Then, hitting her 30th birthday, the Malone resident and member of St. André Bessette Parish said she went through a period of reflection and decided she needed to pursue the idea of a mission trip further.

“I realized I needed to do some research and make this happen,” she said.

Rousell’s research led her to Believers World Outreach, a Christian organization that facilitates short-term mission trips for individuals, families and groups/organizations.

“I wasn’t sure if I was looking for a medical trip or an evangelical trip,” said Rousell, a Registered Nurse. “I prayed about that a lot. Then I found this organization. They do both.”

When she decided to apply, Rousell said she had to obtain a letter of recommendation from a pastor or a church leader, a task she found daunting at first.

“I was never confirmed when I was young,” she said. “When I was young, I was a bratty kid, and I complained about going to church school. Eventually, my parents gave in and let me back out, and I stopped going. A few years ago, I was really thinking about it, and I didn’t feel like a real Catholic. I went back, made my Confirmation and returned to Mass. But

I felt weird, uncomfortable, and I didn’t attend Mass as often as I should have, so I felt really nervous even approaching (parish leadership) about this.”

Despite her reservations, Rousell was able to secure the required recommendations, and she completed the necessary forms. It was also around that time that she returned to regularly practicing her Catholic faith.

She was accepted into the program.

“From December 26 to January 2, I went to San Mateo, Belize,” she said. “The town is on land that used to be a marsh. The land was given to people who were in need, but they couldn’t afford sand to fill the marsh, so trash is used for fill. It’s basically a dumping ground with homes on stilts built above it. And the town is separated from the next closest town by a bridge, and there’s a \$10 toll to cross the bridge. These people are basically isolated, and it seems almost intentional.”

Rousell said she chose the Belize destination at least in part because English is the primary language there, making it easier to communicate on her first mission trip.

The mission trip included over 80 participants, ranging in ages from 7 to late 60s. The group was divided into work teams based on skills and aptitudes. Some worked in sports ministry or vacation Bible school ministry, others worked on construction and projects, and still others worked in ministry and prayer teams.

“We spent a lot of our time focused on kids,” Rousell said. “The kids were on a three-week va-

cation from school, and they were essentially left to fend for themselves during the days. It wasn’t that the parents didn’t care, but they couldn’t afford to take time off work. A lot of the children only have one parent. Some have no parents and live with a relative. We met one girl who had been living with an aunt, but something happened to the aunt, and a neighbor took her in. And there’s no such thing as affordable daycare.”

Rousell said village residents were extremely appreciative of the help provided by the missionaries.

“They were so grateful for everything,” she said. “We all had lanyards we would wear identifying us as with the mission trip. I don’t know how many times I had a stranger – someone I hadn’t spoken to from the village – just come up and give me a hug. They so appreciated that we traveled all this way to help them. They were very welcoming, very loving. It made me think: we have so much, and they have so little, but in some ways, they have more than we do. They have more joy, more faith. They’re a great community.”

Rousell said she also found support and love from her fellow missionaries.

“I was nervous about working with a team of strangers,” she said. “I prayed about it a lot. It was, ‘God, please let me connect with one person. Let me find one friend there.’ By the second or third day, we were all close, and it felt like a family. I’m not generally an emotional person. Anyone who met me on the



Meagan Rousell of Malone recently traveled on a mission trip to Belize with Believers World Outreach, an organization that facilitates Christian mission trips. Rousell is pictured with youth from San Mateo, the town where the mission focused its efforts.

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CONTINUED ON PAGE 4

JOB OPENING

Pastoral Associate for newly linked parishes

Are you a person blessed with a deep love of the Catholic Church, looking for a career where you could enrich a parish community by providing outreach and evangelization for Catholic families? Would you like the chance to share your strong faith by supporting the spiritual, social and developmental needs of young people? These are only two of the opportunities that are part of the position of Pastoral Associate for the linked parishes of St. Andrews, Norwood; Parish of the Visitation and St. Raymond, Norfolk & Raymondville; and St. Patrick's, Brasher Falls. These parishes are located in the Diocese of Ogdensburg, New York.

For inquiries and a complete job description contact the Search Committee at: parish@twcny.rr.com

The deadline for applications is March 20, 2019.



Malone resident Meagan Rousell journeyed to San Mateo, Belize, where families live in extreme poverty, to perform mission work with Believers World Outreach.

Mission journey

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 3

trip would probably argue about that. It was just almost overwhelming to have so many people be kind and love you. One day at worship, we were praying and singing songs, and I just started tearing up – for what reason, I have no idea. People came over and grabbed my hand or put their hand on my shoulder. One woman came up to me and asked if she could pray with me, and she took me aside to pray with me. It was just wonderful. I'm still in contact with people from the team. We Facetime, text, connect on social media. I was uneasy about it not knowing anyone, and it was more than I could've expected. It was amazing!"

Rousell said she's already looking to plan further mission trips with Believers World Outreach and has been asked to consider serving as a medical team leader. She's working with her employer to determine if she can secure the required time off to participate.

She's also considering

more long-term mission experiences.

She noted the mission trip has helped her deepen her faith and reflect on her faith journey.

"All I can say is I've never felt Lord's presence as intimately and deeply as I did on that trip," she said. "I went to Belize to give of myself and help others. I came back having gained more than I gave; I'm the one that was served. I was nervous. I was convinced that I haven't been back at the church long enough to make a difference. There's still stuff I'm learning. I felt like a hypocrite; I hadn't been in church full-time for more than six to eight months. I felt unworthy of it. I didn't know if my faith was enough. But I learned that's not what Christianity is. We're all at different levels. That's one of the cool things about it. There are people ahead of me who can guide me, but there are people behind me that I can help."

For more information on Believers World Outreach, visit www.believersworld.com.

Women's Discernment Group

Come pray and discuss with other women how to know what God has in mind for you.

Who: Any woman seeking to find God's plan, from grade 11 up through adult



When: Sunday March 3, 10, 17, 24, 31 and April 7th

Where: Potsdam, St. Mary's Rectory, 5-7 pm
Plattsburgh, Newman Center 1-3 pm
Watertown, Hearthside Room, 1425 Washington St.
5-7 pm

Dinner will be provided. For more information, contact Cathy Russell, crussell@rcdony.org or 315-393-2920.

Registration is requested by emailing Shayne Lippincott at slippincott@rcdony.org.



Mary Palamar, Peter Palamar, Molly Amoriell, Becky Miller, Sarina Nicola, Denise Wallace, Sister Cathleen Moore, Bernie Clarke, Tilman Kuwe, Lora Kluwe, Yvona Fast, Lorraine Chilson and Michael Chilson participated in a fall retreat held at Guggenheim this past September. The retreat was given by Sister Bethany Fitzgerald, a Sister of St. Joseph (pictured at far right). Sister Bethany has been giving retreats at Guggenheim Lodge and other locations for many years.

Why go on a retreat?

Submitted by by Bernie Clarke
St. Agnes Parish, Lake Placid

Why do people from all walks of life and from all over the diocese go on retreat? The answer is actually quite basic: we are all searching for God.

Some of us may be more aware than others that we want a closer relationship with God, but it is a basic human desire.

Sometimes we fill our lives with other things as we pursue our search, but sometimes an opportunity presents itself for time away with the Lord.

Maybe a friend asks you to join them on a retreat. Perhaps you read about an upcoming retreat in the parish bulletin, and the idea sticks with you.

Responding to nudges from the Lord is a beginning.

After you sign up, apprehension may set in; you may question why you signed up?

"I have so much to do," you may think. "Why am I

giving up a whole week-end?"

Then you rush around getting everything together, and you arrive at the retreat.

You enter in to quiet time. You have space. You have reflection. You have prayer.

Occasionally, there are struggles in letting go of your usual activities, the silencing of the cell phone, the silencing of the mind.

But it's an opportunity to choose to remain with the Lord – to sit with, walk with and be present to the Lord.

Slowly the weekend takes shape, and you feel peaceful. Reflection can bring clarity, sometimes letting go of a concern. Perhaps a worry does not seem as great; a grace is given.

Subtle changes in how you see life may emerge.

Often we do not realize the benefits of retreat until weeks or months later. We receive graces

that we may not even be aware of for a long time.

Before you know it the week-end is over, and it's time to return to life as you know it. But the peace, the benefits, the graces remain with you long after the retreat is over.

Why not give a retreat a try? You may be very glad you did.

You may have a closer relationship with the Lord. Sister Bethany Fitzgerald, Sister of St. Joseph, plans to offer adult retreats in both the summer and fall.

Dates will be announced as they are confirmed.

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Environmental Stewardship

What are you already doing?

Returning to Dewitt Jones' advice that he learned from working for National Geographic as a photographer, "Celebrate what is right with the world, and then you will have the energy to fix what is wrong." Let us look at some ways we are already being "good stewards" of the earth.

What are you already doing in your own home, parish and community to recycle, reduce, reuse? What efforts are you already doing to reduce the amount of energy you are using, i.e. turning off lights when not needed, unplugging appliances when not in use, turning down the heat by a few degrees, insulating your home, etc.? In what ways are you already reducing carbon emissions when you travel, i.e. combining trips, sharing rides, keeping tires properly inflated, etc.? What are you already doing to reduce the amount of one-use plastics, i.e. carrying your reusable beverage container, requesting "no straw, please," using your own bag for shopping, etc.?

Why not write down the ways you are already being a good steward of God's creation this week? We may question, how can such little actions really make a difference in the big picture? However, like the waves that wash upon the rocks and create sands, so our seemingly small actions do make a difference.

As followers in the footsteps of Jesus, we are called to a way of simplicity. Christian simplicity means taking only what we need – not wasting or taking in excess. Amid our culture of overconsumption, the way of Christian simplicity can lead us to a life that is outwardly simple, inwardly rich and socially just.

As the adage says, "The impossible can always be broken down into possibilities." As you celebrate the ways you are already being a good steward, consider one more way that you could live more simply. Praise God for the abundance in creation that He has entrusted to us and ask for the grace to carry out this new resolution.

Bishop's Public Schedule

Feb. 13 – 10:40 a.m. – Mass at St. Joseph's Home

Feb. 14 – Noon – Mass at St. Mary's Cathedral

Feb. 16 – 8 a.m. – Mass at St. Mary's Cathedral

Feb. 17 – 8 a.m. – Mass at St. Mary's Cathedral

Feb. 18 – 9 a.m. – Pontifical College Josephinum Board Meeting in Columbus, Ohio

Feb. 20 – Noon – Mass at St. Mary's Cathedral

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:

Feb. 25 – 5 p.m., St. Alphonsus-Holy Name of Jesus Parish, Tupper Lake

To Report Abuse

If you have a complaint of suspected misconduct involving diocesan clergy, religious, employees or volunteers, contact **Victims Assistance Coordinator**, Terri-
anne Yanulavich, Adult & Youth Counseling Services of Northern New York, 31 Sixth Street, Malone, NY 12953; 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

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!

Vermont bishop: Proposed abortion bill 'goes too far'

BURLINGTON, Vt. (CNS) – The bishop of the Diocese of Burlington said an abortion bill working its way through the Vermont Legislature "goes too far."

Bishop Christopher J. Coyne said the proposal, H. 57, "goes far beyond Roe v. Wade," the U.S. Supreme Court decision legalizing abortion, by "guaranteeing unrestricted abortion through all nine months of pregnancy."

This, he added, "means that a baby in the womb can be terminated right up to the moment of natural birth. My friends, that is not abortion. That is infanticide."

The House Human Services Committee passed the bill out of its committee Feb. 7 after only making what Vermont Right to Life called "cosmetic changes." It now moves to the House Judiciary Com-

mittee.

The bill's sponsors say it isn't intended to change or pre-empt abortion law but simply "codify current access."

Bishop Coyne said the Catholic faith teaches that all human life is sacred, "meaning 'of God'" – from the moment of conception to the moment of natural death and that Catholics are called to embrace and protect that sacred gift.

"You are also aware that the teaching and ministry of the Catholic Church since the first century has affirmed the moral evil of every procured abortion," he added, quoting from the Catechism of the Catholic Church. "This teaching has not changed and remains unchangeable. Direct abortion, that is to say, abortion willed either as an end or a means, is gravely contrary to the moral law."

The bishop called for people to contact their legislators and oppose the bill, saying it "would legislate that right to an abortion – to infanticide – not be 'denied, restricted or infringed by any government entity.'"

This is not exclusively a Catholic issue as evidenced by the scores of non-Catholics who joined pro-life Catholics at the Statehouse for a Feb. 6 hearing.

Though he was not called upon to read his testimony during the crowded hearing, Deacon Philip Lawson's written statement said: "Like most

Vermonters, we quietly go about our lives and do our best to help others. We have no desire to impose our way of life on others, but there are times when the threat to life is so egregious that our faith compels us to speak out publicly, especially on behalf of those who have no voice or are viewed as unwanted."

He is executive director of evangelization, catechesis, divine worship, marriage and family and respect life for the Diocese of Burlington.

"As Christians and as Catholics, we are a people of life, and we cannot sit idly by when any life is threatened," he wrote. "It is why we support pregnancy help centers; it is why we support homeless shelters and so many outreach ministries; it is why we take care of folks at the end of their lives. It is why we take the time today to speak up for those who have no voice, both in the womb and for those whom society so often devalues."

Across the country, the New Mexico House Feb. 7 passed a bill pro-life leaders say will allow abortion on demand for any reason. The measure also takes away a parental notification requirement for minors and removes conscience protections. It now moves to the state Senate, and if it passes will go to Gov. Michelle Lujan Grisham to sign into law. She has made it clear she will do so.

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CATHOLIC WORLD AT A GLANCE

Judge allows survey of church property for border wall build

WASHINGTON (CNS) – A judge in Texas ruled Feb. 6 that the Diocese of Brownsville, Texas, must allow federal officials to survey some of its property for possible construction of a border wall on it. The action had been blocked by Brownsville Bishop Daniel E. Flores, who earlier said he could not consent to it because such a structure "would limit freedom of the church to exercise her mission." But U.S. District Court Judge Randy Crane said surveying the land would not constitute a "substantial burden" for the church and that federal officials could proceed. Lawyers representing the diocese opposed the survey, particularly on the stretch of land that includes the historic La Lomita chapel. The structure, in the border city of Mission, is near a levee where the government wants to build part of President Donald Trump's proposed border wall. Mary McCord, lead counsel for the Diocese of Brownsville, said that while the ruling was not about taking away property from the diocese at this time, attorneys representing the diocese wanted to make clear its opposition based on how it would affect the constitutional right to religious exercise.

Head of U.S. bishops: New 'season' could come after crisis

WASHINGTON (CNS) – The laity may be angry over the most recent revelations of the Catholic Church's sex abuse crisis, but bishops, particularly younger ones, share in that anger and "want to move with real force" toward solutions and it could yield a new season for the church, said the president of the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops Feb. 6. Cardinal Daniel N. DiNardo made the comments during a conference to address the problem. The "Healing the Breach of Trust" conference, the second such meeting at The Catholic University of America, addressed the need of more involvement by lay women and men in building what the cardinal called in the morning part of the conference a new "season" for the church, and one that may not be accidental. "Think about what the Spirit might be doing in all of this," Cardinal DiNardo said. "In saying this, I am in no way trying to deny or dodge the issues of the episcopal responsibility and accountability that this crisis has raised," but added it's worth it to ponder St. Augustine's principle "that God can bring good even out of evil."

Dioceses warned of possible lawsuit by student's lawyers

WASHINGTON (CNS) – Two weeks after the much-talked about and interpreted incident that occurred between Catholic high school students, a Native American tribal leader and members of another protest group, lawyers for one of the students sent more than 50 letters to media outlets, individual journalists, celebrities and Catholic dioceses and archdioceses warning of possible legal action. The letters – from the lawyers for Covington Catholic High School student Nick Sandmann, the student most prominent in viral footage of the Jan. 18 encounter in Washington – were sent to individuals and groups the attorneys think may have defamed or libeled Sandmann particularly in the initial reaction on social media. The incident in question occurred when students from Kentucky's Covington Catholic High School, who had attended the March for Life, were waiting for buses to pick them up near the Lincoln Memorial. In clips from a video that went viral almost immediately, students were shown surrounding Nathan Phillips, tribal elder for the Omaha Tribe, who was chanting and beating a drum. The students appeared to be mocking him.

To ignore trafficking is to be complicit, pope says

VATICAN CITY (CNS) – To be indifferent to or ignore human trafficking and modern-day slavery would be to become an accomplice to those crimes, Pope Francis said.

"Although we try to ignore it, slavery is not something from other times," he said in a video explaining his prayer intention for the month of February.

"We cannot ignore the fact that there is as much slavery in the world today as there was before, or perhaps more," he said in the one-minute video, published online at www.thepopevideo.org Feb. 7.

"Faced with this tragic reality, no one can wash their hands of it without being, in some way, an accomplice to this crime against humanity," he said, calling for prayers and action by welcoming those who are victims of human trafficking, forced prostitution and violence.

The video was presented at a Vatican news conference underlining the importance of the International Day of Prayer and Awareness Against Human Trafficking. The day of prayer, encouraged by Pope Francis, is celebrated every Feb. 8, the feast of St. Josephine Bakhita.

"We cannot be quiet if we don't want to sell our soul to the devil. This is why we are here, we and all those who fight against trafficking," said Jesuit Father Frederic Fornos, head of the Pope's Worldwide Prayer Network, which develops the videos of the pope's monthly prayer requests.

"It is important to denounce" the crime of traf-

ficking and forced labor, he said, which is why people need to spread awareness, pray and help victims in some way.

Among those helping in the global fight are the world's religious orders, particularly through the international Talitha Kum network sponsored by the women's and men's international unions of superiors general.

The network's 2,000 consecrated women and men and lay volunteers in 77 countries know "the painful reality" and global complexity of trafficking must be fought with coordinated and "common action," said Comboni Missionary Sister Gabriella Bottani, the network's international coordinator.

While sophisticated criminal organizations and government corruption are often responsible for the recruitment and cross-border transportation of trafficking victims, an individual's own family also might be the culprit, pushing an unsuspecting or vulnerable relative into the hands of traffickers and forced labor, she said at the Vatican news event.

Rejoice, 19, was one such survivor from Nigeria. She told reporters her mother sold her when she was 13 years old to a man named "Lucky," who "needed a girl to work" in Europe.

Away from home and en route toward Libya, she said she found out she was going to be working as a prostitute. "I was crying. I was afraid. They said if I report to the police I will die," she said.

After escaping from a detention center in Libya, she said she headed to Italy by boat which "broke

in two" and required rescue.

With the help of Italian workers who realized Rejoice was being trafficked, the young girl was eventually taken to a home in Catania run by the Sisters of Divine Providence.

There, the sisters and volunteers work with many women and girls who have been trafficked, said 42-year-old "Bridget," who asked that her real name not be used.

Bridget said many of the young women they help are minors, whom they must shield and protect not only from the traffickers still looking for them, but from the family members who sold them.

Rejoice's mother repeatedly threatens and insults her daughter when they speak by phone, both Rejoice and Bridget said, and they cannot tell anyone where she lives for fear the mother will let the traffickers know.

Further anxiety and anguish for victims and even the survivors who have escaped, Bridget said, comes from the voodoo rituals traffickers perform, threatening their victims with evil or death if they do not do what they have been told.

Bridget, also from Nigeria, said she escaped her traffickers in 1998 after she was promised a job at a restaurant in Italy. She said her captives severely beat her when she refused to "work on the street" as a prostitute.

After she escaped and got help from Catholic organizations, she began working as an educator at the sisters' home and a volunteer who heads to the seaport when a boat of suspected victims of traf-

SCRIPTURE REFLECTIONS

God's word is personal and loving

On this Sixth Sunday in Ordinary Time, God's spoken word to us is warm and personal.

Even in the Old Testament reading, He urges us to view Him as a deeply loving person, who wants us to be treated as a lover who resents our ignorance and indifference to the tenderness with which He acts towards us. Even His anger towards us flows from unchanging love.



Monsignor
Paul E.
Whitmore

Looking at Jeremiah first, we know how hard this prophet worked to prevent the Israelites from being made slaves in Babylon in the year 587 B.C. Why? Because they didn't listen to Jeremiah's plea, "Cursed is the one who trusts in human beings – whose heart turns away from the Lord... he is like a barren bush in the desert."

By contrast, "blessed is the one who trusts in the

February 17

Sixth Sunday of Ordinary Time

READINGS

Jeremiah 17:5-8
1 Corinthians 15:12, 16-20
Luke 6:17, 20-26

Lord...He is like a tree planted beside the waters that stretches out its roots to the stream..."

What a beautiful image, that God also uses in several of the psalms, It's a message for government leaders, business people, and society in general. If we want peace, we must

work for justice as God's law directs us.

In the second reading, St. Paul tells the Corinthians never to forget how both human and divine our Savior is. Jesus rose in the flesh, and we are called to also rise in both our flesh and in our spirit. Without this doctrine, our faith is useless

In Luke's Gospel, His Beatitudes are deeply personal. Because our faith is rooted in a person, Jesus speaks to us as persons, not as objects. He speaks to us directly. If we seek riches and hoard our pos-

sessions instead of sharing them with the poor, if we engage in evil practices for the sake of popular approval, then we risk divine punishment and loss of eternal life.

Those who go against the stream, and endure insult and abuse in this life, should "rejoice and leap for joy... for your reward will be great in heaven."

Sound familiar? We'll hear a lot more of the same during Lent.

The message gives us a head start on Lent, which begins in a couple of weeks.

Abortion law is not what supporters claim it is

By Jesse Sovie
Contributing writer

The RHA (Reproductive Health Act) that was passed and signed into NYS law, as it governs abortion, is not what its champions claim it to be.

First and foremost, this law is not simply a state-level reaffirmation of Roe Vs. Wade, passed because the governor fears what will happen at the Supreme Court. The truth is, those who wrote the bill did so many years before it was most recently rammed down the throats of all New Yorkers. The governor simply used the fear mongering of the Supreme Court as an excuse to gin up support from his base and push this law through.

Second, this bill contains many vile and dangerous things I feel are not being reported on by the media or that are being flatly ignored. For starters, the law now allows for abortions past 24 weeks for the reason of the mother's life or health

and/or viability of the baby. Prior to the passage of this law, the law on the books restricted abortions past 24 weeks to only cases where such a procedure saved the mother's life. While the new law sounds fairly reasonable at face value, the devil is in the details.

The specific addition of allowing abortions past 24 weeks for the mother's "health" is a very dangerous addition. The law does not define what it considers "health," and it was put there in vague terms by design. The crafters of the bill wanted to encompass any and all reasons that could cause a woman to have an abortion, even if it was only for "mental or emotional health." By design, the term "health" – without definitions included – would have to include all facets of a woman's health. With health so broadly defined, a woman one month, one week or one day away from giving birth could get an abortion if she argued for any

reason that the pregnancy was giving her emotional or mental health issues. All it would require is a doctor or a healthcare practitioner to sign off as the patient having a qualifying reason for her to have the abortion.

Think about what this entails? A woman could have an abortion up to her very due date or even as she is having contractions. Don't believe me? Look it up, as the same legislation that passed in our state is being proposed in other states and that very question was asked and answered. On an intellectual and theological level, what does such a law imply? That a baby is not a human being and therefore does not have any rights until it exits the woman's body. These politicians and elected officials could look at an ultrasound of a baby one day away from being born, with a fully developed heart, lungs, body, and say with a resounding voice that they aren't a human being and

they have no rights. The abortion lobby has been trying for years to push the idea – that a baby isn't a human life until it exits the woman's body. It looks like the crafters of this law gave that lobby exactly what they wanted. It makes one wonder how many of those politicians received campaign money from that lobby.

Thirdly, champions of this bill argue that it is a win for women's reproductive health and safety, yet this bill downgrades who can perform an abortion. Prior to this law change, the law required a medical doctor to perform any abortions. This new law allows for healthcare practitioners – not doctors – to perform abortions. I fail to see how that is good for the safety and well-being of the mothers.

Lastly, this bill removed several important things from the original law. One of the items removed was the protection clause that enabled a baby who survived an abortion to receive medical care to save

its life. Assuming a baby survives an abortion and is removed from the mother's body, it can now be left to die on the operating table, or be killed by the person performing the abortion, as there is no rule or law regulating that the baby be given medical treatment.

The final item removed from the old law that wasn't replaced was the clause that stated if a pregnant woman past 24 weeks of the pregnancy was killed or assaulted to the point where the baby was killed, the assailant could be charged with manslaughter or murder as it relates to the baby, in addition to whichever other charges the assailant faced with attacking the mother. It's another example of how this law, in no uncertain terms, pushes the idea that babies in the womb are not human beings until they are born, and that they are at the mercy of whatever the mother decides. Thanks to this new bill, it enables even more dan-

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AT THE MOVIES

THE LEGO MOVIE 2: THE SECOND PART

NEW YORK (CNS) – Everything is (still) awesome in "The Lego Movie 2: The Second Part" (Warner Bros.), a spirited and amusing sequel to 2014's "The Lego Movie."

This go-round, Phil Lord and Christopher Miller turned the directing reins over to Mike Mitchell ("Shrek Ever After"), but remained as co-writers, serving up the expected preponderance of puns and bounty of belly laughs that made the original animated movie so popular.

The signature dance tune, "Everything is Awesome," returns, along with a new one, aptly titled "Catchy Song," with the oft-repeated lyric, "This song is gonna get stuck inside your head."

It certainly does.

Five years after mild-mannered construction worker Emmet (voice of Chris Pratt) saved his city, Bricksburg has fallen on hard times, due to attacks from Duplo space invaders.

Duplo, for the uninitiated, are the larger-sized plastic bricks designed for toddlers, making this movie an intergenerational battle between



CNS PHOTO/WARNER BROS.

Animated characters Lucy, voiced by Elizabeth Banks, and Emmet, voiced by Chris Pratt, appear in "The Lego Movie 2: The Second Part."

Duplo's shiny hearts and rainbow-hued unicorns, and Lego's edgier characters and gritty vehicles.

Even as his rubble-strewn city is nicknamed Apocalypseburg, Emmet remains a cockeyed optimist, much to the frustration of his lady love, Lucy (voice of Elizabeth Banks). He is forced to rise to the occasion when Lucy and a gaggle of his Lego friends, including Batman (voice of Will Arnett), are suddenly whisked off into outer space.

The kidnapper is Queen Watevra Wa'Nabi (voice of Tiffany Haddish), the

Duplo ruler of a far-off galaxy where everything is equally awesome, but doused in sparkles. She lives up to her exotic name ("Whatever I Wanna Be"), deciding at whim to morph into a variety of exotic shapes.

The queen has but one goal: to marry Batman and unite the universe, bridging the Lego-Duplo gap. Batman, world-weary cynic that he is, wants no part of her scheme.

"I'm a bat-chelor!" he insists.

Meanwhile, Emmet, intent on a rescue mission, finds an unexpected ally

in a space cowboy named Rex Dangervest (also voiced by Pratt). A send-up of Pratt's roles in the "Jurassic World" and "Guardians of the Galaxy" franchises, Rex is hard-nosed and fearless, with a crew of obedient raptors on his space ship.

In Rex, Emmet finds his alter ego and inner warrior, and together they set off to save the day.

"The Lego Movie 2: The Second Part" features a dizzying array of settings and characters. Older viewers will enjoy the multiple cameos and inside jokes from a diverse

cast including presidents (Abraham Lincoln), action-film stars (Bruce Willis), scientists (Marie Curie), and even a Supreme Court Justice (Ruth Bader Ginsburg).

This family-friendly film offers positive messages about (no puns intended) making connections, bridging the gaps among friends and family members, and constructing a world where people respect one other, no matter their differences.

The film contains cartoon mayhem, some peril and mild rude humor. The Catholic News Service classification is A-1 – general patronage. The Motion Picture Association of America rating is PG – parental guidance suggested. Some material may not be suitable for children.



Abortion law

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 8

gerous and radical decisions to be made to end the pregnancy at any point, and for any reason.

How in the world did we get here to this culture of death that is now being legislated from legitimate forms of government?!

As if this law isn't already horrendous by itself, what I find sicker and more abhorrent is the re-

action of the politicians and governor himself. They celebrated with cheers, smiles and laughter as the bill was signed into law. The governor ordered the One World Trade Center building to be lit up pink in honor of passing this legislation into law.

When we look back on history to the fall of Rome, and we're shocked and ab-

horred by the citizens being fed to the lions in the Colosseum while other citizens cheered at the sight. Can we really say history does not repeat itself, that we are really all that different from that time period? I dare say we are starting to see history repeat itself. If we do not turn back from this culture of death and violence we are crafting both

personally and legislatively, we will see history repeat itself with our own fall, our own modern day empire will fall.

Students of history will laugh at us at this moment in time with irony, irony because a society as "evolved" and "enlightened" as us could allow such a travesty to unfold before our very eyes as we did nothing.

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ADIRONDACK

RUMMAGE SALE

Lake Placid – Rummage Sale to be held.

Date: March 9

Time: 9 a.m. to 2 p.m.

Place: St. Agnes School

Features: There is something for everyone. Come shop the treasures and find those items for bargain prices. Donations are now being accepted at the school for the sale.

Contact: Please call Kathleen Murphy at 518-523-3771.

CLINTON

BREAKFAST

Lyon Mountain – Knights of Columbus to host a breakfast.

Date: Feb. 16

Time: 5 a.m. to 10

Place: Lyon Mountain American Legion Post #1623

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

Contact: For more information please call 518-578-2638 or 518-593-2052

SPAGHETTI DINNER

Peru – Peru Knights of Columbus to have spaghetti dinner to fund the Council's Coats for Kids program.

Date: Feb. 16

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

Place: St. Augustine's Parish Center

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

FISHERS CLUB

Plattsburgh – The Lakesides Fishers Club will meet and discuss priesthood discernment.

Date: Feb. 17, March 3 & 17, April 7 & 21, May 5

Time: 3 p.m.

Place: St. Peter's Church Upper Room

Features: Join for discernment, evening prayer & dinner. High school junior men and older are welcome.

Contact: Father Douglas Lucia, dlucia@rcdony.org, or Father Howard Venette, hvenette@gmail.com, or just drop in.

PANCAKE BREAKFAST

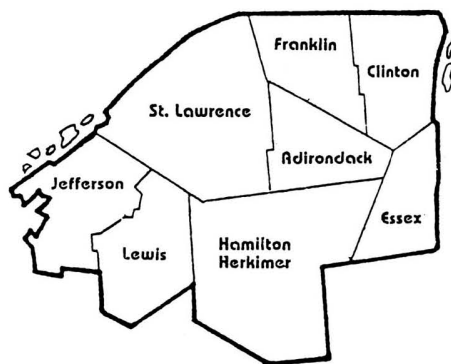
Treadwell Mills – The Knights of Columbus will hold an all you can eat Pancake Breakfast.

Date: March 3

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

Place: St. Joseph's Church Parish Hall

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



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.

under 5, Free

FISH FRY

Chazy – Sacred Heart parish to have their annual fish fry.

Date: March 15

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

Place: Parish Center

Cost: Adults, \$11; Children 6-12, \$5; All take-outs are \$11

Contact: 518-846-7650 or email sacredheart@westelcom.com for more information.

FRANKLIN

LENTEN DAY OF RECOLLECTION

Chasm Falls – Lenten Day of Recollection to be held by the Ogdensburg Cursillo group.

Date: March 23

Time: 10 a.m. to 5:30 p.m.

Place: St. Helen's Church

Cost: A donation of \$10/adult is suggested upon arrival

Features: Join Bishop Terry R. LaValley, Father Albert Hauser, Father Alan Shnob, Father Jack Downs and Father Andrew Amyot for a day of talks, prayer, personal witness, recollection and opportunity for Confession.

Contact: Pre-register by mail, email or phone no later than March 15.

kathyracette@gmail.com, kracette1a@gmail.com, 518-314-1505, 518-578-3056, Ken and Kathy Racette, 679 Cumberland Head Rd, Plattsburgh, NY 12901

JEFFERSON

SPAGHETTI & MEATBALL DINNER

Evans Mills – Spaghetti & Meatball

Dinner to be held to benefit Indian River Knights of Columbus.

Date: March 2

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

RETREAT

Watertown – Please join us for "Charisms: Discovering the Gifts We All Have to Share" retreat.

Date: March 23

Time: 9 a.m. to Noon

Place: Sisters of St. Joseph Mother House

Features: The cost of the workshop is minimal, free will donation at the door. Facilitator will be Marika Donders. Mass and workshops to be held.

Contact: Please register prior to March 23 by going to It's easy to register, just click on the link below: <http://www.rcdony.org/formation/commissioned-layministers/clm-event-registration.html> or call Jeannie Griz-zuto at 315-393-2920.

SPAGHETTI SUPPER

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

Date: March 28

Time: 4:30 p.m. 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

LEWIS

LEWIS EUCHARISTIC ADORATION

Lowville – Lewis Eucharistic Adoration to be held.

Date: Feb. 21

Time: 4 p.m. to 5

Place: St. Peter's Church

Features: To Thank God for & To Honor the Most Blessed Sacrament, all are invited to one hour of exposition, silent adoration, the Divine Mercy Chaplet for Souls, and benediction. If inclement weather, service will be cancelled and not rescheduled.

ST. LAWRENCE

STEAK OR HADDOCK DINNER

Ogdensburg – Knights of Columbus Council #258 to have a dinner with the option of BBQ strip steak or haddock filet.

Date: Feb. 22

Time: 4:30 p.m.

Place: K of C Hall

Cost: Adults, \$11; Seniors and Children, \$10

Contact: 315-393-7990 for more information and to buy tickets

BLESSED IS SHE WORKSHOP

Norwood – "Live Well: Self Care for Body and Soul" workshop and DIY perfume making to be held.

Date: March 10

Time: 12:30 p.m.

Place: St. Andrew's Church

Features: All women can come and learn about spiritual and physical self care, then make your own essential oil perfume! Light snacks will be served but please bring a drink. There is no cost to attend

Contact: To reserve your materials for perfume making or for more information please contact Sara LaPoint at 315-212-7565 or narrow56@gmail.com

DIOCESAN EVENTS

SURVIVING DIVORCE

A Surviving Divorce group program is to be held in Gouverneur.

Start date: Feb. 21 at St. James Church, Gouverneur

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

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

WOMEN DISCERNMENT GROUP

Women's discernment groups are forming in three areas of the diocese.

Date: March 3, 10, 17, 24, 31 and April 7

Place: Potsdam, St. Mary's Rectory 5 p.m. to 7; Plattsburgh, Newman Center 1 p.m. to 3 p.m.; Watertown, Hearthside Room at SSJ Mother House 5 p.m. to 7

Features: Come pray and discuss with other women how to know what God has in mind for you. Dinner will be provided.

Contact: Cathy Russell at crussell@rcdony.org or 315-393-2920. Registration is requested by emailing Shayne Lippincott at slippincott@rcdony.org

YOUTH LENTEN RETREAT

A Lenten retreat for grades 6-12 to be held in Gouverneur and Ticonderoga.

Schedule: March 2 at St. James, Gouverneur from 12 p.m. to 5; March 9 at St. Mary's, Ticonderoga from 12:30 p.m. to 5:30 p.m.

Features: Journey begins with the sacrament of Reconciliation. Each retreat will be comprised of a unique blend of activities, DYC led workshops, and closing Mass. Snacks and drinks included. Registration deadline is Feb. 27

Contact: To register visit www.rcdony.org/youth and select "Lenten Retreats". Please contact Tom Semeraro, Director of Youth Ministry at tsemeraro@rcdony.org or by calling 315-393-2920 ext. 1415

NEIGHBORING DIOCESES

IGNITE MEN'S CONFERENCE

Syracuse – The 11th Annual IGNITE Conference to be held.

Date: March 30

Place: The SRC Arena is located on the campus of Onondaga Community College

Features: There will be three tremendous speakers – including former NFL player Eric Mahl; musician and author Chris Padgett; and a convert to Catholicism, Dr. John Bergsma – that will challenge all who attend. An amazing day that will have a tremendous impact on you.

Contact: You can register for the IGNITE 2019 Catholic Men's Conference online at www.ignitecatholicmen.org



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

The church's universal mission: Questions answered

The Pontifical Mission Societies are one family in Mission. Unlike the Society for the Propagation of the Faith, Missionary Childhood Association or the Society of St. Peter Apostle, the Missionary Union of Priests and Religious is a spiritual apostolate. Period. They do not collect, solicit or distribute funds. The primary purpose is to educate and inspire clergy and religious so they may be better animated to share their faith and to be better missionaries.

In 1916, Father Paolo Manna, a PIME missionary serving in Myanmar (then called Burma), envisioned an organization that would help him share the spiritual graces he had received through his work in bringing the "Good News" of Christ to others. He wanted to encourage those already engaged in the work of the church to support the work of the missionaries — and perhaps to become missionaries themselves. And so, he formed the Missionary Union of Priests and Religious.

What is MCP and what is its purpose?

It is a way of centralizing the efforts of missionary organizations from around the world who wish to appeal to Catholics in the United States. The purpose of the MCP is two-fold. First, the many men's' and women's' mission congregations, lay organizations and mission dioceses get a chance to personally appeal for prayer and financial support from Catholics of the U.S. Secondly, we Catholics get the opportunity to be educated about what is happening in the mission field today. There are many new strides in mission. We emphasize solidarity and understanding of situations that make life so difficult for so many people.

I would like to serve as a lay missionary.

What should I do?

There are a number of local and national organizations that help "connect"

lay Catholics to mission opportunities in the United States and abroad. Contact your diocesan mission office for more information or contact the Catholic Network of Volunteer Service (CNVS). Catholic Network of Volunteer Service promotes opportunities for men and women of all backgrounds and skills to respond to the Gospel through domestic and international volunteer service to people in need. CNVS connects volunteers and missionaries with more than 200 faith-based programs offering more than 10,000 full-time volunteer placements throughout the U.S. and in over 115 countries.

Could you give me an example of some of the types of activities conducted on behalf of the Missionary Union of Priests and Religious?

In dioceses throughout the United States, Diocesan Directors of the Pontifical Mission Societies, as well as others engaged in the work of the church, help "animate the animators," so they can tell others about the mission of Jesus Christ.

How can I further my personal spiritual commitment to the Church's universal mission?

If you are a lay person, you can deepen your commitment to the missionary work of the church by offering your prayers and personal sacrifices for the missions and for missionaries. In addition, the Pontifical Mission Societies offers several publications on mission spirituality for lay people. In addition, you may speak to your pastor or diocesan director of the Pontifical Mission Societies about activities, discussions or pilgrimages in your area designed to animate baptized Catholics to the missionary work of the Church. If you are a priest, seminarian, religious brother or sister, or catechist, contact your diocesan director of the Pontifical Mission Societies about mission education programs available in your area.

OBITUARIES

Brownville — Edward S. Hirsch, 53; Mass of Christian Burial Feb. 7, 2019 at Immaculate Conception Church; burial in Brownville Cemetery.

Carthage — Joseph Edward Elliott, 61; Funeral Services Feb. 6, 2019 at the Lundy Funeral Home & Cremation Service, Inc.; burial in the New St. James Cemetery.

Constableville — Eva Duppert Shambo, 81; Mass of Christian Burial Feb. 8, 2019 at St. Mary's Church; burial in St. Patrick's Cemetery.

Croghan — Stephen A. Buckingham, 98; Mass of Christian Burial Feb. 4, 2019 at St. Stephen's Church; burial in St. Stephen's Cemetery.

Dannemora — Howard "Pete" Elias, 77; Mass of Christian Burial Feb. 4, 2019 at St. Joseph's Church; burial in Independence Cemetery.

Dannemora — Barbara Smart Rock, 63; Mass of Christian Burial Feb. 2, 2019 at St. Joseph's Church

Elizabethtown — Joan Trombly, 87; Mass of Christian Burial in the Spring at St. Elizabeth's Church.

Malone — Charles T. Ashley, 82; Funeral Services Feb. 12, 2019 at the Brusno-Desnoyers Funeral Home; burial in St. Mary's Cemetery, Brushton.

Massena — Mary E. (Morin) Bush, 83; Funeral Services Feb. 8, 2019 at Phillips Memorial Home; burial in Calvary Cemetery.

Massena — Tammy Lee (Richards) Holliday, 56; Mass of Christian Burial Feb. 9, 2019 at Sacred Heart Church; burial in Calvary Cemetery.

Ogdensburg — Nelson J. Sholette, 85; Mass of Christian Burial Feb. 5, 2019 at St. Mary's Cathedral; burial in St. Mary's Cemetery.

Peru — Nancy J. (Varno) Grenier, 84; Funeral Services Feb. 6, 2019 at the Hamilton Funeral Home; burial in St. Peter's Cemetery.

Plattsburgh — Shauneen (Ryan) Casey, 85; Mass of Christian Burial Feb. 7, 2019 at St. John's Church; burial in Mt. Carmel Cemetery.

Potsdam — Jonathan M. Thompson, 13; Mass of Christian Burial Feb. 9, 2019 at St. Mary's Church; burial in St. Mary's Cemetery.

Redford — Carol (Carron) Gilmour, 77; Mass of Christian Burial to be held at a later date at Assumption of Mary Church.

Waddington — E. Jane (Rickard) Layo, 80; Mass of Christian Burial Feb. 8, 2019 at St. Mary's Church; burial in St. Mary's Cemetery.

Watertown — Sterling F. "Jim" Campaney, 86; Mass of Christian Burial Feb. 6, 2019 at Holy Family Church; burial in Calvary Cemetery.

West Chazy — Agnes M. (Bordeau) LaValley, 74; Mass of Christian Burial Feb. 7, 2019 at St. Joseph's Church.



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LIFE IMITATES ART



Students at St. Mary's School in Ticonderoga participate in the school's "Living Art Museum." Students researched famous artists and their works, and they "became" famous portraits and shared information they learned at a Jan. 31 assembly.



President defends rights of adoption agencies

WASHINGTON (CNS)—Touting efforts to protect religious freedom, President Donald Trump told the National Prayer Breakfast that his administration would de-

fend the right of faith-based adoption agencies to place children in families based on firmly held religious beliefs.

"We will always protect our country's proud tradition of faith-based adoption," Trump said. "My administration is working to ensure that faith-based adoption agencies are able to help vulnerable children find their forever families while following their deeply held beliefs."

His comments came after introducing Melissa and Chad Buck, a Catholic couple from Holt, Michigan, who have adopted five children with special needs through St. Vincent Catholic Charities in the Diocese of Lansing. Two of the Holts' children — Max, 10, and Liz, 9 — joined the couple at the Feb. 7 breakfast.

Trump alluded to an American Civil Liberties Union federal lawsuit against the Michigan Department of Health and

Human Services that challenges a state law that protects child-placing agencies that deny adoption services because of a conflict with the agency's religious beliefs.

The lawsuit argues that state-contracted, taxpayer-funded child placement agencies unconstitutionally discriminate by disqualifying same-sex couples from consideration for adoption or foster care.

Under Catholic teaching, St. Vincent Catholic Charities does not place children with same-sex couples. It is among the agencies contracted for adoption services by the state of Michigan.

The president also told the breakfast audience his administration is "speaking out against religious persecution around the world including against religious minorities, Christians and the Jewish community."

Trump then introduced Elan Carr, a former prose-

cutor in the Los Angeles district attorney's office, as the State Department's new special envoy to monitor and combat anti-Semitism.

Applauding throughout the breakfast, the audience reserved its longest ovation for Trump's pledge to uphold its pro-life policies toward unborn children.

"As part of our commitment to building a just and loving society, we must build a culture that cherishes the dignity and sanctity of innocent human life. All children, born and unborn, are made in the holy image of God," he said.

Trump pledged to continue efforts to crack down on human trafficking by working with faith-based agencies working on the frontline to protect vulnerable men, women and children.

"Together we will end the scourge of modern-day slavery, which because of the internet is at levels nobody can believe, the president added.

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