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The Diocese of Ogdensburg Volume 74, Number 34

NORTH COUNTRY CATHOLIC

JAN. 29, 2020

Ministry knits, crochets and prays

PLATTSBURGH – Members of the Prayer Shawl Ministry know how to wrap people in blessings and love. They knit and crochet baby blankets, as well as, prayer shawls and lap blankets for the sick and suffering.

New volunteers are always needed and welcomed to help spread encouragement.

"We would always be thankful for new members as the more creative hands we have the more we can give," said Marie Montroy, a long-time member of the Prayer Shawl Ministry.

The ministry also gladly accepts donations of yarn.

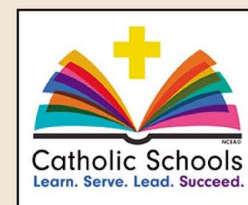
SEE STORY, PAGE 8

MARCHING FOR LIFE



A portion of the Youth Buses for Life participants gather on the steps of the Library of Congress after the March for Life in Washington, DC on Jan. 24. There will be additional coverage of the diocesan participation in the march in a future edition of the *North Country Catholic*.

CATHOLIC SCHOOLS WEEK



Schools around the diocese are preparing to celebrate Catholic Schools Week.

The theme of this year's Catholic Schools Week is "Catholic Schools: Learn. Serve. Lead. Succeed."

While some schools in the diocese have opted to delay their celebrations until later in the year, others are celebrating in the next couple weeks with full schedules of fun and faith, including family Masses, theme days, carnivals, charity food drives and teacher appreciation events.

SEE STORIES ON PAGES 3-6

World needs stories of truth, peace, pope says

VATICAN CITY – With fake news becoming ever more sophisticated, people need the wisdom, courage and patience to discern and embrace constructive stories, Pope Francis said.

"We need stories that reveal who we truly are, also in the untold heroism of everyday life," Pope Francis wrote in his message for World Communications Day 2020.

World Communications Day will be celebrated May 24 at the Vatican and in most dioceses. The papal

message was released at the Vatican Jan. 24, the feast of St. Francis de Sales, patron saint of journalists.

The message for 2020 was based on the theme, "That you may tell your children and grandchildren: Life becomes history." The passage, drawn from the Book of Exodus, highlights the importance of sharing "knowledge of the Lord" and meaningful memories, stories and experiences, so that they may transform people's

lives, he wrote.

Jesus, who is "the quintessential storyteller – the Word," he said in the message, spoke of God "not with abstract concepts, but with parables, brief stories taken from everyday life" so that "the story becomes part of the life of those who listen to it, and it changes them."

"God has become personally woven into our humanity, and so has given us a new way of weaving our stories," he said.

"Stories influence our lives, whether in the form of fairy tales, novels, films, songs, news, even if we do not always realize it," he said, and people often decide "what is right or wrong based on characters and stories we have made our own."

So many stories throughout history share a common "thread" in which heroes, including everyday heroes, follow a dream and "confront difficult situations and combat evil, driven by a force that

makes them courageous – the force of love," the pope said.

These kinds of stories can give people both the example and reasons "to heroically face the challenges of life," to grow, be enriched and to discover themselves better.

However, the pope warned, "our story has been threatened" by the temptation of evil that entices with false promises and uses the power of storytelling "for purposes of exploitation."

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EDITOR'S NOTE

It sounds like a family to me

"We have biological family, and we have logical family."

While I can't remember where I first heard that quote, I use the phrase with some regularity.

We have our biological families, the families we are born into — our parents, siblings, aunts, uncles, cousins, nieces and nephews — and, for some of us, the families we later create. In addition, we have our logical families, the friends we love so much, we see them almost as brothers and sisters, or maybe as one of our crazy cousins.

While I love that quote, I'm discovering it's incomplete.

First, it doesn't include our Church family, both our parish communities and the universal Church. We're all part of the Body of Christ. That makes us inextricably connected. It makes us family.

Beyond that, as I've traveled around the diocese and gotten to know more and more of the people and places, I consistently hear about yet another type of family: The Catholic school family.

I frequently hear parents talk about "our St. Mary's

School family," "our Trinity family" or "our (insert the name of any of our diocesan Catholic schools here) family."

With their smaller classes, parent volunteers, service projects, after-school programs and extra-curricular activities, my experience suggests everyone knows everyone in a Catholic school.

The teachers, administrators and staff truly love and support their students.

The students love and support each other. They learn and grow together. They have fun together and create a bit of mischief together, as youth are known

to do.

In our Catholic schools, Christ is at the center. Each school community worships together, serves others together, learns tenets of the faith together.

It sounds an awful lot like a family to me.

As our diocesan schools prepare to celebrate Catholic Schools Week, let's join them in celebrating Catholic education. If you have a school in your community, look for ways to support it, either by volunteering, donating, or enrolling your child or grandchild.

Be part of the Catholic school family.

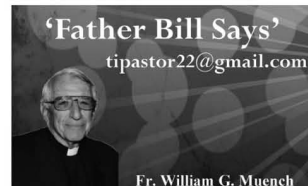


Darcy L.
Fargo

'Behold the Lamb of God'

The first part of the first chapter of the Gospel of St. John speaks of Jesus as the Word. "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God." This month, we celebrate Jesus as the Word of God. In the second part of that same chapter of St. John's Gospel, we are told that on the day after Jesus was baptized by John the Baptist, John noticed Jesus coming down the roadway. John pointed out Jesus to his disciples and those standing near him, "Behold, the Lamb of God, who takes away the sins of the world."

We, Catholics, use this expression of "the Lamb of God" for Jesus, especially during Mass. At Mass, before Holy Communion, we sing together, "Lamb of God, who takes away the sins of the world, Have mercy on us." "Lamb of God, who takes away the sins of the world, give us peace." And then the priest celebrant holds up the consecrated Body of Christ and says, "Behold the Lamb



of God, behold him who comes to take away the sins of the world. Blessed are those who are called to his supper."

This expression, the Lamb of God, touches our Hebrew roots. I am certain you remember the story. We must go all the way back to the Book of Exodus, the second book of the Torah, the Old Testament. The Hebrew people were being held in slavery in Egypt. Moses is commissioned by God to return to Egypt to seek freedom for his Hebrew people and lead them out of Egypt to the Promised Land. Moses is guided by God to bring plagues on Egypt. These plagues would make the Egyptians want to free the Hebrews and allow them to leave Egypt.

We often think of plagues as diseases of some sort. Here, the ten plagues were some sort of harmful infestation like the plague of frogs, the plague of gnats, a pestilence of boils, a hailstorm, locusts, a plague of darkness. The tenth plague was the death of the firstborn. At a certain time, God would send the Angel of Death and cause the death of the firstborn in each family.

To protect the Hebrew families, each family was instructed to procure a lamb and prepare it for a meal. They were told to take some of the blood of the lamb and place it over the doors of their homes. This would be a sign that this was a Hebrew family and the Angel of Death would Passover that home. The blood of the Lamb would save and protect the Hebrew families.

To this day Jewish homes continue to celebrate and remember this event with a special home celebration. They continue to call this special meal and celebration,

The Passover. Each year, the Passover is celebrated very close in time to our Holy Week and Easter. The Passover is a meal to celebrate that our people were once slaves, but God came and set them free.

For us, Catholics, we are set free by Jesus. Jesus came among us to live with us and teach us and then die for us and rise to new life. Just as the blood of the lamb won freedom for the Hebrews of the Exodus, so Jesus shed his blood to free us and win for us freedom from the slavery of sin. Jesus is the Lamb of God.

There is no other word for the addiction of sin than slavery. It can hold us back from being free to live in the Lord's Spirit. Jesus comes to us as our Savior. Jesus comes to our world as the Lamb of God. Jesus comes to give us the joy of freedom by forgiving our sins. Jesus comes to show us the happiness of freedom. Jesus teaches us to live in the love of God. We are a loved people.

CELEBRATING CATHOLIC SCHOOLS WEEK

Catholic Schools: Learn, Serve, Lead, Succeed

Sister Ellen Rose Coughlin, SSJ
Superintendent of Schools

You can count on certain events occurring at the same time each year. Such is the case with the national celebration of Catholic Schools Week which begins each year on the last Sunday of January. This annual celebration traces its beginnings to 1974 and the theme, *Difference Where it Counts – Message, Community and Service*. In the years that followed, subsequent themes emphasized the same three components.

As I prepared this article, I revisited the themes from previous years. Each one provided an opportunity to highlight the mission of Catholic Schools. Join me in looking at some themes from the past. They provide the unique qualities and character of Catholic schools.

2005: *Catholic School Faith in Every Student*. The seed of faith received in baptism, nurtured primarily by parents, is further developed in the Catholic school through instruction, example, and the support of the faith community. Students reach their full potential as human beings, children of God and members of God's family, when the spiritual component of their lives is recognized and developed along with their intellectual and physical growth.

2007: *Catholic Schools: The Good News in Education*. Academic programs, competitive sports teams, a safe environment, the competence of the faculty and staff are vital aspects to a school's vitality and good news that should be recognized. In a Catholic



school, however, these components must be rooted in the Gospel. The academic program must address the whole child and therefore in light of the Gospel, acknowledge the spiritual and ethical development of the students. Athletic programs must be infused with Gospel values, respect for others, tolerance, cooperation, teamwork and sacrifice. Caring and safe environments are built upon mutual respect and love for others. The faculty and staff recognize and accept their responsibility to witness to the Gospel message in word and action. When all of this happens, the school becomes not only an educational community where children learn the human knowledge and skills necessary for life, but also a community of faith that is nourished by a relationship with Jesus, the Good News!

2010: *Catholic Schools Dividends for Life*. In the economic and business world the term dividends refers to a sum or quality of money to be divided among stockholders. The dictionary, however, offers an alternative mean-

ing. A dividend is a "gift of something extra." What is the gift . . . the something extra that students receive in a Catholic school? Christ is the gift that students encounter in our Catholic schools. And from this gift comes so much more, namely a supernatural vision of life, an awareness of the dignity of the human person, the experience of a faith community, a curriculum which acknowledges the relationship between faith and culture and the personal witness of teachers and administrators.

2012: *Catholic School: Faith. Academics. Service*. This theme focused on the three priorities of our Catholic schools. Our children and young people are taught the basics of our Christian faith. In addition to knowledge about our faith, students encounter the person of Christ, experience His love and learn how to become companions and disciples of Christ. Our academic programs provide the knowledge and skills our students need to be integral members of the Church and society. Here, too, Catholic schools have an added value. The

Gospel and the teachings of the Church are integrated into all subject areas, programs and the environment of the school. No subject is only a secular pursuit. Each subject is enriched by the virtues that spring from the grace of the Gospel accepted and lived. Matthew's Gospel is clear about the importance of service to our neighbor. Feeding the hungry, clothing the naked, visiting the imprisoned, promoting justice and comforting the suffering (cf. Mt 25:31-46) are works of service by which the disciple of Christ can reach out to others. Our very salvation depends upon recognizing Christ in our brothers and sisters and reaching out to them through the corporal and spiritual works of mercy. Service, noticing our brothers and sisters in need and reaching out to them is a vital component of a Catholic school.

This return to past themes is not simply a backward glance for the sake of acknowledging the mission of Catholic schools. It is an opportunity to celebrate that mission today, to make sure it is thriving in our schools and to continue our efforts to announce the Good News to the children, young people and families we serve.

This year's theme, *Catholic Schools: Learn – Serve – Lead – Succeed*, encompasses the core products and values of our Catholic Schools. We can sing the praises of our schools recognizing that they:

- combine our Catholic faith with academic excellence;

- provide a balanced academic curriculum that integrates faith, culture and life;

- instill in students the values of service to others;

- partner with parents in the faith formation of their children;

- instill respect for the human person and all creation;

- emphasize moral development and self-discipline;

- recognize a person's eternal destiny;

- prepare students to be productive citizens and future leaders;

- provide a safe and welcoming environment.

Catholic Schools Week will be celebrated in some of our schools during the week of January 29, the week designated for the celebration by the National Catholic Education Association. Other schools will celebrate it during February or March, often combining the week-long celebration with registration for the next school year.

I encourage those of you who have a Catholic school in your area to call or visit the school during Catholic Schools Week. A visit to one of our schools will give life to the words that describe who we are and what we are about in our schools.

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CELEBRATING CATHOLIC SCHOOLS WEEK

Our Catholic schools teach faith by living it

By Anita Soltero

Assistant Director of Education for
Faith Formation and Catholic Schools

WOW...WOW...WOW...is all I can say – just WOW!

What am I so excited about you may ask? OUR CATHOLIC SCHOOLS – that's what! Why share this with you? Because it is GOOD NEWS – GREAT NEWS!

As Assistant Director of Education for Faith Formation and Catholic Schools, one of my responsibilities is to visit our Catholic Schools annually. Why? To observe how they incorporate all aspects of our Catholic mission and identity into their curriculum, building environment and school activities.

Since August, when I undertook this position, I have visited Augustinian Academy in Carthage, Immaculate Heart in Watertown, St. Agnes in Lake

Placid, St. Bernard's in Saranac Lake, St. Mary's in Ticonderoga, and Seton Catholic in Plattsburgh. I have more schools to visit, but I am sure I will have similar experiences at Trinity in Massena, St. James in Gouverneur and St. Mary's in Canton.

As I entered the door of each school, some things were the same, some very different. Just as every home has a unique characteristic and represents the homeowner in some special way, so too with our schools. However, all of them are welcoming and inviting.

You know you are entering a Catholic School the minute you cross the threshold! It is not only the Crucifix on the wall or the statue of the Blessed Mother that alerts you. It is the staff and students that occupy the building; the school's morning prayer often led by a stu-

dent; the greeting you receive when you walk into a classroom, and all the children greet you with "Good morning Miss Anita." It is the polite manners the students exhibit; the caring attitude of teachers toward their students; the empathy shown when a student is having a difficult day and the joy celebrated when a great day is experienced.

Life is rough, tough and sometimes downright just difficult. Thank goodness, for all our Catholic schools do for the youth

and families of our Diocese. Catechesis (the teaching and handing on the faith) does not happen in a bubble. Catechesis is not just taught in Religion class. Catechesis is more than going to Mass on Sunday and receiving the sacraments – as important as those things are. Catechesis is a process by which our faith is taught and handed on. It is about developing a relationship with Jesus and becoming His disciple. Our Catholic faith is best learned through shared life expe-

riences: liturgy, prayer, serving others and living day to day with fellow students, colleagues and families. Our Catholic schools do these things EVERY DAY – ALL DAY.

As we celebrate National Catholic Schools week, January 26 through February 1, may we here in "God's Country", the North Country, the Diocese of Ogdensburg, rejoice and give thanks for the opportunity to provide a Catholic education and all that it entails to the families we serve.



A display on a wall at Augustinian Academy in Carthage asks students at the school if the Lord is calling them to serve as priests. A similar wall asks all students if they're called to consecrated life.

Celebrate Catholic Schools Week 2020

January 26 - February 1 #CSW20

a dozen reasons to choose Catholic Schools



CELEBRATING CATHOLIC SCHOOLS WEEK



Students at St. Agnes School in Lake Placid are encouraged to vote for the team they think will win the Super Bowl by placing a can of soup or chili in the corresponding cart as part of "Souper Bowl," an effort to collect food and donations for individuals and families in need.

Big game marked with big hearts at St. Agnes School

St. Agnes School in Lake Placid is tackling hunger with a "Souper Bowl of Caring."

As part of the event, the school now contains two shopping carts, one featuring the logo of the Kansas City Chiefs and one featuring the logo of the San Francisco 49ers.

Students are encouraged to bring a can of soup or chili to the school and place them in the cart representing the team they think will win this year's Super Bowl. Monetary donations are also accepted.

The funds and food collected will be used to feed individuals and families in need.

The event runs from Jan. 20 to Jan. 31.

According to a letter sent to St. Agnes School families, "Souper Bowl of



Caring uses the energy around our nation's largest sporting event to mobilize and inspire youth to fight hunger and poverty. Students develop stronger connection to their communities as they collect food and raise money for charities that provide shelter to the homeless, food to the

hungry and compassion to those in need."

Souper Bowl of Caring is a national movement. According to the organization's website, Souper Bowl of Caring started in 1990 as a "youth-inspired, youth-led movement."

This is St. Agnes School's first year participating in the event.

Week of faith, fun planned at Augustinian

The theme for 2020 Catholic Schools Week is "Catholic Schools: Learn. Serve. Lead. Succeed." This year, Augustinian Academy in Carthage will celebrate Catholic Schools' Week from February 8-14.

The school has planned a week full of faith and fun for families in celebration of Augustinian Academy.

The week begins with a Roaring 2020s Gala on Feb. 8. Guests are encouraged to attend dressed in their best '20's attire.

There will be a dinner, silent auction, and dancing for everyone's enjoyment.

On Sunday, the school will officially open Catholic Schools Week with the 10 a.m. Mass at St. James. Augustinian Academy families will participate in various parts of the Mass. The monthly pancake breakfast, sponsored by the Father John Cosmic Knights of Columbus Council 291 and Ave Maria Circle, will follow Mass. There is always plenty of food and fellowship!

On Monday, students will be able to dress as their favorite historical figures. The school will host a Geography Bee at 12:30 in the gym for all students. Questions will be used based on the NYS Social Studies Standards.

Tuesday will be pajama day. Classes will create snow murals outside, as long as there is adequate snow.

On Wednesday, students will dress as their favorite saints. The school will invite area priests and religious sisters to join the staff and students for lunch. The faculty and staff will host a "Wait-For-It-Wednesday" assembly for the student body at 12:30 in the gym. Everyone will just have to wait and see what this assembly brings!

Thursday is western day, so students may wear their western gear to school. The Middle Schoolers are planning a Western-themed Fun Hour for the younger students beginning at 12:30.

The week ends with Blue & Gold Day. Events for a mini-Olympics will be held in the morning for the younger students, and the afternoon will be for the annual Faculty vs Eighth grade volleyball game.

When the week of fun ends, the students and staff will enjoy their mid-winter vacation.

What a better way to begin time off than to celebrate their Catholic School!



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Environmental Stewardship

Advice from our popes

In recent years, numerous ideas have been proposed on how to deal with issues associated with our call as Christians to be good stewards of creation. The best suggestions put forth for improving the health of our planet, and the well-being of our souls come from our popes. As Catholics, we are so blessed to have our religious leaders who speak to these pressing issues, namely St. John Paul II, Pope Benedict XVI, and most recently Pope Francis.

In his encyclical, *Laudato Si: On Caring for our Common Home*, Pope Francis criticizes our "throw-away" society, our consumption driven habits, and an economy based on quick financial gains. In order to feed our materialistic culture, we have been plundering the earth's resources at an unsustainable pace and without regard to the environmental consequences.

The Holy Father observes that many people become obsessed with buying the newest and most sought-after gadgets, appliances, cars and other items not because they need them, but because these purchases help temporarily satisfy the feeling of emptiness that exists deep within them. Treasuring material objects over personal relationships eventually leads to loneliness, despair, and depression. As such souls periodically wonder "Is this all there is to life?"

The pope proposes that we spend considerably less on material objects and adopt the St. Francis' spirituality "Less is More." Individuals addicted to a lifestyle centered around lavish spending and the accumulation of personal possessions, often find such a notion totally unacceptable. However, if they were to stop and take the time to quietly reflect on the nature of true inner happiness and joy, they would eventually come to realize that God, and the unconditional love that flows from Him, is the source of the true peace that our material world is incapable of providing.

If we all were to adopt a much simpler lifestyle, it would be one step toward embracing Gospel justice, a more vibrant spirituality and a better future for our children and grandchildren. What step could you take this week to simplify your life style?

CELEBRATING CATHOLIC SCHOOLS WEEK

Trinity celebrates with theme days

Trinity Catholic School in Massena will celebrate Catholic Schools Week from Feb. 9 to Feb. 14, with a series of theme days throughout the week.

On Feb. 9, the school will kick off its festivities with a spaghetti dinner in

the school's dining hall, as well as a STREAM (Science, Technology, Religion, Arts and Mathematics) Fair and signing performance.

Feb. 10 will be Spirit Day at Trinity, with students encouraged to wear the school colors of blue and white. A pep rally, complete with classroom cheers, will be held in the morning, along with a robotics demonstration. A Mass will be celebrated to mark Catholic Schools Week at noon, and the students will also have a pizza party.

Feb. 11 will be Teacher Day. The classrooms will join together for games, there will be a Teacher Appreciation Luncheon, and the students will be encouraged to wear mismatched clothing.

Community Day will be Feb. 12, with students making valentines for the community. In the afternoon, community members will visit the school to present to the students, and students are encouraged to dress like their favorite community member and consider fu-

ture career plans.

Feb. 13 is Student Day, with winter fun scheduled for the morning and "Minute to Win It" games in the afternoon. Students are encouraged to wear their Trinity t-shirts for the day.

Fun Day will be Feb. 14, and will feature movies and popcorn, a Valentine Party and a dance. Students are allowed to wear comfortable clothing for the day and encouraged to participate in "Goofy Hair Day."

Bishop's Public Schedule

Jan. 29 – 10:3 a.m. – Meeting with all Priests at the Sisters of St. Joseph Motherhouse in Watertown

Jan. 31 – 10:50 a.m. – Mass at St. Joseph's Home in Ogdensburg
7 p.m. – Deacon Candidate Class at Wadhams Hall in Ogdensburg

Rest in Peace

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

Jan. 29 – Msgr. James T. Lyng, 1965

Jan. 30 – Rev. John T. Sullivan, 1884; Rev. Eusebius Schlingmann, O.F.M., 1937

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

Feb. 1 – Rev. John B. Doonan, 1949; Msgr. George T. Donnelly, 1968; Rev. Edward M. Delaney, 1977; Rev. Robert L. Cotter, 2015

Feb. 2 – Rev. William Bennett, O.M.I., 1887; Rev. Amadeus Viger, O.S.A., 1915; Rev. George E. Racette, 1961; Rev. Gilbert O. Boisvert, 2017

Feb. 3 – Rev. John McDonald, 1879

Feb. 4 – Rev. Joseph Redington, 1892; Rev. Edmund Walsh, 1925; Msgr. Michael R. Burns, 1932; Rev. Henry McArdle, O.S.A., 1969; Rev. Francis Maurus Kearns, 1990

Feb. 5 – Msgr. Thomas E. Walsh, 1901; Msgr. F. Gordon Coseo, 1997; Rev. John J. Fallon, 2005

Full slate of events planned at St. Mary's in Ticonderoga

St. Mary's School in Ticonderoga will celebrate Catholic Schools Week from Feb. 7 to 14, with a

full slate of activities for students and families.

On Feb. 7, the school will kick off its festivities

with a celebration of First Friday Mass in the morning.

Later that day, the school will host a Carnival.

On Feb. 8, St. Mary's School will host a Family Mass, followed by a potluck dinner for students and their families.

Throughout the school week, St. Mary's School will offer a series of fun events, including a glow dance, cup stacking, Bingo, Spirit Day, Pajama Day, Muffins with Mom and Doughnuts with Dad, as well as a Nutrition Rock Show.

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, 5050 Route 374, Merrill, NY, 12955
terriannyanulavich@yahoo.com
Phone: Day: 518-651-2267, Night: 518-569-0612; or Father Christopher Carrara, the Episcopal Vicar for Clergy 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!

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Protecting God's Children

The Diocese of Ogdensburg has scheduled sessions for Protecting God's Children for Adults.

Pre-registration online is required.

Participants may preregister at

www.virtus.org.

Upcoming sessions:

Jan. 30 – 6 p.m., Wakefield Recital Hall at SUNY Potsdam

Clergy gather for baptism workshop

COLTON – Most of us cannot recall our Baptisms. Most Catholics received the sacrament as infants or young children. The Rite Catholic clergy use when baptizing is about to change. That brought roughly 60 priests and deacons from across the Diocese to St. Patrick's in Colton, New York, January 20, 2020 to hear about those changes.

Father Bryan D. Stitt, director of the diocesan Office of Worship, organized the session.

"I thought it would be best to make the most of this liturgical development by doing three things," Father Stitt said. "First, I wanted to come together for prayer and fellowship. Second, I wanted a chance for us to share some of the best practices that are going on in our own parishes. And finally, I wanted us to get the new books in our hands to familiarize ourselves with the richness of the Order of Baptism."

Father Stitt noted there are only a few changes.



Priests and deacons of the diocese recently gathered in Colton for a workshop on revisions to the Rite of Baptism. The clergy learned about the changes and discussed best practices related to the sacrament.

"For most people in the pews, the changes will not be noticeable," he said. "There are some slight changes in wording that better align with the Roman Missal, there is a beautiful new suggested welcome for the beginning of the sacrament, and there is a great clarification of how to offer a Baptism during a Sunday Mass – something that the Church strongly encourages."

The work session gave

clergy an opportunity to share their best practices with the group. Suggestions about baptism preparation and follow-up; the use of video aids in parish preparation programs, pre-scheduled preparation programs versus "as needed" and the distribution of responsibilities among clergy in given parishes were among the topics discussed.

Father Stitt said he was pleased with the session.

"It was a great day," he said. "We were blessed with a crisp winter day, good home cooking from the St. Patrick's Altar Rosary society, the chance to reconnect with clergy from around the diocese, and the chance to gain some insights into the life of Baptism."

The 2nd edition of the *Ordo Baptismi parvulorum* (Order of Baptism of Children) was approved for use in 1969 in the original Latin form. Pope Paul

VI approved the text. The Roman Ritual was revised in order that it might be "adapted to the actual condition of children" and that the role and responsibilities of parents and godparents might be more clearly expressed. It has taken all this time to have the original Latin translated for use in English speaking countries and then receive all the necessary attention and approvals required. The U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops approved the text in 2017. The Congregation for Divine Worship and the Discipline of the Sacraments gave its approval on April 11, 2019. "The rite may be used in the Liturgy as of February 2, 2020."

"It took about 46 years for this translation to receive final approval," Father Stitt told the group. After the meeting Father told the *North Country Catholic*, "Many of us left looking forward to the next time we could have a day like this. I don't think we should wait 46 years."

CANDIDACY FOR HOLY ORDERS



Seminarians in the School of Theology at the Pontifical College Josephinum, including Lukas Gruber from the Diocese of Ogdensburg, were admitted to Candidacy for Holy Orders by The Most Reverend Robert J. Brennan, bishop of Columbus and vice-chancellor of the Josephinum, on Jan. 18. The Rite of Admission to Candidacy is celebrated when a seminarian has reached a maturity of purpose in his formation and has demonstrated the necessary qualifications for ordination. In the presence of the bishop, he publicly expresses his intention to complete his preparation for Holy Orders and his resolve to fully invest himself to that end, so that he will serve Christ and the Church faithfully.



The Prayer Shawl Ministry in Plattsburgh creates baby blankets for babies in need (left), and prayer shawls (right) and lap blankets for parishioners and neighbors experiencing illness or struggles. The ministry is seeking new members to join them in knitting or crocheting for others.

Ministry knits, crochets, prays for those in need

By Mary Beth Bracy
Contributing writer

PLATTSBURGH – Members of the Prayer Shawl Ministry know how to wrap people

in blessings and love. They knit and crochet baby blankets, as well as, prayer shawls and lap blankets for the sick and suffering.

New volunteers are always needed and welcomed to help spread encouragement.

“We would always be thankful for new members as the more creative hands we have the more we can give,” said Marie Montroy, a long-time member of the Prayer Shawl Ministry.

The Prayer Shawl Ministry was begun by two women in 2011 at St. Peter’s Church in Plattsburgh. Although not the founders, Sue Bordeau and Marie Montroy, have been members since it started.

As part of the ministry, knitters and crocheters meet in the Emmaus Room at St. Peter’s on the First Thursday of every month from 1 to 2:30 p.m. “There are several things we make,” explained Montroy. “We make white baptism blankets that are given to the newly bap-

tized babies, prayer shawls, baby blankets and lap blankets. The prayer shawls are given to anyone we know of that is ill or in need of comfort. Anyone can contact us if they know of anyone who would be in need of one.”

Those who are battling health issues or going through difficult times are grateful for blankets and shawls.

“The lap blankets are given to various places,” Montroy said. “We have donated to the renal center to be given to their patients as they get cold during their treatments, to hospice, to the cancer center and to seniors in need. The baby blankets go to moms in need through Birthright. If we hear of a need, we try our best to help.”

Recently, the parishes in Plattsburgh – St. Peter’s Church, St. John’s Church, Our Lady of Victory

Church and St. John XXIII Newman Center – merged.

“We are a very small group with only 7 active members,” Montroy said. “We are hoping to get more involvement now that the parishes have merged, and more people hear about us.”

Montroy explained that the ministry incorporates prayer into the crafts.

“The whole idea of a prayer shawl ministry is as we knit or crochet the item, we say prayers for healing, peace and comfort for the recipient and our prayers get woven into every stitch,” she said. “The recipient is then wrapped in our prayers when they receive it. We have received thank you cards from people telling us that the item they received brought them great comfort.”

To request a blanket, volunteer, or for more information on the Prayer Shawl Ministry, contact Sue Bordeau at 518-563-1905 or Marie Montroy at 518-561-4650.

The ministry is always grateful for donations of yarn, as well.

THE MONTHLY PRAYER REQUEST FOR PRIESTS

WOULD YOU PRAY FOR A PRIEST EACH DAY?

— PRAYER SUGGESTION —

O Jesus, Eternal High Priest, live in (name a priest), act in him, speak in and through him. Think your thoughts in his mind, love through his heart. Give him your own dispositions and feelings. Teach, lead and guide him always. Correct, enlighten and expand his thoughts and behavior. Possess his soul; take over his entire personality and life.

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

FEBRUARY 2020

February
The Passion of our Lord

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
1 BISHOP TERRY R. LAVALLEY	2 REV. BRYAN D. STITT	3 REV. RICHARD S. STURTZ	4 REV. JONAS RAFAEL LANDAYU	5 REV. TODD E. THIBAUT	6 REV. JUSTIN THOMAS HGN	7 REV. HOWARD J. VENETTE
8 OUR PASTOR	9 REV. RAYMOND J. WERTMAN	10 MSGR. PAUL E. WRIGHT	11 REV. LEO A. WILEY	12 REV. JOHN R. YONKOVIG VF	13 REV. PHILIP T. ALLEN	14 REV. ANDREW J. AMYOT
15 POPE FRANCIS	16 BENEDICT XVI POPE EMERITUS	17 REV. MEDENEL ANGRAND	18 MSGR. JOSEPH G. AUBIN	19 REV. PIERRE AUBIN MSC	20 MSGR. ROBERT H. AUCCOIN	21 REV. DEEPAI BARU, HGN
22 RETIRED PRIESTS	23 REV. SCOTT A. BELINA	24 REV. PETER M. BERG	25 REV. TIMOTHY G. CANAAN	26 REV. CHRISTOPHER C. CARRARA	27 REV. GERALD A. CERANK	28 REV. TOJO CHACKO HGN
29 DECEASED PRIESTS						

For more information visit us online at www.mpprpostlate.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
 Vocations Society www.nyvocation.net

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CLINTON

BREAKFAST

Altona – All you can eat breakfast to be held.

Date: Feb. 2

Time: 8 a.m. to Noon

Place: Holy Angels Church Hall

Cost: Adults, \$10; Children 6-12, \$5; under 5, Free, Take-outs available

PANCAKE BREAKFAST

Treadwell Mills – The Knights of Columbus will hold a pancake breakfast.

Date: Feb. 2, March 1 & April 5

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

Place: St. Joseph's Parish Hall

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

FISHERS CLUB

Plattsburgh – Priesthood discernment group to meet for those men hearing the call.

Date: Feb. 2 & 16, March 1 & 29, April 19, May 3 & 10

Time: 3 p.m.

Place: St. Peter's upper room

Features: For High School Junior men & older. Meetings will have discernment, evening prayer & dinner. It's never too early to begin the discussion with your Pastor or another trusted priest.

Contact: Just drop in or contact Father Howard Venette: pastorsmall@stmarysti.org 518 585 7144 or Father Christopher Carrara at ccarrara@rcdony.org 315-375-6571

BIBLE STUDY PROGRAM

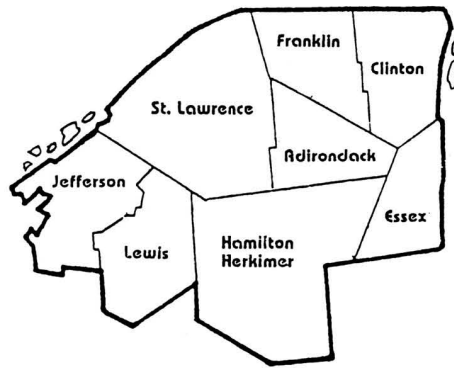
Plattsburgh – Join us this Lent as we take 6 weeks to prepare ourselves for the coming of Christ!

Date: Tuesdays, Feb. 25 – March 31

Schedule: 10 a.m. to 11:30 a.m. at St. John's Parish center classroom; 7 p.m. to 8:30 p.m. in the upper room at St. Peter's

Features: The Road to Redemption, Cycle A. A Catholic Scripture Study International Program by Mitch Pacwa, S.J. The six weeks leading up to Easter mark our own 40 days in the desert with Jesus. To prepare, each participant reads the Sunday readings along with the "Points to Ponder" commentary, answers the Study Questions & Questions for Reflection and "prays the scriptures." All material is provided in the study guide.

Contact: Please call The Rectory office at 518-563-1692 to register by Feb. 18 When you call please make arrange-



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, 315-394-0670;
e-mail news@northcountycatholic.org.

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

ments to pick up your study guide prior to the session on Feb. 25 (We will be discussing the Week 1 Session - Temptation in the Desert at the 1st session).

40 DAYS FOR LIFE

Plattsburgh - You're invited to join other Christians for 40 Days for Life – 40 days of prayer and fasting for an end to abortion. You are also invited to stand and peacefully pray during a 40-day vigil.

Date: Feb. 26 – April 5

Time: 7 a.m. to 7 p.m.

Place: Public right-of-way outside Planned Parenthood

Contact: If you'd like more information – and especially if you'd like to volunteer to help, please contact: Nancy Belzile at 518-593-6024 or nancys_56@hotmail.com www.40daysforlife.com/Plattsburgh

FRANKLIN

ROSARY RALLY

St. Regis Falls – Rosary Rally to be held for world peace and the sanctity of families.

Date: Feb. 22, March 21

Time: 12 p.m.

Place: St. Ann's Church

Contact: For more information call Elaine McGivney at 518-529-6133

JEFFERSON

CATHOLICISM SERIES

Watertown – Bishop Robert Barron's "Catholicism" DVD presentation and discussion to be held.

Schedule: #4 – Jan. 30 - "Prayer"; #5 – Feb. 6 - "Heaven & Hell"

Time: 7 p.m.

Place: Dostie Hall at Sacred Heart Church

Features: Explore the faith through stories, biographies, & images; like a world tour of persons, places, & cathedrals. All are welcome. Refreshments.

Contact: Holy Family Rectory, 315-782-2468

SURVIVING DIVORCE

Watertown – Surviving Divorce program to be held.

Date: 12 Sessions for 6 weeks starting Jan. 21 on Tuesdays and Thursdays

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

Place: St. Anthony's Church

Features: Separated and divorced adults, come find support and healing.

Contact: For more information, contact Steve Tartaglia at startaglia@rcdony.org or (315) 393-2920.

SPAGHETTI DINNER

Watertown – St. Anthony's church to have a Spaghetti Dinner.

Date: Jan. 30

Time: Take-outs begin at 4 p.m., dinner 4:30 p.m. to 6:30

Cost: Adults, \$8; Half portions for children or adults, \$4.50; children 3 and under, Free; Sauce, \$5 quart (bring a pot); extra meatballs are .75 cents each.

SPAGHETTI & MEATBALL DINNER

Evans Mills – Indian River Knights of Columbus to have a Spaghetti & Meatball dinner.

Date: Feb. 8

Time: 4 p.m. to 7

Place: St. Mary's Parish Center

Cost: Adults, \$7; Senior Citizens, \$5; Children under 12, \$5; Under 5, Free

Contact: For more information call 315-629-4678

PARISH MISSION

Watertown – "Dare to be Holy," a parish mission to be hosted by the parishes of St. Anthony, St. Patrick, Holy Family and Our Lady of the Sacred Heart.

Schedule: Feb 9 at Holy Family Church; Feb. 10 at St. Patrick's Church; Feb. 11 at St. Anthony's Church; Feb. 12 at Sacred Heart Church

Time: 6:30 p.m. all days & extra special session after 12 p.m. Mass at St. Patrick's Church Feb. 10-12

Features: Bill Wegner will be joining us to preach our Parish Mission. Everyone welcome. Offering will be taken. Refreshments will be served.

Contact: For more information call 315-782-1190

FISHERS CLUB

Watertown – Priesthood discernment group to meet for those men hearing the call.

Date: Feb. 23, March 22, April 26, May 31

Time: 3 p.m.

Place: St. Anthony's Church, Sechi Hall

Features: For High School Junior men & older. Meetings will have discernment, evening prayer & dinner. It's never too early to begin the discussion with your Pastor or another trusted priest.

Contact: Just drop in or contact Father Chris Looby at fatherlooby@gmail.com 315-782-1190 or Father Christopher Carrara at ccarrara@rcdony.org 315-375-6571

LEWIS

DIVINE MERCY DEVOTIONS

Houseville – Divine Mercy devotions to be held for the month of February.

Date: Feb. 2

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.

Contact: 315-348-6260

BIBLICAL TALK

Croghan – Five-week study to be had about "No Greater Love: Biblical Walk

Through Christ's Passion"

Date: Beginning March 4 and continuing every Wednesday for 5 weeks
Time: Two Sessions, 1:30 p.m. & 6:45 p.m.

Place: St. Stephen's Church
Cost: \$24.95 for the Book and Workbook

Features: You will also need to use your Bible. Couples could purchase one set and share.

Contact: call Tom at 315-523-5890 or via email tkalamas@twcny.rr.com. Parish Office at 315-346-6958

ST. LAWRENCE

FISHERS CLUB

Potsdam – Priesthood discernment group to meet for those men hearing the call.

Date: Feb. 2, March 1, April 5

Time: 1 p.m.

Place: St. Mary's Rectory

Features: For High School Junior men & older. Meetings will have discernment, evening prayer & dinner. It's never too early to begin the discussion with your Pastor or another trusted priest.

Contact: Just drop in or contact Father Stephen Rocker at srocker164@yahoo.com or 315-265-9680 or Father Christopher Carrara at ccarrara@rcdony.org 315-375-6571

BIBLE TIMELINE STUDY

Massena – 8 Week series to be held unlocking the mystery of the bible.

Date: Tuesdays, Feb. 4 – March 31
Time: 2 p.m. to 4 & 6:30 p.m. to 8:30

Place: St. Mary's Social Hall

Cost: Free-will offering

Contact: 315-769-2469 or smarion@massenacatholics.com; massenacatholics.com

ST. JAMES SCHOOL GALA

Gouverneur – St. James School Gala with the theme of "God Bless the USA" to be held.

Date: Feb. 8

Time: Doors open at 5:45 p.m.; Treasure Chest Keys go on sale at 6:30 p.m.

Place: St. James School

Cost: \$60 per person; \$45 special ticket price for active and retired military, law enforcement, and emergency responders.

Features: Tickets are available at the parish office or log onto stjamesk-6.org, hit the donate button and purchase your tickets. Ticket includes: Admission to our

Around the diocese

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 9

Admission to our auctions, raffles, appetizers, full course dinner, dessert bar, drinks and dancing. Must be 21 years of age. Formal attire is optional. Join us as we ignite the pride in every American heart and celebrate our Home-town Heroes.

PANCAKE BREAKFAST

Canton – Knights of Columbus to sponsor a pancake breakfast.

Date: Feb. 9

Time: 8:30 a.m. to 11:30 a.m.

Place: St. Mary's School Gym

Cost: Adults, \$7; Children 5-10, \$5; Under 5, Free; Families, \$30

HEALING MASS

Massena – St. Mary's Church to have a Healing Mass.

Date: Feb. 11

Time: 5:30 p.m.

Place: St. Mary's Church

Contact: Parish office at 315-769-2469 for more information.

STEAK OR HADDOCK DINNER

Ogdensburg – Knights of Columbus to have a Steak/Haddock Dinner.

Date: Feb. 21

Time: 4:30 p.m. until gone

Place: K of C Hall

Cost: Pre-sale, Adults, \$12; Seniors and children, \$11; Day of the dinner \$1 more

Contact: Order tickets and Take-out by calling 315-393-7990 by 4:15 to be delivered to the towers.

LENTEN DAY OF REFLECTION

Ogdensburg – All CLMS and FFM Candidates are in invited to attend a Lenten Day of Reflection.

Date: March 7

Time: 9:30 a.m. to Noon

Place: St. Mary's Cathedral, Brzana Hall

DIOCESAN EVENTS

YOUTH LENTEN RETREAT

Lenten retreats to be held for young people in grades 7 to 12

Schedule: Feb. 29 at St. Patrick's, Watertown; March 7 at St. Mary's, Champlain

Time: Noon to 4 p.m.

Features: There is no fee to attend.

Each retreat will focus on three aspects to aid us in centering ourselves on Jesus Christ and strengthening our relationship with our loving God. Each afternoon retreat will be fun, heart and mind opening and spiritually rejuvenating.

Contact: To register go to www.rcdony.org/youthlenten/lenten-retreat.html or contact Virginia Demers, at: vdemers@rcdony.org - 315-393-2920 ext. 1401

LEAD EVENT

Lake Placid – Diocesan LEAD event to be held.

Date: March 9-10

Place: Crowne Plaza

Cost: One LEAD member is free, Additional members cost \$50. If you have a team of 3 the cost is \$120. Non-LEAD parishes cost \$75 per person.

Features: The theme will be "The Catechumen's Journey: The Initiation process." Creating Holy Moments for New Disciples. Participants are responsible for their own hotel accommodations and expense. Mention the event when registering with the hotel.

Contact: Jessica Hargrave by email: jhargrave@rcdony.org or by phone: (315)393-2920

DAY OF REFLECTION

Lead event to be held in the Eastern and Western region of the diocese.

Date: March 21

Time: 10 a.m. to 2:30 p.m.

Place: Eastern Region, St. John XXIII Newman Center, Plattsburgh. Speaker will be Deacon Mark Bennett. Western

Region, Wadhams Hall, Ogdensburg. Speaker will be Deacon Jim Crowley.

Cost: One LEAD member is free. Additional Lead member and non-members fee is \$20

Contact: Jessica Hargrave at jhargrave@rcdony.org or call 315-393-2920

CONFIRMATION RETREAT

Net Ministries challenges young Catholics to love Christ and embrace the life of the church.

Schedule: March 28, St. Augustine's Church, Peru from 10:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.; March 29, at Sacred Heart Church, Watertown from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m.

Cost: \$30 per student (meal included)

Contact: These are a first come, first served basis registration, so don't be the last and miss the chance to attend. Register by March 18 by emailing crusell@rcdony.org or by calling 315-393-2920

YOUTH RALLY

Lake Placid – Diocesan Youth Rally to be held for grades 7-12.

Date: April 25

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

Place: High Peaks Resort

Cost: \$30, All inclusive

Features: The Youth office is excited to bring young people together for a celebratory day filled with "God's All Encompassing Love." The theme of "Under The Big Top" sets the tone for a carnival style event with fun games, entertainment, great food, a wonderful resort location, a dynamic speaker and a closing Mass offered by Bishop Terry LaValley. This year our Keynote speaker will be, Doug Tooke. Doug Tooke is a dynamic speaker with more than 20 years in Ministry. Utilizing cinematic storytelling, Doug's presentations motivate people to seek a personal relationship with Jesus. Also appearing will be the Gratto Fellows Circus Performers showcasing their interactive juggling, unicycling, rope walking, and other feats of daring and comedic entertainment. You can also try your skill or luck at one of the Carnival Game tables and we will have great music all day long! Carnival style lunch will be provided by the High Peaks Resort.

Contact: Tom Semeraro at 315-393-2920 ext. 1415 or register at www.rcdony.org/youthrally/rally

Speaker, crowd show march resonates with the young

WASHINGTON (CNS) – Catalina Galinanes, this year's student speaker at the March for Life rally on the National Mall, has been to almost as many marches as Jeanne Mancini, president of the March for Life Education and Defense Fund.

The Jan. 24 march was Galinanes' seventh, Mancini's eighth.

"It's so inspiring and so powerful to go with family and friends," said the junior at Oakcrest School in Vienna, Virginia.

She's president of the school's Respect Life Club. Forty students from the school were chosen to carry the parade-front banner for the entire duration of the march down Constitution Avenue to the Supreme Court.

It's in keeping with this year's theme, "Pro-Life Is Pro-Woman," linking the pro-life cause to the women's suffrage leaders who brought about the 19th Amendment, enabling women to vote for the first time.

"And so I thought it was appropriate that we have young women at the front of the march," said Mancini in an interview with Catholic News Service ahead of the event.

Another 200 students from Colorado Christian University in the Denver suburb of Lakewood were chosen to carry pennants.

Putting the focus on young participants has been Mancini's goal for some time.

"The way I see it, the March for Life is organically young grassroots. Like, we don't really try really hard to bring young people to the March for Life. They are attracted to the issue now."

That's partly been the result of the organization's aggressive use of social media.

"Knowing that social media is a language that reaches young people, so there's a pretty massive difference from eight years ago. I think we're the most followed pro-life group on Instagram," Mancini explained.

"When we do the surveys after the march to see who the favorite speakers were, by and large it's always the young speaker, someone like Catalina, that people were excited to hear from, because they're speaking for their generation."

Young people "know that social justice begins in the womb, and they have such hopes that their generation will make abortion unthinkable."

The long-established image of the marchers is of school groups in matching toboggan caps, and parish groups arriving by bus. But to anyone who has ever talked to marchers, a more nuanced picture emerges. Many are there as individuals or as couples who have come on their own.

Mancini has some personal experience with that as well.

"It's almost like a call," she agreed. "Someone in my family came for the first time last year. I think he felt a certain call to come. It really changed his heart."



Attention Snowbirds going south for the winter!

Notify our office so you don't miss a single issue of the *North Country Catholic*! Call (315) 608-7556 with your winter address.

CATHOLIC WORLD AT A GLANCE

Some Chinese churches suspend activities because of virus

HONG KONG (CNS) — Some churches in China have suspended community activities, including Mass, over fears of the deadly coronavirus virus that has already killed six people and continues to spread, reported ucanews.org. With Lunar New Year celebrated Jan. 25 this year, this is the busiest travel season, when millions of workers head back to their villages for celebrations. Hankou Diocese in Hubei province announced the suspension of community activities in all its parishes as the province is on high alert to check the virus, reported ucanews.org. St. Ignatius Cathedral of Shanghai Diocese said Jan. 22 it will be closed temporarily, and no prayer services or Masses will be conducted during Lunar New Year. Holy Family Catholic Church in Wuchang, which is just across the Yangtze River from Wuhan, has issued a notice suspending all Masses temporarily following a government directive. Ningbo Diocese in Zhejiang province has asked parish priests not to distribute Communion on tongues as a preventive measure. "The church members shall receive the Eucharist in their hands," it said in a notice seeking parishioners' prayers to end the epidemic.

Archbishop Chaput praises his successor, Bishop Perez

PHILADELPHIA (CNS) — Proclaiming his successor as "exactly the man our church needs," Archbishop Charles J. Chaput introduced Bishop Nelson J. Perez, whom Pope Francis named as the next archbishop of Philadelphia, at a Jan. 23 news conference in Philadelphia. He will be installed as archbishop Feb. 18 at 2 p.m. in the Cathedral Basilica of St. Peter and Paul. The pope had announced the appointment while accepting the resignation of Archbishop Chaput, who last September turned 75, the age at which canon law requires that bishops turn in their resignation to the pope. Anticipation for his successor had been building intensely in the archdiocese since that time, and judging by the applause in the room filled with more than 100 archdiocesan staff, it was a warm welcome home for Archbishop Perez, 58, currently the bishop of the Diocese of Cleveland. He described his appointment as a "surreal moment" for a former priest of the archdiocese to be named its new shepherd. Archbishop Perez is the first archbishop of Philadelphia of Hispanic heritage; his parents emigrated from Cuba and he was born in Miami in 1961.

New research details Catholic inmates at Auschwitz

WARSAW, Poland (CNS) — A Polish researcher has published the first study of religious practices among Christian prisoners at Auschwitz-Birkenau, as the 75th anniversary of the Nazi-run death camp's liberation was marked in Israel and Poland. "Although most deportees to Auschwitz from occupied Europe were Jews, the camp was originally opened for Polish prisoners and also took in Catholic resistance fighters from France, Germany, Belgium and other countries," said Teresa Wontor-Cichy, a historian at the Auschwitz-Birkenau State Museum. "This aspect of its history has been studied only randomly up to now. But it's important the world knows more and takes it into account." The historian spoke after her study, "Religious Life of Christian Prisoners in KL Auschwitz," was published by the state museum's research center. In a Jan. 23 Catholic News Service interview, she said the fate of some Catholic clergy at Auschwitz-Birkenau, notably St. Maximilian Kolbe and St. Edith Stein, had been extensively documented. However, she said thousands of lay Catholics also had kept their faith at the camp, where 1.2 million inmates were killed by the Nazis during World War II.



CNS PHOTO/VATICAN MEDIA

Pope Francis greets U.S. Vice President Mike Pence during a private meeting at the Vatican Jan. 24, 2020.

Pope, Pence meet at Vatican

VATICAN CITY (CNS) — After Pope Francis and U.S. Vice President Mike Pence met privately for nearly an hour at the Vatican, Pence told the pope that his Roman Catholic mother will be pleased with the visit.

"Thank you, Your Holiness. You have made me a hero," said Pence, who was raised Catholic but became an evangelical Christian.

The vice president, along with his wife Karen and daughter-in-law Sarah, arrived 10 minutes early for the meeting with the pope Jan. 24.

They were welcomed by Msgr. Leonardo Sapienza, regent of the papal household.

As the pope and Pence sat down in the papal library of the Apostolic Palace, the vice president relayed greetings from U.S. President Donald Trump, who met with the pope in 2017.

"I wanted to extend the

warmest greeting on behalf of President Donald Trump who so enjoyed his visit here," Pence told the pope before reporters were ushered from the room.

After speaking with Pence for 59 minutes, with interpreters present, the pope greeted those accompanying the vice president on his visit, including Callista Gingrich, U.S. ambassador to the Holy See; her husband, former Speaker of the House Newt Gingrich; and Lt. Gen. Keith Kellogg, Pence's national security adviser.

Pence then presented the pope with a wooden cross "made from a tree at the vice president's residence."

"Every other vice president since Walter Mondale has lived" at the residence, he told the pope.

The pope then presented a medallion, describing it as "angel of

peace" conquering "the demon of war."

Additionally, he gave Pence copies of several of his documents, which he jokingly called "a Vatican library."

The documents included "The Joy of the Gospel" on evangelization, "Amoris Laetitia" on the family, and "Laudato Si," on the environment.

Pope Francis also gave the vice president a copy of his message for World Peace Day 2020.

"Here, I prepared for you the message for peace," the pope said. "I signed it personally for you."

Neither the Vatican nor the vice president's office were expected to issue a statement on the issues discussed in their private meeting.

However, Pence tweeted that the two discussed "today's March for Life, Venezuela, and displaced religious minorities in the Middle East."

Trump lauds march crowd for its commitment

WASHINGTON (CNS)– President Donald Trump credited attendees at the 47th annual March for Life for their commitment to protect the life of unborn and born children.

"Together we are the voice for the voiceless," Trump told tens of thousands of people gathered at a noontime rally Jan. 24 on the National Mall.

"You stand for life each and every day. You provide housing, education, jobs and medical care for the women that you serve," the president said.

Trump was the first president to speak in person in the 47-year history of the March for Life. He spoke for about 10 minutes at the start of the rally and before attendees began their march to the Supreme Court.

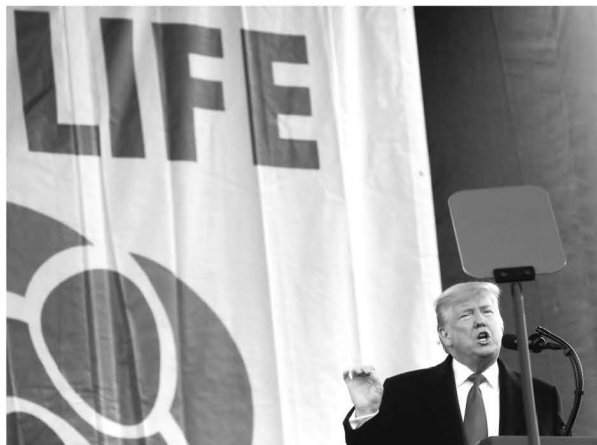
"Today, as president of the United States, I am truly proud to stand with you. We're here for a very simple reason: to defend the right for every child, born and unborn, to fulfill their God-given potential," Trump said.

He also credited the young people who made up a large portion of the crowd for their commitment to life, saying they were "the heart of the March for Life."

"It's your generation that is making this a pro-life nation," the president said, adding, "You are powered by prayer and motivated by pure unselfish love."

Trump's speech before the largely supportive crowd was punctuated by applause and cheers. Calls of "Four more years" welcomed him to the podium.

The pro-life movement has been buoyed by Trump's appointment of two conservative justices to the Supreme Court.



CNS PHOTO/LEAH MILLIS, REUTERS

U.S. President Donald Trump addresses thousands of pro-life supporters during the 47th annual March for Life in Washington Jan. 24, 2020. He is the first sitting president to address the pro-life event in person.

Their goal has been a reversal of the court's 1973 decision in *Roe v. Wade* that legalized abortion.

Vice President Mike Pence and his wife, Karen, addressed the rally in a video recorded in Rome prior to Trump's arrival at the rally. Pence met with Pope Francis earlier in the day.

He said in the video that he thanked the pope "for all that he and Catholic Americans have done to defend the sanctity of human life in the history of this movement."

Karen Pence thanked attendees for their witness and compassion for the unborn. "Thank you for standing for life," she said. "We cannot be more proud to be on this journey with you."

The vice president called Trump the "most pro-life president in American history" and a "champion for the movement."

"So keep standing strong and stand with that love and compassion that has always defined the movement for life," Pence said.

Not all participants in

the rally agreed with the single-issue stance of Trump and Pence. A group of Franciscan friars and their supporters held signs aloft outside of the security barrier with messages reading "I am 100% Pro-Life." "Care for the Unborn." "Protect the Earth" and "Seek Justice for the Poor."

Franciscan Father Jud Weiksnar, pastor of Sts. Columba Brigid Parish in Buffalo, New York, said he attended the March for Life to encourage people to embrace a wider call in support of life, including care for the environment and peace.

"I'm very deeply convinced that my religious calling calls me to something like the March for Life," he told Catholic News Service in a phone call from a point just off the Mall.

His group included about 20 people, among them priests, men in formation and laypeople.

His friend, Franciscan Father Jacek Orzechowski of Maryland said he joined the march and rally "to remind others about what it means to be

authentically pro-life."

"It's not enough to say that a person is against abortion, but especially about other concerns at this time when we as humanity are standing on the verge of ecological catastrophe," he explained. "I'm not willing to fall into a false choice in caring for our common home or caring for the unborn."

Rally-goers also heard from members of Congress and several other speakers, including women who survived attempted abortions, over the course of an hour following the president's appearance.

Rep. Steve Scalise, R-Louisiana, urged the audience to support the Born-Alive Abortion Survivors Protection Act that has been introduced in Congress. The bill would ensure that any child born alive after an abortion received medical care. It would also institute penalties for doctors who allow such infants to die or who intentionally kill a newborn.

He said he is working to bring the bill to a vote in the House of Representatives by filing a discharge petition, meaning it would by pass committee action and go directly to the full House. He said 204 House members have signed the petition – all 197 Republicans and seven Democrats – and that he is working to gain 14 more Democrats to gain a majority that would force a vote on the bill. He encouraged those at the rally to contact their member of Congress to express support for the petition and the bill.

At times the rally turned to politics as speakers called on rally-goers to vote for pro-life candidates in the upcoming

presidential election. They also complimented Trump for his appointment of 187 federal conservative judges who are more likely to support restrictions on abortion.

"We are at a pivotal moment for the pro-life movement and this great nation," said Marjorie Dannenfelser, president of Susan B. Anthony List, a pro-life education organization, in crediting legislative efforts nationwide to limit abortion.

She encouraged the crowd to "go for the win" and "put the will of the people into law" in an effort to overturn *Roe v. Wade* in the Supreme Court in the November election. "It's the most consequential for the cause of the unborn," she said.

In brief remarks, Rep. Chris Smith, R-New Jersey, noted how there have been incremental steps to end abortion throughout the nation.

"We're making progress," Smith said. "Be very encouraged. With the help of ultrasound imaging, we will tirelessly struggle to ensure that unborn children are no longer invisible, trivialized, mocked, dehumanized and killed."

Smith, who co-chairs the Congressional Pro-Life Caucus, credited the crowd for their activism that has resulted in "countless" women and babies who have been spared "the violence of abortion and today live, love and thrive."

Others addressing the rally included Elisa Martinez, founder of New Mexico Alliance for Life and co-chair of Native Americans for Life, and Democratic Louisiana State Rep. Katrina Jackson.

Trafficking documentary available to churches

SAN DIEGO (CNS) – A powerful new documentary on sex trafficking, being shown in select theaters Jan. 23 only and then for a month at churches that sign up to host a screening, makes its intentions clear from the outset.

"Blind Eyes Opened: The Truth About Sex Trafficking in America" begins with this scriptural passage from Isaiah: "to open eyes that are blind, to free captives from prison and to release from the dungeon those who sit in darkness."

Over the hour and a half that follows, viewers' eyes will indeed be opened, not only by the many disturbing facts related on-camera by law enforcement personnel, legislators and those dedicated to facilitating the healing of trafficking victims, but also through the haunting first-person accounts of six survivors of this modern-day form of slavery.

In a Jan. 17 telephone interview with The Southern Cross, San Diego's diocesan newspaper, executive producer Geoffrey Rogers described the film as unabashedly "a Christian documentary."

"Certainly it exposes the darkness, it shows the truth about sex trafficking in America – that's the goal of it – but, when we produced it, we had a very clear objective and that was to show the hope in Jesus Christ to solve this problem," he explained.

During the film, viewers hear from survivors who share Jesus' role in their recovery. The film also shows Christian ministries reaching out to those in the commercial sex trade, and it concludes with a direct challenge to its Christian viewers to do more to combat this societal scourge.

After the documentary's one-night-only theatrical release, churches can host their own one-night screenings of the film during a monthlong period, from Jan. 24 to Feb. 20.

Several of those interviewed on camera in "Blind Eyes Opened" suggest that society's blindness to this widespread crime is the result of simply not wanting to believe that such things are happening, with increasing frequency, in our own neighborhoods.

In the film, Cpl. Alan Wilkett of the Pasco County Sheriff's Office in Florida tells viewers, "It's happening right before our eyes, and yet we're not seeing it."

The film tackles such topics as the insidious ways in which children are lured by traffickers who often prey on vulnerabilities such as low self-esteem and an unstable family life; how law enforcement has shifted from viewing trafficked persons as criminals to recognizing them as crime victims; what additional steps that American society can take against trafficking; and what resources are currently available to those fortunate enough to escape from such a hellish life.

Among the many heart-breaking stories recounted in the film is that of Edie B. Rhea, founder of Healing Root Ministry Inc., a nonprofit led by trafficking survivors.

Her father died when she was 4. A few months later, a man named Bill moved in with her and her mother. He molested her when she was 10 and, two years later, began selling her for sex to strangers.

A childhood photo of a smiling Edie is seen on-screen as the grown

woman recounts her lost innocence and the multiple rapes she endured at the butcher shop that Bill and her mother owned. On one occasion, Bill prostituted her in exchange for a new meat grinder.

Rhea says in the film that she believes that there were "lots of opportunities for people to see (what was happening), but they didn't see."

"The signs were there," she added. "They just looked the other way."

Rogers described the survivors' testimonies as "so incredibly powerful." He said meeting them left an indelible mark on him and his wife.

"The messages that these survivors tell are unbelievably heart-wrenching and then incredibly inspiring, because you hear of their faith in Jesus and what He's done for them," said Rogers, who stepped away from a 15-year career in the corporate world in 2011 after feeling that God was calling him to ministry.

Today, he is the CEO and co-founder of the U.S. Institute Against Human Trafficking and the president of Ships of Tarshish Films, a nonprofit that produces television and film content for Christian audiences about important social issues.

"Blind Eyes Opened" is the second project from Ships of Tarshish.

In its unflinching look at sex trafficking, "Blind Eyes Opened" also takes aim at pornography and abor-

tion.

"We identify pornography as the number-one fueling factor that is driving the demand for sex trafficking in America," Rogers said, explaining that porn addiction leads addicts to seek out increasingly deviant forms of pornography – and sometimes even to pay for sex – to achieve the same level of arousal.

Abby Johnson, the former Planned Parenthood clinic director who became an outspoken pro-life activist and whose conversion story was dramatized in the 2019 film "Unplanned," is interviewed in "Blind Eyes Opened" about the connection between trafficking and abortion.

"Abortion is the best thing on the planet for an abuser because it covers up and hides the abuse," she tells viewers.

One of the six featured survivors is Brook Parker-Bello, now the founder, CEO and executive director of More Too Life Inc., a nonprofit that provides mentoring and education to trafficking survivors. She shares that her trafficker forced her to un-

dergo multiple abortions.

During her onscreen interview, she pauses, seemingly holding back tears. In a broken voice, she reveals that, as a lasting legacy of those abortions, she has experienced several miscarriages during her marriage and has been unable to carry a child to term.

"Blind Eyes Opened" concludes with a powerful call for Christians to enlist in the battle against sex trafficking.

"You've got to fight the fight," Kevin P. Malone, co-founder and board president of the U.S. Institute Against Human Trafficking, tells viewers near the end of the film, "and I believe, when the Church accepts that responsibility and really engages, we can make a major difference."


Editor's Note: Churches interested in learning how to host a screening can do so by visiting www.faith-contentnetwork.com, clicking on "See the Current Film Line-Up," and selecting "Blind Eyes Opened: The Truth About Sex Trafficking in America."



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SCRIPTURE REFLECTIONS

Reflecting on the Feast of the Presentation

This Sunday we celebrate a major feast of our Lord, His Presentation in the Temple. This is also known as Candlemas Day, since traditionally candles used in the Liturgy were solemnly blessed on this day, with a solemn procession in which all carried lighted candles before the Mass.

Forty days following the birth of a child, a Jewish mother, having been "purified" of the birth-blood, came into the Temple with an offer-



Monsignor
Paul E.
Whitmore

ing to the Lord. Since every child belonged to God, the parents would "buy back" their child. Poor people, like Joseph and Mary, were obliged to bring only two inexpensive birds, like turtledoves or pigeons.

When Jesus was presented in the Temple, he was recognized immediately as the Messiah by a pious old man, Simeon, and a devout widow by the name of Anna. Simeon recognized in this child the fulfillment of the

February 2

Feast of the Presentation

READINGS

Malachi 3:1-4
Hebrews 2:14-18
Luke 2:22-40

prophecy of Micah we hear as today's first reading: "Thus says the Lord God: Lo, I am sending my messenger to prepare the way before me: and suddenly there will come to the temple the Lord whom you seek..."

This messenger is likened to a refiner of silver who cleanses the sons of Levi (who are priests) of

any impurities in a very hot fire. God had promised Simeon that he would see this Child before he died. Simeon hastens to the temple at the very hour that Joseph and Mary come with Jesus, who is the hope of Israel. Taking the child in his arms, Simeon prophesies that Jesus is set for the rise and the fall of many in Israel.

This child will affect the future of Israel through His passion and death. Simeon then says to Mary "and you yourself a sword will pierce – so that the thoughts of many hearts will be revealed."

The widow, Anna, also recognizes this child as special, although we don't know what words she said.

Although but a mere child, Jesus enters the Temple as a divine, yet human High Priest. He brings understanding of our weakness, for which He will show His mercy, as we read in today's second reading from Hebrews.

Like Mary, we too must ponder all these things in our hearts this day. Like candles, we must let the fire of God's love in us consume and purify our lives more and more each day.

Poll: 70% of adults favor abortion restrictions

WASHINGTON (CNS) – Seven in 10 American adults support "significant" restrictions on abortion, according to a new poll released in advance of the annual March for Life.

Conducted by the Marist Poll at Marist College under the sponsorship of the Knights of Columbus, the survey of 1,237 adults Jan. 7-12 showed that the respondents would welcome limits on abortions so that it can be performed only during the first three months of pregnancy.

Notably, 47% of "pro-choice" respondents favored restrictions while 98% of pro-life respondents felt the same way.

In 2019, the Marist Poll found that respondents favored restrictions by a 75% to 25% margin.

Andrew Walther, vice president for communications and strategic planning for the Knights of Columbus, told reporters during a teleconference

Jan. 22 that while the numbers have varied by a few percentage points over the 12 years of the poll, 70% to 80% of respondents have consistently supported abortion restrictions.

The latest poll also found that 55% of respondents identified as "pro-choice" and 40% as pro-life.

Barbara Carvalho, director of Marist Poll, said people who identify as "pro-choice" are not necessarily strongly in favor of unrestricted access to abortion as is widely portrayed in the media and among members in the strongly pro-life and "pro-choice" camps.

"Pro-choice people still are supportive of significant restrictions on abortion to, at most, three months during pregnancy," Carvalho said.

"When we look at this issue, like many issues that we see in the public debate, it's one side ver-

sus the other side. What is reality, and I think the abortion issue is a very clear example of this, is that Americans have a very nuanced understanding of the issue and want their public policy to reflect that as well," she said.

This year's poll also looked at how respondents would weigh individual presidential candidates' positions on abortion before voting. The poll found that 38% of respondents said it would be a major factor, 36% a minor factor and 25% no factor at all.

Among self-identified pro-life respondents, 45% said a candidate's abortion stance would be a major factor in their deliberations on who to vote for while 35% of self-identified "pro-choice" respondents agreed.

A second question asked poll participants about the likelihood of voting for a candidate who wants sig-

nificant abortion restrictions.

Overall, 65% of respondents said they were likely to vote for a candidate who supported significant restrictions.

Broken down by political leanings, 44% of Democrats in the poll said they would likely vote for a candidate who wants significant restrictions. That contrasts with 88% of Republicans and 62% of independents holding the same view.

In addition, the poll asked respondents about their views on what the U.S. Supreme Court should do if justices decide to revisit the 1973 Roe v. Wade decision that legalized abortion, with 46% saying the decision should revert to the states, down from 49% in 2019.

Thirty-three percent said abortion should be legal without restriction, up from 30% in 2019, while 16% said it should always be illegal, the same

percentage as last year.

Other findings in the poll show:

- 55% of respondents favor a ban on abortion after 20 weeks of pregnancy.

- Respondents oppose taxpayer funding of abortion by a 60% to 37% margin.

- A far larger majority – 76% to 21% – oppose the use of tax dollars to pay for abortion in other countries.

- Nearly two in three respondents – 65% – oppose abortion if a child is diagnosed with Down syndrome.

- 52% of respondents support requiring a woman to have an ultrasound at least 24 hours before an abortion.

Carvalho said the margin of error in the data was plus or minus 3.7 percentage points.

Thousands of people participated in the 47th annual March for Life Jan. 24 in Washington.

Catholic schools make the difference for MCA

The Mission Office would like to take this time to salute our Catholic schools here in the diocese. They are the main engine of growth and spirituality behind our MCA program.

This school year, we are honored to once again have Sister Cindy Sullivan, BVM, promoting this important and valuable program for the Mission Office.

Kudos Sister Cindy, and God Bless you!

Since it's Catholic Schools Week, addressing the topic of MCA, or the Missionary Childhood Association, seems to be in order.

As a reminder, the questions and responses in this column are part of a number of Frequently Asked Questions that are found



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

The Society for the Propagation of the Faith

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mbrett@rcdony.org

the Pontifical Mission Society webpage: www.one-familyinmission.org/faqs.html

How does MCA differ from other organizations helping children in the Developing World?

MCA is unique to other organizations that assist children in the Developing World in that its primary aim is to encourage children to share their faith with children in the Developing World through their prayers, personal sacri-

ces and financial offerings.

Does MCA help only Catholic children?

MCA cares for children regardless of their religious affiliation.

Why doesn't MCA participate in sponsoring individual children or families?

Contributions to MCA are allocated to mission dioceses throughout the world according to need. This system of allocating funds helps ensure that

aid is distributed fairly and that those who are most desperately in need receive enough support. MCA funds are distributed to help children in 110 countries throughout the world.

Who participates in MCA programs in the United States?

Annually, more than one million young people, kindergarten through eighth grade, participate in MCA-sponsored programs in the United States through Catholic schools and parish religious education programs.

Why should my child participate in MCA?

All young Catholics have a baptismal responsibility to make Jesus Christ and His love known to others. MCA helps young people

understand the universal nature of the Catholic Church and recognize that they are missionaries today, in prayer and sacrifice, reaching out to children in the missions.

What else can children do to help the Missions?

Children can offer their prayers in support of missionaries and the work of the Church in the missions.

Should you have more interest in the MCA program, please contact Molly in the Mission Office at 315 393 2920.

Please remember "The Society for the Propagation of the Faith" when writing or changing your Will. www.dioogdensburg.org/missionoffice

Funeral Mass celebrated for Sister Marjorie Stumpf

A Mass of Christian Burial for Sister Marjorie Stumpf, a beloved member of the Ursuline Community, was celebrated Saturday, Jan. 25, 2020 at the Province Center Chapel in New Rochelle, New York.

Sister Marjorie died peacefully on Jan. 22, 2020 at Andrus-on-Hudson, Hastings, New York.

Born in New York City to Ellen and Arthur Stumpf in 1931, she was predeceased by her parents and her sister, Theresa Richards. Sister Marjorie is survived by her sister, Jean Boulger, and several nieces and nephews.

Entering the Ursulines shortly after graduating from the College of New Rochelle in 1952, she pro-

fessed her final vows in 1958. As Mother David Marie, she began a half-century ministry in education. Besides teaching at primary and secondary schools in the Bronx at Our Lady of Mercy (1958-1961), New Rochelle, and Malone, New York; Wilmington, Delaware; Dedham, Massachusetts; and Chiangmai and Bangkok, Thailand; she also taught at Mater Dei College, Ogdensburg, New York. Sister Marjorie returned to school to earn a master's degree in Religious Studies from Providence College, followed by a Master's in Library Science from Queens College, and subsequently served as a librarian at St. Saviour High School (1991-98) and

St. Philip Neri (1998-2002) in the Bronx.

After completing a training at the New York Botanical Garden, Sister Marjorie served as a volunteer docent there for 13 years from 1997-2010. Additionally, she volunteered as a gifted seamstress and gardener in the community and English as a Second Language teacher to Ursuline Outreach projects in New Rochelle.

Burial will be in Gate of Heaven Cemetery, Hawthorne, New York.

In lieu of flowers, gifts may be made to the Ursuline Sisters Retirement Fund at the Ursuline Provincialate, 1338 North Avenue, New Rochelle, NY 10804.

OBITUARIES

Canton – Donald J. Tracy, 65; Mass of Christian Burial Jan. 23, 2020 at St. Mary's Church.

Champlain – Madeleine M. (Bedard) Bourdeau, 60; Mass of Christian Burial Jan. 25, 2020 at St. Mary's Church.

Chazy – Gordon C. Dragoon, 88; Mass of Christian Burial Jan. 25, 2020 at Sacred Heart Church; burial in parish cemetery.

Massena – Dennis I. Binan, 49; Mass of Christian Burial Jan. 24, 2020 at Church of the Sacred Heart.

Massena – Madeline M. Horvath, 88; Mass of Christian Burial Jan. 27, 2020 at St. Mary's Church.

Norfolk – Andrew S. Neer, 94; Mass of Christian Burial Jan. 25, 2020 at Church of the Visitation.

Ogdensburg – Eleanor (Santoro) Adamczyk, 74; Mass of Christian Burial Jan. 25, 2020 at Notre Dame Church

Ogdensburg – Eleanor (Krzykalski)

Santoro, 94; Mass of Christian Burial Jan. 25, 2020 at Notre Dame Church

Lake Placid – Mae Julia (Cartier) Palumbo, 94; Mass of Christian Burial Jan. 27, 2020 at St. Agnes Church; burial in St. Agnes Cemetery.

Port Henry – Donna M. (Gilbo) Cook, 71; Mass of Christian Burial Jan. 23, 2020 at St. Patrick's Church.

Redford – Gaye B. (Venne) Chisholm, 61; Mass of Christian Burial Jan. 25, 2020 at Church of the Assumption.

Star Lake – Theresa M. Lashua, 67; Mass of Christian Burial Jan. 31, 2020 at St. Hubert's Church; burial in Oswegatchie Cemetery.

Ticonderoga – Stella (Rynkiewicz) Wiktorko, 86; Funeral Services Jan. 24, 2020 at the Wilcox and Regan Funeral Home.

West Chazy – Janice Giguere, 62; Mass of Christian Burial Jan. 24, 2020 at St. Joseph's Church.

REASON FOR THE SEASON



(Above) The Canton Knights of Columbus sponsored a "Keep Christ in Christmas" poster contest with St. Mary's School in Canton. Pictured with the three winners are Grand Knight John Taillon and 5-6 teacher and school coordinator Marianne Augenstein. (Right) St. Nicholas (Father Kris C. Lauzon) visited the students of Seton Catholic on his Dec. 6 feast day. He talked to the students, read them a story, and gave them candy canes and Advent buttons to wear. Pictured with St. Nicholas are Nicholas Santoro and Vivienne Blatchley.



Participant: Spirit of march was 'quite amazing'

WASHINGTON (CNS) — What you don't comprehend about the marching portion of the March for Life until you're in it is, even though it appears somewhat unorganized at the start, is that it's an intensely polite and orderly experience despite its immense size.

For many participants, it's a pilgrimage. There are no raised voices, there are occasional chants from student groups, it moves very slowly — a brisk walking pace would seem like a sprint — and

there appear to be as many thousands of people lining the sidewalks as there are on the street.

The throng at the pre-march rally on the National Mall doesn't give a true sense of the sheer bigness of the march itself. Many groups, all with placards, join it midway through, and quite a few others, rather than try to squeeze in on the street, accompany it on the sidewalks.

This year, the scheduled 1 p.m. start was delayed for 50 minutes as police

cleared away barriers in place as part of the security for President Donald Trump's address at the Jan. 24 March for Life rally.

No one tells the groups how to assemble. They just quietly line up. A handful of Knights of Columbus kept the front of the march somewhat tidy with rope barriers as they cleared spectators back to the sidewalks, but no one announced an order to begin. The police squad cars started to roll, there was a mighty

whoop, and the walk to the Supreme Court was underway.

Anne-Marie Rimback of Laytonsville, Maryland, attended with her son Adam. She used to attend marches in the 1980s when she was in high school, and felt inspired to return after watching it on TV last year.

"In a society that's so secular and anti-life on so many levels, we start to think that's the reality," she said in an interview with *Catholic News Service*. "That's not the mes-

sage of the younger generation, which really is the future."

LaVonne Vogt, who had driven from Wilmington, North Carolina, with her husband, Bob, was marching for the second straight year, and marveled at the calm she sensed.

Last year, she said, "I thought the spirit of this was quite amazing. To have that many people, and nobody was angry, nobody was ugly. That's what, to me, defines that the spirit of God is here."