

INSIDE THIS ISSUE

Diocese outlines
Coronavirus, illness
precautions | PAGE 8

Catholic vote
becomes harder
to define | PAGE 10

The Diocese of Ogdensburg Volume 74, Number 40

NORTH COUNTRY CATHOLIC

MARCH 11, 2020

Mother Cabrini Foundation releases grants

NEW YORK – The Mother Cabrini Health Foundation announced today it has awarded nearly \$150 million in grants across New York State.

The grants are helping to fund more than 500 activities, programs, and initiatives in 2020 focused on improving the health and quality of life for low-income and underserved communities.

"We are honored to support such a wide range of organizations doing critically important work to improve the lives of New York's most vulnerable communities," said Alfred F. Kelly, Jr., Chief Executive Officer of Visa and Chair of the Mother Cabrini Health Foundation Board.

FULL STORY, PAGE 7

RITE OF ELECTION



JESSE SOVIE/NORTH COUNTRY CATHOLIC

Catechumen Dawn Pelo, of St. Peter's in Lowville, signs the Book of the Elect during the Rite of Election on March 1. For more about the Rite, see pages 3 and 4.

SHARING OUR STORIES



Dave Petrelli of Malone shares the story of his faith journey in this week's installment of "Sharing Our Stories; Sharing Our Faith."

"Today I can't imagine not being Catholic. Now that I know the truth and have given myself to Christ, I have to live what I believe," Petrelli said.

FULL STORY, PAGE 5

Pope leads 'virtual' Angelus, blesses crowd

VATICAN CITY (CNS) – Pope Francis did not recite the Sunday Angelus from the window of his studio overlooking St. Peter's Square March 8, but he did go to the window to wave and to bless the pilgrims who showed up anyway.

The Vatican had announced the day before that the Angelus prayer and the pope's weekly general audience March 11 would be livestreamed from the papal library "to

avoid the risk of spreading the COVID-19 (coronavirus)," especially given the crowding that occurs at the security checkpoints on entering the square.

The Italian government and Vatican City State health services have asked people throughout Italy to avoid large gatherings, particularly indoors, and to keep a yard's distance between people in public in the hopes of slowing the spread of the

virus.

Following the lead of the Italian government, the Vatican also announced March 8 that the Vatican Museums, the necropolis under St. Peter's Basilica and the papal villa at Castel Gandolfo would be closed until April 3 to reduce situations where people crowd together.

Pope Francis began his Angelus address acknowledging that "it's a bit odd, today's Angelus prayer with the pope 'caged' in

the library," but he said he could see there were people in the square and he was with all those who were praying with him.

"I am close in prayer to the people who are suffering from the current coronavirus epidemic and all those who are caring for them," the pope said. "I join my brother bishops in encouraging the faithful to live this difficult moment with the strength of faith, the certainty of hope and the fervor of charity."

"May this season of Lent help us give everything a Gospel sense, even this moment of trial and suffering," Pope Francis said.

After his Ash Wednesday services Feb. 26, Pope Francis began cancelling events because of a cold, according to the Vatican press office. While he was not coughing during the Angelus March 8 and while his voice was not as hoarse as it had been, the microphone did pick up the sound of wheezing.

NORTH
COUNTRY
CATHOLIC

Box 326

Ogdensburg, N.Y. 13669

USPS 0039-3400

BISHOP TERRY

R. LAVALLEY

President

REV. JOSEPH A. MORGAN

Vice President

JAMES D. CROWLEY

Secretary-Treasurer

DARCY L. FARGO

Editor &

Communications Director



Publish 45 is-

sues per year.

Weekly except

skipping

every other

week begin-

ning July

through Aug. and skipping
one week in Dec. by the Dio-
cese of Ogdensburg,
622 Washington Street, Og-
densburg, N.Y. 13669.

Editorial Office:

622 Washington Street,
Ogdensburg, N.Y. 13669.

Telephone:

(315) 608-7556

E-mail:

news@northcountry
catholic.org

Entered at the

Post Office:

Ogdensburg, NY

13669 and

additional mailing offices as
Periodical Postage.

Subscription:

For one year:

In-Diocese Rate: \$27

Outside of Diocese Rate: \$30

Matters for publication
should be
addressed to
PO Box 326

Ogdensburg, NY 13669
and should be received by

Thursday prior to
publication.

Paper is printed each
Monday;
deadline is Wednesday.
Member, Catholic Press
Association.

POSTMASTER:

Send address changes to
North Country Catholic,
PO Box 326
Ogdensburg, NY
13669-0326

EDITOR'S NOTE

It was both awful and awesome

When I look back on it, it was the most awesome awful week possible.

Tuesday morning, I was involved in a car accident on a black-ice-covered road. It was a near head-on collision. Both vehicles sustained significant damage. My vehicle had considerable front-end damage, air bag deployment and rear-end damage. The other vehicle looked as bad as mine, maybe worse. A third vehicle had a separate crash in the same spot maybe seconds before.

To be honest, I don't remember most of the crash. I don't remember much from immediately after the crash, either. But I'll forever remember seeing God at work that day.

God was protecting us, the drivers of the vehicles. We all sustained bumps and bruises, aches and pains, but we lived, and our injuries were far less severe than they could've been. If my car had spun in the other direction, or if I had been carrying a passenger, it could've been a very different day. God protected me there, too. So

many things could've transpired differently and made the crash far more catastrophic, but God protected us.

God was working in the other drivers – including one of my colleagues – who stopped to render aid, not knowing what they'd find when they approached the mangled vehicles. I saw God working in their bravery, kindness and compassion.

God was working in the volunteer firefighters and emergency medical personnel who responded to the scene. These people left their workplaces, their homes, their regular lives to provide care for strangers. God was

in the New York State Police who responded to the scene, treating all involved compassionately and professionally.

God was there. To borrow a phrase from a wise woman I recently talked to, "I don't believe it; I know it."

But God wasn't done there. After the crash, I saw God in the countless people who visited, called, messaged or otherwise contacted me to check on me, extend well wishes or say they were thankful we were all ok.

I'm truly overwhelmed with gratitude.

Parts of this week were bad. In fact, they were downright awful. But God can make the awful awesome.



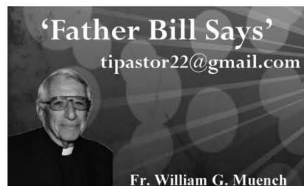
Darcy L.
Fargo

A time to reflect on baptism

One of the basic purposes of Lent is concerning baptism. Lent is an important time for the catechumens who are preparing to be baptized at the Easter Vigil Service as they become members of the Catholic Church. These catechumens are part of the program of reception into the Catholic Church that begins with several months of investigation of the message of Jesus and of the Catholic Church.

Lent begins the final stage of preparation for the catechumens with a special service of election at the cathedral with Bishop LaValley. The catechumens are welcomed as ready for baptism. During the days of Lent, they are involved in a time that is called Purification and Enlightenment – a time of special prayer and reflection to prepare them spiritually for the Easter Vigil when they will receive baptism, Holy Eucharist and confirmation.

Lent is a special time for all of us who are already baptized. Each Lent is a time – a unique opportunity – for us



Fr. William G. Muench

to celebrate, to renew, to confirm our own baptisms. This is a time for special prayer and Lenten acts of mortification to remember our new birth in baptism in the Holy Spirit. Lent is our time to reflect on all that baptism should mean. Lent is our time to renew our dedication as adopted sons and daughters of our God.

Baptism is a call to holiness. I would like to share with you some ideas in this regard that I have found in the United States Catechism for Adults. First, from St. Paul's Letter to the Romans (6:3-4): "Are you unaware that all who were baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into his death? We were indeed buried with him through Baptism into death, so that just as Christ was raised forth from the dead by

the glory of the Father, we too might live in newness of life."

In the Gospels, Jesus says: "Whoever believes and is baptized will be saved." We believe that in baptism, the Holy Spirit moves us to answer Christ's call to holiness. In baptism, we are asked to walk by the light of Christ and to trust in His wisdom. As baptized Christians, we are invited to submit our hearts to Christ with an even deeper love. What is this light, this wisdom, this holiness? Jesus is clear about the high ideals to which he invites us.

In the Gospels, Jesus says: "Be perfect, just as your heavenly Father is perfect." (Matt 5:48) "Be merciful as your Father is merciful." (Luke 6:16) "Love one another as I love you." (John 15:12)

Lent is a time for us to develop a new and alive spirit of holiness. The Lord Jesus, our divine teacher and model of all virtue, preached holiness of life to everyone without exception. Our goal is to hold on to the gracious act of

sanctification that we have received from Christ.

Living out our baptism is a lifelong responsibility. Growing in holiness and discipleship involves a willingness to continue to learn throughout one's whole life about the faith and how to live it. It also involves a willingness to support and encourage others who share the faith and who have committed themselves to the ongoing process of conversion of heart and mind to God, which results in the holiness to which we are called.

This is a strong challenge that we cannot meet by human strength alone. We, Christians, will sanctify our call more and more by receiving all from the hand of the heavenly Father and by cooperating with the divine will, showing forth the love with which God has loved the world. The baptized are called to transform the world with the light and power of the Word of God. When you live your Baptism, you transform the world and make it a better place.

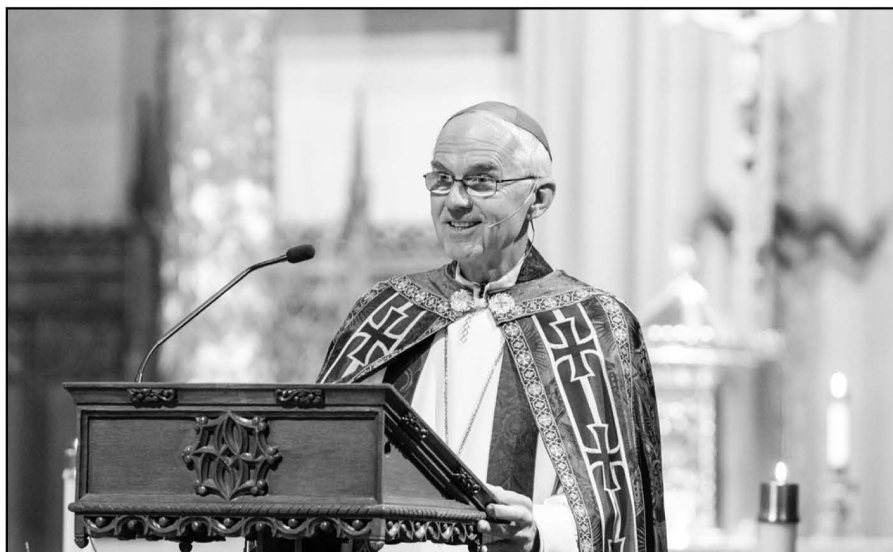
FOLLOW ME

'Reflect on those trials that Jesus encountered'

Editor's note: The following is Bishop Terry R. LaValley's homily from the Rite of Election, held March 1 at St. Mary's Cathedral in Ogdensburg.

We remember that under the old covenant, God subjected His people Israel to testing in the desert. They failed that test, so a new covenant became necessary. In today's familiar Gospel reading, we see Jesus, the Bearer of that new covenant, being subjected to testing again in the desert. Immediately before the temptations of Jesus that we just heard about in today's Gospel, St. Matthew tells the story of the baptism of Jesus in which a heavenly voice declared of Him: "This is my beloved Son with whom I am well pleased." As He leaves the baptismal waters of the Jordan to begin His public ministry as the Anointed Son of God, Jesus went through tests of faith. My sisters and brothers in Christ, no child of God can go through life without trials, without tests.

In this scene, Jesus is given three. The first one, to turn stones into bread, prompts us to reflect on how we use our God-given gifts, talents, and abilities. The temptation is for us to use our gifts to stash our bread, to make a comfortable living for ourselves and those who live under our roof, and that's pretty much it. But St. Paul tells us that gifts are given to the individual "for the common good." Jesus would, later on in His ministry, multiply bread to feed others. Notice, He would not do it to feed Himself, but others. Do we see our talents and abilities, our jobs and profes-



JESSE SOVIE/NORTH COUNTRY CATHOLIC

Bishop Terry R. LaValley delivers his homily at the Rite of Election on March 1.

sions, as means to serve others?

In many ways today, some people have become indifferent, even uninterested in the plight of others, de-sensitized, almost hard-hearted to the people around us. Certainly, Pope Francis has called our attention to how so many have failed this test. We resolve to be attentive to the needs of others.

In the second test, Jesus is tempted to prove that He is God's Son by jumping from the pinnacle of the temple and letting the angels catch Him as was promised in the Scripture. Though Jesus fully believes the word of God, He would not put His Father to the test. This contrasts sharply with the case of a college student in Nigeria who claimed that he was born again and to prove it he jumped into the lion's cage in the zoo because the Bible promises that nothing can ever harm God's children. Maybe his soul is in heaven today, but his body provided a

special lunch for the hungry lions that day.

Again, so many have succumbed to this second temptation. We place conditions on our faith and test our God. We demand signs from Him. If He produces, then we will follow Him. We bargain with Him because somehow we believe that we are doing our God a favor if we remain faithful to His commandments. Or, maybe, it's out of a sense of desperation that we bargain. These holy days, we resolve to try to grow in our faith with no strings attached.

In the third temptation, Satan promises Jesus all the kingdoms of the earth if only Jesus would worship him. Jesus wants the whole world to acknowledge Him, of course, but would He achieve that by worshipping a false god? Can we pursue our goals by any means whatsoever? Does the end justify the means? Jesus says no. He remains steadfast and faithful to God, rejecting the short-cuts offered by

Satan.

My friends, you know as well as I, that we are under constant testing. Jesus shows us today that to serve God is to surrender ourselves to Him unconditionally and in all situations, even when the going gets tough. It is so very difficult sometimes to let go and let God be God. That's why it is important that we rely on one another in our journey of faith. We challenge, support, and affirm our sisters and brothers. You see, the hope for you and me in all of this is that the desert experience was a victory event for Jesus. The times our faith is tested in life can be occasions of growing in our relationship with Jesus because we know He's been there before us and He's with us today as we respond to life's difficulties. Our faith can be strengthened when it's tested, if we know and rely on Jesus as our constant companion.

Historically, dear cate-

chumens and candidates, Lent is the time has been set aside by the Church for your preparation for the Easter Sacraments. In preparation, I invite you, during these graced forty days of being in the desert, to reflect on those trials that Jesus encountered and see how they might apply to your own lives. As Pope Francis wrote, "In the desert, people of faith are needed who, by the example of their own lives, point out the way to the Promised Land and keep hope alive. In these situations, we are called to be living sources of water from which others can drink...to go out of ourselves and to join others is healthy for us." (EG, 86)

Each and every one of you, coming from many parishes throughout our Diocese has done precisely that—you have gone out of yourselves and responded to the Lord's call to follow Him as a member of Christ's Mystical Body, the Church, our family of faith. For that we are most grateful!

With the help of your pastors and the parish RCIA team and staff, make these forty days in the desert a privileged time of reflection and prayer with the God who has loved you into existence. On the day of our baptism, God smiled and calls us His "beloved." I'm sure this day, the Lord is smiling as He sees your joy-filled faces here this afternoon. He is well-pleased! Thank you for coming to our St. Mary's Cathedral to be counted among the elect. Know of my continued prayers for each one of you. May God be praised... forever may God be praised!

On the path to full communion with the Church

By Jessica Hargrave
Contributing writer

OGDENSBURG – On the first Sunday of Lent, Bishop Terry R. LaValley celebrated the annual Rite of Election and Call to Conversion at St. Mary's Cathedral, welcoming those who are prepared to fully enter the Catholic Church.

The ceremony, held on March 1, is a key milestone in the Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults (RCIA), a gradual process of conversion and initiation into the Catholic Church. It's during Lent when the 33 catechumens and candidates bind their new-found relationship with God, and they will receive the Sacraments of Initiation – baptism, the Eucharist and confirmation – at the Easter Vigil.

As part of the celebration, Bishop LaValley had an opportunity to meet the catechumens and candidates from parishes around the diocese and support them on their journeys to the Catholic faith. During the Rite of Election, parish RCIA directors presented catechumens to the bishop.

Then, one by one, the catechumens signed their names in the Book of The Elect, strengthening their commitment and discipleship to their new faith. Bishop LaValley then declared them members of the Elect, moving them forward in preparation for the Sacraments of Initia-



JESSE SOVIE/NORTH COUNTRY CATHOLIC
(Above) The Curtis family and their sponsors pose for a photo with Bishop Terry R. LaValley after the Rite of Election ceremony. Pictured are, back row, from left, Mary Sovie, Brenda Trivilino, Isabelle Curtis, Bishop LaValley, Thomas Lawrence, Ryan Frary, front row, Zachary Curtis, Zona Curtis, Scarlet Curtis, Amanda Curtis, and Cornelius Curtis. (Right) Catechumen Zona Curtis signs the book of the elect beside her sponsor Brenda Trivilino.

tion.

During the Call to Continuing Conversion, candidates who are already baptized Christians were affirmed by their sponsors and the assembly. With Bishop LaValley's acceptance, the candidates will take the next steps toward being in full communion with the Church.

For candidate Thomas Schneider, of St. Mary's in



Canton, the RCIA process was a long one but was worth it.

"For me it's continuing on my love for God," she said.

For Rachel Johnson, a catechumen from St. Patrick's in Watertown, the

Rite of Election had a deep, emotional meaning.

"I lost my spouse in September and I'm very grateful for Father Looby who was there for me," she said. "My husband and I, we already had this planned. I know my hus-

band is with me and God is with me day in and day out."

Preparation through the RCIA program covers Church history, the sacraments, learning to read Scripture, prayer and personal testimonies.

Mary Skillian has been the RCIA director at St. John the Baptist in Plattsburgh for 11 years, and recently took on the role as director for all three parishes in Plattsburgh. Skillian said she gets much joy in journeying with people as they prepare to enter the Catholic Church.

"I will be at Mass and see and speak with people I have journeyed with and think, 'oh yes, this, this or this happened during their preparation,'" she said. "A highlight of the journey is always the trip to the Cathedral for Rite of Election. Their excitement of meeting Bishop LaValley and knowing how close they are to realizing their desire to enter the Church is palpable. What is particularly memorable is when, without a doubt, you see that conversion within an individual. It takes my breath away. Of course, the apex is at the Easter Vigil when you see them receive their sacraments and knowing you helped them realize this brings tears to my eyes."

The Bishop thanked the pastors, sponsors and RCIA directors who are shepherding each catechumen and candidate through the process. The Easter Vigil takes place on Holy Saturday, the evening before Easter Sunday when the catechumens will be presented to the parish community. The catechumens are then baptized and confirmed with the candidates and receive the holy Eucharist for the first time.

For a New or Used Car

**Mort
Backus &
Sons**

On Canton-Ogdensburg Rd.
315-393-5899



'I can't imagine not being Catholic'

Editor's note: This is the second installment in what's planned to be an ongoing series featuring how Catholics of the Diocese of Ogdensburg are living out their faith. To suggest an individual to be featured in this series, please call the North Country Catholic at 315-393-2920 or email dfargo@rcdony.org.

By Suzanne Pietropaoli
Staff writer

MALONE – "I see my life up until recently in the parable of the sower (Mt. 13:7)," relates Dave Petrelli. "I could well be like one of the seeds that fell among the thorns. While I was choked initially, it appears that I grew up taller than the thorns around me and started to see the light."

The comparison unfolds as Petrelli shares details of his faith journey. His dad was Baptist, and his mom was (nominally) Catholic; the family "attended a few Baptist services here and there." Yet during his middle school years, Petrelli recalls with gratitude, his mom did make sure that he received First Communion and confirmation. He continued attending Mass during high school, and later with his fiancée, Kellie.

Soon, though, the young man was off to the Army Reserves.

"It was a challenging time to be away from Kellie, while I was dealing with Army psychology and basic training," he said. "It was a bad experience, and if there were any Catholics around, I didn't know it. I fell away from my faith."

Then, amid marriage, college, and careers, faith stayed in the background.

But children changed



Dave Petrelli of Malone poses with a cardboard cutout of Pope Francis and his daughter, Lauryn, at the Life is Very Good Rally the pair attended with the Youth Buses for Life in January.

everything. As the couple's three daughters (now ages 11-23) came along, so did questions about baptism, First Communion, and of course, school. "I count myself blessed that my wonderful and beautiful wife had a much better formation and foundation in our faith than I had," Petrelli said. "Having attended Bishop Smith School, she really wanted our daughters in Catholic school. Once our daughters were at Holy Family School, and receiving the sacraments, Kellie nudged me back toward the Church 10 or so years ago. In hindsight, I can also see that the Holy

Spirit and my guardian angel were always there to guide me, tugging at my heart."

According to Petrelli, "The changes in my journey since coming back to God have been really dramatic and happened as quickly as I fell away. I started to thirst for truth, and now really wanted to know all I could about God and our Catholic faith, history and tradition. It was through all of this that I truly realized I could actually have and develop a relationship with Jesus. When I started to put God first in my life and gave myself to God, I began to hear the Holy Spirit com-



municating back to me. Reconnecting with the sacramental life of the Church began a journey that has really gathered steam over the past seven years."

Soon Petrelli discovered Lighthouse Catholic Media. The company's CDs/MP3s became constant companions as he commuted to various sites for his work as a vocational counselor with ACCESS-VR.

"These really helped me to learn and live my faith, since they feed both the head and the heart," he said. "Formation for Ministry was another way God helped me to overcome my poor catechesis and poor formation. The program was wonderful, and I recommend it to anyone

wanting to learn more about the faith." [Petrelli was commissioned as a lay minister at the Cathedral in Jul 2019.] "Also, I had gotten to know Father Joe Giroux, who was pastor at St. André Bessette, and Father Scott Belina, who was parochial vicar. Both are very good and knowledgeable priests, who helped me so much; they must have answered thousands of questions for me!"

But the influence of these priests reached well beyond answering Petrelli's questions about the faith. They invited him to experience elements of Church life of which he had been previously unaware.

"When Father Joe en-

CONTINUED ON PAGE 6

BARSTOW

AN AMERICAN REVOLUTION BUICK PONTIAC GMC SUBARU
HERE WE PROFESSIONAL GRADE

"Family owned dealership serving the
North Country for over 56 years!"

For more information, visit our Website
at: www.barstowmotors.com

MARKET ST., POTSDAM, NY • (315) 265-8800

MONASTERY CARD SHOP
Cards for All Occasions
Mass Enrollments for your living & deceased loved ones.

Precious Blood Monastery
OPEN: 9 AM - 5 PM
SATURDAY 9 AM - 12 PM
400 PRATT ST., WATERTOWN
315-788-1669
www.sisterspreciousblood.org

Environmental Stewardship

Healing

Attempting to imitate the actions of Jesus during Lent can take many forms. Along with teaching, Our Lord was also well known for His healing ministry. Yet, while most of us lack His Power to correct or eliminate physical or mental ailments in people, most of us have the ability to heal or repair some of the damage inflicted to our common home by modern society.

Even though our landscape still remains covered in snow, there are several projects that can be undertaken in late winter to help nature. Building bluebird houses is one activity that can help restore the population of our State's official bird, especially in small towns and villages where it has been ravaged by the aggressive nesting behavior of the invasive house sparrow and starling. Building wood duck houses, or bat shelters/retreats and placing them outside before the spring migration begins can also contribute to the restoration efforts of these native species.

Early to mid March is also not too early to start planting the seeds of numerous types of flowers indoors. Growing plants inside is a great way to reduce the cost of developing sizeable flower gardens in late spring. Along with the beauty these areas provide during the warmer months of the year, they also help sustain bees and various other insects and bugs that rely on their nectar for sustenance.

Remember that Jesus never cured vast numbers of people in some dramatic fashion as He traveled through a region. Rather He tended to cured individuals whom He encountered on His journey after spending some time with them. In a similar way, we are never expected to solve all of the regions' environmental ills. You work to correct one small defect that you encounter and let the others go; and you continuously thank God for the opportunity to serve His creations in some small way and for making that site a little better than it was before.

Submitted by: Tom Kalinowski, St. Bernard's Parish, Faith and Ecology Member

Can't imagine not being Catholic

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 5

couraged me to be a part of André's Brothers, a men's group he was starting, I did not know what to expect," Petrelli said. "But it was a pivotal time for me, and André's Brothers has really helped me to go much deeper in faith. I had never heard guys singing, and the first time I did,

my head whipped around and I stared in shock! Even more amazing was being introduced to the Liturgy of the Hours. I truly had no clue about the Liturgy of the Hours, but now, praying the Hours is a very important and blessed part of my day."

Around the same time, Petrelli discovered the beauty and power of Eucharistic Adoration.

"I guess I was one of those Catholics who did not believe in the Real Presence," he explains. "But there is a definite Presence in the Tabernacle, and in the Monstrance, and I do not want to miss Adoration opportunities. To have Jesus so near is amazing, and now I am able to meet him there and to receive him at Mass every day."

Petrelli is likewise grateful for what he calls "building experiences," such as Exodus 90 with Father Joe.

"This encourages you to know yourself and to become more of what God wants you to be," Petrelli said. "The discipline I found most challenging was the kind of music I enjoyed: listening with faith led me from the '80s rock I was used to, toward Christian music. Paying attention to what goes into my mind has been life changing. Recently I made a Cursillo, which was quite an experience of brotherhood. It was very helpful to me as I continue to work on my relationship with God and to share the tremendous love and graces he has given me."

In fact, sharing God's

goodness has been important for Petrelli ever since he re-discovered his faith – beginning with his own family.

"Now our faith is central to our family life, and we have sought out like-minded people," he said. "We attend Sunday Mass together, discuss our faith together, and attend Christian music concerts together! I even started attending the March for Life with my daughter each January to stand for life, the top human rights cause of our time."

A member of the Knights of Columbus as well as André's Brothers, Petrelli serves St. André Bessette parish as a lector and Eucharistic minister and teaches the 5th/6th grade class in the religious education program.

Faith changes everything, as Petrelli affirms.

"All the difficulties that came in the past still come, but now my perspective is so different," he said. "Jesus suffered for me, so I can and should suffer with him sometimes. Today I can't imagine not being Catholic. Now that I know the truth and have given myself to Christ, I have to live what I believe."

Rest in Peace

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

March 11 – Msgr. Edmund Charles M.J. DePauw, 1911

March 12 – Rev. Joseph L. Stickelmyer, 1984

March 13 – Rev. James Keveny, 1880; Rev. Ferdinand J. Ouelette, 1929; Rev. Joseph A. Bachand, 1950

March 14 – Msgr. Maurice John Bellamy, 1958; Msgr. Edgar A. Gallagher, 1961; Rev. John Quinn, M.S.C., 1962; Rev. Joseph E. Turcotte, O.M.I., 1980; Rev. Edward C. Rivette, 1981; Rev. Timothy J. Soucy, 2009

March 15 – Rev. Charles J. McMorrow, 1898; Rev. Howard G. Goiser, 1984

March 16 – Rev. William A. MacDermott, 1913; Msgr. Noel V. Zimmerman, 1994

March 17 – Rev. Michael Froc, O.M.I., 1905; Rev. Francis X. Parisian, 1955

To Report Abuse

If you have a complaint of suspected misconduct involving diocesan clergy, religious, employees or volunteers, contact **Victims Assistance Coordinator**, Terrianne Yanulavich, Adult & Youth Counseling Services of Northern New York, 5050 Route 374, Merrill, NY, 12955

terrianneyanulavich@yahoo.com
Phone: Day: 518-651-2267, Night: 518-569-0612; or Father Christopher Carrara, the Episcopal Vicar for Clergy at 315-393-2920

Bishop's Public Schedule

March 11 – 11 a.m. – Priests Personnel Board Meeting at Bishop's Residence followed by lunch

March 12 – 10:30 a.m. – Meeting with deacons at the Sisters of St. Joseph's Motherhouse in Watertown followed by lunch

March 13 – Noon – Mass at St. Mary's Cathedral

March 14 – 4 p.m. – Mass at St. Mary's Cathedral

March 15 – 11 a.m. – Mass at Immaculate Heart Central celebrating Catholic Schools Week at Immaculate Heart Central's High School Auditorium in Watertown followed by a pancake breakfast

March 16 – 10:30 a.m. – Meeting with deacons at the former Holy Family School in Watertown followed by lunch

March 17 – 10:50 a.m. – Mass at St. Joseph's Home in Ogdensburg

March 18 – 9:30 a.m. – Diocesan Department Head Meeting at Wadhams Hall in Ogdensburg

Letters to the Editor

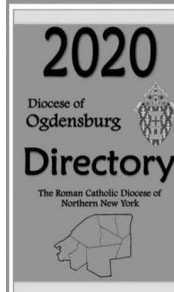
We welcome letters from readers of the North Country Catholic.

- 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!

Order your 2020 Diocesan Directory!



\$15.00 each

The Official 2020 Directory of the Diocese of Ogdensburg includes detailed information about parishes, schools and other Catholic organizations.

Order online at www.northcountrycatholic.org or call our office at

315-608-7556

to order yours today!

Mother Cabrini Health Foundation releases grants

More than 500 programs statewide were awarded nearly \$150 million in grants

NEW YORK – The Mother Cabrini Health Foundation announced today it has awarded nearly \$150 million in grants across New York State.

The grants are helping to fund more than 500 activities, programs, and initiatives in 2020 focused on improving the health and quality of life for low-income and underserved communities.

“We are honored to support such a wide range of organizations doing critically important work to improve the lives of New York’s most vulnerable communities,” said Alfred F. Kelly, Jr., Chief Executive Officer of Visa and Chair of the Mother Cabrini Health Foundation Board.

Added Msgr. Gregory Mustaciuolo, Chief Executive Officer of the Mother Cabrini Health Foundation: “Mother Cabrini spent her life devoted to those who faced the greatest struggles, and the Foundation named in her honor is proudly carrying on her legacy. From supporting pediatric cardiac care units in children’s hospitals to expanding mental health services to enhancing immigrants’ access to services, our inaugural grants are already making a difference in communities across New York State.”

“It is a great start for the Foundation – their initial grants promise to have a positive impact on the health and well-being of millions of New Yorkers, particularly the most needy,” noted Anthony Shih, MD, President of United Hospital Fund. “We are excited to be among the Foundation’s partners and look forward to honoring Mother Cabrini’s

legacy through our projects focused on the needs of poor and underserved young children and older adults.”

Said Rose Duhan, President and CEO of the Community Health Care Association of NYS (CHCANYS): “Attracting and maintaining a skilled workforce is one of the biggest challenges community health centers face – and this grant will help CHCANYS in accomplishing our mission to champion community-centered primary care in New York State through leadership and support of Community Health Centers. CHCANYS is proud and grateful to be recognized by the Mother Cabrini Health Foundation for our work to improve the health and well-being of low-income and underserved communities.”

This is the first round of grants released by the Mother Cabrini Health Foundation, one of the largest foundations in the U.S. and the largest foundation focused exclusively on New York State. Its mission is to help address health and health-related needs of New Yorkers regardless of race, ethnicity, religion, or background, as well as the social determinants of health that improve health outcomes, including nutrition, housing, education, and employment.

The Foundation’s first round of grants include:

- \$57 million toward general services for low-income individuals and families, including grants to Harlem Children’s Zone to support Healthy Harlem, a program to prevent and address childhood obesity in Central

Harlem, and to the Hudson Headwaters Health Network to expand a program that provides fresh produce and nutritional counseling to rural communities in the Adirondack North Country region.

- \$25 million toward youth and young adults, including grants to the Greater New York Hospital Foundation to improve access to medication and treatment for patients grappling with opioid use disorder and to Cornell Cooperative Extension of Oneida County for opioid prevention education in local schools.

- \$18 million toward programming, nursing, and caregiving services for older adults, including a grant to the JASA for Caring Link, an aging-in-place program that helps elders resolve daily living challenges, manage chronic disease, and reduce isolation and depression.

- \$18 million toward housing and services for persons with special needs, including a grant to New Yorkers For Children, in partnership with the New York City Administration for Children’s Services, for a pilot program aimed at providing support for parents with intellectual or developmental disabilities involved in the New York City child welfare system.

- \$10 million toward initiatives for immigrants and refugees, including a grant to the Young Center for Immigrant Children’s Rights for child advocates to help unaccompanied minors.

- \$7 million toward needs of young children, pregnant women, and new moms, including a grant to the United Hospital Fund of New York to increase the number of chil-

dren receiving primary care interventions that promote healthy development, address unmet social needs, and strengthen families.

- \$4 million toward opportunities for formerly incarcerated individuals, including a grant to the Center for Community Alternatives in Syracuse to support transitional housing for formerly incarcerated individuals returning to their communities.

- \$4 million toward programs at Federally Qualified Health Centers, including grants to CHCANYS benefitting over 70 community health centers that serve low-income New Yorkers statewide; the Charles B. Wang Community Health Center in Queens for its bilingual smoking cessation and health programs; and the Jericho Road Community Health Center in Buffalo for its Vive Shelter, which provides shelter, food, and legal services to asylum seekers.

- \$3 million toward support services for veterans, including a grant to the Veterans Outreach Center in Rochester for a new program to assist female veterans in their return to civilian life, including housing assistance for those at risk of homelessness.

A list of grants is posted on the Foundation’s website. The portfolio covers a range of nonprofits, from local community organizations to large-scale hospital systems, including 19 hospitals across

New York State.

The Foundation provides funding to a wide array of religiously affiliated organizations, including grants to Catholic Charities affiliates across the State supporting an extensive range of programs through a well-established infrastructure serving the needs of the poor and underserved of all faiths. Other grantees include Trinity Episcopal Church for housing and supportive services for women exiting Rikers Island, the UJA-Federation’s Digital Pantry, the Coptic Orthodox Diocese’s St. Abraam Program benefitting low-income individuals and families, and The Council of Peoples Organization’s center serving Muslim South Asian seniors.

Grantees are addressing New Yorkers’ health needs, as well as the social determinants of health: from providing food, legal assistance, and mental health services to expanding dental care, supporting advancements in telehealth technology, and providing transportation to and from clinics.

The Mother Cabrini Health Foundation was formed after the 2018 sale of Fidelis Care, a nonprofit health insurer created by the Catholic bishops of New York State. For more than 25 years, Fidelis Care expanded under the bishops’ oversight to become one of the highest rated and most successful insurers operating in the State.

Visit our website

www.northcountrycatholic.org

- Read local stories and commentaries
- Search archived papers
- View diocesan events and much more



Find us on Facebook!



Diocese outlines coronavirus precautions

The Diocese of Ogdensburg has not called for the suspension of any practices at Mass in response to the new coronavirus that appeared in China and has been detected in several countries, including the United States, but is closely monitoring the situation.

The same precautions and recommendations that are applied each year for defense against influenza should be employed.

To stay home?

The Catechism of the Catholic Church #2181 reminds us that "illness" is one of the serious reasons

for which participation in Sunday Eucharist can be excused. Note, it does not say "serious illness." If you are sick, you can (and probably should) stay home.

To go to Mass?

If you are concerned that you might be getting ill, or if you are concerned about

contracting an illness, the following precautions can assist:

- Refrain from extending hands at the sign of peace.
- Refrain from receiving from the chalice.

- Holding hands during the Lord's Prayer should be discouraged.

- Hand sanitizer should be made available in churches.

- Priests, Deacons, and extraordinary ministers of Holy Communion are encouraged to practice good hygiene, washing their hands before Mass begins or even using an alcohol based anti-bacterial solution before and after distributing Holy Communion.

- Holy water fonts are cleaned, and the water changed on a regular basis.

In some parishes Holy Communion is not distributed from the chalice. If the local pastor determines that that is best for his parish, we should remember that: "Since Christ is sacramentally present under each of the species, communion under the species of bread alone makes it possible to receive all the fruit of Eucharistic grace. For pastoral reasons this manner of receiving communion has been legitimately established as the most common form in the Latin rite" (Catechism of the Catholic Church #1390).

Below is a joint statement from the USCCB, Catholic Relief Services, and the Catholic Health Association of the United States:

"As communities and public health officials respond to the outbreak of novel coronavirus (COVID-19) in China and closely monitor its presence and progression in other parts of the world, we join in solidarity and prayer for

those impacted or working to treat those infected by the disease. The U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops, Catholic Relief Services, and the Catholic Health Association of the United States hope that governments will work together in partnership to improve all nations' capacity to prevent, detect, and respond to this virus.

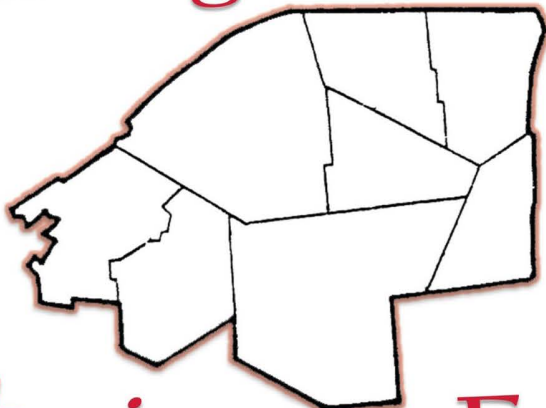
"The Catholic Church in the United States stands in solidarity with those affected by the coronavirus and their families, health workers who are valiantly trying to diagnose and treat patients, and those under quarantine awaiting results of their screening for the virus. We offer our prayers for healing and support those organizations, both domestic and international, working to provide medical supplies and assistance to address this serious risk to public health.

"We also commend the U.S. government for transporting more than 17 tons of donated medical supplies to China. This response to the novel coronavirus demonstrates the critical importance of the need to work together and to invest in crucial health care systems here and in other countries, thus preventing and responding to community-wide emergencies. We urge the U.S. Congress to support these efforts by protecting access to domestic health care safety net programs and by providing additional emergency international assistance to areas impacted by the virus. "We also urge individuals to stay informed as information becomes available by going to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention at <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/index.html>."

The Diocese of Ogdensburg

**NORTH COUNTRY
CATHOLIC**

Sharing our Stories



Sharing our Faith

The Diocese of Ogdensburg covers an area of 12,036 square miles. With such a large area to cover *The North Country Catholic* allows us share our stories of faith with one another. The NCC is able to provide:

- Parish and Diocesan News
- Important messages from Bishop Terry LaValley
- A fresh perspective on Catholic news from around the nation and world
 - Scripture Reflections
- Receive your copy in print by mail or have it emailed to you!

**Subscribe or renew to the
North Country Catholic today!**

- Place your envelope in your parish collection
- Online at our website:
www.northcountrycatholic.org
- Call our office at 315-608-7556

CATHOLIC WORLD AT A GLANCE

Bethlehem holy sites closed after COVID-19 reported at hotel

JERUSALEM (CNS) — The Latin Patriarchate of Jerusalem urged its faithful to cooperate with the Palestinian Authority Ministry of Health, following its order March 5 to close all schools, universities, mosques and churches, including the Church of the Nativity and Shepherd's Field. The affected areas were in the West Bank: Bethlehem, Beit Jala, Beit Sahour and Jericho for 14 days following seven reported cases of the coronavirus in the Bethlehem and Beit Jala area. "Unfortunately, this danger is already in our midst, and with a sense of responsibility, we must cooperate with the authorities and those responsible for public health for the good of all," Archbishop Pierbattista Pizzaballa, apostolic administrator, said in a statement. A spokesman for the Palestinian Ministry of Tourism said seven employees of the Angel Hotel tested positive for the COVID-19 coronavirus. The cases, which were tested in an Israeli hospital, are suspected to be connected to a group of Greek pilgrims who had stayed in the Beit Jala hotel and who were also diagnosed with the virus after they returned home. Minister of Health Mai al-Kailah told a news conference that the seven people had been placed in quarantine together with the hotel staff and two doctors who had come into contact with them.

As COVID-19 spreads, Catholic entities take precautions

WASHINGTON (CNS) — Catholic aid agencies are protecting their staff's safety as they increase their worldwide efforts to stop the spread of the coronavirus COVID-19. Catholic dioceses around the world, too, are following protocols issued by their government health ministries. Catholic Relief Services, which works in more than 110 countries, is "restricting all but the most mission-critical travel, with contingency operational plans in place should the disease take hold in any of the countries where the organization operates," it said. More than 3,000 people have died globally from COVID-19, which emerged in the Chinese city of Wuhan in December. The World Health Organization said that, by early March, more than 92,000 infections had been confirmed. Dioceses around the world took precautions such as recommending that Communion is received only in the hand and that people do not shake hands during the sign of peace at Mass, especially in places frequented by pilgrims.

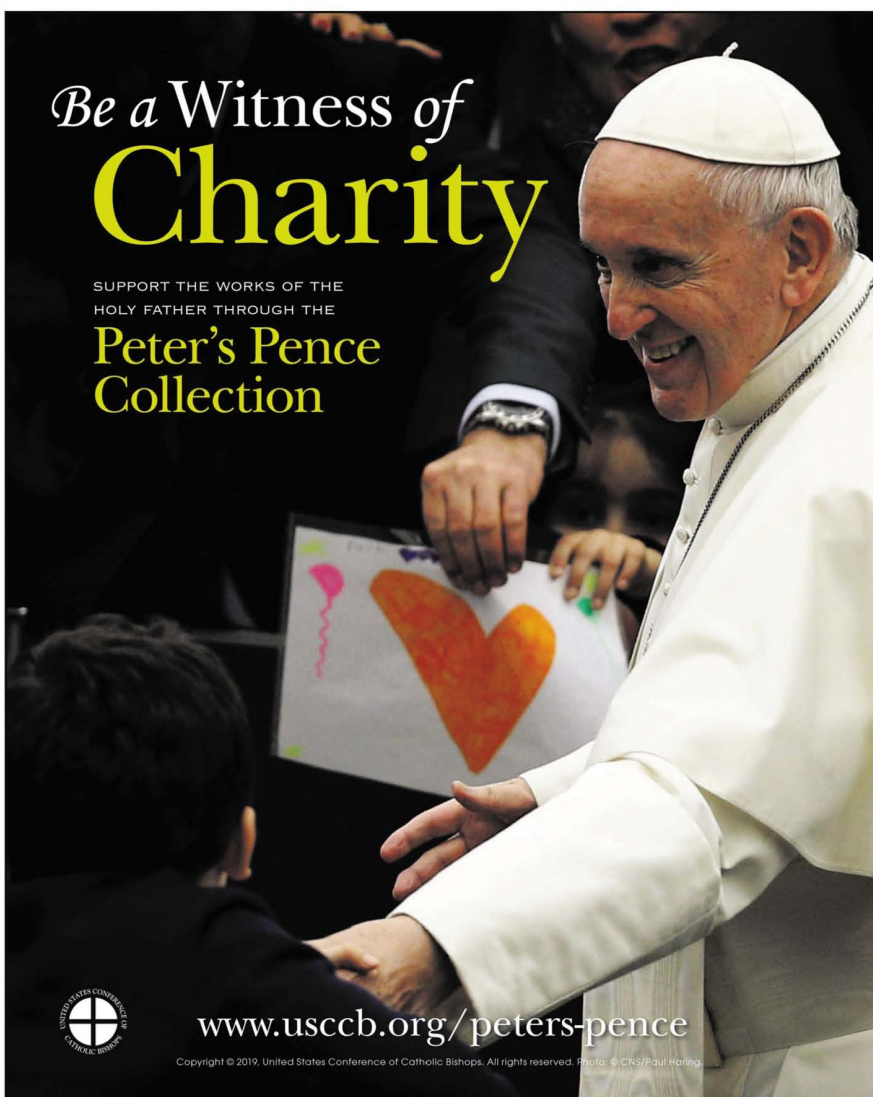
Commission: Lack of faith can impact validity of marriage

VATICAN CITY (CNS) — A lack of faith and a misunderstanding of marriage can mean no sacramental marriage occurred, even if both the husband and wife had been baptized, said a new document. The International Theological Commission, whose members are appointed by the pope, wrote the document in response to questions repeatedly raised since the 1970s and addressed by St. John Paul II, Pope Benedict XVI and Pope Francis. "The existence today of 'baptized nonbelievers' raises a new theological problem and a grave pastoral dilemma, especially when the lack of, or rather the rejection of, the faith seems clear," the document said. In the document, "The Reciprocity Between Faith and Sacraments in the Sacramental Economy," members of the theological commission did not claim to resolve completely the question of the validity of sacramental marriages in the absence of faith, but they did insist that much greater care must be taken to educate Catholics in the meaning of faith and marriage. The document was approved by Cardinal Luis Ladaria, prefect of the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith, and its publication in early March was authorized by Pope Francis.

Be a Witness of Charity

SUPPORT THE WORKS OF THE
HOLY FATHER THROUGH THE

Peter's Pence Collection



www.usccb.org/peters-pence

Copyright © 2019, United States Conference of Catholic Bishops. All rights reserved. Photo: © CNS/Paul Haring

**"A LITTLE MERCY MAKES THE WORLD LESS COLD AND MORE JUST."
—POPE FRANCIS, ANGELUS, MARCH 17, 2013**

Pope Francis calls each of us to witness to charity and to show God's mercy to one another. He encourages us to **"open our eyes and see the misery of the world, the wounds of our brothers and sisters who are denied their dignity, and let us recognize that we are compelled to heed their cry for help!"** (Misericordiae Vultus [MV], no. 15). The Peter's Pence Collection unites us in solidarity to the Holy See and its works of charity to those in need. Your generosity allows the Pope to respond to our suffering brothers and sisters.

The purpose of the Peter's Pence Collection is to provide the Holy Father with the financial means to respond to those who are suffering as a result of war, oppression, natural disaster, and disease.

Collection Weekend: March 21 & 22

Catholic vote becomes harder to define

WASHINGTON (CNS)—In the last presidential election, some political pundits referred to the "Catholic vote," one that predicted Donald Trump's rise to the presidency, and one that aligned in 2016 with the voting constituency that landed him the White House: overwhelmingly white and politically conservative voters.

But what the vote also revealed was a demographic shift taking place among Catholic voters, one that depends more on the ethnic background of the person casting the vote than on a religious affiliation.

"When we don't talk about the white Catholic vote vs. the Hispanic Catholic vote, we're really missing a lot," said Elizabeth Podrebarac Sciupac, senior researcher at the Pew Research Center and one of the panelists of "Faith and the Faithful in the 2020 Presidential Primaries" roundtable hosted March 4 by the Initiative on Catholic Social Thought and Public Life at Georgetown University.

"We know the entire U.S. is becoming far more politically polarized than ever before and religious groups are not immune to that," she said.

Though 52% of Catholic voters cast ballots for Trump in the 2016 presidential election, the majority of Latino Catholics — which at 38% of the U.S. Catholic population is the second largest ethnic group in the church — overwhelmingly voted for Democratic candidate Hillary Clinton.

And in the recent Democratic primaries, Latinos carried progressive Bernie Sanders to victory on Super Tuesday in the delegate-rich state of California.

"I think that the really important Catholic vote in this primary election was the Hispanic Catholics," said Jesuit Father Thomas Reese, who also spoke on the panel that examined the way religious values and voters are shaping the race for the White House in 2020.

The way a voter views and practices his or her faith, which in many ways is painted with the brush of their socioeconomic experience as well as ethnicity, seems to have a lot to do with how the person approaches the ballot box.

For political operative Donna Brazile, a former interim national chair of the Democratic National Committee, her beliefs have largely been shaped by her experience as a black Catholic from Louisiana. The third of nine children, she said she benefited from government programs as a child such as Head Start that helped not just with education but nutrition and health care — programs that have suffered amid political bickering, which has left a generation of children behind, she said.

"We don't talk about them. They are the victims of this conversation and this battle that we're having," she said. "We never talk about maternal health. We never talk about the children who get born, who get nothing, who get no health care, no ability to survive. We're snatching away the only food they get every day from a government that can afford to feed them."

Yet others voted for Republicans and in particular for Trump because they felt that they and their religious institutions

were under attack by Democrats who did little to reach out to them, said panelist Timothy Carney, an editor at the Washington Examiner and author of "Alienated America: Why Some Places Thrive While Others Collapse."

"The white evangelical looks around and says, 'I'm a religious minority now.' That's the main thing that's going on now," Carney said, explaining that people who never would have defended the behavior of Trump in the past felt that "he's what's between me and the state that's going to come after our institutions" and decided to support him.

They wanted a president to defend their beliefs against abortion, and Trump, along with Vice President Mike Pence, were ready to do that, Carney said, even if there were character issues.

"People who certainly are ashamed of a president who appeared in Playboy, poses with a Playboy cover behind him, brags about sexually assaulting women ... they just say, 'He's the guy who gives us these results.'"

Panelist Eugene Scott, political reporter for The Washington Post, pointed out that there had been a lack of outreach to religious voters, particularly conservative Christians, by the Clinton campaign in the last election and any potential Democratic candidates should pay attention to those lessons from the past.

Most recently, Brazile said, "the Protestant black community put the Catholic in the driver's seat. That's where we are." But she admitted that "while my faith has driven me and my politics ... my party often doesn't

lead with faith, but with values," and includes voters of other religions as well as of no religious beliefs.

Democratic presidential candidates Joe Biden and Elizabeth Warren agreed that there were a few conservative Christians out there who backed Trump in the last election, but "would be open to voting for them if that person (the candidate) was aware of them and was reaching out," Scott said.

But some panelists called out the Democrats, saying that when it comes to the abortion issue, the party has not been welcoming to pro-life Democrats, and has gotten tangled up in responses for fear of how other Democratic constituencies might respond, as well as how others would react when you mention the word "Catholic."

"I think anyone who mentions 'Catholic' is going to tick off some of the main constituencies in the main party," said Father Reese.

And yet, the Pew center's Podrebarac Sciupac said more than half of voters in a survey said that it was "very important" or "somewhat important" to have a president share their religious beliefs. In the Democratic camp, Biden is perceived as someone who is "very or somewhat religious," while the rest of the Democrats weren't perceived similarly.

But Father Reese pointed out that while Latino Catholics may have said they favored someone religious, they voted for Sanders, who, even though he has referred to how Judaism shaped his view, is not perceived to be religious.

"Don't believe what vot-

ers tell you," he said.

"The biggest story related to faith and politics in the context of identity that has come about in this election is people reflecting on what their faith means to them and what values shape their politics and their view of policy," said Scott.

Father Reese said he feared that elections, of late, are run more on fear than love. Carney said religious voters in the last election and this election are looking for something to belong to, something that perhaps in the past was satiated by belonging to a church.

"The quintessential Trump (voter) in the early primaries was the white evangelical who does not go to church," he said. "You can say that's because they're fake Christians. No. It's because they're disconnected. The people, what they're seeking with Sanders, what they're seeking with Trump, is what they would be getting if they were going to church. I, for one, argue they'd be better off going to church."

For those like Brazile, being a religious voter means heeding the lessons of her Catholic grandmother who would open the Bible before her grandchildren and read her favorite Scripture from Galatians 6:9: "Do not grow weary in doing good for at the proper time we will reap a harvest if we do not give up."

"That woman had so much faith, giving us that hope every day. Feeding that hope every day is what we should do in our lives to remove fear and doubt and hate because that is not of God. That is the devil we have to rebuke," she said.

ADIRONDACK

RUMMAGE SALE

Lake Placid – St. Agnes School to have their Annual Rummage Sale.

Date: March 28

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

Place: School gym

Features: Donations can be dropped off at school any day prior to the event.

Contact: For more information please call Kathleen Murphy at 518-523-3771 or email info@stagnesp.org

CLINTON

TAIZE PRAYER

Plattsburgh – All are invited to Taize Prayer around the Cross.

Date: March 11

Time: 7 p.m.

Place: St. Peter's Church

Features: Calm, reflective prayer around the cross, with gentle, prayerful singing.

IRISH MEAL

Peru – The Peru Knights of Columbus will have a corned beef and cabbage dinner.

Date: March 14

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

Place: St. Augustine's Parish Center

Cost: Adults, \$10; Children 5-12, \$5; under 5, Free

FISH FRY

AuSable Forks – AuSable Forks Knights of Columbus to have their Ash Wednesday Fish Fry.

Date: March 20

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

Place: Holy Name Parish Center

Cost: Adults, \$10; Children under 12, \$6; take-outs available

CHAMPLAIN VALLEY RIGHT TO LIFE OPEN MEETING

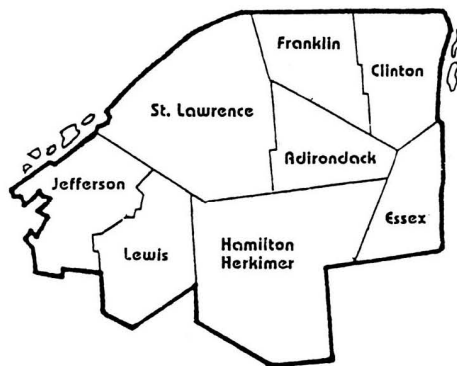
Treadwell Mills – Come join the conversation and breathe LIFE into our area.

Date: March 21

Time: 1 p.m.

Place: St. Joseph Hall

Features: Champlain Valley Right to Life (CVRTL) not for profit, under new leadership is working together with NYSRTL, to refresh their business plan. The opportunity came about last year when there was discussion to fold. However, when a member stepped forward and offered to take over, the board agreed to vote in new leadership roles of President and Secretary. As part of CVRTL's new vision, an open



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@northcountrycatholic.org.

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

meeting is planned.

Contact: Please RSVP by calling Nancy 518-593-6024

FISHERS CLUB

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

Date: March 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:

pastorsmoll@stmarysti.org 518 585 7144 or Father Christopher Carrara at ccarrara@rcdony.org 315-375-6571

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

PANCAKE BREAKFAST

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

Date: 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

ESSEX

ST. JOSEPH'S LENTEN STUDIES

Olmstedville – Lenten Studies on Miracles to be held.

Date: Wednesdays starting Feb. 26 to April 1

Time: 5 p.m.

Place: St. Joseph's Parish House

Features: Discussion to be had as well as soup and bread will be served.

FRANKLIN

ROSARY RALLY

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

Date: March 21

Time: 12 p.m.

Place: St. Ann's Church

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

JEFFERSON

THE MASS SERIES

Watertown – Bishop Robert Barron's "The Mass" DVD presentation and discussion

Schedule: (2) March 12 "God Speaks; We Respond"; (3) March 19 "Preparing the Sacrifice; Creating Com-

munion"; (4) March 26 "Sacred Meal, Sacrifice, Real Presence"

Time: 7 p.m.

Place: Dostie Hall at Sacred Heart Church

Features: Whether new to the Mass or not, you will learn from Bishop Barron's presentation. Refreshments.

Contact: Holy Family Rectory, 315-782-2468

LENTEN PRAYER GROUP

Adams – Join us on our Lenten journey as we meet in a small group setting to pray and reflect on the Sunday readings.

Date: Sundays for 6 weeks March 1 to April 5

Time: 9:30 a.m. to 10:45 a.m.

Place: St. Cecilia's Parish

Features: We will be using the Lenten Longings series to embrace the teachings of Christ, open ourselves to the Spirit of God, grow in our faith and in our relationship with God and one another.

Contact: To register please call the Parish office at (315) 232-3292 or Denise Wallace at (315) 523-1623

SPAGHETTI & MEATBALL DINNER

Evans Mills – The Indian River Council 7471 Knights of Columbus to have a spaghetti & meatball dinner.

Date: March 14

Time: 4 p.m. to 7

Place: St. Mary's Parish Center

Cost: Adults, \$7; Seniors, \$6; Children under 12, \$5; Under 5, Free

Contact: For more information call 315-629-4678

CHILD TRAFFICKING PRESENTATION

Watertown – "Closing the Gap: What you need to know to protect against Child Trafficking," a presentation, to be held.

Date: March 15

Time: 1:30 p.m.

Place: Hearthside Center at the Motherhouse of the Sisters of St. Joseph, 1425 Washington St., Watertown

Features: Ann Marie Crescent, Community Coalition coordinator, Alliance for Better Communities, will speak. Light refreshments will be served. There is no cost to attend.

SPRING JUNGLE FUN RUN

Carthage – Celebrate Spring with Augustinian Academy Spring Jungle Fun Run.

Date: March 21

Time: 9 a.m.

Place: Packet pickup at Augustinian Academy Gym

Features: There will be a 5K and 1.5 mile walk.

Contact: For more info or paper registration, please contact the front office 315-493-1301 - Or at kclarkson@augustinianacademy.org Register at <https://www.webscorer.com/register?raceid=194539> or facebook.com/caa-jinglebellrun

FISHERS CLUB

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

Date: 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

SPAGHETTI DINNER

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

Date: March 26

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.

CELEBRATE DIVINE MERCY

Watertown – Our Lady of the Sacred Heart Church will hold a Divine Mercy Sunday Celebration.

Schedule: April 10 at 3 p.m. the Divine Mercy novena will begin by praying the chaplet in Our Lady of the Sacred Heart Church; April 19 at 3 p.m. at Our Lady of the Sacred Heart, There will be Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament, Singing of the Chaplet of Divine Mercy, confession, & a procession. You may bring your own Divine Mercy picture to be specially blessed.

Contact: For more info on Mercy Sunday, call Judy Boulton at 315-783-7349 or visit www.thedivinemercy.org

Around the diocese

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 11

LEWIS

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

BRUNCH

Lyons Falls – Fr. Paschal Rys Knights of Columbus to have an all you can eat brunch.

Date: March 15

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

Place: St. John’s Church Hall

Cost: Adults, \$8; Students, \$5; Under 5, Free

Contact: Delivery available in the Lyons Falls area by calling 315-348-6599 or Chris at 315 766-6897

ST. LAWRENCE

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 smar-ion@massenacatholics.com; massenacatholics.com

LENTEN FISH AND SHRIMP FRY

Gouverneur – St. James School to have a Lenten Fish & Shrimp Fry.

Date: Friday’s during Lent starting Feb. 28

Time: 4:30 p.m. to 6:15

Cost: Adults, \$10; Children 12 and under, \$5; under 5, Free

Contact: Deliveries and take-outs available by calling 315-287-0130

LENTEN BIBLE STUDY

Ogdensburg – Bible series on salvation to be held.

Date: March 4 and runs for 10 weeks.

Time: 6:30 p.m.

Place: St. Mary’s Cathedral, Brzana Hall

Cost: \$10 for the workbook, the parish will supply the book.

Features: At every Sunday Mass, Catholics confess that Jesus came down from heaven “... for us men and for our salvation.” But what does salvation mean? In this remarkable 10-part video series, Scripture scholar and theologian Michael Patrick Barber provides a thorough, deeply Catholic, and deeply biblical, answer.

Contact: You need to register at St. Mary’s Cathedral website at www.Ogdensburgcatholics.org. Scroll down and in the right column find “Lectio-Salvation”, and then find the “Go Here” button to register. If you have any questions you can email Deacon Bill O’Brien at billob315@gmail.com.

ST. BALDRICKS FUNDRAISER

Potsdam – Knights of Columbus to have St. Baldrick’s Fundraiser to help conquer childhood cancer.

Date: March 14

Time: 3 p.m. to 8

Place: Trinity Episcopal Church

Features: There will be food, raffles, photo booth and a silent auction.

Looking for groups or individuals to have their head for the cause. Recognition awards will be given for campus groups or individuals who raise the most; individual who raises the most business donations and the business that donates the most.

Contact: For more information call Colin Myers at 315-265-6168 or go to <https://www.stbaldricks.org/events/mypage/13810/2020>

DINNER AND FUN

Canton – St. Patrick’s Day Community Dinner and Family Fun Night hosted by the Canton Knights of Columbus.

Date: March 15

Time: 4:30 p.m. to 7

Place: St. Mary’s School Gym

Cost: Adults, \$10; Children 4-8, \$3; under 4, Free; Families, \$32

Features: Dinner will include Ruby glazed corned beef. Presentation of the Irishman of the Year Award. Fun activities for the kids. Irish Dancing by the St. Mary’s Students. Music by Barb Heller from NCP. More music by Grammy nominated duo, The Dotys.

LENTEN PREPARATION

Massena – St. Peter’s Parish is offering Adoration, Stations of the Cross, Fish Fries, Penance Service; Rosary.

Schedule: Adoration – Mon. at St. Mary’s Chapel 6 a.m. to 10 p.m., Fri. at Sacred Heart from 6 a.m. to Noon and 12:30 p.m. to 10; Stations of the Cross Thurs at Sacred Heart at 11 a.m., Fri at St. Mary’s at 6:30 p.m.; Fish Fries every Friday during Lent at St. Mary’s Social Hall, 4:30 p.m. to 6:30; Rosary, Sun. at St. Mary’s at 2 p.m.; Penance Service March 16 at Sacred Heart at 6:30 p.m.; All Day Confession April 3 at Sacred Heart, 6 a.m. to 10 p.m.

ST. PETER’S LENTEN MISSION

Massena – St. Peter’s Parish to have a Lenten Mission.

Schedule: March 24 at St. Mary’s Church; March 25 at First United Methodist; March 26 at New Testament Church

Time: 6:30 p.m.

FISHERS CLUB

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

Date: 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

DIOCESAN EVENTS

YOUTH LENTEN RETREAT

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

Schedule: March 14 at St. Mary’s in Champlain; March 21, St. Patrick’s in Watertown

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

EVENT FOR WOMEN

Lake Placid – The Catholic Daughters to sponsor an event for women.

Date: March 15

Time: 11 a.m.

Place: St. Agnes Church

Features: Marika Donders, Director of the Office of New Evangelization of the Diocese of Ogdensburg, to present “The Audacious Woman: A Story of Encounter, Challenge and Discipleship.” This event is open to all women.

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

CHRISM MASS

Ogdensburg – The Diocese of Ogdensburg is cordially invited to the Chrism Mass.

Date: April 2

Time: 11 a.m.

Place: St. Mary’s Cathedral

Features: Christ-led, Christ-fed, Hope-filled. Join The Most Reverend Terry R. LaValley, Bishop of Ogdensburg for the annual Renewal of Priestly Commitment, the Blessing of the Holy Oils and the consecration of the Sacred Chrism for use in all the churches of the Diocese symbolizing that we are one family in Christ.

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 will 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 event with fun games, entertainment, food and a closing Mass offered by Bishop Terry LaValley. Keynote speaker will be Doug Tooke, a dynamic and energetic speaker with more than 20 years in Ministry who will inspire and motivate people to seek a personal relationship with Jesus Christ. Also appearing will be the Gratto Fellows Circus Performers, showcasing their interactive juggling, unicycling, rope walking, and feats of daring and comedic entertainment. There will be carnival game tables and 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

EARLY CATHOLIC FAMILY LIFE TRAINING

Watertown – A workshop how to create a joy filled home with Jesus at the center to be held.

Date: May 16

Time: 9 a.m. to 4 p.m.

Place: St. Patrick’s Church, Pastoral Center

Presenters: Alan and Joanne Foley, the creators of the Early Catholic Family Life Program.

Features: Lunch will be provided
Contact: To register contact Jessica Hargrave by email: jhargrave@rcdony.org, or by phone: 315-393-2920

AT THE MOVIES
THE WAY BACK

NEW YORK (CNS) – Whose life doesn't involve a crazy mixture of heartbreak and joy, despair and hope, death and life, weakness and redemption? Jack Cunningham (Ben Affleck), the protagonist of the sports drama "The Way Back" (Warner Bros.), can surely relate to all those shared highs and lows.

We first meet construction worker Jack as a hopeless drunk, putting a can of beer in his shower caddy at home, another brew or harder stuff in his coffee mug at work, and going through a whole case in one night. When he shows up at his sister Beth's (Michaela Watkins) home for Thanksgiving, he already has a drink in hand.

Yet, by contrast, he shows himself a doting uncle, reading bedtime stories to his young nephew. When Beth confronts him about his isolation, she also tells him that his wife, Angela (Janina Gavankar), called her, worried about him. We later learn that Jack and Angela are still married but have separated after a devastating family loss.

When the basketball coach at the Catholic high



CNS PHOTO/RICHARD FOREMAN, WARNER BROS. ENTERTAINMENT
Ben Affleck and Melvin Gregg star in a scene from the movie "The Way Back."

school he attended suffers a heart attack, former hoops star Jack is asked to take over the program. His alcohol-fuddled brain comes up with tons of excuses as to why he can't do this. But, surprisingly, he shows up at the gym for practice the next day and is introduced to the team by the assistant coach, Dan (Al Madrigal).

Jack is less than impressed by what he sees. The team's stats are awful. They "couldn't hit the ocean from the beach," as Jack puts it.

As penned by Brad Ingleby, director Gavin O'

Connor's film is permeated with the kind of off-color language that might be overheard in a locker room. Unlike many other movies, though, the swearing in "The Way Back" isn't gratuitous. Instead it serves as a symptom of Jack's deep suffering.

Thus, as he works with the players, finds a new sense of purpose and begins to heal, his instances of mouthing off diminish – although they don't disappear completely. Jack's vocabulary becomes an issue for the team's chaplain, Father Mark (Jeremy

Radin), who reminds him that swearing is against the school's code of conduct.

This leads to an amusing exchange between the two. Angered during a match, Jack gives forth an expletive, only to get the "hairy eyeball" from Father Mark. "I'm working on it," Jack responds, reining in his frustration. "Work harder," the chaplain curtly replies.

The movie's depiction of Jack's recovery is so unrealistic as to be unsettling. He goes cold turkey without any support from others. However, the script does at least demonstrate that Jack's path back to a fulfilling, happy life is not free of pitfalls – nor is his deliverance from dependency a one-and-done deal unmarred by setbacks.

At one point, Dan tells Jack not to underestimate the influence he can have in the lives of kids on the team. And this is borne out as the story progresses.

Jack helps Brandon (Brandon Wilson) come out of his shell and live up to his potential for leadership. Similarly, Jack guides Marcus (Melvin Gregg) – who has previously just skidded by

using his natural charisma – to take responsibility for himself and his actions.

"The Way Back" does nothing to break free of the traditional formula of sports movies, and these aspects of the plot are highly predictable. Yet Affleck carries the proceedings with able acting and the younger members of the cast, especially Wilson, give believable performances as well.

Catholic viewers will appreciate the parochial-school setting, although faith doesn't play a big part in Jack's journey or those of the other characters. What "The Way Back" does provide, however, is hope. Jack's redemption shows that no matter how much suffering life throws at us, we can once again experience love if we simply remain open to it.

The film contains mature themes, including alcoholism, a few instances of profanity, frequent crude and crass language and a vulgar sexual reference. The Catholic News Service classification is A-III – adults.

The Motion Picture Association rating is R – restricted. Under 17 requires accompanying parent or adult guardian.

Also in theaters: Onward

Using a spell, two teenage elven brothers (voices of Tom Holland and Chris Pratt) bring their father back from the dead for 24 hours. But the magic goes awry so that he is only resuscitated from the waist down.

To acquire the mystical gem that can restore him fully, they embark on a

hazardous quest, trailed by their fiercely protective mom (voice of Julia Louis-Dreyfus), her centaur boyfriend (voice of Mel Rodriguez) who's a police officer, and a lion-like creature (voice of Octavia Spencer) who has the ability to defeat the dragon that, unbeknownst to the boys, guards the jewel

they seek.

Though it reaches a heartwarming conclusion, director and co-writer Dan Scanlon's animated adventure is loaded down with an overly detailed mythos, values focused primarily on self-empowerment and a passing allusion to a same-sex relationship that, though

brief, amounts to propaganda aimed at youthful viewers.

Occult themes, considerable peril, a reference to homosexuality, one mild scatological joke.

The Catholic News Service classification is A-III – adults. The Motion Picture Association rating is PG – parental guidance sug-

gested.

Some material may not be suitable for children.



SCRIPTURE REFLECTIONS

Scripture presents stories of thirst

On this Third Sunday of Lent, the Scripture presents two powerful stories about thirst – thirst for water. The Israelites' thirst in the desert was so great, Moses feared for his life. So God told Moses to strike a rock – and water gushed forth. It made Moses bitter, but satisfied the Israelites for a while.

In the Gospel, Jesus breaks the law to speak to a Samaritan woman who had come to Jacob's well to draw water. She was a passionate woman who had tried every kind of pleasure, but none had satisfied. What a surprise when Jesus, tired, hungry and thirsty, asks her for a drink of water. He broke all the rules in speaking to her. Now, he keeps on talking, ignoring her hostility, aware that, in



Monsignor
Paul E.
Whitmore

this unexpected encounter, the Father has provided him with an opportunity for piercing the heart of this sinful woman with His love.

Jesus suggests He can give her living water that is far superior to anything she had ever tasted. Certainly, her five husbands (plus her newest lover) haven't brought her what she is really looking for. We know she had tried cheap love, and we presume she was no stranger to intoxication, power and money! This isn't a gentle lady who comes to draw water from the well, but a toughened cynic. No wonder she is rude to this travel-dusty Jew, whom she is sure will avoid her with downcast eyes. Jews despised Samaritans, who

March 15

Third Sunday of Lent

READINGS

Exodus 17:3-7

Romans 5: 1-2, 5-8

John 4:5-42

worshipped God on the wrong mountain. But Jesus doesn't follow the accepted prejudice!

Jesus forgets his own needs and offers this woman living water, spiritual grace. Incredible! Finding her heart curious and open to this miraculous water, he proceeds to raise her vision. He asks her to go back and bring her husband to the well with her. Of course, this is the turning point of the story. When he confronts her with the truth, she could have flounced off in righteous indignation and denial, but she doesn't. In humility, she accepts the reality of her sordid life.

Because of her humility, Jesus floods her soul with grace. Dropping her bucket, she runs back to spread the good news. "I've found the Messiah." And she had!

Lent is a time for us to let Jesus satisfy our thirst. Like that woman, we too have tried the wrong kinds of water to quench our thirst for happiness, satisfaction and peace of mind without really finding it. Now is the time for us to find real joy and satisfaction in letting the Lord fill us with the grace of the season. Like her, we will find that our joy is greatest when we share that gift with others – joining in a study or prayer group, visiting a nursing home, being patient with our family members and really listening to them, praying from the heart in a quiet place, reflecting on the Word privately or at daily Mass, and letting the Eu-

charist change us into the Body of Christ.

The Samaritan woman never did give Jesus a drink of water as he had requested. Do we stop to realize that Jesus' thirst for our love is even greater than our thirst for His love? I guess only saints understand that. It's what gives them the energy to pour themselves out in ministry up to their last breath.

Next Sunday, Lent will be half over. A question: "Are we satisfied with what we have done so far to let Jesus fulfill our desires? We need to check out our habits of prayer, our penances, our almsgiving. And what are we planning for the remainder of Lent? It's all about quenching our thirst for life, shunning the type of thirst-quencher that doesn't really satisfy, and earnestly begging Jesus to give us His living water.

A hundred love letters

In a recent essay in the Wall Street Journal, Kimberly Cutter chronicled the death of her father by suicide. As he struggled with rapidly progressing prostate cancer, he lost more than 30 pounds, becoming gaunt and emaciated. Back pain and nausea forced him to spend much of his time in bed.

A few days before Christmas, he shared with Kimberly that he was thinking about shooting himself. Kimberly argued with him, stressing that she and her sisters couldn't accept a violent ending: "If he shot himself, my father would die alone. Someone in our

family would have to find him," she wrote.

His daughters convinced him to look into other options. When he started investigating lethal drugs he ran into questions of reliability. He encountered horror stories about "wrong dosages and unreliable contents, painful, drawn-out demises." A lifelong marksman, he deemed the gun his best option: "If I shoot myself, I know I won't miss."

Kimberly then describes an important decision she

made:

"I couldn't accept my father's threat to shoot himself. I thought about violence and the fear that always lies beneath it. How violence, in essence, is a twisted cry for help. At some point, it occurred to me that what I needed was a way to make my father feel loved. If I could make him feel loved enough, maybe he would not forget my sisters and me in his lowest moments and do what his darkest impulses urged. Late that night, I had an idea. It was



Father Tadeusz
Pacholczyk
Ph.D.

childishly simple. Corny, really. I would start sending him daily love notes. I sent the first email the next morning. The subject line read: 'Reasons Why I Love You.' ...As soon as I sent it, I knew I was onto something. ...For the next 99 days, I continued sending my father a different reason why I loved him each morning. They ranged from the ridiculous to the sublime—from memories of snorkeling with him through a school of angelfish in Jupiter, to his incomparable Daffy Duck imitation: 'Suffering Succotash!...I could tell the emails were working; I could hear it in my father's voice when I spoke to him

on the phone; could feel it in the grateful emails he sent back in response. The daily act of pulling up a reason I loved him and sending it to him seemed to restore him in some essential way... My father never again discussed with me his plans for how or when he would die."

Kimberly's hundred love letters emboldened her dad to live out his life more fully and resist his fears for much longer than he would have otherwise. Tragically, however, they did not stop his suicide. He ended up purchasing lethal barbiturates from a company in China and, late in

CONTINUED ON PAGE 4



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

Join the Catholic Missions without leaving the U.S.

MISSIO is the global crowdfunding network, powered by Pope Francis' Pontifical Mission Societies, where your Catholic donations are crucial for the success of Pope Francis' missions to the poor and marginalized. If you're looking to make donations to the causes dearest to Pope Francis' heart, you're in the right place.

In 1822, inspired by letters she received from her brother who was on mission in Guangnam, Pauline Jaricot began collecting money from her co-workers at the local silk factory in Lyons, France. That first collection was given to support the missions in the U.S. It wasn't long before the pope himself took Pauline's efforts under his own wing, and thus the Pontifical Mission Societies was born.

Within the its first 100 years of operation, this Church mission society sent over \$7 million to help stabilize the U.S. missions, and within a decade the Pope began receiving donations for other Catholic missions from the Catholics in the U.S.

Today, Catholic donations from the U.S. make up 25% of the donations received at the Pontifical Mission Societies. These gifts from Catholics in the U.S. are then sent to the mission territories that today cover more than half the globe.

With MISSIO, today's technology meets the Church's age-old mission of helping the poor and marginalized. Partnering with Pope Francis and powered by the Pontifical Mission Societies, MISSIO gives you direct access to the people making a difference in our world's most vulnerable communities. MISSIO brings Pauline Jaricot's inspired crowdfunding idea into the 21st Century through our extensive online platform. By partnering with us, 100% of your Catholic donations will reach Catholic missions across the globe; helping more people, developing more relationships, and having greater impact for the poor and marginalized.

Remember "The Society for the Propagation of the Faith" when writing or changing your Will. www.rcdony.org

OBITUARIES

Cadyville – Clarence E. Duquette Sr., 93; Mass of Christian Burial March 5, 2020 at St. James Church; burial in parish Cemetery.

Croghan – Douglas F. Robbins, 84; Mass of Christian Burial March 3, 2020 at St. Stephen's Church.

Lowville – Sandra A. (Sabo) Grimmer, 74; Funeral Services at Iseneker Funeral Home; burial in St. Vincent DePaul Cemetery, Belfort.

Malone – Mildred "Millie" (Delaney) Clark, 103; Funeral Services March 2 at Whispering Maples Memorial Gardens Mausoleum.

Massena – Rose R. Brady, 81; Mass of Christian Burial March 7, 2020 at Church of the Sacred Heart; burial in St. Lawrence Cemetery, Louisville.

Massena – Phyllis M. (Joy) Chilton, 74; Mass of Christian Burial March 4, 2020 at Church of the Sacred Heart; burial in Calvary Cemetery.

Massena – Lilliane M. (Vaillancourt) Compo, 72; Mass of Christian Burial

March 9, 2020 at St. Mary's Church; burial in Calvary Cemetery.

Massena – Harriet M. (Haritgan) LaMay, 89; Mass of Christian Burial March 6, 2020 at Sacred Heart Church; burial in St. Patrick's Church, Brasher Falls.

Massena – James Harvey Peets, 78; Mass of Christian Burial March 5, 2020 at Church of the Sacred Heart.

Norfolk – Kenneth W. Aldridge, 96; Mass of Christian Burial March 6, 2020 at the Church of the Visitation; burial in Visitation Cemetery.

Ogdensburg – Joseph Patrick "Kelly" McCarthy, 68; Mass of Christian Burial March 6, 2020 at St. Mary's Cathedral.

Ogdensburg – Fernand "Pete" E. St. Pierre, 87; Funeral Services March 7, 2020 at the Fox & Murray Funeral Home; burial in St. Mary's Cemetery.

Plattsburgh – John Delaney Ryan, Jr., 84; Mass of Christian Burial March 3, 2020 at St. John's Church; burial in Mt. Carmel Cemetery.

Plattsburgh – Sidney St. Louis, 73; Mass of Christian Burial March 2, 2020 at St. Peter's Church; burial in parish cemetery.

Potsdam – Mary J. Goolden, 96; Mass of Christian Burial March 9, 2020 at St. Mary's Church; burial in Bayside Cemetery.

Saranac Lake – Anne (Sweeney) Latham, 82; Mass of Christian Burial March 2, 2020 at St. Bernard's Church; burial in Riverside Cemetery, Gouverneur.

Saranac Lake – Nathaniel "Tom" Oddy, 94; Mass of Christian Burial May 30 at St. Bernard's Church; burial in St. Bernard's Cemetery.

St. Regis Falls – Sheila Bailey Sexton, 65; Mass of Christian Burial March 6, 2020 at St. Ann's Church; burial in Santa Clara Cemetery.

Watertown – Attorney Robert V. Renzi, 84; Mass of Christian Burial March 6, 2020 at St. Anthony's Church; burial in Glenwood Cemetery.

Love letters

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 14

his illness, consumed the fatal powder.

His death left painful contradictions, as suicide always does. He had acceded to his daughters' requests to avoid shooting himself, using drugs rather than a bullet, but he still died alone, discovered by a stunned family member. And while his suicide was perhaps not as violent, death by overdose can feel just as violent as death by gunfire. The underlying reality of pills, powders or poisons still involves a brutal devastation of our physiology. Our bodies often resist, with the vomiting of pills, convulsions, paralysis, and the like. Although Kimberly and her sisters may have preferred that their dad succumb to toxins instead of

a bullet, those sentiments, in the final analysis, are more poetic than rational.

Sometimes the poetic may feel like all we have when we're confronted with the tragedy and incoherence of certain human choices. Another incoherent part of Kimberly's story is the fact that, despite her father's suicide, she seems to support the idea of physician-assisted suicide. While no one wants a loved one to experience pain and agony in the final days, only a false and misguided sense of compassion could conclude that instead of eliminating the suffering, we should eliminate the sufferer.

Kimberly may well have been aware of these inconsistencies as she embarked on the project of crafting a hundred love

letters to her father, striving to help him understand that he was treasured and still a source of blessing to others in spite of his painful trials. Each of our loving human gestures speaks volumes about the singular power of love to overcome fear, and to strengthen us in adversity.

While the hundred letters did not ultimately dissuade him from giving into the temptation to take his life, they nevertheless give us a step we can take when confronted with loved ones who think their life no longer has meaning or that death is better than life. And there is no need to wait until loved ones are in agony to pick up the pen to say, in one or more ways, how much and why they're loved.

Poll: Fewer U.S. Catholics see persecution as urgent issue

NEW YORK (CNS) — Over half of U.S. Catholics are "very concerned" about global Christian persecution, but this group accounts for 52% of Catholics today, compared to 58% in winter 2019 — a decline of more than 10%, according to a new poll.

It also showed the number of U.S. Catholics who think Christian persecution is "very severe" declined by 11% compared to a year ago, dropping from 46% to 41%.

Results of the third annual nationwide poll examining the views of U.S. Catholics on the global persecution of Christians were released March 4.

The poll was conducted by McLaughlin & Associates for Aid to the Church in Need-USA, an international papal agency that supports suffering and persecuted Christians in more than 140 countries.

Respondents also ranked global Christian persecution as a less urgent issue than human trafficking, poverty, climate change and the global refugee crisis.

Catholics who described themselves as being "very devout" were most concerned about Christian persecution, but the poll showed that even this group has ranked human trafficking as the issue of greatest concern for three consecutive years.

"While 52% of American Catholics show strong concern about the persecution of Christians, it is nevertheless disheartening to see the drop in their number compared to a year ago," George Marlin, chairman of Aid to the Church in Need-USA, said in a statement.

"It's telling," he said, "that U.S. Catholics con-

sider human trafficking, poverty, climate change, and the refugee crisis — as important as these issues are — to be more important than the persecution of Christians."

"Two years ago, the genocidal campaign waged by ISIS against Christians and other minorities in Iraq and Syria had only just begun to decline," Marlin said, "but memories of that atrocity have faded since then."

"This may well help explain the apparently lesser concern" about Christian persecution by U.S. Catholics, he said.

In listing the countries where they believe Christian persecution is most severe, U.S. Catholics identified Iran as the worst offending nation, followed in order by North Korea, Iraq, Syria, Pakistan and Saudi Arabia as the next five worst-offending countries.

Other findings of the poll showed:

— Just over one-fifth of U.S. Catholics said their parish is "very engaged" on the issue of Christian persecution, up by 16% from a year ago; 20% said their parish is "not engaged"; and 22% were "unsure" about their parish's level of engagement on the issue.

— As for their local bishop speaking out on Christian persecution, 27% said the bishop was "very engaged" on the issue, up 12% compared to a year ago; 24% were "unsure" about their bishop's level of involvement; and 12% said their bishop was "not engaged" at all.

— Asked about Pope Francis' focus on the issue, 47% of U.S. Catholics said he was

"very engaged" on the issue, down by 8% from a year ago; 16% were "unsure" about the pope's involvement on the issue; just 8% said the pope was "not engaged."

Respondents also were asked to rank by importance policies by the U.S. government and other Western countries to help persecuted Christians. "Putting diplomatic pressure on offending countries" was ranked as most important by U.S. Catholics, followed by economic sanctions and emergency asylum for victims of persecution. Next came financial support of persecuted Christian communities, while military intervention and "the military training and arming" were said to be less important.

Asked what actions U.S. Catholics can personally take to help persecuted Christians, 68% said prayer was "very important," 59% said raising awareness of the plight of the Christians at the parish level was important; 53% and 52%, respectively, said donating to agencies that help persecuted Christians and contacting members of Congress were important.

Marlin said the survey showed that U.S. Catholics believe the U.S. church in America "can do much more when it comes to calling attention to the gravity of Christian persecution." Given the percentage of Catholics who said they were "unsure" about their parish's or bishop's engagement on the issue, or said they were "not engaged, education at the parish and diocesan levels "remains of crucial importance," he added.

Vermont Catholic school adds esports offering

BURLINGTON, Vt. (CNS) — This is not your grandfather's high school sports team. Or your mother's.

The esports team at Mount St. Joseph Academy in Rutland, Vermont, is new and part of a growing trend to keep up with students' interests.

Esports is a form of sport competition using video games, often taking the form of organized, multiplayer video game competitions.

According to Michael Alexander, Mount St. Joseph Academy principal, the Catholic high school's esports team is only the second in Rutland County. (The other is at Fair Haven Union High School where he previously served as director of school counseling services.)

"The definition of sports can be very broad," he said, explaining the esports team members are exercising their brains. "It's a common misconception that it's 'just a video game.'"

Junior Jeremy Gillespie brought the idea of an esports team to Alexander last year because of the principal's openness to new extracurricular activities. Though he had considered pitching starting a fencing team or a Quidditch team, he opted for esports because of his own interest. "I like to play video games as any teenager does," said the former Mount St. Joseph football team member.

But with changing demographics and enrollment, the Catholic high school did not have enough interest to field a football team this year, though it has a rich history of championship play. So Jeremy has taken on the role of captain of the esports team.

"We have to look at where we can be a powerhouse, realistically," Alexander told Vermont Catholic, Burlington's diocesan magazine. "It's not realistic to be a football powerhouse, so we have to look in other directions."

He wants students to be excited about the extracurricular options they have at the school — that's why he plans to add a bass fishing team in the fall and a bowling team in the winter of 2021.

"School is about education, and education is not just about academics," Alexander said. "We are preparing these young people to be productive members of a global society."

The esports team is preparing for the spring season that begins in March in a league with students throughout the country who play the game "League of Legends," a kind of "Capture the Flag" game, approved by Alexander.

In addition to Jeremy, the esports team includes Destiny Jurado, a junior, and Keith Dishaw Sinclair, a freshman. Two Rutland High School students also participate because their school does not have an esports team.

If students from other schools get excited about playing on the Mount St. Joseph esports team and "like what they see when they come here, I might get another student" to enroll, Alexander said. "But that is second to providing something for these kids to get excited about."