

INSIDE THIS ISSUE

Diocese works to develop reopening plan | PAGE 6

Celebrating Laudato Si' five years later | PAGE 7

The Diocese of Ogdensburg Volume 75, Number 4

NORTH COUNTRY CATHOLIC

MAY 13, 2020

Follow Me: A Mother's Day tribute

In his Mother's Day homily, Bishop Terry R. LaValley pays tribute to mothers and reminds us to support and assist mothers in all phases of their journeys.

This month we honor Mary, the Mother of God and Mother of the Church, and today, as you know, we honor our moms.

This Mother's Day morning, I would also like us to reflect on how we, as members of a family, walk with our moms – new and not-so-new – through the years of their lives. Once a mom, always a mom. What a noble vocation of selfless love and service.

FULL STORY, PAGE 3

SOCIALLY DISTANT TASKS



Father Stephen T. Rocker, pastor of St. Patrick's in Colton and St. Mary's in Potsdam, paints railings at St. Patrick's Church to pass time during the coronavirus isolation.

SHARING OUR STORIES



Clayton resident Sandy Geiss says her faith has carried her through many challenging times in life, including the loss of her husband. A lay minister at St. Mary's Church, she continues to minister to others during the coronavirus pandemic. "God helps me get back up and keep going," she said. "You've just got to trust God. He's going to get you through this. He got you through everything else."

FULL STORY, PAGE 5

Pope: Rediscover the need for prayer

VATICAN CITY (CNS) – The coronavirus pandemic is a "favorable time to rediscover the need for prayer in our lives; let us open the doors of our hearts to the love of God our father, who will listen to us," Pope Francis said.

At his weekly general audience May 6, the pope began a new series of audience talks about prayer, which is "the breath of faith, its most appropriate expression, like a cry arising from the heart."

At the end of the audience, which was livestreamed from the papal library in the Apostolic Palace, the pope offered a special prayer and appeal for justice for "exploited workers," especially farmworkers.

Pope Francis said that May 1, International Workers' Day, he received many messages about problems in the world of work. "I was particularly struck by that of the farmworkers, among them many mi-

grants, who work in the Italian countryside. Unfortunately, many are very harshly exploited."

An Italian government proposal to grant work permits to immigrant workers in the country without proper papers has shined a spotlight particularly on farmworkers and their long hours, poor pay and miserable living conditions while also highlighting their essential role in ensuring an adequate supply of fresh fruit and

vegetables for the country.

"It is true that the current crisis affects everyone, but people's dignity must always be respected," the pope said. "That is why I add my voice to the appeal of these workers and of all exploited workers. May the crisis give us the opportunity to make the dignity of the person and the dignity of work the center of our concern."

The pope's audience began with reading the

story from the Gospel of Mark about Bartimaeus, the blind man, who repeatedly cries out to Jesus for healing. The pope said that of all the Gospel characters who ask Jesus for help, he finds Bartimaeus "the most likable of all."

"At the top of his voice," Bartimaeus cries out, "Jesus, son of David, have pity on me." And he does so over and over again, annoying the people around him, the pope noted.

NORTH
COUNTRY
CATHOLICBox 326
Ogdensburg, N.Y. 13669
USPS 0039-3400BISHOP TERRY
R. LAVALLEY

President

REV. JOSEPH A. MORGAN

Vice President

JAMES D. CROWLEY

Secretary-Treasurer

DARCY L. FARGO

Editor &

Communications Director



Publish 45 issues per year. Weekly except skipping every other week beginning July through Aug. and skipping one week in Dec. by the Diocese of Ogdensburg. 622 Washington Street, Ogdensburg, 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: \$30Matters for publication
should be
addressed to
PO Box 326
Ogdensburg, NY 13669and should be received by
Thursday prior to
publication.Paper is printed each
Monday;
dateline 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 doesn't seem possible

It doesn't seem possible. As mothers around the country were celebrating Mother's Day, we were celebrating both that holiday and my son's birthday.

Jacob is officially a teenager; the big 13. My little boy is suddenly five-feet, seven-inches tall. His little boy voice has been replaced by a deep manly voice (though it still cracks occasionally). He has the peach fuzz formation of a moustache above his lip. He's developed a few pimples. He's suddenly arguing with my husband and me about

the dumbest things.

I'm not sure I'm ready for this.

At this point, I feel pretty capable of handling little kid problems. I can help solve basic disputes with friends. I can help solve academic struggles. I can put bandages on skinned knees and ice packs on bruised elbows.

But now my husband and I are entering that portion of parenting in which we start to relinquish more and more control. Jake is now allowed to stay home alone for limited periods of time. He's allowed to walk to

the neighborhood store alone (with frequent check-ins). He spends more and more time trying to find his own way in life.

While I recognize the importance of this phase of Jake's development, it's scary. It's scary not knowing what he's doing when he's out of my sight. It's scary not knowing if he'll make the right decisions. It's scary not knowing if others will take advantage of his trusting soul.

This parenting thing isn't for the faint of heart.

As I make my way through my own parenting journey, I find myself appreciating my own parents more and more. I appreciate how well

they guided my sisters and I as we found our paths in life.

Even now, I rarely go a week without calling my mother looking for some sort of wisdom or advice. Since she somehow managed to survive having three teenage girls in the house at the same time, I feel like she's an expert in navigating the difficulties of parenting in the phase of teen attitude. I'm blessed to have her in my life.

Thank you to my mother and all the mothers. Your job is not an easy one, but it's an important one.

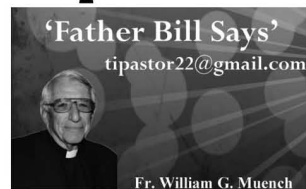
In fact, it's a job that sometimes doesn't seem possible.

Darcy L.
Fargo

Seeing the positives in the pandemic

Today, I thought that it would be a good time to write something positive. I want you to know that I do listen to the news, but it can be rather negative as we go through these days of the pandemic. Where to start? I mentioned last week Pope Francis' daily Mass. Often, I take the time to join in that Mass and pray together with the Holy Father. I find that being a part in his Mass, I find a strong peace and an inspiration to put life into my own life. His homilies are great.

Just the other day, I was roaming through those videos on YouTube. I guess the Holy Father must have been on my mind. Anyway, I ran into a video of the evening on which Pope Francis was elected. I have watched it several times. It was truly an important day for me. The first thing I noticed was the confusion of the commentators on television when the cardinal in charge announced to the



world the name of the newly elected pope. The commentators were obviously surprised that Cardinal Bergoglio was elected Pope. You could hear them shuffling papers, trying to find some information on this Argentinian cardinal who was now the new pope. Then the new pope came out on the balcony and his first words were, "Buona sera" – "Good Evening." Such a gentle and comfortable beginning to a new papacy. The new pope then asked people there at St. Peter's and everywhere in the world to pray in silence for him as he begins his new time a pope. The best way to begin something new is always a time of silent prayer, just as Pope Francis decided to begin.

On YouTube I have found all sorts of music. Music has been an important part of my stay-at-home quiet time. I find it interesting when these bands and music groups join together on zoom and perform together. It proves to be rather special. Our family has used a few of these Zoom sessions as opportunities to remember what each of us looks like. It has also been a bit of a concert for my great niece, Anna, a music student at Berklee in Boston. She plays the double bass, and I must say she is truly great. It is a great opportunity for getting the family together.

In addition, I have had lots of time – plenty of time – to get over to church, praying in gratitude to this God who has protected me. I have had the time to remember so many who were important to me, so many who are now with the Lord. This stay at home time has allowed me to remember in prayer and gratitude so many who have

cared and helped me in so many wonderful ways. As I pray, I realize those wonderful people who have filled my life with their gifts. For them all, I am so intensely grateful. So, thank you, God, for filling my life with so many. They were leaders for me, they were guides, they were friends. I have time to remember them all and pray for them all.

Now don't get me wrong, I know that despite the rather happy and enjoyable moments I have had time for during this stay at home time, I know that too many have been suffering during this time. This COVID-19 is not a pleasant sickness. I know that too many wonderful people have died. I want to pay honor and offer my prayers for those who have given time and sacrifice in their effort to care for those who are sick. I thank God for their talents and love, for their healing touch. They have been truly miracle workers.

FOLLOW ME

A Mother's Day tribute

"Walking with Moms in Need: A Year of Service" is an effort by our Church to increase our outreach to pregnant and parenting women in need as we celebrate the 25th anniversary of St. John Paul II's prophetic document, The Gospel of Life. Pope Francis, in this regard, said that our parishes should be "islands of mercy in the midst of a sea of indifference." Those in our parishes who work with the Project Gabriel ministries make a world of difference to so many pregnant and new moms in need. We are so fortunate and grateful to those who participate in this life-giving ministry in our communities.

It is important that we walk the Pro-Life talk by being attentive to our pregnant and parenting moms who don't have the family or community of loving support that we might take for granted, be it financial, emotional or educational. "Walking with Moms in Need: A Year of Service," is the Church's effort to serve life in all its truth.

This month we honor Mary, the Mother of God and Mother of the Church, and today, as you know, we honor our moms. This Mother's Day morning, I would also like us to reflect on how we, as members of a family, walk with our moms – new and not-so-new – through the years of their lives. Once a mom, always a mom. What a noble vocation of self-less love and service.

Our First reading today is concerned with "who will wait on tables?" The Apostles are concerned about what they had to sacrifice (the Word of God) because they had to spend

time "serving at table."

I wonder how much our moms sacrificed because, for in many of our homes, that was our mother's domain – serving at table. So that no one was neglected, how often would our moms miss the conversations with visitors because she was in the kitchen either preparing the meal, serving it, or cleaning up after. What did she miss so that stomachs weren't neglected? I wonder, what did she and dad have to sacrifice in order to put food on the table?

Throughout their and our lives, we must walk with our moms. Did any of us really appreciate how closely our mothers walked by us while we were growing up? Only a mother knows the physical anguish that a pregnant woman endures for the sake of new life within her. Then there is the lifetime of going without personally, so that her children might enjoy something. There were the sleepless nights when her child (no matter the age) was sick or in emotional turmoil or out on a date. Moms are always there to soothe and make things better.

I thank God for my mother whose bountiful and delicious food was always on the table or in the fridge. I thank her for the always present clean clothes, for an immaculately kept house, the pretty flowers on the lawn.

I thank her for being up through the night when I was sick and for forgetting to tell dad when he got back from work, what my brothers and sisters, I mean, I did wrong during

the day. I thank mom for teaching me my prayers and making sure we went to Church every Sunday and walked every day to Church with us during Lent when we got off the school bus.

As our mothers age, we appreciate more and more their love for us and what motherhood entails – sacrifice that knows no bounds. The years creep up on them, on all of us. They become proud grandmothers and, God-willing – even great-grandmothers. Often their bodies become fragile, sometimes tragically their minds diminish,

their memories fade. You know, our mothers need someone to walk with them, at their pace, particularly when their soul-mate, their life partner is no longer with them. I'm thankful to God that I have siblings who accompany my mother during these years in which she sometimes struggles with her health. They walk with my mom in her need. If you are still gifted with her presence, do you walk with your mother in her need?

Yes, throughout their and our lives, we must walk with our moms. As they grow older, the attention they deserve from us increases, because we remember with much gratitude.

In our efforts to honor and offer thanksgiving for all mothers, it is important to remember that Mother's Day can be a difficult holiday for many people, such as women who are struggling with infertility, those who have lost or are estranged from their moth-

ers, and mothers who have lost one or more children through miscarriage, abortion, or some other way.

I can't imagine how difficult a day this must be for those who have never known the love of a mother, for someone whose mother abandoned them, physically or emotionally, or those whose mother has died recently or when they were very young. This day doesn't go by without a big lump in the throats of many.

Again, St. John Paul II wrote so beautifully: "There is an everyday heroism, made up of gestures of sharing, big or small, which build up an authentic culture of life..."

Part of this daily heroism is also the silent but effective and eloquent witness of all those brave mothers who devote themselves to their own family without reserve, who suffer in giving birth to their children and who are ready to make any effort, to face any sacrifice, in order to pass on to them the best of themselves...We thank you, heroic mothers, for your invincible love! We thank you for your intrepid trust in God and in his love. We thank you for the sacrifice of your life." (EV, 86) Happy and Blessed Mother's Day to all our moms!

St. Joseph, Pillar of Families, Pray for Us!



Bishop
Terry R.
LaValley



Were you unable to hand in your subscription envelope? No problem! You can still renew your subscription by using one of the options below:

- ◆ Visit our website at www.northcountrycatholic.org to pay by Credit/Debit Card for immediate delivery. Click on subscribe by Credit Card in the top right corner. (please note you will be re-directed to Paypal, you do not need to have a Paypal account, click the option that says: "Pay with debit or credit card" located in the gray box)
- ◆ Send this coupon with payment to: North Country Catholic PO Box 106, Canajoharie, New York, 13317
- ◆ Have a question about your subscription, call Christine at: 315-608-7556 (Please leave a message if there is no answer) ***Please note we can not take Credit Card payments over the phone at this time***

Inside Diocese \$27 Outside Diocese \$30

I want to be a Patron: \$35 \$50 \$100 \$250
 New Subscription Renewal

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Parish _____

Please send my subscription to my e-mail address: _____

Summit discusses evangelization during crisis

By Jessica Hargrave
Contributing Writer

In times of uncertainty, fear and loss, spirituality is often brought to the forefront. Many people facing financial and health issues, fear of the unknown future and isolation during the COVID-19 crisis, are opening their hearts and minds to Jesus Christ during this global crisis.

So how do we not lose hope in the face of uncertainty? What is the most important skill we need to develop as Catholics right now? How do we as Catholics evangelize when we're stuck at home? Like other events here and around the world, missionary disciple group U Evangelize had to cancel their New Evangelization Summit scheduled for April 25th in Ottawa, and instead offered a free virtual summit on their website. The summit featured world-class speakers who discussed the topic "Can Catholics Evangelize at a

Time Like This?"

During this pandemic, as people are suffering and dying, this is the time for disciples to know it really matters that people know Jesus, and to be bold in their convictions and confident in their proclamations. Pete Burak, Director of Intentional Disciples for Renewal Ministries, spoke about the "six Ps" in remaining faithful to the mission of spreading the Gospel especially when the world is shaken. Burak said first, and simply, we need more Prayer. Use it as a time to grow more in love with Christ. Be Perceptive of the opportunities Jesus is presenting to us. Those who weep, weep with them. Through Pathos or empathy, have a heart for those who are suffering. Remember, the words of the Gospel give us Perspective so we have the passion to deliver it, to break through the fear. We need to be Powerful until we are powerful, meaning

full of the Holy Spirit. Finally, Proclaim in any way the Lord inspires us. Whether it's through phone calls, hand-written notes, social media or yelling across the street, people need to know the power Jesus won for us is still present.

"Jesus even talks about the narrow gate and the wide gate. That those who are on the narrow

path are many right now," said Burak. "He's sending us out to say those who are on the narrow path need to find the wide path so that they can enter into salvation."

Burak's message to those turning to Jesus now is to remember in the darkness, the light of Christ shines the brightest.

Mary Skillian of St. John the Baptist in Plattsburgh watched Saturday's summit and believes Burak's "six Ps" are important.

"It can help to keep us in tune to our own needs as well of the needs of the people of our parishes," said Skillian.

She attests that for those seeking out Jesus for comfort, praying helps.

"I personally have found spending more time with Jesus is helping me to stay hopeful," she said. "Mostly letting go and letting God. He has been taking care of myself and my family."

The Catholic Church

has lived through several tragedies throughout history. Author Sherry Weddell spoke on the Church's response during devastating times in the past and leading up to today's crisis, COVID-19, and what it's learned from those experiences. Weddell said some of the greatest revivals in Catholic history have risen from times of war, plague and famines.

"I think really what stands out during moments like this, honestly, in a way that doesn't happen often, is the role of lay apostles. Lay people really enter into their own in situations like this," said Weddell.

She said this is the time when people are searching, pointing to the millions of people who watched online as Pope Francis delivered his blessing "To the City and to the World." From the steps of St. Peter's Basilica on March 27, Pope Francis called Catholics worldwide to join him in praying for an end to the COVID-19 pandemic. In this time of searching, Weddell asks "will we be available to walk with those people who are curious about God?" Weddell said this is a great time to be discerning Charisms, gifts given to us at baptism such as prophecy, teaching and leadership to name a few.

"They are very important in developing a community of apostles, a people who know that

God is sending them," said Weddell.

Weddell uses the time she spends walking outside to pray, as does Brenda Trivilino, a parishioner of St. Mary's Cathedral in Ogdensburg who also watched the summit.

"It is hard not to be hopeful when I am constantly reminded of the goodness of God," said Trivilino.

She agreed with the speakers who stressed there's no better time to pray than now.

"I will use this time to deepen my prayer life, to deepen my relationship to God. Everything else stems from that."

Other speakers at the virtual summit were Father Justin Huang from the Diocese of Vancouver who spoke about his response to the cancelling of Mass, and Nicky Gumble provided information on the program, Alpha, an 11-week course that welcomes conversations of faith, life and God.

U Evangelize team members, Josh and Lisa Canning, and Michael Dopp hosted the summit.

U Evangelize is a free online membership site that provides video resources which includes evangelization expert interviews and trainings for people who want to be more effective in evangelizing. The organization's Facebook group also provides a space where people can pray for one another and offer support.

SAINT JAMES ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

Gouverneur, New York

Is seeking applicants for the position of
PRINCIPAL

For the School Year 2020-21
Effective July 1, 2020

Applicants should:

- Possess a Master's Degree in Education and/or Education Administration/Supervision;
- Be a practicing Catholic;
- Have experience as a successful Catholic school administrator;
- Give evidence of administrative leadership skills in the areas of Catholic identity, instructional evaluation, management, promotion and maintenance of an effective learning environment and public relations.

Applicants should send a cover letter expressing their suitability for the position, resume, a completed application (available at <https://www.redony.org/catholicschools.html>), transcripts, two letters of recommendation attesting to the candidate's proven administrative ability and one letter of recommendation attesting to the person's adherence to the Catholic Church, no later than **May 29, 2020** to:

Sister Ellen Rose Coughlin, SSJ,
Superintendent of Schools
100 Elizabeth Street; PO Box 369
Ogdensburg, NY 13669

For a New or Used Car

**Mort
Backus &
Sons**

On Canton-Ogdensburg Rd.
315-393-5899



Visit our website

www.northcountrycatholic.org

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



Find us on Facebook!



'God helps me get back up and keep going'

Editor's note: This is an installment of 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 Jonathan Monfiletto
Contributing Writer

CLAYTON—Sandy Geiss says her faith has gotten her through many tough times in her life.

A little over a year ago, Geiss' husband died of a heart attack while out riding his bicycle. The couple had been married for 48 years. About halfway through their marriage, Geiss' husband was hit by a car while he was riding his bicycle, rendering him a paraplegic with numerous health issues the rest of his life.

Now, during the coronavirus pandemic, Geiss is feeling "a little more lonely" without her husband, as she isolates at home while making occasional trips to the store and to doctor's appointments. Meanwhile, her son is in self-quarantine after being exposed to somebody who tested positive for coronavirus.

"For my whole life, I've had different things that my faith has helped me to get through," Geiss said. "That's honestly what I feel most about my faith, is that it's gotten me through some really tough times as well as led to the creation of some very wonderful friendships as well."

Geiss' faith is sustaining her now, as she attends Mass online through her oldest son's church in Bethesda, Maryland,



Sandy Geiss

watching the service on YouTube and viewing the listings of readings and songs on Facebook. She also had the opportunity recently to see her grandchildren for the first time in two months during a socially distanced family get-together.

Geiss' faith is also helping her to reach out and minister to others in need during this time. As a lay minister for her church, St. Mary's Church in Clayton, she has been contacting about 50 to 60 people to see how they are doing and if they need help.

"Checking in with people, trying to be sympathetic with people, seeing if they need help with things," Geiss said.

On her contact list is a friend who is disabled and trapped in Florida. The friend traveled to Florida aboard Amtrak's Auto Train, in which passengers ride in the train that carries their personal car, but the friend will not be able to return to the North Country by that method.

Instead, Geiss and a couple of her fellow parish-

ioners will pick their friend up at the Syracuse airport. The woman's car will remain in Florida, so Geiss and others will drive their friend to the pharmacy, the grocery store and Mass when it resumes.

Geiss serves on the board of the Paynter Senior Citizens Center in Clayton and said that group is trying to keep in touch with its senior citizens as well. Though all on-site activities have been canceled for now, there remains a bus service to the grocery store and food pantry and other stops.

This sense of faith in action is not new for Geiss. She was commissioned as a lay minister in 2017, out of a class of 10 people who have stayed in touch as close friends, "the kind of thing where we'd do anything for each other," she said.

"Every single one of us has picked a unique ministry, and we have stayed with it," she said. "We didn't just feel like, 'Oh, I'm going to do this for two



years.' It's kind of like a lifelong commitment."

For Geiss, the ministry she chose was catechism, so she has taught Rite of Christian Initiation for Adults (RCIA) and other adult education classes. In fact, she was in the middle of teaching a class during Lent on the parts of the Mass when the class was shut down after two of the five meetings.

She also serves as a Eucharistic minister, helps plan different social events for her church – including the St. Joseph's brunch on March 15 that was one of the last social events in the county before isolation began – and coordinates volunteers to work at receptions after Mass in the summer.

Geiss also works at the food pantry that is located in St. Mary's and overseen by a council of local churches.

"I'm really glad I became a lay minister. It's really enriched my life in a lot of different ways," she said.

Coming to the Catholic faith has enriched Geiss' life as well. After her parents were killed in a car crash when she was 11,

Geiss and her four sisters went to live with their grandparents. It "wasn't the most idyllic upbringing," Geiss said, as their grandparents didn't want to raise the children but felt obligated to do. They did take the children to the Methodist church on Sundays.

"I kind of got to liking church even back in those times," Geiss said. "It was kind of an escape from home to go to youth group meetings and choir practice and whatever."

By the time she met her Catholic husband while attending Syracuse University, Geiss had fallen away from her faith in her college years, so they decided to get married in the Catholic church and raise their children Catholic.

However, it wasn't until her middle son made his First Communion in 1987 that Geiss decided to take RCIA classes and officially become Catholic after years of being involved in the faith with her family.

"I've been in love with it ever since," Geiss said of the faith that has helped her form a relationship

CONTINUED ON PAGE 6

Environmental Stewardship

An invitation

One of the most discussed questions today seems to be "What will the 'new normal' look like? How will this new normal affect my daily routine, our country, our world?" Although none of us know the answer to that question, we all know it will not be "business as usual." What do we have to guide us in our discernment of where God may be leading us as a humankind?

We as Catholics are blessed to have the Gospel and the Catholic social teachings to provide us with a spiritual vision of our unique role as humans at this critical moment in our world today. It is through the lens of the seven Catholic social teachings that Pope Francis' encyclical *Laudato Si'*; On Care for our Common Home challenges us to look upon our contemporary world. In this encyclical, written five years ago, Pope Francis makes it clear that we all need a complete turn-about in our relationship with the earth, a transformation that can be sustained only if rooted in a spiritual vision.

How has this encyclical affected the way we view this current historical moment and what is our role in being instruments of God's peace and love? In this Encyclical Pope Francis writes "Living our vocation to be protectors of God's handiwork is essential to a life of virtue; it is not an optional or secondary aspect of our Christian experience." He calls every person on the planet to work toward fashioning a more just and sustainable world where all life is sacred and is revered and treated with respect.

During the coming week of May 16-24 you are invited to a special Diocesan celebration of *Laudato Si'*. Check out the Diocesan web page and the E-Notes for several opportunities to learn more about it and the Christian vision that it provides us with as we strive to create a more just and peace filled future. Don't miss Franciscan priest, Father Dan Horan, virtually present on Sunday afternoon, May 16, to begin the week! For more details, see Diocesan Website (www.rcdony.org)

Rest in Peace

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

May 13 – Rev. Ladislaus J. Stasz, 1971; Rev. Edward E. Papp, 2016

May 14 – Deacon Vincent E. Irvin Jr., 2003

May 15 – Rev. William Rossiter, 1908; Msgr. James R. McClure, 1960; Deacon William G. Schmidt, 2016

May 16 – Rev. Moses Legualt, 1908; Rev. John M. McIntyre, 1944; Msgr. Peter R. Riani, 2019

May 18 – Rev. John B. A. Legrand, 1891; Rev. Richard J. Cotter, 1928, Rev. Augustus J. Dumont, 1949

May 19 – Msgr. Arthur M. Leary, 1968; Deacon Vincent J. Frattali, 2003

Protecting God's Children

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

Pre-registration online is required. Participants may preregister at www.virtus.org.

Due to CoVid-19, there are no live trainings scheduled. If you need to complete VIRTUS training, contact Jean Grizzuto, jgrizzuto@rcdony.org or 315-393-2920 x 1413, who will coordinate assigning the training to be completed online.

To Report Abuse

If you have a complaint of suspected misconduct involving diocesan clergy, religious, employees or volunteers, contact **Victims Assistance Coordinator**, Terri-
anne Yanulavich, Ph.D., LMHC, 5050 Route 374, Merrill, NY 12955; [terri-
anneyanulavich@yahoo.com](mailto:terri-
anneyanulavich@yahoo.com)
Phone: 518-651-2267 days; 518-
569-0612 evenings; or Father
Christopher Carrara, the Episcopal
Vicar for Clergy;
ccarrara@rcdony.org Phone: 315-
393-2920 ext. 1340. If you have a
complaint of suspected sexual
abuse or related misconduct by the
bishops, contact the Catholic
Bishop Abuse Reporting Service at
800-276-1562 or [www.Report-
BishopAbuse.org](http://www.Report-
BishopAbuse.org).

Diocese works with experts to develop reopening plan

OGDENSBURG – Bishop Terry R. LaValley is working with local health officials and professionals to develop a plan that will allow Masses to resume in the Diocese of Ogdensburg.

Bishop LaValley has been consulting with a committee of health and liturgy experts, including representatives of the Department of Health, the St. Lawrence County Public Health Department, area medical center administration, the diocesan Office of Worship and local medical professionals as it develops the plan. The committee includes Dr. Dana McGuire, Dr. Andrew Williams, Dr. Tracy LaFlair, Dr. Lisa Breitenbach, Nurse Practitioner Rita Crowley, Registered Nurses Sandy Lyons and Nancy Levac,

and Father Bryan Stitt.

"As we work to transition to a possible gradual reopening of our churches and some institutions, I thought it was important that I get the best expertise I can from you, our health care professionals, as I try to design a plan or protocol for the churches in our diocese," Bishop LaValley told the group.

While the public health professionals noted they're still awaiting additional guidance from the state on the planned phased reopening, including dates churches could potentially resume worship, discussion centered around potential safety measures a reopening plan could include, as well as how the plan could be impacted by regional differences

within the diocese or a potential resurgence of the virus.

To begin the phased reopening, each region of the state needs to meet set criteria.

Public health officials noted they are cooperating across the region to get testing and tracing systems in place that will allow the North Country to enter phase one of reopening as soon as possible.

The diocese has also been reviewing plans established by other dioceses around the nation, as well as plans developed by the Thomistic Institute, as a plan for local reopening is developed.

Additional details will be provided as the plan is developed and the diocese moves toward resuming worship.

'God helps me get back up'

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 5

with God and relationships with her fellow believers.

It was that faith – and those relationships – that sustained Geiss through

her husband's death and still sustains her in its aftermath. While State Police tried to get a hold of her after her husband's incident, they also tracked down people from her church to help locate her.

"When I got home, at that very first moment when my husband had passed, I pulled into my driveway and there were two of the deacons from our church," Geiss said. "They were here from the very first second to support me. They came in the house. They stayed with me until my children came and just stayed with me right through the whole time."

It was a tough time,

and especially overwhelming to see her children and grandchildren deal with the loss of their father and grandfather, "so prayer certainly go me through those very rough first days."

Reflecting on that tough time, putting aside some time for God every day, and praying for people suffering from coronavirus while thinking about her son in quarantine is a process Geiss uses to continue to sustain her.

"God helps me get back up and keep going," she said. "You've just got to trust God. He's going to get you through this. He got you through everything else."

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!

Celebrating Laudato Si' five years later

By John Tenbusch

Parishioner at St. Mary's, Waddington

Five years ago, Pope Francis issued the Encyclical Letter "Laudato Si' – On Care For Our Common Home." His opening words: "Laudato Si', mi Signore' – 'Praise be to you, my Lord," are taken from the Canticle of Brother Sun and Sister Moon, written by St. Francis of Assisi almost 800 years ago. That beautiful prayer praises God for the sun, the moon, wind and air, water, fire, the earth, and even "Sister Death" – saying "Blessed are they She finds doing Your Will."

Pope Francis grounded this encyclical squarely within Catholic social teaching; he cited writings from Popes Paul VI, John Paul II, Benedict XVI to demonstrate that concern for the environment is not a "new" idea among Catholics. Francis describes an "authentic human ecology" which "presumes full respect for the human person, but it must ... take into account the nature of each being and its mutual connection in an ordered system." Pope Francis sees the "cries of the poor and the cries of the earth" as not separate issues but as in-

CELEBRATE LAUDATO SI WEEK

May 16-22: Online Video series of videos by Fr. Dan Horan, OFM: "Understanding Laudato Si'"

May 17 at 4pm: Virtual Keynote presentation by Fr. Dan Horan, OFM

May 19 at 6pm: Virtual Presentation by Tom Semeraro for Parents and Youth

May 21, 3pm: Snack and Chat Virtual Youth Group meeting by Tom Semeraro

May 23, 7pm: Panel discussion of Laudato Si based on the Video Series "Understanding Laudato Si"

FOR DETAILS AND INFORMATION SEE THE DIOCESAN WEBSITE: RCDONY.ORG

May
16-24



tricately connected.

Laudato Si' is part of the ethos of this past decade. Only six months before its release, the "People's Climate March" was the largest global climate change march to date – an estimated 600,000 people participated in events on six continents. Seven months afterward, 195 nations signed the Paris Agreement at the U.N. Climate Change Conference

in December 2015.

Laudato Si' also stimulated study and activism in the Church. Catholic parishes, schools and communities across the world held study groups, reflections and discussions of all sorts. At the encyclical's six-month mark, a survey found one in three Catholics acknowledging a papal influence on their views of global warming. A quarter of them were aware of Laudato Si'.

Another survey a year later found that a third of Catholics had heard of or read the encyclical. Six-in-10 Catholics agreed that climate change was occurring and was largely a result of human activity. Additionally, 68% of Catholics recognized a

personal moral responsibility to address climate change, with 32% saying the Pope had strengthened that belief.

In our own Diocese of Ogdensburg, Pope Francis' encyclical has stimulated numerous study and discussion groups. I personally have participated in Laudato Si' study groups in Canton and Colton; I facilitated a discussion group in my parish in Waddington. Many other Catholics in our North Country can make similar statements about how Laudato Si' led them to increased involvement in environmental issues.

An "Environmental Stewardship" column appears each week in the diocesan newspaper, "North Country Catholic." This column offers ideas for individual and group activities, directs readers to additional information about the environment, and reminds us all that the environment is a central part of

our faith.

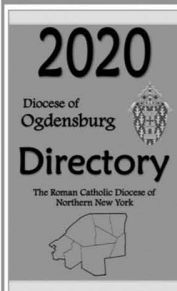
Three Faith and Ecology groups (in Watertown, Canton, and Saranac Lake) continue meeting today. According to the group in Canton, "Our intention is to create a forum for discussion and activity on environmental issues, by people who recognize the interconnection between their own spirituality and the Creation of which we are all part. The subject of faith and the environment has been profoundly influenced by Pope Francis' encyclical, Laudato Si'. It places concern for the environment in a moral context that many find compelling."

The Canton Faith and Ecology group has gone so far as to develop a Vision Statement, and a strategic plan which includes activities in areas including "Outreach and Education," "Partnering with Other Organizations," and "Eliminating Plastics From Our Environment." Progress on these issues has been slow, but it is the work of our (and our children's) lifetimes.

Five years out from its issuance, what is the legacy of Laudato Si'? Has our "concern for the environment in a moral context" waned, covered over by more current problems and issues? After all, for many the most important problems are the ones in front of us now.

But if we continue to pray St. Francis' Canticle of Brother Sun and Sister Moon, especially "Praised be you my Lord, through our Sister, Mother Earth, who sustains and governs us, producing varied fruits with colored flowers and herbs," then we can be inspired to continue this work of our lifetimes, toward our ultimate salvation.

Order your 2020 Diocesan Directory!



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!

\$15.00 each



Court reexamines insurance coverage of contraceptives

WASHINGTON (CNS) – The justices of the U.S. Supreme Court seemed divided May 6 over Trump administration rules that give employers more ability to opt out of providing contraceptive coverage in their health plans.

The argument, part of a handful that will take place by teleconference during the coronavirus restrictions, took another look at an issue that has come before the court already and again, as in previous terms, it highlighted the Little Sisters of the Poor, the order of women religious who care for the elderly poor.

"There are very strong interests on both sides here, which is what makes the case difficult, obviously," Justice Brett Kavanaugh said in the May 6 arguments, which lasted 40 minutes longer than usual-allotted hour.

He said the interests include religious liberty for the Little Sisters of the Poor and others and ensuring women's access to health care and preventive services.

"So the question becomes: Who decides how to balance those interests?" he asked.

The Little Sisters of the Poor, who have been down this road before, were represented by Becket, a religious liberty law firm.

To recap their journey: In 2013, religious groups and houses of worship were granted a religious exemption by the Supreme Court from the government's mandate in the Affordable Care Act to include coverage of contraceptives in their employee health plan. Three years later, religious nonprofit groups challenged the requirement that they comply

with the mandate and the court sent the cases back to the lower courts with instructions for the federal government and the challengers to try to work out a solution agreeable to both sides.

Then in 2017, religious groups were given further protection from the contraceptive mandate through an executive order issued by President Donald Trump requiring the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services to write a comprehensive exemption to benefit religious ministries from the contraceptive mandate.

HHS provided this exemption in 2018, but several states challenged it, saying HHS didn't have the power to give this exemption.

Pennsylvania and New Jersey obtained a nationwide injunction against the rules protecting religious objectors from the contraceptive mandate; that injunction was then upheld by the 3rd U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals, based in Philadelphia.

This is where the Little Sisters come back because they appealed the circuit court's ruling and asked the Supreme Court to step in.

In one of the two consolidated cases, *Trump v. Pennsylvania*, the administration has argued that the exceptions to the contraceptive mandate for religious groups were authorized by the health care law and required by the 1993 Religious Freedom Restoration Act, known as RFRA.

Lawyers for Pennsylvania and New Jersey said the administration lacked statutory authority to issue such regulations and said the government did

not follow proper administrative procedures.

The second case examines whether the Little Sisters of the Poor had the standing to appeal the 3rd Circuit ruling since a separate court order had already allowed them to refuse to provide contraceptive coverage in their employee health plans.

In the May 6 oral arguments, Justices Ruth Bader Ginsburg and Sonia Sotomayor expressed concerns that if the Trump administration rules remained in place, many women would be left without access to contraceptives covered by insurance plans.

"You have just tossed entirely to the wind what Congress thought was essential," Ginsburg said, calling in from a hospital room in Baltimore, where she was recovering from gallbladder treatment.

She also said that in the area of religious freedom, "the major trend is not to give everything to one side and nothing to the other side. We have had a history of accommodation, of tolerance."

The U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops filed a friend-of-the-court brief siding with the Little Sisters of the Poor, which stressed that the court needs to set the record straight, particularly with its interpretation of RFRA, which says "governments should not substantially burden religious exercise without compelling justification."

The oral arguments were the combined cases of Little Sisters of the Poor Saints Peter and Paul Home v. Pennsylvania and *Trump v. Pennsylvania*. A decision is expected by late June.

CATHOLIC WORLD AT A GLANCE

In merger, Vatican creates Archdiocese of Ottawa-Cornwall

OTTAWA, Ontario (CNS) – The long-anticipated merger of Ontario's Ottawa and Alexandria-Cornwall dioceses has been officially approved by the Vatican and, as of May 6, the new Archdiocese of Ottawa-Cornwall is now officially recognized by the Catholic Church. Archbishop Terrence Prendergast maintains his leadership of the church in Ottawa and is now the first archbishop of the new Archdiocese of Ottawa-Cornwall. But in making the announcement on May 6, Pope Francis named his eventual successor. Pope Francis appointed Bishop Marcel Damphousse, 57, of Sault Ste. Marie as coadjutor archbishop of Ottawa-Cornwall. Robert Du Broy, Ottawa-Cornwall communications director, said that although no official date has been set, Archbishop Prendergast is expected to retire this year, and Archbishop Damphousse will succeed him. In a statement, Du Broy said the merger "will ensure more efficient management of the church's resources while respecting the bilingual nature of the region."

Some dioceses announce first steps to resuming Masses

WASHINGTON (CNS) – A handful of U.S. dioceses that have not celebrated Masses for roughly two months since the emergence of the coronavirus pandemic have now taken the first steps to reopening their parishes for Mass. One archdiocese announcing the resumption of Masses was the Archdiocese of Portland, Oregon. Even so, there are caveats: No more than 25 at any Mass, social distancing will still be in effect, and not every parish will be prepared to restart a Mass schedule effective May 9. Even so, Archbishop Alexander K. Sample of Portland called this "great news" in a video posted May 5 on Facebook and Twitter, asking Catholics to "have great understanding and patience at this time as we begin to transition to some level of normalcy in the life of our church." The dispensation from the obligation to attend Sunday Mass is still in effect. When the Archdiocese of Denver canceled public Masses March 13, "we did not foresee the suspension lasting as long as it has," said a May 7 letter from Archbishop Samuel J. Aquila and Auxiliary Bishop Jorge H. Rodriguez. Denver, too, is reopening Masses "in a limited and gradual way," they said, also May 9. "Extreme caution will be used, that strict physical distancing will be observed, and that pastors will consult the guidance issued by state and local health authorities. This, of course, will mean that access to the Masses celebrated over the next few months will be very limited," they added.

Jesuits mourn members' deaths at Ontario care home

TORONTO (CNS) – Canada's Jesuits are in mourning after five members of their community, including four priests, died of COVID-19 at the religious order's long-term care facility in Pickering, Ontario. Jesuit Fathers Michael Hawkins, 83, Peter Larisey, 91, Norman Dodge, 92, and Francis Xavier Johnson, 93, as well as layman George O'Neill, 77, died between April 29 and May 3 at Rene Goupil House, an infirmary near the Manresa Jesuit Spiritual Renewal Centre. All the deceased became infected while residing at the Jesuit community, where 16 of 22 residents and an unspecified number of staff tested positive for COVID-19. The facility has been in lockdown since March 9. Since there can be no Jesuit without a mission, all the men living at the infirmary in Pickering are assigned to pray for the Society of Jesus, and thereby to also pray for the church and the world.

Nuncio: Church wasn't prepared for pandemic

WASHINGTON (CNS) – Just like billions of people throughout the world, "the church was not prepared" for the coronavirus pandemic, said Archbishop Christophe Pierre, the Vatican nuncio to the United States, in a May 6 interview with Catholic News Service.

"We are also people in an organization" beyond just a religion with adherents, Archbishop Pierre said in the interview, which was conducted via Zoom. "The other day I was with an archbishop who was telling me, 'Today, we have 16,000 people to give salary to, people who work for the church, and we have a huge organization.'"

In response, "we have to innovate. We have to be creative," Archbishop Pierre said.

He warned, though, of another malady that could strike the church.

"We live in a drastically changing time," Archbishop Pierre said. "May I say, in our church at times we take for granted what we have until it disappears. The empty church will not just be covered with vines, the empty church is provoked by another virus: the loss of faith, the lack of transmission of faith in the family, in the schools, in the society. A lot of the young people who have not had any belonging to the church. They have not received the gift of faith. They have not been invited to follow Jesus."

The nuncio said he has heard from some "protesting" people that "the bishops have closed the churches, there is no access to the sacraments, and so forth." But "we suffer what they suffer. The spiritual dimension of the meaning, maybe, of God's presence in the world is

being rediscovered."

That is how he interpreted the May 1 reconsecration of the United States and Canada by their respective nations' bishops to Mary. Archbishop Pierre noted that bishops in Latin American countries have reconsecrated dioceses – and in some cases the entire nation – to Our Lady of Guadalupe, patroness of the Americas.

"It's an act of offering, knowing that God is there, taking charge of all of us. Our faith is not an idea. It's not just an ideology. There is nothing magical. It's a relationship with a person," he said.

"In our private devotions, we have constantly these practices of consecration to the Sacred Heart. You know there is a kind of culture ... when the new home is going up, you invite a priest just to bless your home, you put up an image of the Sacred Heart. These kinds of things," which he said help make people "aware that God is present."

Concern for those most at risk during the pandemic weighed on Archbishop Pierre's mind. "The church has to find ways and means. Actually, to be honest with you, since I've been in this country, I have seen how many works are done by organizations. They don't make noise about it, but Catholic Charities, CRS (Catholic Relief Services), and many others, there are many. Not just the big ones, (but) dioceses and so forth," he said.

"Another bishop was telling me a few days ago he was discovering how many were poor – and so we have to do something," Archbishop Pierre added. "I would give a lot of attention to the migrants. The migrants are

those now in a very difficult situation because of the precarity of their situation. Many of them are contracting the coronavirus and they are not being paid attention to."

He said: "The other day we had a kind of meeting through Zoom with a lot of actors in the church, Catholic Charities, people in charge of education, we were about 20 people sharing our experience. And I was amazed to see how people are acting, not just to foresee what will happen after that, but to be present. A bishop was telling me how many people are in need because they are poor. They are trying to organize a solidarity outreach to the poor."

This has filtered to the parish level as well, he said, having heard reports of "so many priests now, calling their parishioners all the time" and of "voluntarily, priests going to the hospital. ... We have to innovate, not to repeat the same things as before."

In his conversations with U.S. bishops, "first and foremost, they all suffer," Archbishop Pierre told CNS. "'Where are you, bishop?' 'At home.' But you know, on the other hand, I also feel they have this on their shoulders – the huge responsibility of animating a church" that has been paralyzed in a shutdown mode for close to two months.

"They are worried about the condition of the dioceses, they are worried

about what will happen financially. And I think it's important for the people also to share the responsibility of the bishops and their priests also. Because we know the resources of this side in defense of the people. It's also a good way to help the people feel more responsible for the future of their own church."

It has even touched Pope Francis. "For Francis, has had to readjust his practical life. He is like all bishops here," he said, restricted to staying inside.

"I know that Pope Francis is very anxious to exercise his mission and to announce the Good News and to evangelize to reach out to people," the nuncio said.

Even if speaking to an empty St. Peter's Square, he added, the pope is "advocating for the whole world. I know his words are reaching out all over the place. I said to myself, this is the situational life of a Jesuit. He shows the way to discern and he shows the way we have to behave in this time."

Likewise, Archbishop Pierre's bosses at the Vatican Secretariat of State have been on restriction, although Pope Francis has assigned Cardinal Peter Turkson to figure out a reopening plan for the Vatican. "The Holy Father would like to have a kind of analysis of what is happening today. We know what is happening, but

what should we be doing later. ... What will be the perspective of the church for the next few months?"

The nunciature in Washington is still operating, but Archbishop Pierre's own travels have been postponed. "We wait for the time when hopefully we will be able to do it as before, especially for me," he said adding that a current problem is a number of new bishops who have "not yet been ordained or installed. So we wait and see for the moment. We will have to take decisions. Many things have been postponed."

One event Archbishop Pierre had to miss was the May 6 installation of new Atlanta Archbishop Gregory J. Hartmayer. He did see, though, the new archbishop's homily from a vespers service the night before the ordination in which Archbishop Hartmayer asked his listeners what lessons they will take from "these weeks of physical separation. We do not know how much we have until we lose it."

"What if, thanks be to God, we are only separated the Eucharist and one other to be jarred into a different situation, a manifestation of the great and fragile gift to what we have been entrusted?" Archbishop Pierre asked aloud in a lament of continued U.S. church infighting, saying, "A house divided against itself will crumble."

North Country Catholic has Green option

Our E-paper is now easier to read online. You can receive your *North Country Catholic* in your e-mail rather than in the mail. Fill in your information and send this form to:

Please switch my current NCC subscription to E-mail

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

E-mail _____

PO Box 326

Ogdensburg,

NY 13669

OR call

Christine at

315-608-7556

to make the

change



SCRIPTURE REFLECTIONS

Readings, Gospel prepare us for Pentecost

Although Pentecost is still two weeks away, this Sunday could well be called "Introducing the Holy Spirit Sunday," since the Gospel is all about Jesus' promise to send another "paraclete," one who pleads our cause, when he returns to heaven.

The Gospel is part of Jesus' farewell address to his apostles at the Last Supper. There, he prepares them for his death, resurrection and ascension. He tells them they should be happy that He is leaving them, for now God the Father will send them an Advocate or Counselor. As Jesus Himself was the first "Paraclete," so God the Father



**Monsignor
Paul E.
Whitmore**

will now send the Spirit of Truth, who will complete their education, reminding them of all that He said while on earth, and giving them full understanding and skill to preach the Word with great power and wisdom. This Holy Spirit will make it possible for Jesus, along with God the Father, to come into their hearts and dwell there. In this way, Jesus will be present to them always. Further, this Holy Spirit will fill them with courage to witness to the Truth. He will console them with great joy and help them to live always in hope of their own resurrection.

The first reading from

May 17

Sixth Sunday of Easter

READINGS

Acts 8:5-8, 14-17

1 Peter 3:15-18

John 14:15-21

the Acts of the Apostles, tells a story that shows how the apostles, following Pentecost, were able to perform miracles and healings very similar to the ones Jesus Himself worked while yet with them. These signs gave such strong credibility to their preaching that crowds of people immediately believed in Jesus and were baptized. The story tells us that Philip the Deacon, filled with the Spirit, goes to Samaria and converts these traditional enemies into enthusiastic

believers. When the apostles heard this astounding news, they immediately sent Peter and John to lay hands on them, so they could receive the Holy Spirit. It was in Samaria that a certain magician named Simon, revered there as a god, was converted to Jesus. Unfortunately, he made a serious mistake of offering to "buy" Peter's power. Even today, we refer to that as the sin of simony. Peter excommunicated him on the spot but invited him to repent of this grave sin. We never do find out what happened to him.

The second reading today, from a letter attributed to St. Peter, gives the early Christians a rule of conduct as they set out on their mission of truth and service. "Always be pre-

pared to make a defense to anyone who asks you to account for the hope that is in you; yet do it with gentleness and reverence."

They should have no fear of their enemies but be prepared to pay the price of discipleship. If they unite their sufferings to those that Jesus endured, then their personal reward in heaven is assured.

This Thursday is Ascension Thursday and the beginning of our nine-day preparation for the coming of the Holy Spirit on Pentecost. We must pray to the Holy Spirit for federal and state governments to have His wisdom and guidance on when to lift bans on social distancing in this still uncertain time.

CALLED TO SERVE

Praying for our deacons

Pope Francis chose the Order of Deacon as his month of May prayer intention. The Pope's message was, "Deacons are not second-level priests. They are part of the clergy and live their vocation in and with their family. They are dedicated to the service of the poor, who carry within them the face of the suffering Christ.

They are the guardians of service in the Church. Let us pray that deacons, faithful in their service to the Word and the poor, may be an invigorating symbol for the entire Church.

Thank you, Holy Father. As a priest friend of mine likes to say, "we can use all the prayers we can get!"

Bishop Stanislaus Brzana introduced the Permanent Diaconate to the Diocese of Ogdensburg in 1977. He asked Father Don Manfred, who became Pastor in North Lawrence that year, to organize a formation program. With faculty from Wadhams Hall, they put together a formation program that included academics, spirituality,

liturgical and ministerial practices. A total of 22 men were invited to that first formation class out of 50 applicants. On the feast of St. Francis in 1980, 14 of them were ordained. Deacons Oberst, Trombly, Hinerth and DeFayette are still with us from that group.

The formation program has been tweaked since those first days, but it essentially covers the same material.

All Catholic clergy are ordained to the order of deacon. Some continue to the priesthood; they are called "transitional deacons." More than 125 men

have been ordained as permanent deacons in our diocese since 1980. These men feel called to the ministry of deacon, not priesthood, and so are called permanent. Today, we have 86 permanent deacons in the diocese, roughly 75% of them remain in active or semi-active ministry. Most of us are married, have children, and worked outside the church in the public or private sector.

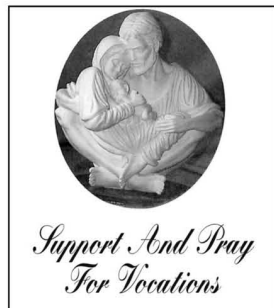
There are three men who will be ordained this summer, two as transitional deacons and one as a permanent deacon. Fourteen men are in formation working toward a

fall 2021 ordination as permanent deacons.

All are faithful to the Word, worship and service.

Father Bill Muench said it well in his column in this paper last week: "Permanent deacons today are an integral part of parish life. Parishioners are well aware of the tremendous contributions deacons make to the parishes of our diocese." Pray for the deacons in your parish and to all men who have heard God's call to the Order of Deacon.

Deacon Kevin Mastellon ministers in Watertown. He is the Director of Permanent Deacons for the Diocese of Ogdensburg.





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

The Society for the Propagation of the Faith

Sr. Mary Ellen Brett, SSSJ, Director

622 Washington St., Ogdensburg, NY 13669

(315) 393-2920; fax 1-866-314-7296

mbrett@rcdony.org

Good News travels fast

By Father Dan Chapin, MM

One Saturday afternoon, I was on my way to preside at a wedding at the Chapel of the Exaltation, one of the two chapels of the Parish of Our Lady of La Salette in Cochabamba, Bolivia; I have been assisting at the parish since October of 2016. This parish is the only one in Bolivia that belongs to the La Salette community; its international headquarters are in the French Alps; this missionary congregation is present in many countries, including in the United States.

As mentioned, I was on my way to this wedding. I hailed a taxi; there are many here in this city of some 700,000 and like many vehicles, it was an older model; I'll explain the reason for this in another article. As I entered the taxi, I immediately detected the aroma of coca leaves; this also is quite common. Right away, the driver asked me where was I from and how long had I been in the city; when I informed him who I was and what I was doing, it led to a discussion on religion, as it frequently does. The driver related that he was not a member of any church; apparently, he was not baptized, as he told me he had no godparents; for him it was "God and I," "Jesus and I." He was scandalized by the divisions in Christianity. He emphasized the church as being referred to as female and the different denominations represented different women; I think he was referring to the various parishes and churches being named after female saints.

Then he changed the subject. He asked me if I liked singing, and I indicated that I did indeed and that I had been singing since I was a boy. Didn't he start singing! He was in good voice and sang a number of hymns based on the Gospels and other New Testament texts: he sang of Jesus, of a new heaven and a new earth, of the beauty of God's works, of how being calm will get you far in life. I must admit I was worried about his somewhat distracted driving as he wound his way through city traffic. He said he also played guitar and I was relieved that he hadn't brought it along with him that day! He shared that he didn't play or sing in public, just by himself.

I guess I was his public that day; I was his captive audience, but I loved his singing and was inspired by it; even more so, I was moved by the fact that he would so generously and spontaneously share this God-given talent with a perfect stranger. He was evangelizing me. Evangelization is a two-way street; it takes many forms; and listening – really listening – to one who shares faith, like this taxi driver, is one of the many ways the Good News is transmitted.

Private funeral held for Sister Mary Patrick Murphy

Sister Mary Patrick Murphy died on May 4, 2020, at the Sisters of St. Joseph Motherhouse at the age of 86.

She was born on January 6, 1934, in Potsdam, the daughter of Paul Francis and Mildred Butler Murphy.

A graduate of Canton High School, Sister Mary Patrick entered the Sisters of St. Joseph on September 8, 1957. She received the habit on June 24, 1958, and made Final Profession on August 28, 1963. She received her Bachelor's Degree and Masters Degree with a concentration in French from the New York State University of Potsdam. She also did Post-Graduate work in Education Administration and Supervision from St. Lawrence University, Canton and SUNY Plattsburgh.

Sister Mary Patrick taught at Holy Name School, AuSable Forks, Augustinian Academy, Carthage and Immaculate Heart Central, Watertown. She was principal of Augustinian High School, Carthage and Vice-Principal of Immaculate Heart

Central, Watertown. She taught French at the high schools and at Mater Dei College, Ogdensburg. She was on the Diocesan Committee for Vocations and was the Sisters of St. Joseph Vocation Director. In 1980, Sister Mary Patrick was appointed Vice-President of Mater Dei College until she became secretary to the Diocesan Marriage Tribunal in 1990. In 2010, Sister Mary Patrick retired and lived at the Sisters of St. Joseph Motherhouse, Watertown. Sister Mary Patrick celebrated 60 years of religious life in 2018.

Sister Mary Patrick served on many committees throughout her ministry in the Diocese of Ogdensburg. She served on the Diocesan Pastoral Council as secretary (1989-2009); Diocesan Council of Religious as its Treasurer and Vice-President (1995-2008); Mater Dei College Board of Trustees from 1992-1998; Mater Dei Foundation (2002-2011) and President of the Foundation from (2002-2005); Bishop's Fund Committee (1981-1990 and 2003-

2006). She also served on the Board of Directors of the Ogdensburg Community Players (1987-1988), the Tri-County Arts Council (1987-1990) and the Hospice of St. Lawrence Valley (1992-1995).

Sister Mary Patrick loved to read the daily newspaper, to listen to music, travel, especially to Ireland, and spend time with friends.

Sister Mary Patrick is survived by her brother, Robert, of Holland Patent, NY. She is also survived by nieces and nephews.

Besides her parents, she is predeceased by her brother, Francis.

Funeral arrangements are with Cummings Funeral Service, Inc.

Due to the Corona virus, there will be no waking hours at the Sisters of St. Joseph Motherhouse.

The funeral liturgy will be held privately at the Motherhouse Chapel.

Contributions may be made to the Sisters of St. Joseph, 1425 Washington St., Watertown, NY 13601. Online condolences to her family may be posted at www.cummingsfuneral.com.

OBITUARIES

Black River – Rita M. (Horn) Cesario, 85; Private Funeral Services to be held May 8, 2020 at the Bruce Funeral Home; burial in Black River Cemetery.

Carthage – Harry F. Becker, 87; Private Mass of Christian Burial to be held at St. James Church; burial in St. James Cemetery.

Clayton – Hans C. Wahl, 56; Funeral Services to be held at a later date; burial in Sand Bay Cemetery, Cape Vincent.

Keeseville – Marion M. LaChance, 97;

Memorial Services to be held Sept. 5, 2020 at St. John the Baptist Church; burial in Evergreen Cemetery.

Massena – Catherine Ann "Kay" (Scott) Boyer, 86; Funeral Services to be held at a later date at the Donaldson Funeral home; burial in St. Mary's Cemetery, Canton.

Massena – Elizabeth "Betty" (Ezrow) Haley, 86; Memorial Mass to be held at a later date; burial in Calvary Cemetery.

Massena – Judy Ann Farnsworth, 59;

Private Funeral Services to be held.

Plattsburgh – Diana M. (Filancia) John, 92; Celebration of life and burial to be held at a later date at St. Mary's Cemetery, Port Chester.

Potsdam – Anna K. (Russell) Hewlett, 86; Mass of Christian Burial to be held at a later date at St. Mary's Church; burial in St. Mary's Cemetery.

Watertown – Beverly J. (Tarzia) Lamica, 81; Funeral Services and burial to be held at a later date.

MAKING SENSE OF BIOETHICS

Accelerating vaccine development

Creating a new vaccine and bringing it to market typically requires more than a decade of research and clinical testing. Many companies and research groups are working overtime to shorten this timeline dramatically in the wake of the Covid-19 pandemic.

Some have suggested it may be possible to develop a vaccine within a year or two, but such a feat would be a first, especially considering that no vaccine for any type of coronavirus has ever been successfully developed.

The former director at the Food and Drug Administration's Office of Biotechnology put it this way: "Scientists have tried unsuccessfully for decades to develop a vaccine to prevent HIV/AIDS and a 'universal' flu vaccine that wouldn't need to be reformulated and readministered every year. All have been duds."

Another specialist in the field of infectious diseases, when asked about the prospects of a quick Covid-19 vaccine, demurred, saying it would require a "home run" and "nearly everything to go right."

Some vaccines end up taking so long to develop that the original threat disappears by the time they become available, as

happened, for example, with the Ebola vaccine after the original viral outbreak in Africa.

Nevertheless, scores of laboratories are now urgently working to develop a Covid-19 vaccine. Their haste in trying not only to save lives, but also to beat their competitors, raises the concern that biomedical researchers may succumb to temptations to cut corners ethically in the research and development phases of their work.

One concern involves safety testing. The bar for safety has always been very high for vaccines that are to be administered to healthy people, and typically tens of thousands of people need to be systematically tested before a new vaccine receives approval and becomes widely available. The first rotavirus vaccine (RotaTeq) was tested on 72,000 healthy infants, while the newest shingles vaccine (Shingrix) underwent safety testing on about 29,000 people. And those tests were done only after extensive testing on animals had been completed.

Such large-scale testing is a formidable and meticulous task requiring a

good deal of time and expense so that the purported treatment doesn't unintentionally harm those it intends to help. In terms of Covid-19, the concerns about safety are even greater, since some developers are looking at novel and largely unproven technologies, like mRNA vaccines and DNA vaccines, raising further safety questions that may require additional time to sort through during the phase of clinical trials.

Another concern involves the proposal to shorten the timeline by soliciting young, uninfected volunteers who would be intentionally infected with the virus after having been given either the potential vaccine or a placebo. This "challenge trial" approach would enable researchers to assess the effectiveness of a proposed vaccine more rapidly than a traditional clinical trial, which would require waiting for some of the participants to become infected in the course of ordinary life.

Experts who favor this approach say that they have already heard from many people willing to volunteer. Carrying out a challenge trial for a virus

with no known cure clearly involves risk. There is no way to predict what kind of reaction a volunteer may have from either the virus or the proposed vaccine; even the young and healthy could end up hospitalized or dying.

While it is not intrinsically unethical to take actions with a degree of risk for the good of the community, provided that it comes with the patients' full and informed consent, questions about whether it would be prudent to do so need to be carefully addressed. Given the significant competitive pressures arising from many dozens of companies and research teams trying to get to the finish line first, big pharma needs to remain vigilant about over-stepping the boundaries of reasonable risk.

A final concern in attempting to speed up vaccine development involves the use of human cell lines derived from abortions. A variety of cell lines are available for Covid-19 research and vaccine development, some originating from hamsters, mice or other mammals, some from insects, and some from humans. The cell lines from humans may come from acceptable sources, like

human skin, or from problematic sources, like direct abortions. Regrettably, several of the Covid-19 vaccine candidates that are being developed today have relied on cell lines that were harvested from aborted fetuses. Scientists have a duty to avoid the use of such unethically derived cell lines and should instead select available alternatives as they ramp up their research programs.

Vaccines, of course, are real "game changers" in public health. As a society, we must continue to insist that vaccine development and production be held to the highest ethical standards. This is especially true during the accelerated push arising from the present pandemic, lest we foster practices meant to save lives by risking the lives of other vulnerable human beings.

Rev. Tadeusz Pacholczyk, Ph.D. earned his doctorate in neuroscience from Yale and did post-doctoral work at Harvard. He is a priest of the diocese of Fall River, MA, and serves as the Director of Education at The National Catholic Bioethics Center in Philadelphia. See www.ncbcenter.org



Father Tadeusz Pacholczyk Ph.D.



Enjoy the renewal of spring with a subscription to the *North Country Catholic*, the newspaper for the Diocese of Ogdensburg.

Send payment to: **North Country Catholic,**
PO Box 106, Canajoharie, NY 13317

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Parish _____

Inside Diocese \$27

Outside Diocese \$30
Patron Donation

\$35 \$50

\$100 \$250

BUYING USED SINGLE WIDE AND DOUBLE WIDE MANUFACTURED HOMES

CALL JERRY @
518-569-0890