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The Diocese of Ogdensburg Volume 75, Number 6

NORTH COUNTRY CATHOLIC

MAY 27, 2020

Bishop announces assignment changes

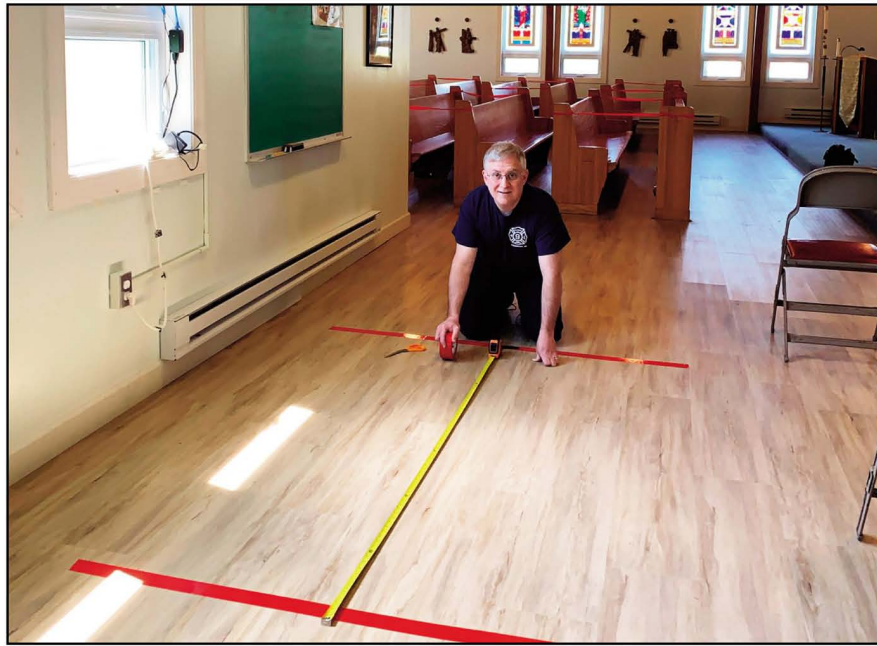
On Tuesday, May 19, 2020, Bishop Terry R. LaValley met with the Priest Personnel Board and approved changes to assignments.

The new assignments will take effect on Wednesday, July 8. Please pray for the individuals and parishes involved, especially during this pandemic.

In addition to several moves for pastors and parochial vicars, the new assignments include one retirement and the implementation of a parish linkage as planned in the Living Stones plan.

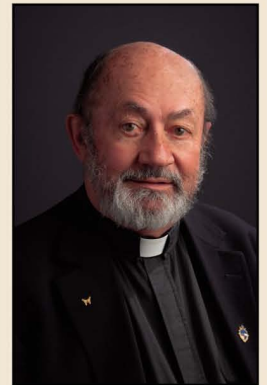
FULL STORY, PAGE 3

SAFE DISTANCE



Father Christopher C. Carrara measures social distancing lines as work continues to prepare churches to re-open for worship. Each parish is asked to develop a safe reopening plan which will be approved by Bishop Terry R. LaValley before the parish can offer public worship.

CELEBRATING JUBILEES



Father Francis J. Flynn is one of three priests of the diocese who celebrates a 50th Jubilee this year. Also celebrating 50 years of priesthood are Msgr. Robert H. Aucoin and Msgr. Dennis J. Duprey. Father Donald A. Robinson celebrates 40 years.

FULL STORY, PAGES 5 & 6

Pope: Preference for the poor is nonnegotiable

VATICAN CITY (CNS) – A missionary or church reality that is truly inspired by the Holy Spirit "manifests predilection for the poor and vulnerable as a sign and reflection of the Lord's own preference for them," Pope Francis told the pontifical mission societies.

In a message May 21, the pope said that those involved with the church's missionary activity "should never justify their lack of concern for the poor with the excuse, widely used in particular ecclesiastical cir-

cles, of having to concentrate their energies on certain priorities for the mission."

"For the church, a preference for the poor is not optional," he said.

The mission societies, which are under the Congregation for the Evangelization of Peoples, include the Society for the Propagation of the Faith, the Missionary Childhood Association, the Society of St. Peter Apostle and the Missionary Union of Priests and Religious.

The societies help poor churches and communities around the world and support more than 9,000 health clinics, 10,000 orphanages, 1,200 schools, 80,000 seminarians and 9,000 religious sisters and brothers in more than 1,150 mission dioceses – mostly in Africa and Asia.

Due to the coronavirus pandemic, the societies' annual general assembly was canceled, prompting the pope to send them the message "in order to share what I had intended to say

to you personally."

Reflecting on the celebration of the feast of the Ascension, the pope said that it was that event, followed by the coming of the Spirit on Pentecost, that defines the church's mission, which "is the work of the Holy Spirit and not the consequence of our ideas and projects."

"This is the feature that makes missionary activity bear fruit and preserves it from the presumption of self-sufficiency, much less the temptation to comman-

dear Christ's flesh, ascended to heaven, for narrowly 'clerical' projects and aims," he said.

Recalling his apostolic exhortation "Evangelii Gaudium" ("The Joy of the Gospel"), the pope said he wished to reiterate several "features of mission" that center on faith as a gift from God and not a result of proselytism.

"If one follows Jesus, happy to be attracted by him, others will take notice," the pope said. "They may even be astonished."

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EDITOR'S NOTE

I fell down the YouTube rabbit hole

I fell down the YouTube rabbit hole, as they say.

I've been watching far too much YouTube during this pandemic. For some strange reason, YouTube recently started suggesting mountain biking videos for me. I love street cycling, and I love adventures, so I started watching videos of brave individuals hurling themselves down mountains, jumping rocks, making sharp turns on rocky terrain and navigating narrow dirt trails.

I stumbled upon a channel of a rather mediocre rider. His

videos include content of him riding with professional mountain bike racers (apparently that's a thing) to show how well the professionals ride relative to him and to get tips from them.



**Darcy L.
Fargo**

I recently watched a video by that content creator in which he rode with a female professional mountain biker. She evaluated his skills. When it came time to offer the YouTube tips to improve, she had only

one tip, and it didn't involve how he shifted his weight, went into turns or approached a jump. She noted that he let

his fear hold him back from "sending it," as the bikers say, and truly committing to going fast and jumping high. She advised him to sing a song or focus on his breathing as he approached sections of a trail that he would typically plan for extensively in his head and trust his body and abilities.

The YouTuber took her advice. He made the next lap down the trail singing out loud. And he sent it. He flew through sections of the trail that had previously slowed him down significantly. He got out of his head and out of his own way. He stopped overthinking and started trusting.

I thought about how often I

get in my own way. How often I let fear or "what ifs" or my dwelling on my failures stop me from trusting the Lord and following His calling in my life, how I sometimes overthink and talk myself out of doing something I know I'm called to do.

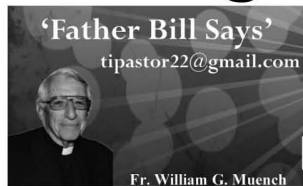
Following the Lord isn't easy. We're often called to do challenging things, things that seem outside our areas of expertise and comfort levels. But if we trust the Lord to equip us to serve in the ways He calls us to do so, we, too, can accomplish things that seem impossible.

At least when we're not falling down the YouTube rabbit hole.

Celebrating the Holy Spirit

It is called the Birthday of the Church. I am referring to the Feast of Pentecost, celebrating the descent of the Holy Spirit on the apostles. On Pentecost, the Church celebrates the Holy Spirit – a most important Feast Day of the Catholic Church's Liturgical year. However, every day of the year is a celebration of the Holy Spirit. We believe that the Holy Spirit is always active in the lives of the People of God, in our Church, bringing peace and guidance to our Holy Father, Pope Francis, and to the bishops of our Church. The Holy Spirit is also involved in the lives of us all, people of faith, the people of our Catholic Church – of all the Baptized.

I am certain that you have heard and learned a great deal about the theology of the Holy Spirit. Do you remember your Confirmation Class? So, I'm going to remember and study again the things we learned about the Holy Spirit as we prepare for Pentecost Sunday. For my part today, I would like to share with you my personal



experiences with the Holy Spirit.

I believe that the Holy Spirit came into my life with real force through the sacrament of confirmation. I say that because I know that in those years after confirmation, I had to make many important decisions, especially concerning my vocation in life. I now have great faith and confidence in the Holy Spirit. In those days, it was a question of surprises. So many very surprising things came along, including teachers who helped me and friends who were part of my life. I remember well a friend who had a yellow Jeep, a post war Jeep. He never expressed an interest in a religious vocation but certainly supported me. I can remember we often headed to school early so we could at-

tend morning Mass, especially during Lent.

Through my seminary years, the Holy Spirit became a rather close friend. Then there were many times for firm decisions leading to ordination. Each ordination was preceded by a retreat, a time for moments of decision and planning for the future. These were time of praying to the Holy Spirit and times for listening to the Holy Spirit. There were many advisors and powerful preachers, however, I am certain that the Holy Spirit had my attention.

During the ceremony of ordination, the new priest is asked to promise obedience to his Bishop. For me, the bishop of Ogdensburg. The heart of that promise was a readiness to accept the assignments I would receive from my bishop. I had no doubt that the Holy Spirit was right there leading and guiding me.

I believe that the Holy Spirit found for me the many happy assignments that have been part of my life as

a priest. I have been truly blessed. Not only did the Holy Spirit find good assignments for me, but the Holy Spirit also constantly helped me with one decision after another as a priest and a pastor.

I would like to add quickly that the Holy Spirit is not just about religious vocations. As people of faith, we are called to realize that God, through the power of the Holy Spirit, touches the lives of all of us as we work out our vocation. We believe that we are all called and guided by the Holy Spirit. Some will be called to a religious vocation – as a priest, or a religious sister, or to a dedicated single life. Others may be called to the married state that may include being a parent.

I believe that the Holy Spirit becomes part of our dedication as a Baptized and Confirmed Catholic, leading us and guiding us and showing us the way, giving each of us the power and the confidence to follow the call of the Holy Spirit.

Bishop announces assignment changes

On Tuesday, May 19, 2020, Bishop LaValley met with the Priest Personnel Board and approved changes to assignments. Below please find the new assignments which will take effect on Wednesday, July 8. Please pray for the individuals and parishes involved, especially during this time of pandemic.

- Father Howard J. Venette, pastor of St. Mary's in Ticonderoga and Our Lady of Lourdes in Schroon Lake, will become pastor of the parish configuration of St. Elizabeth's in Elizabethtown, St. Philip Neri in Westport and The Catholic Community of St. Philip of Jesus and St. Joseph in Willsboro.

- Father Christopher J. Looby, pastor of St. Anthony's and St. Patrick's in Watertown will become pastor of St. Mary's in Ticonderoga and Our Lady of Lourdes in Schroon Lake.

- Father John M. "Mickey" Demo, pastor of Holy Family in Watertown will also become pastor of St. Anthony's and St. Patrick's in Watertown. The new configuration was anticipated in the Living Stone Planning Process for Watertown. Fathers Deepak Baru, HGN and Herman Pongantung, MSC will become Parochial Vicars of the new configuration.

- Father Alan D. Shnob, pastor of St. Augustine's in Peru begins retirement.

- Msgr. Dennis J. Duprey, V.F., special parochial vicar for St. Peter's, St. John the Baptist and Our Lady of Victory churches in Plattsburgh, as well as St. John XXIII Newman Center, will become pastoral administrator of St. Augustine's in Peru.

- Reverend Tojo Chacko,



Father Howard J. Venette

HGN, parochial vicar at St. Peter's in Massena, will become parochial vicar in St. Peter's, St. John the Baptist and Our Lady of Victory churches in Plattsburgh, as well as St. John XXIII Newman Center.

- Deacon Severinus Torwoe, deacon assistant at St. Mary's in Ticonderoga, and Our Lady of Lourdes in Schroon Lake, will become deacon assistant at St. Peter's Parish, Massena until his ordination to the priesthood. Upon priestly ordination he will become parochial vicar at St. Peter's in Massena.

- Deacon Jude Nnadibuagha, deacon assistant at St. Peter's Church in Lowville, St. Mary's Church in Glenfield, and St. Hedwig's Church in Houseville, will upon priestly ordination remain in place as parochial vicar.

FATHER VENETTE

Prior to his current assignment as pastor of St. Mary's in Ticonderoga and Our Lady of Lourdes in Schroon Lake, a position he was appointed to effective Jan. 23, 2019, Father Howard J. Venette was pastor of St. Bartholomew's Church in Old Forge and St. Anthony of Padua Parish of Inlet and Raquette Lake, pastor of St. Mary's in Potsdam and St.



Father Christopher J. Looby

Patrick's in Colton, pastor at St. Francis Solanus Church in Harrisville. He also served as administrator of the Catholic Community of Constable, Westville and Trout River, and at St. Mary's in Brushton; and as parochial vicar at Sacred Heart in Massena, St. Mary's in Potsdam, St. John's in Plattsburgh, Notre Dame in Malone, and Our Lady of Victory in Plattsburgh.

Father Venette was born Jan. 14, 1958 in Chateaugay and began his studies for the priesthood at Wadhams Hall. He continued his education at the North American College at Rome and was ordained July 21, 1984 by Bishop Brzana at St. Patrick's in Chateaugay.

In 1994, he was named associate director of the deacon formation program. He later served the diocese as director of the permanent deacon formation program from 1995 to 2001.

Father Venette left the diocese to join the Fraternity of St. Peter, a traditional Latin Rite Society in communion with Rome in June of 2004. In June 2009, he was excardinated from the Diocese of Ogdensburg and incardinated into the Society.

Father Venette returned to Ogdensburg in July of



Father John M. 'Mickey' Demo

2012 and served as temporary administrator in Waddington and Madrid before becoming administrator of the Catholic Community of Constable, Westville and Trout River.

His incardination back into the Diocese of Ogdensburg was effective May 1, 2013.

FATHER LOOBY

Prior to his current position in Watertown, Father Christopher J. Looby was pastor in Evans Mills, after first serving as administrator for the parish, as well as its missions in Theresa and Philadelphia.

Born July 26, 1970, he grew up in Harrisville and studied for the priesthood at Wadhams Hall and St. Mary's Seminary in Baltimore.

Father Looby was ordained May 12, 2001, by Bishop Gerald M. Barbarito.

The priest has served as parochial vicar at St. Peter's in Plattsburgh, Holy Family, Watertown, and St. Peter's, Lowville.

In June 2009, he was named administrator in Brushton and North Bangor and, one year later, pastor of those parishes until his 2015 appointment in Evans Mills, Theresa and Philadelphia.

Father Demo
Father John M. "Mickey"



Father Alan D. Shnob

Demo has been serving in Watertown since June 26, 2019, when he was appointed pastor at Holy Family Church.

FATHER DEMO

Before arriving in Watertown in June 2019, Father John M. "Mickey" Demo was pastor in Dannemora and Redford for six years, and he served as administrator in Willsboro and Essex prior to that assignment.

He has previously served as pastor in St. Ann's in St. Regis Falls and Church of the Holy Cross in Hopkinton; parochial vicar at St. Bernard's in Saranac Lake, Holy Family in Watertown, St. Mary's Cathedral in Ogdensburg and Notre Dame in Ogdensburg, and St. James Minor in Carthage; and administrator in St. Patrick's in Chateaugay and St. George's Church in Burke.

A native of Brasher Falls, he was born March 7, 1961. He graduated from LeMoyné College in Syracuse before beginning studies for the priesthood at Wadhams Hall and St. John's Seminary in Brighton, Mass. Father Demo was ordained Sept. 24, 1988 by Bishop Stanislaus J. Brzana.

After ordination, Father Demo continued his edu-

Assignments

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 3

cation, studying philosophy at Catholic University from 1995 to 1996.

FATHER SHNOB

Father Alan D. Shnob has served as pastor of St. Augustine's Church in Peru since 2005. He had served previously at St. Mary's in Massena for 10 years.

He is 70 years old.

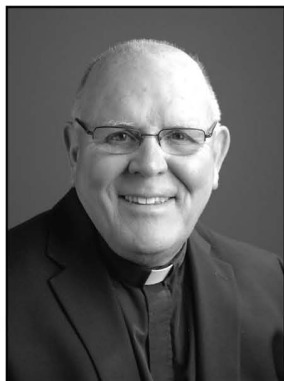
A native of Mooers Forks, Father Shnob studied for the priesthood at Wadhams Hall and Christ the King seminaries before his ordination May 6, 1978, by Bishop Brzana.

Father Shnob's first assignment was as assistant pastor at Notre Dame in Ogdensburg. In 1981, he was named bishop's secretary and associate chancellor.

One year later he was named associate pastor of St. Joseph's in Malone.

He served for two months in 1983 as administrator in Chazy before being released to serve outside the diocese at St. Columban's Parish in Cornwall, Ontario.

Upon his return to the diocese in 1986, Father Shnob was named parochial vicar in Peru and pastor in West Chazy



Msgr. Dennis J. Duprey

before being named pastor in Ticonderoga in 1991. Two years later he was given added responsibility as pastor in Crown Point until his 1995 appointment in Massena.

MSGR. DUPREY

Msgr. Dennis J. Duprey, became pastor at St. Peter's in Plattsburgh in 2010. Prior to that assignment, he served as pastor in Malone, first at Notre Dame Church and then for the Malone Catholic Parishes, now St. André Bessette Parish, in 2003.

A native of Mooers Forks, Msgr. Duprey was born March 19, 1945.

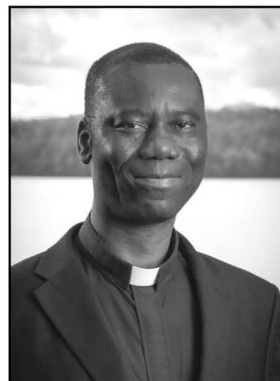
He studied for the priesthood at Wadhams Hall Seminary, St.



Father Tojo Chacko

Bernard's Seminary in Rochester and the University of Louvain in Belgium. He was ordained at Louvain June 27, 1970, by Archbishop Ignio Cardinale, papal nuncio to Belgium.

Msgr. Duprey's first assignment was as assistant pastor at Notre Dame in Malone. In 1974, he was named associate diocesan director of the Religious Education Department and assistant pastor at Notre Dame in Ogdensburg. Five years later, he was appointed director of religious education, a position he held until 1986 the year he became director of Priest Personnel, a position he held until



Deacon Severinus Torwoe

1997. He has also served as Co-Vicar for Religious of Diocese from 1994 to 2004.

Msgr. Duprey also served as a prison chaplain from 1983 to 2003 first at Ogdensburg Correction Facility, and also at Upstate Correctional Facility in Malone. Through the years, he has been an advocate for criminal justice issues of the state and local level, as well as a member of the New York State Catholic Conference Public Policy Committee on Criminal Justice Issues.

From 1992 to 1994, Msgr. Duprey was administrator in Hammond and Rossie.

He also served as Dean of the Franklin Deanery.

FATHER TOJO CHACKO, HGN

Father Tojo Chacko, a priest from the Herald of the Good News (HGN) Mother Theresa Province, India, has served as a parochial vicar in Massena since 2010, first appointed to Sacred Heart and St. Lawrence churches, now with St. Peter's Parish.

Father Tojo, now age 35, was born in Changanassery, Kottayam, Kerala, India. He made his first profession with the Heralds of the Good News on Aug. 6, 2005. He made his final profession on



Deacon Jude Nnadibuagha

July 6, 2008 and was ordained to the priesthood on Jan. 2, 2009.

DEACON SEVERINUS TORWOE

Deacon Severinus Torwoe was ordained a deacon in October 2019 by Bishop Terry R. LaValley.

Born in Hlefi, Ghana, Deacon Torwoe received a bachelor's degree in education at University of Cape Coast, Ghana, in 2008. He then studied philosophy and theology at Holy Apostles College and Seminary in Cromwell, Connecticut, where he obtained a master's degree in theology in 2017.

In 2018, he received a post masters certificate in the theology from Holy Apostles.

DEACON JUDE NNADIBUAGHA

Deacon Jude Nnadibuagha was ordained a deacon in October 2019.

Born in Ideato North Local Government Area, Imo State, Nigeria, he is 36 years old.

Deacon Nnadibuagha obtained a bachelor's degree in philosophy from Dominican Institute of Philosophy and Theology in Samonda Ibadan, Nigeria in 2013 and a bachelor's degree in theology from Collegio Pontificio Teologico Internazionale in Rome, Italy in 2017.



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Three priests hit 50th jubilee milestone

By Darcy Fargo
Editor

Three priests of the diocese are celebrating their 50th jubilees this year, Msgr. Robert H. Aucoin, Msgr. Dennis J. Duprey and Father Francis J. Flynn.

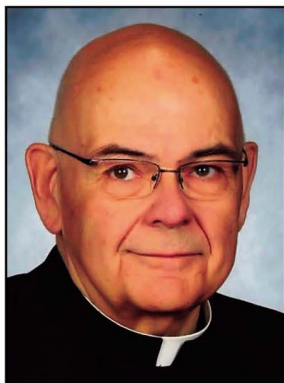
Msgr. Aucoin

A Massachusetts native, Msgr. Aucoin, now age 76, studied for the priesthood at St. Joseph's Apostolic School in Watertown with the Missionaries of the Sacred Heart. He completed his novitiate with the religious order in Canada and attended Laval University in Canada and Gregorian University in Rome.

He was ordained March 14, 1970 as a Missionary of the Sacred Heart in Rome. In 1973, he was incardinated as a priest of the Diocese of Ogdensburg. He later earned a master's degree in education from Ottawa University and has completed Ph. D. course work in theology at St. Paul University, Ottawa. He also holds a New York State Permanent Certificate in School Administration and in School District Administration, as well as one in guidance and teaching.

Msgr. Aucoin's first pastoral assignment was as parochial vicar at Our Lady of the Sacred Heart Church in Watertown and as a teacher at Immaculate Heart Central School in Watertown. In 1975, he was appointed director of the Family Life Department and, in 1977, principal of IHC. He has also been a chaplain at Fort Drum, pastor in Evans Mills, administrator in Lake Placid and pastor of St. Patrick's Church in Watertown.

Msgr. Aucoin served as president of Mater Dei College from 1986 to



Msgr. Robert H. Aucoin

1988 until his assignment at St. Patrick's, Watertown. In 1991, he moved back to Ogdensburg to serve as rector of St. Mary's Cathedral and chancellor of the diocese. In the following year, he was named a monsignor and also served the diocese as Episcopal Vicar for Diocesan Services.

In 1994, Msgr. Aucoin was named pastor in Madrid and, two years later, was named rector-president of Wadhams Hall Seminary-College, a position he held until the seminary closed in 2002.

That year he was named Episcopal Vicar for Education, now Episcopal Vicar for Education and the New Evangelization, and also served as director of the permanent deacon formation program from 2001 to 2013.

During 2003, he served as administrator of Norwood. From October of 2003 until June 2006, he was pastor in Alexandria Bay and Redwood. He then served as principal at Seton Catholic. He became pastor in Potsdam and Colton in 2010.

He served at St. Anthony's and St. Patrick's in Watertown from 2015 to 2018 before becoming pastor of St. Mary's Church in Evans Mills, St.



Msgr. Dennis J. Duprey

Paul's in Black River and St. Rita's in Deferiet with missions of St. Theresa of Avila in Theresa and St. Joseph's Church in Philadelphia in 2018.

In August 2019, he became pastor of St. Mary's Church in Waddington and St. John the Baptist Church in Madrid. He remains Episcopal Vicar for Education and the New Evangelization.

Msgr. Aucoin said he's been blessed to spend a significant portion of his priesthood in education.

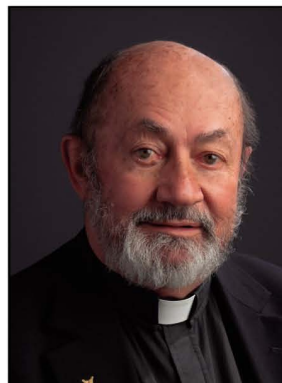
"In my years in the schools, I've been able to see people continue to practice their faith and continue to achieve all they could achieve," he said. "That's been a blessing."

He noted, though, that he's seen changes in how parents approach their children's education.

"Parents today expect that the schools will be perfect and provide everything for their children that they don't provide," he said. "That's a change."

Msgr. Aucoin said his parish assignments have also been a blessing to him.

"I've had many assignments as a priest," he said. "I've enjoyed every one, and every one has been different. That's been a



Father Francis J. Flynn

blessing. I've had to adapt to each community and situation."

He noted that serving people in some of their hardest moments has created lasting memories for him.

"Just about every funeral I've done has created a memory of some kind," he said. "We're dealing with people at vulnerable

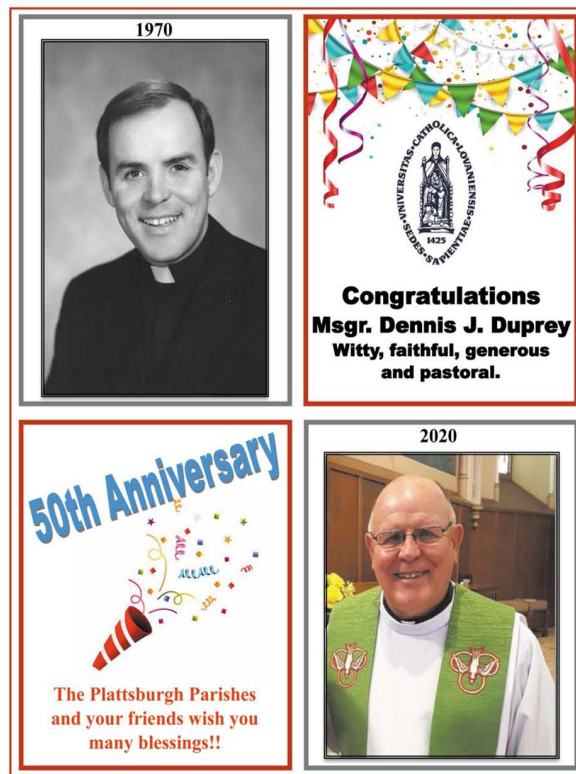
parts of their lives. It's helping the living and learning more about the faith life of the deceased."

Msgr. Duprey

Msgr. Dennis J. Duprey, 75, studied for the priesthood at Wadhams Hall Seminary, St. Bernard's Seminary in Rochester and the University of Louvain in Belgium. He was ordained at Louvain June 27, 1970, by Archbishop Ignio Cardinale, papal nuncio to Belgium.

Msgr. Duprey's first assignment was as assistant pastor at Notre Dame in Malone. In 1974, he was named associate diocesan director of the Religious Education Department and assistant pastor at Notre Dame in Ogdensburg. Five years later, he was appointed director of religious education, a position he held until 1986,

CONTINUED ON PAGE 6



Celebrating 50 years

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 5

the year he became director of Priest Personnel, a position he held until 1997. He has also served as Co-Vicar for Religious of Diocese from 1994 to 2004.

Msgr. Duprey also served as a prison chaplain from 1983 to 2003 first at the Ogdensburg Correction Facility, and at the Upstate Correctional Facility in Malone. Through the years, he has been an advocate for criminal justice issues of the state and local level, as well as a member of the New York State Catholic Conference Public Policy Committee on Criminal Justice Issues.

Msgr. Duprey noted that this ministry has been one of the most impactful of his time as a priest.

"I didn't really want that job," he said. "I told Bishop Brzana I didn't want to go. I went into it with a bad attitude. Now, I sometimes think it was the most important single assignment I received. All the other assignments have been important, but God taught

me a big lesson in the prisons. I didn't think there would be faith in the prisons, but God taught me that He's always ahead of you and there when you arrive. I wasn't there to bring God to the people, but to discover God in the world in which they live."

From 1992 to 1994, Msgr. Duprey was administrator in Hammond and Rossie. In 1997, he was named pastor at Notre Dame Church in Malone, later being named pastor of the Malone Catholic Parishes, now St. André Bessette Parish.

In 2010, he became pastor of St. Peter's Church in Plattsburgh. He will become administrator of St. Augustine's Parish in Peru later this year.

Msgr. Duprey said the most rewarding part of his priesthood has been accompanying people.

"The most rewarding part has been being introduced to the most sacred parts of peoples' lives," he said. "When you're a priest, people tell you things they've never spoken out loud before. It's al-

most shocking to have that privilege, and to know they're sharing with me not because of who I am personally, but because I represent the Church and God. Sometimes people are sharing the worst things you can think of, sometimes they're sharing their deepest joys. It's stunning to me. I know other people are in positions in which people bear their souls to them sometimes, but it's a pretty regular thing for a priest. We don't receive direct preparation for that. I don't think there is a way to prepare for it. When someone tells us something, we're holding something very delicate. It's a treasure."

Father Flynn

A native of Massena, Father Francis J. Flynn studied for the priesthood at St. Joseph's Seminary in Yonkers and at the North American College at Rome. He was ordained in December of 1969 at St. Peter's Basilica in Rome.

In 1970, he received an STL degree from the Gregorian University in Rome.

Father Flynn's first assignment was as an assistant pastor at St. John's in Plattsburgh. In 1973, he joined the Ogdensburg Peruvian Apostolate, serving in Mollendo, Peru, until 1981.

His time in Peru had a lasting impact on him.

"My years in South America made a mark on me," he said. "It's lasted right up to this day. When I first came back, my body was here, but my heart was there. It took a long time to get them back together again."

While he noted it was difficult to pinpoint exactly why the experience was so impactful, Father Flynn said part of it was the character of the peo-

ple in Mollendo.

"You're welcomed; you're the stranger," he said. "I think part of the reason they're so welcoming is that family is very important to them. The fact that you'd leave your family to be with them said it all and showed them how important they were. The people there took you under their wings, and you were kind of dependent on them in a way."

Upon his return to the United States, Father Flynn was associate pastor at St. Joseph's in Malone. In 1982, he was named pastor in Lake Clear and campus minister at Paul Smiths College.

Father Flynn left the diocese in 1984 to work with the Maryknoll order for two years. Upon his return, he was assigned to North Bangor where he served as pastor until 1995 when he was assigned as parochial vicar at St. Augustine's in Peru. For several months in 1996 he took part in a sabbatical program in Jerusalem.

Upon his return in June 1996, he was named pastor of St. Francis of Assisi Campus Parish in Potsdam. In 1999, he was named pastor in Bloomingdale and Gabriels where he continued in campus ministry at Paul Smiths College and served as a part-time prison chaplain at Camp Gabriels until moving to Constable in 2002. He served as pastor of the Catholic Community of Constable, Westville and Trout River until 2012.

Father Flynn was named pastor in Elizabethtown and Westport in 2012, taking on the responsibilities as pastor of the Catholic Community of St. Philip Neri and St. Joseph in

Willsboro in 2015. He retired in January 2020.

Father Flynn said the multi-parish configurations were something he didn't foresee when he became a priest 50 years ago.

"When I was ordained, I never thought I would end my last years as a parish priest almost like a circuit rider," he said. "I never imagined having two or three parishes. When I was growing up in Massena, there were three priests. My experience of priests wasn't that they were alone."

In fact, Father Flynn said he initially considered joining an order as a missionary priest.

"Honestly, I didn't know what I was doing when I went into seminary," he said. "I wanted to be a missionary. When I talked to my pastor, he convinced me I wanted to be a diocesan priest. In the end, I was able to be a diocesan priest on mission."

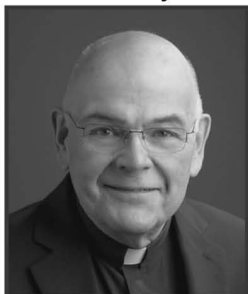
Father Flynn was able to celebrate his jubilee in Mollendo in February and early March, just barely escaping the country before its borders were closed due to the coronavirus pandemic.

"I was supposed to leave March 17 to come home," he said. "There were no rumors of a lockdown - no talk of anything like that. I had a thought to leave early. Through a friend, I was able to get a seat on a plane for the 15th. When I was arriving in Montreal, the president of Peru was issuing a statement closing the borders and imposing a curfew. I wouldn't have been able to leave if I had waited."

The jubilees will be celebrated in conjunction with the Chrism Mass, which will likely be a private celebration.

Msgr. Robert Aucoin

Congratulations on 50 years in ministry!



Ordained March 14, 1970

Your Parishioners

St. Mary's, Waddington

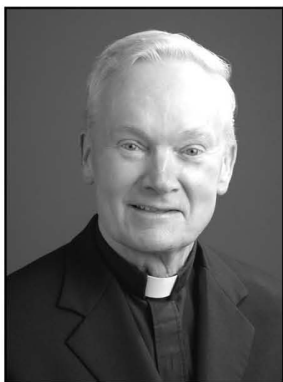
St. John's, Madrid

Father Robinson celebrates 40 years

Father Donald A. Robinson, pastor in Carthage and Copenhagen, celebrates his 40th jubilee this year.

Father Robinson, 69, is a native of LaFargeville. He earned a bachelor's degree from SUNY Oswego and master's degree in reading education from SUNY Potsdam before beginning studies for the priesthood.

He graduated from Wadhams Hall Seminary-College and Christ the King Seminary before his ordination May 3, 1980 by Bishop Stanislaus J. Brzana.



Father Donald A. Robinson

Father Robinson has served as an associate pastor at St. Peter's in

Lowville, Notre Dame in Malone and St. Anthony's in Watertown. He was also a teacher at Immaculate Heart Central School in Watertown.

In 1988, Father Robinson was named a member of the Wadhams Hall Seminary Faculty and diocesan vocations director.

At Wadhams Hall he was a history teacher and director of admissions. In 1996, Bishop Paul S. Loverde appointed him as vice-president of the seminary college.

Father Robinson also served as diocesan direc-

tor of seminarians from 1995 until he was named pastor of St. Mary's in Champlain in 1998.

Prior to serving in Carthage and Copenhagen, he was pastor at St. Anthony's in Watertown. He was given additional responsibilities as administrator of St. Patrick's in Watertown in 2009 and pastor of St. Patrick's in 2010.

Rest in Peace

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

May 27 – Rev. J. Rosario Jalbert, O.M.I., 1938; Msgr. Wilfred Allen Nugent, 1991; Rev. Andrew R. Mulvaney, 2013

May 29 – Rev. Hervé Racette, O.M.I., 1948 Rev. Arthur C. Kenny, 1945 (should have been April 29);

May 30 – Rev. J. Heliodore Valois, 1952

May 31 – Rev. John J. Dean, 1930; Rev. Eugene T. Desnoyers, 1993

June 1 – Rev. Tobias M. Glenn, 1907; Rev. Charles B. Cotter, 2001

June 2 – Rev. Antoine Buch, O.F.M., 1927; Msgr. John L. Plunkett, 1950; Deacon Richard T. Larche, 1989

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-
annyanulavich@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.

Environmental Stewardship

The gift of uniqueness

Spring is a season of sound, and few creatures create as much overpowering natural music as do the peepers on warm, damp nights in May. When listening to this symphony, it is hard to accept the fact that each of these thousands of voices is slightly different. Like humans, snowflakes, grains of sand, stars in the sky, or anything else in this universe, each individual spring peeper is unique. The Creator has made every entity slightly different, and we are told that He knows all His creations intimately. While one mosquito or leaf may seem totally insignificant to us, these living things have been fashioned by the hand our Creator, and each has been given its own special place or role in the web of life.

Pope Francis repeatedly emphasizes the interconnectedness of all things on this planet in his encyclical *Laudato Si*. He also promotes the idea that harming one entity results in altering His entire work of creation. While we can't sustain ourselves without impacting the environment around us, we must always strive to mitigate the damage we do by developing a simpler style of life.

Our prayer today:

Oh Grand Creator, we thank you for allowing us to be such a unique component, as small as it may be, of Your masterful work of creation. We especially seek Your forgiveness for any of the damage that we have intentionally, accidentally, or inadvertently, inflicted on other people, living organisms, or items that You have fashioned for this magnificent world. We also ask for Your help to better appreciate the beauty and sense of wonder of being a part of Your living world. Finally, please allow us to accept Your guidance in preserving this glorious spectacle that You have set before us. Amen.

Enjoy the bounty of sights, smells and sounds that come with this season. Continue to pray for our own physical, mental, and spiritual health, and an improved state of well being for our community, our state, our nation, and our planet.

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

Respect Life grants awarded

By Colleen Miner
Respect Life Director

Thanks to the generosity of parishioners, the Respect Life Second Collection will aid 17 entities in the Diocese of Ogdensburg with their pro-life efforts. Nine of the awards went to "hands-on" ministries: six Gabriel Projects (Brasher Falls, Gouverneur, Massena, Ogdensburg, Plattsburgh, Potsdam), Plattsburgh Pregnancy Center, Birthright and Malone Catholic Charities.

This was a difficult year to plan, since Covid-19 has disrupted all of our lives. Priority was given to service ministries, where the need will be the greatest. In the social distancing environment, many activities occurring in 2020 will be cancelled or postponed, thus grant requests for group activities (county pro-life fair booths, educational days) did not receive grants.

The grant board met remotely, via email and phone, deciding it best to have education and activism wait until next year. Three Washington DC March for Life pilgrimages

were partially funded for the 2021 gathering: The Youth Buses for Life, The Lewis County Bus for Life and the Plattsburgh Bus for Life.

Other grant recipients include Light of Truth Catholic Radio in Lake Placid, Liferight of Watertown's newsletter, the Spring 2021 40 Days for Life Campaign, the USCCB Respect Life Month pastor packets and Natural Family Planning Awareness Week materials.

The collection total was \$57,513, the lowest since 2006, but all are grateful for

the help.

We are blessed to offer this opportunity to those in our diocese, especially now when the need is so great. Thank you for the dedicated work of the grant board members: Father Martin Cline, Stephen Tartaglia, Angelo and Suzanne Pietropaoli and John and Colleen Miner. A special thank you to Bishop Terry R. LaValley for your support and efforts to build a culture of life in our diocese.

The Respect Life Second Collection is taken up annually in January.

Congratulations



Fr. Vinny Flynn
On celebrating your
50th Anniversary

Funeral for Sister Roberta Southwick postponed

Sister Roberta Maria Southwick, age 80, a Franciscan Sister of the Atonement from Graymoor, died unexpectedly on Wednesday, May 13, 2020 at St. Francis Convent, Garrison, New York.

The second of nine children, Sister Roberta, known as "Bobby" to her family, was born in Ogdensburg on April 18, 1940 to Josephine (O'Brien) and Charles H. Southwick, Sr.

She was predeceased by her parents and brother, Kevin. Sister is survived by seven siblings, Sara Martineau, Veronica Cusson, Monica Lauzon, Martha Charpentier, Charles, Bill and Bryan Southwick and numerous nieces and nephews.

Sister Roberta entered the Franciscan Sisters of the Atonement on Sept. 8, 1957. She professed her

First Vows on April 16, 1959 and her Final Vows on August 29, 1964. As an Atonement missionary for 62 years, Sister Roberta served in various ministries. She was a well-versed individual who was very inquisitive, creative and who developed many talents.

Her earlier mission assignments included a variety of parish, catechetical, and teaching ministries in: Burlington, VT (1960-1963); Placerville, CA (1963), Schenectady & Canajoharie, NY (1963-1966); Boston, MA (1966-1969), and Kamiyama, Japan (1969-1974), where she skillfully learned Japanese. In fact, for a Papal Visit for the Archdiocese of New York, Sister Roberta served as a Japanese Translator. For several years, Sister worked in Tokyo at the

Japan Bishops' Conference Secretariat and at the Tosei News, a bi-weekly compilation of religious news for the foreign missionaries in Japan and the only Catholic news service from the church in Japan.

Creative in diverse areas, Sister Roberta was later missioned to the Motherhouse at Graymoor (1974-1983) to work in our Communications Department. There, she learned all aspects of offset lithographic printing and typesetting and printed the brochures, booklets and newsletters that were sent out from the congregation. After nine years, Sister Roberta went to our guest house in Assisi, Italy (1983-1986) to be involved in our ministry of hospitality welcoming tourists and pilgrims from around the world. After spending three years in Assisi, Sister returned to New York for a short time to care for her mother who died in 1986.

In 1994, Sister Roberta went to Utica, NY and in 1995 became the administrative secretary of the Syracuse Diocese's Office of Vocation Promotion with Father James Quinn as director. The two worked together as a team for six years, promoting vocations to the diocesan priesthood and to religious life. Leaving the Syracuse Diocese in 2001 for her appointment as



Sister Roberta Marie Southwick

the Treasurer General in the congregation, Sister returned to Utica in 2003 and became director of the Proctor House Faith Center and in 2010, ministered at St. Joseph/St. Patrick's in Utica.

Returning to Graymoor in September 2013, Sister Roberta coordinated activities for one-year for seniors at the Mother Lurana House Adult Social Day Center. At the time of her death, Sister Roberta was the coordinator of Mission Appeals. She was an enthusiastic promoter of our

mission in the Philippines (founded in 2010) and she spoke tirelessly about promoting funds for its' operation and encouraged others to do so. In addition to this, she was also a co-editor of our Development Department's newsletter, Graymoor's Well.

Due to the Coronavirus pandemic, funeral services are postponed until a later date and will be announced via emails and through our Facebook page

at: facebook.com/GraymoorSisters. If interested in receiving email notification, send your name and email address to: atonementsisters@graymoor.org. In lieu of flowers, donations can be made to Franciscan Sisters of the Atonement and mailed to Development Office, 41 Old Highland Turnpike, Garrison, NY 10524.

REQUEST FOR PRIESTS

WOULD YOU PRAY FOR A PRIEST EACH DAY?

— PRAYER SUGGESTION —

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

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

June +
Sacred Heart

JUNE 2020

DIOCESE OF OGDENBURG, NY		SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
	1	BISHOP TERRY R. LAVALLEY	2	REV. JUDE SNADIBUGH	3	REV. JAMES W. SEYMOUR	4	REV. SCOTT R. SEYMOUR
	5	REV. ALAN D. SHNOB	6	REV. E. JAMES SHURTLEFF	7	MSGR. HARRY K. SNOW	8	OUR PASTOR
	9	REV. BRYAN D. STITT	10	REV. RICHARD J. STURTZ	11	REV. JONAS RAFAEL TANDAYU MSC	12	REV. TODD E. THIBAUT
	13	REV. JUSTIN THOMAS HGIN	14	REV. SEVERINUS TORWOE	15	POPE FRANCIS	16	BENEDICT XVI POPE EMERITUS
	17	REV. HOWARD J. VENETTE	18	REV. RAYMOND J. WERTMAN	19	MSGR. PAUL E. WHITMORE	20	REV. LEO A. WILEY
	21	REV. JOHN R. YONKOVIG VF	22	REV. PHILIP T. ALLEN	23	REV. ANDREW J. AMYOT	24	REV. MEDENEL ANGRAND
	25	REV. DANIEL ASUE	26	MSGR. JOSEPH G. AUBIN	27	REV. PIERRE ATBIN MSC	28	DECEASED PRIESTS
	29	MSGR. ROBERT H. AUCCOIN	30					

For more information visit us online at www.mnprapostlate.com

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

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CATHOLIC WORLD AT A GLANCE

Psychologist: Domestic violence is pandemic within pandemic

PHILADELPHIA (CNS) – Amid global coronavirus lockdowns, domestic violence has emerged as "a pandemic within a pandemic," said Catholic clinical psychologist Christauria Welland. "Our rates in the U.S. for physical and sexual violence against women were already at one in three," she said. Based in California, Welland has counseled both those who are abused and their abusers for decades. During periods of economic crisis and natural disasters, such rates tend to rise, said Welland, adding that the coronavirus has aggravated conditions for domestic abuse, also known as "intimate partner violence. We're seeing huge increases in anxiety, uncertainty and feelings of powerlessness," she said. "When those who abuse manage their relationships using a template of power that says, 'I'm in control of you,' this kind of insecurity makes them feel vulnerable and puts them at risk of becoming violent." Unemployment, food and financial instability, confinement and substance abuse have increased the risk of abuse.

NY Archdiocese issues plan to gradually reopen churches

NEW YORK (CNS) – Cardinal Timothy M. Dolan of New York and other church officials announced a multistep plan to reopen the 288 parish churches of the archdiocese as the coronavirus pandemic eases. Called Faith Forward, the plan introduced May 21 offers a five-step phasing that will seek to move gradually and safely toward a return to the availability of the sacraments and, ultimately Sunday Mass attendance, with a limited capacity. The guidelines were outlined during a morning new conference at Our Saviour Church in Manhattan. Msgr. Joseph LaMorte, archdiocesan vicar general, described his work leading a task force comprised of priests and senior staff members of archdiocesan offices that created the guidelines during the past six weeks. He said two driving forces guided task force members in their discussions: a return to the Mass and the sacraments because "everybody misses them very, very much," and safety. Task force members recognized, he added, that the return to the celebration of Mass and the sacraments be accomplished "in a safe, gradual way, following the advice of health officials and observing the guidelines of the elected officials." Because the exposure to the novel coronavirus experienced by Catholics in New York City and nearby suburbs was much greater than in the upper counties of the sprawling archdiocese, "we recognize that not every parish will open at the same time," Msgr. LaMorte said.

New coalition seeks to pull together prison ministry efforts

WASHINGTON (CNS) – There are more than 30 Catholic organizations providing some kind of prison ministry in the United States. One reason is because the need is so great, with a prison population estimated at about 2.3 million by the Prison Policy Initiative. But U.S. incarceration rates grew so fast over the past generation, they far outstripped the ability of any one organization to keep up. What's more, few of the organizations had any contact with others to coordinate ministry efforts. That issue is now being addressed by the new Catholic Prison Ministries Coalition, which has slowly come into being over the past two years. Karen Clifton, the coalition's executive coordinator, had been executive director of the Catholic Mobilizing Network, the anti-death-penalty organization. Despite its focus on capital punishment and restorative justice, the network would be approached with requests for resources on issues regarding prisons and prisoners from people who knew of nowhere else to turn.

Trump: Houses of worship are 'essential'

Editor's note: In the Diocese of Ogdensburg, Bishop Terry R. LaValley has asked all parishes to submit a re-opening plan for approval before opening for public worship, regardless of the size of the planned worship. Plans are being developed taking into account all current local, state and federal regulations and with the health and well-being of the faithful in mind.

WASHINGTON (CNS) – Saying America needs "more prayer, not less," President Donald Trump May 22 declared house of worship "essential" and directed the country's governors "to do the right thing and allow these very important essential places of faith to open right now, this weekend."

"The people are demanding to go to church and their synagogue, to go to their mosque. Many, many millions of Americans embrace worship as an essential part of life," he said in a midday announcement.

"The ministers, pastors, imams and other faith leaders will make sure their congregations are safe as they gather and pray. They love their congregations, they love their people," Trump said.

"If they don't do it, I will override the governors. America, we need more prayer, not less," he said, though many of Trump's critics said the U.S. president could not constitutionally "override" governors' authority on this matter in their own states.

Trump noted that several governors "have

deemed liquor stores and abortion clinics as essential but have left out churches and other houses of worship. It's not right."

Among those who praised Trump's declaration that houses of worship are essential was the president and CEO of the Plano, Texas-based First Liberty Institute, a non-profit law firm that handles cases on religious freedom and other First Amendment issues.

"The discrimination that has been occurring against churches and houses of worship has been shocking," said Kelly Shackelford, who also is chief counsel to the First Liberty Institute. "We applaud the president's strong stance today demanding that these attacks must stop and that churches and houses of worship be freed to safely open. Americans are going to malls and restaurants. They need to be able to go to their houses of worship."

When the coronavirus was declared a pandemic, Catholic dioceses across the U.S. closed churches and suspended the public celebration of Mass, following the guidelines issued by government officials and health officials in stay-at-home orders to stop the spread of the virus.

In some parts of the country, as states have begun to open up in stages, dioceses have been issuing their own plans for the gradual reopening of churches over several phases, with the safety of congregants, priests, deacons and other parish staff foremost in the minds of

Catholic officials.

They include rules for social distancing, small-number limits on gatherings, requirements for face coverings, hand-sanitizing procedures, and best practices for disinfecting pews and other areas of churches.

Across the board these church protocols have many other commonalities, including no holy water in fonts, a prohibition on physical contact during the Our Father or the sign of peace, no presentation of the gifts, reception of Communion in the hand, and for the time being the Precious Blood will not be offered at holy Communion.

Trump's May 22 announcement comes less than a week after the U.S. Department of Justice challenged the "unequal treatment of faith communities" in California's coronavirus reopening plan, warning that continued restrictions on worship services threaten believers' civil rights to practice their religion.

"Simply put, there is no pandemic exception to the U.S. Constitution and its Bill of Rights," said Assistant Attorney General Eric Dreiband in a three-page letter sent to California Gov. Gavin Newsom May 19. Dreiband is in the Justice Department's Civil Rights Division.

And in Minnesota the state's Catholic bishops and Lutheran officials are moving ahead with plans to resume liturgies at one-third church capacity May 26, despite the Gov. Tim Walz's executive order capping faith-based gatherings at 10 people due to the pandemic.

SCRIPTURE REFLECTIONS

Celebrating Pentecost, the Holy Spirit

Today, we celebrate the birthday of the Church. As the Holy Spirit entered into the Mary at the Annunciation, making her fruitful with the Son of God, so too, at that first Pentecost, the Spirit entered into the expectant 12 apostles (Mathias replacing Judas), swooping down with wind and fire. As breathing fresh air purifies blood, so too did the Spirit give vigor to all that was dead or sluggish in the hearts of the apostles, freeing them from their



**Monsignor
Paul E.
Whitmore**

fear of proclaiming publicly the truth they knew and had experienced. The Spirit infused them with gifts beyond value – wisdom, understanding, knowledge, counsel, fortitude, piety, and fear of the Lord. As He breathed into them, they would in turn breathe out the Holy Spirit for the rest of their lives, even to death, for love of that truth.

And fire!! We often joke about the heat from birthday candles. Can you

May 31

Feast of Pentecost

READINGS

Acts 2:1-11

1 Corinthians 12:3b-7, 12-13

John 20:19-23

imagine the heat from 2000 and some birthday candles today! Or the heat from millions of flames radiating from those confirmed in the Spirit? Certainly, it was enough heat to set the world on fire with love for the Christ who died for our sins, enough to enkindle faith in the hearts of millions of men, women, and children

in our world. That faith could engender a revolution of love and the establishment of justice among the peoples of this bleeding earth.

It is unfortunate this year that we are not yet ready to open our churches to public worship. Nevertheless, when we do, it will be an even more cause for joy that we can again pray and sing together and celebrate the Eucharist. Here is our great mission, to bring back so many former Catholics.

Unity is the work of the Holy Spirit, to bind all into oneness with Christ...one faith, one Lord, one bap-

tism. On this feast of Pentecost, a new energy comes to the Church through the reality of our liturgical celebration. It's our call to work on unity right here and right now in our local parish families. We can now plan ways of reviving the gifts of the Spirit and pray fervently for a truly renewed Church.

*Come Holy Spirit, fill the hearts of thy faithful!
And enkindle in them the fire of thy love.*

*Send forth Thy Spirit,
and they shall be created,
And thou shalt renew the face of the earth!*

CALLED TO SERVE

Parish linkages hit close to home

My parish was St. Patrick's in Watertown. Back in 2009, St. Patrick's and St. Anthony's in Watertown were linked with one pastor. My parishes became St. Patrick's and St. Anthony's. Father Chris Looby has served as pastor of the linked parishes since 2018. Last week, the diocesan Priest Personnel Committee and Bishop Terry LaValley decided to move forward with the Living Stones Planning Process and merge St. Patrick's, St. Anthony's and The Church of the Holy Family in Watertown. Father John "Mickey"

Demo will become pastor of the three linked (for now) parishes July 8, 2020. He is currently pastor of Holy Family. My parishes will become St. Patrick's, St. Anthony's and Holy Family. Eventually the three parishes will become one, not linked but merged. But that is for another day.

Watertown joins Malone, Massena, Ogdensburg and Plattsburgh as major communities in the diocese that have seen big parish consolidations. Father Demo will now be the local shepherd to about 2,000. Certainly, other

parishes in our diocese have been linked, merged, consolidated or closed over the years, but this one strikes home because it is home.

Father Mickey will be assisted by two parochial vicars, Father Deepak Baru and Father Herman Pongantung, Deacon Mike Allan, Deacon Guy Javarone, Deacon Ed Miller and myself; and with God's grace, Don Wilder will be ordained a deacon for our parishes this summer.



**Deacon
Kevin Mastellon**

Bishops are forced to consolidate parishes for two main reasons. The first is the one lay people cite constantly, the decline in the number of priests. That fact cannot be disputed. The second is rarely mentioned but is equally true; there are fewer people participating in parish life and fewer still registering as parishioners. Given those factors, this linkage make sense in today's environment.

There is nothing unique about the Watertown moves. We will have the

same struggles every other community has faced. Somebody once said, "navigating previously unexplored terrain is difficult, exhausting, and even scary." Like all those other places in our diocese, we will be fine. More priests and deacons will retire or die in the coming years, so it is prudent to think about the future. We look with joy and anticipation to the 13 men now in various stages of seminary formation for the priesthood and another 14 preparing for ordination as permanent deacons in 17 months. Pray for them and the Holy Spirit's guidance for us all.

Deacon Kevin Mastellon ministers in Watertown.

He is the Director of Permanent Deacons for the Diocese of Ogdensburg.

Visit our website
www.northcountrycatholic.org

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Diocese of Ogdensburg, Inc.**

The Society for the Propagation of the Faith

Sr. Mary Ellen Brett, SSI, Director
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(315) 393-2920; fax 1-866-314-7296
mbrett@rcdony.org

Congratulations to our jubilarians

We honor and celebrate our
2020 Jubilarians!

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

&

the Missionary Projects of
the Diocese of Ogdensburg

Congratulations to our Jubilarians!

40 years

Reverend Donald Robinson

50 years

Reverend Msgr. Robert Aucoin
Reverend Msgr. Dennis Duprey
Reverend Vinny Flynn

“Celebrate this day for you are his
chosen one!”

Thank you for your faithful
support and God Bless!

Please remember “The Society for the Propagation of
the Faith” when writing or changing your Will.
www.rcdony.org/mission

OBITUARIES

AuSable Forks – Elizabeth “Betty”
(Aubin) Bombard, 79; Mass of Christian
Burial to be held at a later date at Holy
Name Church.

Brasher Falls – Theresa (Coughlin)
Phillips, 93; Private Services to be held.

Chateaugay – Luva Bourcier; Private
Mass of Christian Burial held May 13,
2020 at St. Patrick’s Church; burial in St.
Patrick’s Cemetery.

Chateaugay – Carolyn (Dwyer) Par-
ent, 78; Private Mass of Christian Burial
May 15, 2020 at St. Patrick’s Church;

burial in St. Patrick’s Cemetery.

Clayton – Veronica A. (Gates) Bogen-
schutz, 99; Memorial Mass to be held at
a later date at St. Mary’s Church burial
in St. Mary’s Cemetery.

Croghan – Timothy Joseph Monnat,
59; Private Funeral Services to be held.

Massena – Sandra (Sargent)
Bouchard, 81; Private Funeral Services
to be held.

Massena – Jeanine Y. (Bouvier)
LeBoeuf, 88; Mass of Christian burial to

be held at a later date at Sacred Heart
Church; burial in Calvary Cemetery.

Plattsburgh – James Louis Longtin,
85; Memorial Mass to be held at a later
date at St. Peter’s Church.

Potsdam – Louise Ann Gardner, 90;
Private Funeral Services to be held;
burial in St. Mary’s Cemetery.

Watertown – David M. Parks, 78; Pri-
vate Funeral Services to be held; burial
in North Watertown Cemetery.

‘I trusted that He would help me through it’

*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

PLATTSBURGH – Brent Davi-
son came back to his faith
through a television pro-
gram.

Raised Catholic and hav-
ing received the sacra-
ments of baptism and
First Communion, Davi-
son fell away from his
faith after his parents di-
vorced. He didn’t go to
any church for 30 years.

After a few of his family
members died, though,
Davison started thinking
about God and what hap-
pens to people when they
die. Then, he started
watching Roma Downey
and Mark Burnett’s “The
Bible” miniseries on the
History channel in 2014.



“It really caught my in-
terest. My wife and I began
watching it,” Davison said
of the 10 episodes that
summarize the events of
the Old Testament and
New Testament. “At the
birth of Christ, something
opened up in me, and a
huge amount of grace
filled me. It gave me some
sort of enlightenment that
I can’t even explain that
drew me closer to Jesus
and wanted me to explore

Him more and get to know
Him more and bring my
family closer to Him.”

Now, Davison and his
family attend St. Peter’s
Church in Plattsburgh,
one of the faith sites of the
newly combined Holy
Cross Parish.

Since that moment he
was grace watching the
television series, Davison
said his faith has been im-
portant to him, especially

CONTINUED ON PAGE 12

'Help me through it'

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 2

with his work as a zone commander with the New York State Police and as he, his lieutenant, and the 12 sergeants and 75 troopers he oversees continue their duties during the coronavirus pandemic.

"Obviously in law enforcement, we see a lot of negative things," he added. "We see some of the bad sides of society, and it's good to have faith to know there's good out there. It's not all just evil."

Davison said he is responsible for the health and safety of the officers under him, so together they ensure they wear the proper PPE when performing their duties and interacting with the public.

"For the most part, we've been doing our job as we normally would, but we just do it with precautions," he said.

And those officers who work under Davison are familiar with his strong faith because it comes up in conversation and because they have seen how his reversion to faith has transformed him.

"They've seen a change in me in the last five, six years that they know is most likely the result of me turning to God," Davison said. "We don't sit down and discuss it like I do with my church friends. ... I don't preach at work, but the guys are aware of how I feel. They

recognize the change that's occurred in me. When the time's appropriate, I do discuss why there's always hope and there's good to everything."

Davison also has the opportunity to shine God's light of love with the people he comes across during his duties.

"We have to make sure we treat everybody with dignity," he said. "Regardless of what they've done in their lives, they always have a chance to turn around and do good."

Davison said his faith became "absolutely important" to him in 2018, when he was diagnosed with throat cancer. Initially, doctors determined the cancer was stage 4 but later revised their finding to stage 2.

"Even then, any time you hear the word cancer you think it's going to be the end of your life," Davison said. "Because of my faith, I never really was too fearful. I always trusted that Jesus would accompany me on my journey wherever that was going to be."

That journey led to surgery and radiation, a process Davison described as "very difficult." During radiation, a patient wears a mask that pins their head, neck and shoulder to a table so tightly they can't open and close their eyelids.

Some patients receive Valium to get them



Brent Davison

through the experience, but Davison relied on his faith.

"When I went through my 10 minutes of radiation a day, I would try to focus on Jesus the whole time," he said. "I just focused on the Lord and got through my treatment. I trusted that He would help me through it, and He's done that."

Aside from his participation in North Country Cursillo and the Deacon Formation Program, Davison said he prays multiple

times throughout the day to strengthen his faith and continue to draw closer to God.

As a deacon candidate, he prays the Liturgy of the Hours morning and evening prayers. During the pandemic, the group of candidates has met with their instructors and people they've invited for evening prayer through Zoom.

With his Cursillo group, which Davison described as "all about faith sharing," members would normally

meet once a month in a larger venue and weekly in a group of six to 10 people. As a group, they discuss their piety, study and action.

"Every week, you share with your group how you've recognized God working throughout your life during that last week," he said.

And during the pandemic, Davison believes God is working both in him and in the church.

"I know it's a difficult time for everyone right now," he said. "Especially as Catholics, we want to receive the sacraments, and we're unable to do that right now. I'm hoping this whole thing makes our church stronger, that if anyone was taking the Eucharist for granted or the sacrament of reconciliation, they now realize how important those things are to have on a regular basis."

For Davison and his fellow Catholics, he feels their faith in God will help them grow both as individuals and as a church, especially during this time.

"God will see us through," he said. "He's here with us. We don't know why we're going through this, but if we trust in Him we'll come out the other side, and I'm hoping our church will be stronger for going through it and remaining faithful to Him throughout."

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