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The Diocese of Ogdensburg Volume 75, Number 10

# NORTH COUNTRY CATHOLIC

JUNE 17, 2020

## Chrism Mass will be livestreamed

Because the Diocese of Ogdensburg could not hold the Chrism Mass as usual on the Thursday prior to Holy Thursday due the pandemic, Bishop Terry R. LaValley and the priests of the diocese will celebrate the Chrism Mass on Friday, June 19 at 2 p.m. at St. Mary's Cathedral in Ogdensburg.

Normally the Chrism Mass is open to all. Unfortunately, the lay faithful cannot attend due to limited seating to prevent spreading the Coronavirus.

A livestream of the Mass will be available.

FULL STORY, PAGE 3

## BACK IN MASS



FATHER CHRISTOPHER LOOBY/NORTH COUNTRY CATHOLIC

**A small crowd of parishioners gathers at St. Anthony's in Watertown for the first weekend of public Masses after the coronavirus required Masses to be suspended. Parishioners were required to maintain social distance and wear masks throughout Mass.**

## SHARING OUR STORIES



Allison Rozon of Lake Clear says her faith journey has taught her conversion is an ongoing process, and she needs to constantly turn back to God.

FULL STORY, PAGE 4

## Pope: Eucharist heals, gives strength to serve

VATICAN CITY (CNS) – The Eucharist heals people of their wounds, emptiness and sadness, and gives them the strength to share Christ's loving mercy with others, Pope Francis said.

The joy of the Lord can change lives, the pope said in his homily during Mass June 14, the feast of the Body and Blood of Christ.

"This is the strength of the Eucharist, which transforms us into bringers of God, bringers of joy, not negativity," he said during the morning Mass, which was celebrated in St.

Peter's Basilica with a small congregation of about 50 people, the majority of whom wore masks and maintained social distance.

Drastically reducing the size of the congregation and not holding a traditional outdoor Corpus Christi procession after Mass were part of the ongoing efforts to contain the spread of the coronavirus.

Over many decades, popes have celebrated the feast either in different neighborhoods in and

around Rome or at the Basilica of St. John Lateran followed by a one-mile procession to the Basilica of St. Mary Major. The solemn procession, in which the pope or a priest carried a monstrance containing the Blessed Sacrament through the streets, would be lined with thousands of people.

For the feast day celebration June 14, however, the entire ceremony was held inside St. Peter's Basilica and concluded with a long moment of silent eucharistic adoration and Benedic-

tion of the Blessed Sacrament. The feast of the Body and Blood of Christ celebrates the real presence of Christ in the Eucharist.

In his homily, Pope Francis said, "The Lord, offering himself to us in the simplicity of bread, also invites us not to waste our lives in chasing the myriad illusions that we think we cannot do without, yet that leave us empty within."

Just as the Eucharist satisfies the hunger for material things, it also kindles the desire to serve others,

he said.

"It raises us from our comfortable and lazy lifestyle and reminds us that we are not only mouths to be fed, but also his hands to be used to help feed others."

"It is especially urgent now to take care of those who hunger for food and for dignity, those without work and those who struggle to carry on," the pope said. "This we must do in a real way, as real as the bread that Jesus gives us," and with real solidarity and genuine closeness.

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## EDITOR'S NOTE

## 'But Jesus was there'

"But Jesus was there, so it was awesome!"

A few years ago, I participated in an online group for Catholic moms. Every weekend, there would be a "how was Mass this weekend" discussion thread in the group. Typically, the thread was full of comments like, "my daughter was licking the pew ahead of us," "my son cried from the time Mass started until the Gospel ended," "I realized halfway through Mass I was wearing shoes that didn't match," or "the people who

sat behind us were really great with my kids."

While I didn't participate in that thread every week, whenever I did, I ended my description of Mass with, "but Jesus was there, so it was awesome!" For example, a typical Darcy comment might be, "I tripped over my own feet and almost fell on my face walking to the front of the church to lecture, but Jesus was there, so it was awesome!"

I thought about those posts this weekend, as I at-

tended my first Mass in two months.

I'm not going to lie: It was a little weird. It felt weird having someone take my temperature as I entered the church. It felt weird wearing a mask throughout Mass. It felt weird having to remain six feet away from other people. It felt weird not singing. It felt weird consciously avoiding socializing and gathering with people with whom I'd love to spend time chatting and reconnecting.

It just felt weird.

But Jesus was there, so it was awesome!

Despite the weird, I can't

describe how grateful I am for the opportunity to worship with others. Just hearing my prayers unite with the prayers of others – all our voices nearly in unison – was suddenly a striking experience. I felt intensely connected to the other worshippers, despite our separation. And that's before I even think about how grateful I was to receive Jesus in the Eucharist.

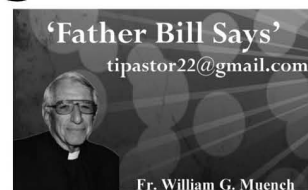
It's been a long few months. Some of us are still unable to attend Mass. Those of us who are able to attend are adjusting to a "new normal." But Jesus is with us all, and that's awesome!

Darcy L.  
Fargo

## Congratulations, graduates!

CONGRATULATIONS, ALL OF YOU GRADUATES! Today, I would like to take this time to congratulate all the 2020 graduates – those who are graduating from high school and those graduating from college. I am truly sad that for most of you because your graduation ceremony is not what you hoped for, not what you thought it would be. Well, I do hope you had a party or two. I consider graduation to be an important occasion in life. Oh, yes! I also want to congratulate the eighth-grade graduates moving on to high school, and I want to congratulate those graduating from kindergarten.

Graduation is not a one-day event. Graduation is the sum of years of study and being transformed. Graduation is a step in life's adventure. Graduation is a time for gratitude. I believe you, graduates, will agree with me that each of one of us had depended on innumerable people who got us to this step, this graduation. I can guarantee that you will



remember them all, no matter how old you get to be, especially the special ones.

Personally, I continue to be so grateful for so many people who have had such a profound influence on my life and all I have accomplished, including all of my graduations. Let me tell you some of them; it is an important exercise in gratitude when I think of them all. There are my parents, my family, especially some aunts and uncles, so many teachers, counselors – including many priests and religious sisters. And I must tell you that there are some who truly transformed my life, and yet they were only with me a day or two. Some of them became real heroes for me.

Here is something you graduates, have heard many

times this month: graduation means newness – new challenges, new and exciting adventures. I believe that as a graduate you have achieved something very spectacular, a huge accomplishment, so now is the time to put all this to work for yourself. It is time for the next step, time to develop yourself in a new person. Now begins the work toward the next graduation.

Beside the regular formal graduations, I like to think that there are many other not so formal graduations. By that I mean those many steps – small or big – that mark the achievements of life. I pray for all of you, graduates, that your life will be full of many such graduations, steps in the right direction that will be the contribution that you make this world a better place.

One more thing today: I must admit my favorite graduation. I was pastor for several years at St. Mary's, where there is an elementary school. One of my tasks as pastor was to hand out

diplomas at the kindergarten graduation each year. Besides the fact that it was fun, each year it was truly fascinating to notice how these kids, these young men and women had changed. It wasn't just that they'd grown bigger, they had also learned to express themselves well.

Finally, I would like to offer my congratulations and gratitude to the real heroes of any graduation ceremony: the teachers, the administrators, the counselors, and also the many lunchroom staff members and even the cleaning staff members of each and every school. This year with all the twisting and turning of the school year and the teaching methods and the attempts at graduations, all of these folks have had to move to the front lines, and all the graduates certainly can recognize just how many great folks were involved to keep the school doing all that it was meant to do in leading, guiding and helping and teaching. They are rather special folks.



Father John L. "Jack" Downs stands in front of his newly planted pollinator garden. Father Downs expects the garden, planted just over a week ago, to be in full bloom in around a month.

## Priest plants garden to aid bees, other pollinators

By Darcy Fargo  
Editor

RAYMONDVILLE – The coronavirus pandemic inspired a new project for one retired priest of the diocese.

Finding himself with extra time to read during the pandemic, Father John L. "Jack" Downs said he was read about the plight of bees and pollinators and was inspired to start a pollinator garden at his home at St. Raymond's Church in Raymondville.

"There's been so much development in the areas where bees and pollinators typically thrive," said Father Downs. "The recommendation was to start pollinator gardens to give provide bees, butterflies and small birds new areas where they can thrive."

After a 20-foot by 30-foot space was prepared for seeding, Father Downs acquired seed packets designed specifically for pollinator gardens.

"It's mostly perennials,

but there's a great variety of seeds in the pollinator variety pack," he said. "The seeds were all different sizes, from very small to very large. I was very surprised. We planted two packets of the pollinator varieties and some single-species packets, too."

The pollinator garden will be bordered with sunflowers. There's a bird feeder and a bird bath nearby, and a hummingbird feeder is soon to be added.

Father Downs noted that he didn't complete the project alone.

"I've had lots of help," he said, laughing. "At 91 years old, this is a crazy thing to be starting!"

Father Downs noted that Gil Gonthier, from the maintenance staff for Parish of the Visitation and St. Raymond, aided with the rototilling.

"It was solid lawn," Father Downs said. "He had to go over it three times."

Father Downs said he

spent time raking the area and preparing it for seeding, tasks he was later assisted in completing by Cory Haynes from St. Regis Falls.

Father Downs said Kathy Bence and Francis Sharlow drove him to acquire the bird feeder and bird bath.

While the plot has not yet sprouted, Father Downs said he's looking forward to seeing it bloom.

"I'm hoping to have flowers in a month or so, and have them every year after," he said.

Father Downs is no stranger to attending to plants. In the entryway to his residence at St. Raymond's Church, he tends geraniums, jade, Christmas cacti and spider plants.

"I have geraniums all year long," he said. "It's a heated space with lots of great sun, and it's easy to access for watering."

## Chrism Mass to be held Friday with livestream

OGDENSBURG – Dioceses typically celebrate a Chrism Mass late in Lent. At this special Mass, Holy Oils are blessed by the bishop and distributed to all the parishes of the diocese.

Also, at the Chrism Mass, the bishop leads the priests in the renewal of their priestly promises of celibacy, prayer for the Church and obedience to their bishop.

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Bishop Terry R. LaValley and the priests of the diocese will celebrate the Chrism Mass on Friday, June 19 at 2 p.m. at St. Mary's Cathedral in Ogdensburg.

Normally the Chrism Mass is open to all. Unfortunately, the lay faithful cannot attend due to limited seating to prevent spreading the Coronavirus.

All are invited others to pray for our diocese, bishop, and especially the sanctification of our priests on the most appropriate day, the Solemnity of the Sacred Heart of Jesus.

You can also participate via livestream at <https://www.rcdony.org/livemass>. The program including prayers and music will soon be available for download at that link.



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# 'God is always calling me back'

By Darcy Fargo  
Editor

**LAKE CLEAR** – For Allison Rozon, a parishioner of St. Bernard's Parish in Saranac Lake, faith is a journey, an ongoing process of conversion.

"I keep learning this isn't a once and done thing," she said. "We can have these profound conversion experiences, but we still have to keep turning back to God every day. Did I have conversion experiences? Yes. But I'm always walking away, and God is always calling me back. Sometimes, I don't listen immediately, and He has to talk even louder."

Rozon group up in Fort Covington, and she said the Dominican priest and religious that served the community in her teenage years, along with her parish's youth group, helped her develop deep faith in her youth.

"As a teenager, I was really faithful and enamored with my faith," she said. "I participated in youth groups and retreats, and I loved sharing the beauty of our faith with others. It shaped a lot of who I was. Having that great Dominican community was awesome. I loved reading the Bible and developing my knowledge of the faith. I don't want to call it childish faith, but it was definitely a youthful phase."

When she went to college, Rozon said she gradually fell away from her strong faith.

"I started picking and choosing what parts I wanted in my life, which doesn't work very well," she said. "I started living a completely different life than the live I lived in high school, thinking maybe I had been missing some-



Allison Rozon

thing. I stopped going to church regularly. I still believed in God to an extent, but there were definitely times I questioned if God was real, and if He is, why are there so many rules and why is there so much pain in the world. I stepped away from it all."

Then, after college, Rozon met her and married her husband, Leif.

"We were both sort of fallen away Catholics," she said. "One Sunday morning, we just decided we should go to church. We sort of started going to church again and sharing a bit of our faith stories with one another. It wasn't something we had talked about a lot before."

Rozon said she believes her marriage, and its impact on her faith, was the answer to earlier prayers.

"Once at a youth conference, I was asked to pray for my future spouse," Rozon said. "After that, I prayed for my future

spouse a lot in high school. There's power to prayer, and maybe that's the reason we were meant to be together. When we started returning to church and talking about our faith, we were both at very broken parts of our stories. But we were helped by the graces of the sacrament of our marriage, by our return to the church and by being blessed to develop a community of friends in the faith."

Rozon and her husband were then introduced to Natural Family Planning (NFP), which has also

helped them grow in their marriage and faith.

"NFP and looking at how we wanted to approach having our children really changed us," she said. "It changed our view on our faith and life in general. Before, we had always thought we'd have one or two kids and lots of things. We started to think about what was more important. Our marriage was a conversion, but if we were serious about planning a family and Natural Family Planning, we had to change even more. We couldn't be so into ourselves. It's been really challenging having a family, but it's really changed me and made me more faithful and trusting."

After the couple had

their first child, Rachel, they struggled to have more children. After years of prayer and working with natural reproductive health doctors at the Gianna Center in Albany, Rozon again said the power of prayer at work.

"It took a lot of praying and a lot of surrender," she said. "We were at the point where we wanted another baby, and God was saying, 'not right now.' In surrendering to God's will, I found intercessory prayer to be helpful on a personal level. I prayed a lot to Our Lady of Perpetual Help and St. Gianna. I always ended my prayer with, 'if this is your will, Lord.'"

The couple later did get

CONTINUED ON PAGE 5



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WELCOME BACK



The pastoral staff at St. Alexander's in Morrisonville welcomes it's parishioners back as churches reopen with "Faith is Essential" shirts. Pictured are Father Jay de la Rosa, Father Scott Seymour, Father William Gordon, Sister Deepali Bankr, Ren  Dewyea, Angel Aquila, Wanda Haby, Jackie Black, Ben Revis, Deacon Michael Howley, Seminarian Venes Laine, and Steve Delorme.

# 'Calling me back'

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 4

pregnant with their second child, Luke. Shortly after his birth, more prayers were needed.

"He failed his first newborn screening," Rozon said. "Then he kept failing it. He had a heart murmur, and the doctors thought he might have a heart lesion or part of his aorta not closing. It was the most terrifying thing that happened in our marriage, maybe either of our lives. We waited so long to have him, and then he was taken away to go to Burlington in an ambulance, with us driving behind. It was a situation when we totally knew we had no control over the situation. God showed us we don't have control in our lives. Not in the sense that it's anarchy, but we don't have control. God has control. Our end goal is his heavenly home. I had to remember that as much as Luke was my child, he is also God's child."

The couple prayed the rosary and Divine Mercy Chaplet the entire ride to Burlington. They continued praying as doctors and interns began scanning baby Luke's heart.

"They were all looking at his aortic valve," she said. "It hadn't closed, which had caused him to fail the

newborn screenings. It usually closes shortly after birth. This was three days after. During the echocardiogram, the aortic valve closed. All the interns couldn't believe they got to watch it. I had been praying for the intercession of the angels right when it happened. Our priest at the time noted, 'how quickly God can change hearts.' It was definitely true for us."

While she noted the ordeal was extremely difficult on her and her family, Rozon said it was also a lesson in faith.

"I thought, 'Wow, God! I'm not sure why you put me through all that, but I saw your power with my own eyes more than I had ever seen it before,'" she said. "It helped me in my journey to trust and surrender to God's will in everyday life."

The Rozon's have since welcomed a third child, Felicity, into their family. Rozon currently homeschools the children.

"I'm sharing my faith with my kids," she said. "When I teach them religion, it's not just 'these are the Ten Commandments' and 'these are the Beatitudes.' I hope I'm sharing on a personal level that this is Jesus, He's our friend, He loves you and He helps you. I want my

kids growing up with that faith and love."

Rozon and her family have formed a faith community by participating in a monthly rosary gathering with other families at St. Agnes Church.

"It's a very basic gathering," she said. "We go around the room, say our intentions and pray the rosary together. Then we share a potluck meal. It's morphed into a second family for us. We're all praying together and witnessing to each other. We're sharing our struggles through our intentions."

Outside her homeschooling and efforts to keep her family connected to a community of faith, Rozon said she has little time for volunteering and ministry, but she recognizes that will change some day.

"I think that's a beautiful part of our Catholic faith," she said. "There are so many ways to share our faiths and talents, and those change throughout our lives. Some people are gifted speakers. Some are gifted authors. Some are able to volunteer locally and share their faith. Right now, I'm a mom. I share my faith with my kids, and try to spend kindness and build relationships with people in my circle."

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## Environmental Stewardship

Growing in  
divine intimacy

If we were to ask a college student what is the most intimate act a person can do, they might say, "sex." But, actually, the most intimate act is that of eating. When we eat, the food becomes a part of our very body.

This past Sunday, we celebrated the Feast of Corpus Christi, the Body of Christ. Before Jesus left the earth, He desired us to be connected with His mystical Body. So he chose bread and wine, "fruit of earth and work of human hands," as we pray in the Offertory of the Mass. His use of bread and wine connects us not only with Him but also to the earth itself. "He comes not from above, but from within, he comes that we might find him in this world of ours." (Laudato Si #234)

"Joined to the incarnate Son, present in the Eucharist, the whole cosmos gives thanks to God. . . . The Eucharist joins heaven and earth; it embraces and penetrates all creation" (LS #234). The wheat and the grape vine that have the capacity to change sunlight into food are connected with the soil, water and air that nurtures their growth. So, every bite of food we eat connects us with the earth, our human family and intimately connects us to the Mystical Body of Christ.

The simple act of praying "Grace" before and after a meal provide us with a PAUSE. It is a moment not only to ask God's blessings on our food, but also to be give thanks for the earth, the farmers, truckers, the grocers and cooks that are part of our meal as well as the Giver of all gifts.

With this awareness of our interconnectedness with all creation Pope Francis sees " . . . the Eucharist is also a source of light and motivation for our concerns for the environment, and directing us to be stewards of all creation." What action will you take to protect the quality of the water and air from toxic pollution?

## Bishop's Public Schedule

**June 17** – 9:30 a.m. – Diocesan Department Head Meeting at Wadhams Hall

**June 19** – 2 p.m. – Chrism Mass at St. Mary's Cathedral (Clergy only with livestream)

**June 20** – 10 a.m. – Diocesan Pastoral Council Meeting at St. Patrick's Church in Colton

**June 21** – 8 a.m. – Mass at St. Mary's Cathedral

**June 23** – 10:30 a.m. – Diocesan Finance Council Video Conference Meeting

## Rest in Peace

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

**June 17** – Rev. Thomas J. Thotumkal, 1992

**June 19** – Rev. Gerard Chouinard, O.M.I., 1955; Deacon David F. Moltz, 2011

**June 20** – Rev. James O'Hara, 1949

**June 21** – Rev. Joseph T. Moriority, O.S.A., 1905; Msgr. Joseph F. Luker, 1972

**June 23** – Rev. Edward Chevalier, O.M.I., 1894; Rev. Donat Morrisette, O.M.I., 1976

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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.

## White House to issue more stringent asylum rules

WASHINGTON (CNS) – Faith groups and other immigrant supporters are bracing for an announcement from the White House that may further limit those seeking asylum in the U.S.

Trump administration officials are soon expected to announce the changes, which may eliminate multiple grounds under which people can be granted asylum, allow immigration judges to reject asylum applications without hearing from those seeking it and may not allow those who have traveled through more than one country on their way to the U.S. to petition for asylum.

Specifics will be announced in a proposed rule to be published June 15, which will be followed by a 30-day period for

public comment.

Organizations such as Catholic Legal Immigration Network Inc. already have said it will oppose the changes and will "encourage all affiliates, partners and allies to submit a public comment in opposition."

In a June 11 statement, the Washington-based American Immigration Council said "the proposed regulation would make it nearly impossible for most applicants to successfully claim humanitarian protection in the United States."

"If implemented, the proposed regulation would impose multiple new bans on asylum, unreasonably raise the bar for asylum screenings at the border, rewrite current asylum law to eliminate multiple grounds under which people are currently granted asylum, and allow immigration judges to effectively deny people their day in court by rejecting applications without a hearing," the statement said.

"It would create new grounds for declaring asylum applications 'frivolous,' an extreme sanction that can ban someone from any other immigration relief," it said. "The regulation would also block virtually all who pass through more than one country on their way to the United States without pursuing relief in those countries, even if it's on a layover."

In a June 10 news release, the Justice Department said the proposed rule is overall consistent with the Immigration and Nationality Act and "would allow the Departments (of Justice and Homeland Se-

curity) to more effectively separate baseless claims from meritorious ones. This would better ensure groundless claims do not delay or divert resources from deserving claims."

Beth Werlin, the council's executive director, said if implemented, the regulations would mean "the end of the asylum system as we know it."

"It directly conflicts with the immigration statute, upends years of case law, and intentionally raises asylum standards to unreachable heights," she said. "The goal of this proposed regulation – far from reshaping the system to improve it – is to make asylum impossible to obtain."

Werlin added: "Asylum has already been greatly weakened by years of sustained attacks from the Trump administration, and this regulation would be the final blow to our once proud legacy of the United States as a refuge for vulnerable and persecuted populations of the world."

The Interfaith Immigration Coalition, which counts with Catholic member organizations, said the changes to be proposed by the U.S. Department of Justice and Homeland Security, "proves these governmental bodies stand for neither justice nor safety."

"The proposed rule further guts the U.S. legal system of asylum and other protections for people who are fleeing violence and murder in other countries. The goal is to end asylum in the United States administratively, without an act of Congress," the coalition said in the statement.

## Protecting God's Children

**The Diocese of Ogdensburg** uses the training, Protecting God's Children for Adults. Due to CoVid-19, there are no live trainings scheduled. If you need to complete VIR-TUS training, contact Jean Grizzuto, jgrizzuto@rcdony.org or 315-393-2920 x 1413, who will coordinate assigning the training to be completed online.

## 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.

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- Join the conversation!

## MAKING SENSE OF BIOETHICS

# Spiritual lessons from the pandemic

The Covid-19 pandemic has left many of us with a great deal of uncertainty: uncertainty about how contagious the virus is and about the best way to treat it; uncertainty about how long our personal immunity will last after we get infected and whether a vaccine will ever be developed; uncertainty about the future of the economy and whether jobs will still be there for the 40 million newly unemployed; uncertainty about how long the public quarantines should continue; uncertainty about what will happen to ourselves, our businesses, our families and our friends.

In the midst of so much uncertainty, we naturally look for something firm to hold onto. Cataclysmic disruptors, whether an outbreak of war, widespread riots and looting, or a new coronavirus, humble us and remind us how we cannot guarantee our own future.

Yet we instinctively yearn for a way to assure and secure that future for ourselves and for our children. Where should we turn for safety?

Maybe we can take a cue from our financial institutions. When uncertainty becomes too high, and lenders realize a potential borrower is at high risk of

default, they can sometimes turn to a higher authority like the federal government to "guarantee" a loan, as in the case of guaranteed student loans. Such loans offer a safety net and take away most risks for the lender.

What kind of higher authority should we be turning to in order to guarantee our future when we face so many uncertainties in life?

One lesson of the pandemic is not to place our hope in undeserving sources. While scientists may promise new treatments, and politicians may promise safety through contact tracing and lockdowns, these measures are stopgaps in the face of our larger human questions.

Many centuries ago, a powerful king of the united monarchy of Israel and Judah mused about the false promise of earthly reassurances. Writing in Psalm 119, King David presciently declared, "Some trust in chariots or horses, but we in the name of the Lord. They will collapse and fall, but we shall hold and stand firm."

The answer to the uncertainties surrounding our human condition lies,

precisely as David noted in his inimitable and direct style, in God himself. He alone knows and understands every event of history, from coronavirus pandemics to civil disturbances to economic collapses.



**Father Tadeusz Pacholczyk**  
Ph.D.

It's important for us to distinguish between true and false saviors. While a vaccine may limit the immediate threat from the coronavirus for us individually, death will still have its day and eventually lay its claim upon us. As natural as it may be for us to reach out for a vaccine to calm our preoccupations and restore predictability to our future, only God opens a real path for us beyond fear and beyond death. Our lives are on loan, and only He can guarantee the fulfillment of that loan in a destiny that lies beyond this troubled world.

Cardinal Robert Sarah summed it up well when he recently said:

"This virus acted as a warning. In a matter of weeks, the great illusion of a material world that thought itself all-powerful seems to have collapsed. ... A microscopic virus has brought this world to its knees..."

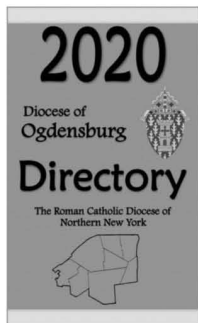
"We were promised to push the limits of human nature ever further by a triumphant science. We were told about artificial procreation, surrogate motherhood, transhumanism, enhanced humanity. We boasted of being a man of synthesis and a humanity that biotechnologies would make invincible and immortal. But here we are in a panic, confined by a virus about which we know almost nothing.

"Epidemic was an outdated, medieval word. It suddenly became our everyday life. I believe this epidemic has dispelled the smoke of illusion. The so-called all-powerful man appears in his raw reality. There he is naked. His weakness and vulnerability are glaring. Being confined to our homes will hopefully allow us to turn our attention back to the essentials, to rediscover the importance of our relationship with God."

We have an important opportunity to ponder these deeper lessons of the Covid-19 saga as it plays out in our midst. Rather than placing our hopes in the limited promises of this world, the pandemic reminds us of our vulnerability and our need for our true Savior, at every moment of our life.

*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](http://www.ncbcenter.org)*

## Diocesan Directory



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# Report: China among worst for religious freedom

WASHINGTON (CNS) – Top U.S. State Department officials singled out China as one of the world's worst offenders of religious freedom because it had subjected religious minorities to imprisonment and forced labor.

Sam Brownback, ambassador-at-large for religious freedom, told reporters during a news conference June 10 that the U.S. Department of State had no evidence that Muslim Uighurs had been released from prison or detention and that workers had been placed into forced labor.

The comments from Brownback and Secretary of State Mike Pompeo during the release of the annual Report on International Religious Freedom covering 2019 continued the U.S. government's monthslong campaign of strong criticism of the Chinese government's actions on a number of fronts.

The report follows the signing of an executive order June 2 by President Donald Trump prioritizing U.S. support for religious freedom in diplomacy worldwide.

China has been designated a "country of particular concern" in annual reports dating to 1999.

"China continues its decades-long war on faith," Pompeo told reporters.

"The Chinese Communist Party is now ordering religious organizations to obey CCP leadership and infuse communist dogma into their teachings and practice of their faith," he added. "The mass detentions of Uighurs in Xinjiang continues. So does the repression of Tibetans and Buddhists and Falun Gong and Christians."



CNS PHOTO/TYLER ORSBURN

A participant holds a sign at a religious freedom rally in Washington July 10, 2019. The U.S. State Department issued its annual report on attacks on religious freedom around globe June 10, 2020.

The section on China was the largest in the report. It cited widespread discrimination of Uighur Muslims as a cause for particular concern.

The Chinese government recognizes five official religions: Buddhism, Taoism, Islam, Protestantism and Catholicism. Members of each of these religious groups must register before they can participate in religious services.

Many faith practitioners have reported they are subject to surveillance and persecution, however.

The report said the Chinese government continued to justify restrictions on religious practices of Muslims in Xinjiang because of what it called the "three evils" of "ethnic separatism, religious extremism and violent terrorism."

More than 1 million Uighurs, ethnic Kazakhs, Hui and members of other Muslim groups as well as Uighur Christians have been held in internment camps in Xinjiang, the report said. Those being held have been subjected to "forced dis-

appearance, political indoctrination, torture, physical and psychological abuse, including forced sterilization and sexual abuse, forced labor, and prolonged detention without trial because of their religion and ethnicity," it said.

The report also identified other countries for infringements on religious freedom.

In Nigeria, "terrorist groups," including Boko Haram and Islamic State-West Africa "attacked population centers and religious targets and maintained a growing ability to stage forces in rural areas and launch attacks against civilian and military targets across the North East, according to observers."

The report repeated earlier findings that in Vietnam "members of religious groups said some local and provincial authorities used the local and national regulatory systems to slow, delegitimize, and suppress religious activities of groups that resisted close government management of their leadership, training programs, assemblies,

and other activities."

The report said religious groups without officials government recognition "reported various forms of government harassment" including assaults, arrests, prosecutions, surveillance, travel restrictions and property seizure or destruction as well as denials of requests for registration or no response to such requests.

In India, a close U.S. ally, increased reports of violence against religious and ethnic minorities and critics of the government and the government's inability to prevent such incidents were cited in the report.

"Some officials of Hindu-majority parties, including from the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP), made inflammatory public remarks or social media posts against minority communities," the report said.

Brownback noted as well that ally Saudi Arabia is the only country to prohibit all churches. Since 2004, Saudi Arabia has been designated a "country of particular concern" under the International Religious Freedom Act of 1998 "for having engaged in or tolerated particularly severe violations of religious freedom."

"Most recently, on Dec. 18, the secretary of state redesignated Saudi Arabia as a CPC and announced a waiver of the sanctions that accompany designation," the report added.

Pompeo pointed to positive developments in terms of actions being taken to hold violators of religious freedom accountable:

- Gambia has charged in a case in the Interna-

tional Court of Justice that Myanmar has committed genocide against the predominantly Muslim Rohingya ethnic group.

- Uzbekistan has boosted religious freedom and ended police raids on unregistered religious groups.

- United Arab Emirates has become the first Middle East country to allow the construction of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints.

The report also credited the Democratic Republic of the Congo for improving relations between the government and religious communities since the inauguration of President Felix Tshisekedi in January 2019, based on media reports and statements from religious leaders.

"Unlike the year prior, there were no reports of acts of violence or intimidation against Catholic Church officials by the government. In March, the government freed several political prisoners from the Catholic lay community (CLC) who had been arrested in 2018 for leading protests, which nongovernmental organizations and others had called an arbitrary action," the report said.

The report is based on the findings of individual U.S. embassies in each nation. U.S. diplomats gather information from government officials, religious groups, nongovernmental organizations, journalists, human rights monitors, academics, media and others, said the report's introduction.

The State Department's Office of International Religious Freedom also collects and analyzes additional information from separate sources.



# CATHOLIC WORLD AT A GLANCE

## Congo's Ebola outbreak adds strain during COVID-19 response

**NAIROBI, Kenya (CNS)** – As Congo battles the COVID-19 pandemic, a new Ebola outbreak has resurfaced in the northwest, just as authorities were prepared to declare the end of Ebola in three eastern provinces. The cases were confirmed in Mbandaka, a port city on River Congo May 31. By June 8, there were 12 cases, nine of which had been confirmed and three considered probable. Eight people have since died, including a 15-year-old girl, in the region where another outbreak ended about two years ago. Congo "is currently facing a COVID-19 epidemic affecting 11 provinces, working hard to end one long-burning (Ebola) epidemic affecting three provinces and confronting a new (Ebola) epidemic affecting one province," said Ghislain Mukuna, the integrated health program manager of the U.S.-based Catholic Relief Services in the country. "It is also acting to end a measles epidemic affecting all 26 provinces and a cholera epidemic affecting 10 provinces." He said in the east and in northwest Congo, the existing coordination structures and response teams fighting Ebola were also the same leading the fight against COVID-19.

## Trump tweets he's 'honored' by former nuncio's letter

**VATICAN CITY (CNS)** – President Donald Trump said he was "honored" by an open letter from a former Vatican official who claimed that restrictions to prevent the spread of COVID-19 were part of a Masonic plot to establish a new world order. In the letter released by LifesiteNews June 6, Archbishop Carlo Maria Vigano, who served as nuncio to the United States from 2011 to 2016, also claimed that "civil disturbances" in the wake of George Floyd's death in police custody were provoked by "deep state" operatives because "the virus is inevitably fading" and "the social alarm of the pandemic is waning." "Deep state" is a conspiracy theory alleging the existence of a hidden cabal in countries and within government offices that are attempting to undermine or usurp the authority of the legitimately elected government. Trump tweeted June 10 that he was "so honored by Archbishop Vigano's incredible letter to me. I hope everyone, religious or not, reads it!" In his letter, Archbishop Vigano praised the president for "wisely" opposing the "children of darkness whom we may easily identify with the deep state" and claimed that restrictions to stem the pandemic were a "colossal operation of social engineering."

## Religious freedom commission: U.S. cannot ignore Syria

**AMMAN, Jordan (CNS)** – The United States Commission on International Religious Freedom has urged Washington to take concrete actions to safeguard religious freedoms established in northeast Syria, an area imperiled by Turkish troops and allied militants. The independent, bipartisan U.S. federal government commission said it aims to defend the universal right to freedom of religion abroad and makes policy recommendations to the U.S. administration. USCIRF said towns and villages in northeast Syria – including some that are traditionally home to Christians, Kurds, Yazidis and Arabs – experience persistent Turkish and militant shelling and ethnic cleansing. It said badly needed humanitarian aid has also been cut off, especially in this time of the coronavirus pandemic. Turkey is also forcibly repopulating the area with Syrian refugees and those displaced from other parts of the country to change the region's demographics, it says. The rights group Genocide Watch labeled such actions as "war crimes" and "crimes against humanity." "The United States cannot look the other way as this disaster unfolds," Nadine Maenza, USCIRF's vice chair, said during a commission roundtable in Washington on June 10.

# Friends say Catholic activist is anti-war, not 'antifa'

**WASHINGTON (CNS)** – Catholic activist Martin Gugino long has been anti-war, anti-hunger, anti-violence, when it comes to opposing social ills, but the one "anti" that doesn't fit the bill is the "antifa" moniker President Donald Trump tried to pin on him in a June 9 tweet, friends say.

Trump's tweet said Gugino "could be ANTIFA provocateur." He insinuated that the 75-year-old fell hard on purpose, referring to the widely circulated video showing him falling to the ground after being pushed by police with the president saying he "fell harder than was pushed."

Antifa is a term some have used for those who have used violent tactics during mass protests, usually a small and younger set known for wearing face coverings such as ski masks to prevent being identified as they take part in destruction of property, attacks against police and vandalism.

But Gugino has been associated with the opposite kind of movement and the majority of peaceful protesters who have turned out recently against racial injustice. In particular, he uses nonviolent methods employed by the set he hangs out with: the Catholic Worker Movement.

"That's rather ... a visual of some of us," said Mark Coleville, a founding member of the Amistad Catholic Worker community in New Haven, Connecticut, about being painted as people carrying out violent tactics. "Not many of us are adept at jumping fences."

Coleville, who has joined Gugino in protests

for about 15 years, posted on Twitter a photo showing his friend in Washington demonstrating outside the U.S. Department of Justice with a sign saying "Resist Racism," in proximity to women holding flowers, demanding murder charges be brought against Cleveland police officers who killed 12-year-old Tamir Rice, a black child, in 2014.

Those are the protest methods of those involved with peaceful activism, Coleville told Catholic News Service in a June 10 telephone interview, while also explaining the history of the Catholic Worker Movement that he and Gugino are involved with, and one co-founded by New Yorker Dorothy Day in the 1930s following the Great Depression.

"It was a faith-based response to the poverty and unemployment, the injustice going on in some neighborhoods," Coleville explained.

Life structured for those involved with the Catholic Worker Movement "is very simple," Coleville said, "it's organized around a few basic daily practices of the works of mercy: giving sustenance to the poor but also fighting for justice for the poor."

Some like Coleville live in communities called Catholic Worker houses, many in large city centers.

"We have an open door for meals twice a week, food distribution, community gardening," he said. "And, of late, setting up tent city for people who are experiencing homelessness in New Haven."

Though Gugino does not live in a Catholic Worker house, he's very

much part of the movement, Coleville said. The two also are involved with Witness Against Torture, which organized to demand the closing of the Guantanamo Bay detention camp, working on issues such as racial injustice and police brutality, which is how Gugino ended up at the Buffalo, New York protest where the incident took place.

It was part of national mass demonstrations focused on the May 25 killing of George Floyd, who died after being pinned to the ground by a white police officer seen in a video holding his knee to the unarmed black man's neck for almost nine minutes.

And now Gugino has become part of those he's tried to defend, experiencing police brutality himself, said Keith Giles, program director for Peace Catalyst International in El Paso Texas, another longtime friend, who served with Gugino, aiding battered women's shelters in California about 13 years ago.

When he saw the video of his friend, who is battling cancer, knocked to the ground, "I was honestly sick to my stomach," Giles told CNS June 10.

If people want to know what those in the Christian peace movement like Gugino are about, Giles said, they are the type of people who follow Jesus Christ with daily actions, feeding those who are hungry in soup kitchens, spending time with those suffering and speaking publicly in their defense, the way Gugino has done, against injustice and that sometimes involves participating in protests.

## SCRIPTURE REFLECTIONS

# Praying all father's follow Jesus' advice

We salute all fathers how today and show our appreciation for all their sacrifices in caring and providing for our needs when we were growing up.

God the Father is the ultimate model for the stresses and frustrations of our fathers. From the very beginning of God creating us, we



**Monsignor  
Paul E.  
Whitmore**

fickle humankind was in keeping faithful for his plans for us. He often expressed his anger, but always forgave and restored them to His love.

In today's first reading, we see how his prophet, Jeremiah was mistreated and betrayed even by his

**June 21**

**12th Sunday of Ordinary Time**

READINGS

Jeremiah, 20:10-13

Romans 5-12-15

Matthew 10:26-33

personal diaries, he regrets his desires for vengeance. He even sings his praises for God, giving thanks for the promised protection of God.

Today's Gospel from St.

Matthew acknowledges how dangerous the work of preaching the Gospel can be. Often, the truths preached will meet opposition and even death. He says to them, "Fear no one." Christ is the solid rock on which the Church is built. Not even the gates of hell can prevail. He is the solid wall that no force can destroy. Their mission is to acknowledge the Good News before all people.

They must first, of course have acknowledged these truths themselves.

On this Father's Day, we pray that all fathers will follow Jesus' advice. May their faith and courage so forth to their families their conviction of faith by letting that light fearlessly shine out in all the circumstances of their lives. May they then draw those to their families, their friends, and many others to faith.

## CALLED TO SERVE

## Sunday Celebrations Absent a Priest

Halloween 1996 was a Thursday. I was at St. Patrick's in Watertown to set-up for noon Mass for our pastor, Father Ivan Boyea. Noon came but there was no priest. We called the rectory but there was no answer. It was a little late to look for another priest and a pretty good size congregation had gathered. At about 12:10, I announced that we did not have a priest available and that our next Mass was to be at 5:15 pm, the anticipated Mass for the Holy Day, All Saints. For those who chose to stay, I followed the directives for a weekday communion service as best I could. For the record, I was a lay

minister.

A group of us decided Father just forgot about the Noon Mass and we would all laugh about it at 5:15 p.m.

But he did not show again. This time, his absence was for a Holy Day Mass. I conducted another communion service but several of us were quite concerned. Three of us went to the rectory after the service and found Father Ivan dead. We had sadly experienced what the Church calls a celebration in the absence of a priest.

In hindsight, I should have told everyone to go home and come back Friday or go to one of the other parishes in Water-

town. Since I was naïve about such things, I could have used the correct text, the Directory for Sunday Celebrations in the Absence of a Priest (which applies to Holy Days too). Except I was not aware such an animal existed, and I am certain we did not have a copy of the Directory, first published in 1988, in the sacristy. If I knew then what I know now, the entire management of the situation would have been very different. But this true story points to the reality that brought 130 priests, deacons, re-

ligious and lay ministers to watch an on-line workshop on SCAP (Sunday Celebrations In The Absence Of A Priest) earlier this month and then spend an hour in a video conference with our diocesan leader for this issue, Father Bryan Stitt, the diocesan director for the Department of Worship. Father Bryan produced the workshop video too.



**Deacon  
Kevin Mastellon**

Our Bishop has asked every pastor to designate folks from his parish who step-in should health or natural disaster or an accident or death prevent a priest from appearing to celebrate weekend or Holy Day Mass. "If you have a deacon in the parish, the deacon goes first," Father Bryan said. But other parishioners need to be prepared, too, should the unthinkable occur.

SCAP is not a weekday communion service. The Rite for Distributing Holy

Communion Outside Mass with a Celebration of the Word is the proper text for that. In either case the conference of Bishops is adamant "every effort must be undertaken to avoid any confusion between this celebration and the Mass."

These prayer opportunities are not Masses. The decision to conduct a SCAP is never reached lightly. If one is ever needed in our Diocese or anywhere in the US, "these celebrations should increase the desire of the faithful to be present at and participate in the celebration of the Eucharist." That is why SCAP ends with a prayer for vocations to the priesthood. That is why we all signed-up for the lesson but hope we never have to use what we learned.

*Deacon Kevin Mastellon ministers in Watertown.*

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

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# Miracle attributed to Pauline Jaricot

On May 27, it was announced that the Holy Father, Pope Francis, has approved a decree affirming the veracity of a miracle attributed to the intercession of Pauline Marie Jaricot, founder of the Society for the Propagation of the Faith. "This is a very important step: it means that her commitment to the mission, made of prayer and charity, speaks and is still significant today for the universal Church, Archbishop Giampietro Dal Toso, President of the Pontifical Mission Societies and Adjunct Secretary of the Congregation for the Evangelization of Peoples, told Agenzia Fides, commenting on the promulgation of the Decree of the Congregation for the Causes of Saints.

### Who was Pauline Jaricot?

The Society for the Propagation of the Faith was founded in Lyons, France, in 1822 by a young French laywoman, Pauline Jaricot. Inspired by stories she heard about missionary work in China, she felt called by the Lord to help the Catholic Church's worldwide missionary work. Pauline herself never traveled to the Missions, which, during her lifetime, consisted of the Missions in China and young dioceses in the United States. Pauline gathered friends and workers in a family silk mill into "circles of ten," asking each person to pray daily for the Missions and sacrifice a penny-a-week (at that time, quite a large sacrifice). From this idea emerged the Propagation of the Faith.

Today the General Fund of the Propagation of the Faith, which gathers gifts from Catholics all over the world — a concept that originated with Pauline Jaricot and her desire to help all the world's missions — is the basic means of support for the Catholic Church's worldwide Missions.

### The cause for sainthood was established for Pauline Jaricot

In 1962, 100 years after her death, Pope John XXIII signed the decree that proclaimed the virtues of Pauline Marie Jaricot declaring her "venerable." Pope John wrote: "It was she who thought of the Society, who conceived it, and made it an organized reality." Among the many reasons to give thanks, the Church now indicates that Blessed Pauline Jaricot, as she will be known, is someone to whom prayers can be directed seeking her intercession.

*Please remember "The Society for the Propagation of the Faith" when writing or changing your Will.*

[www.rcdony.org/mission](http://www.rcdony.org/mission)

## OBITUARIES

**Brasher Falls** — William D. Demo, 83; Private funeral service to be held.

**Keeseville** — Patricia (Davies) Finnegan, 86; Private Mass of Christian burial to be held at Immaculate Conception Church; burial in Immaculate Conception Cemetery.

**Lake Placid** — Henry Michael Cooney Jr., 76; Private Mass of Christian Burial to be held June 4, 2020 at St. Agnes Church; burial in St. Agnes Cemetery.

**Massena** — James C. Murphy, 99; Private Funeral Services to be held; burial in St. Joseph's Cemetery, Batavia.

**Massena** — Jeannette Lucille (Marion) Witkop, 84; Private Mass of Christian Burial to be held at Church of the Sacred Heart; burial in Calvary Cemetery.

**Mooers Forks** — Leon Casper LaMere, 97; Private Services to be held; burial in St. Ann's Cemetery.

**Plattsburgh** — David F. Carr, 35; Mass of Christian burial to be held; burial in St. Mary's of the Lake Cemetery.

**Redford** — Veronica Rock; Mass of Christian Burial Aug. 6, 2020 at Church of the Assumption.

**Ticonderoga** — Frederica B. (Yaw) Sharpe, 80; Private Mass of Christian burial to be held at St. Mary's Church; burial in May Memorial Cemetery, Hague.

**Waddington** — Robert E. Miller, 71; Funeral services to be held at a later date.

**West Leyden** — Margaret A. (Quinn) Samson, 87(39 again); Private Mass of Christian burial to be held at St. Mary's Nativity; burial in St. Peter & Paul's Cemetery, Fish Creek.

# Institute: Remember 'spiritual fathers' on Father's Day

OMAHA, Neb. (CNS) — Stories of Catholic priests' "creativity, sacrifice and compassionate service" during this time of the coronavirus have inspired an effort led by the Institute for Priestly Formation in Omaha to recognize and celebrate "these spiritual fathers" on Father's Day, which is June 21.

These priests are among "the front-line workers, especially during the pandemic and social unrest, continue to inspire us as we witness their selfless acts," said a June 8 news release.

The institute said it is calling on all people to remember their spiritual fathers by sending Father's Day wishes via a card, email, text or phone call "as an expression of gratitude for all they have and continue to do — especially for reminding us of God's abundant graces as we navigate these challenging times."

"We have so many reasons to say thank you. The pandemic and social unrest have definitely underscored our need for

happy, healthy, holy priests," Mary Buttell, president of the Institute for Priestly Formation Foundation, said in a statement. "Our priests are among the many selfless front-line responders. We thought Father's Day offered the perfect opportunity for people to express their appreciation."

Over the past several weeks, she said, the institute has heard story after story of its alumni who have found creative ways to hear confessions in parking lots during the nation's lockdown because of COVID-19.

They have livestreamed Masses to their congregations as well as consoled "disappointed couples and grief-stricken families who were allowed only 10 people to attend their wedding or funeral services," she said.

Priests also have offered support to those who have lost their livelihood due to the shutdown and been on call to anoint COVID-19 patients "and then isolate so as to

not put anyone else's health at risk," Buttell added. Priest also are ministering at this time to victims of violence, she said.

"Everyone appreciates being appreciated," she said. "So, we hope many, many people will reach out to their priests and let them know they make a difference and that their work is appreciated."

The Institute for Priestly Formation, [www.priestlyformation.org](http://www.priestlyformation.org), offers spiritual resources to priests. It also runs an annual nine-week summer program on the campus of Jesuit-run Creighton University's campus in Omaha to enhance spiritual formation of diocesan seminarians from the U.S. and Canada.

When it was founded 25 years ago this year, the institute said it had six seminarians for its program, and to date it has served more than 3,000 seminarians and more than 1,000 priests from 165 U.S. dioceses and 55 international dioceses.

# Black Catholics: Church's support needed

LOUISVILLE, Ky. (CNS) – After Tianna Barnes-Palmer watched local protests and marches for racial justice unfold on social media, she helped organize the "Black Catholics Unite: Stand For Justice March" in downtown Louisville.

On June 6, with chants calling for racial justice, close to 200 people marched from an intersection near St. Augustine Church to the federal courthouse.

Members of the clergy and individuals of different racial groups came out to support in the young adults in the black Catholic community who organized the grassroots initiative.

"I heard young people asking where the Catholic presence was," said Barnes-Palmer during an interview before marching downtown. "We wanted to show that black Catholics are engaged. That we care and we're ready to stand for the injustices black people are experiencing in America."

Father John Judie, a retired priest of the Archdiocese of Louisville, addressed the gathering, noting that racial justice wasn't only the dream of the Rev. Martin Luther



CNS PHOTO/RUBY THOMAS, THE RECORD

**Demonstrators in Louisville, Ky., are seen June 6, 2020, during the "Black Catholics Unite: Stand For Justice March."**

King Jr. It also is "God's dream," he said.

"Racism is a deeply rooted systemic problem and it is as dangerous and destructive as cancer in the blood. It works constantly to eat away and destroy the very spirit and soul of our human community," said Father Judie.

"For African Americans in the United States, it can be traced back as far as 1619, when the first shipload of our African ancestors was taken from the motherland and brought into slavery in this country," he contin-

ued. "America has a shameful history of how black folks have been treated here ever since."

Slavery, said Father Judie, was a "violation and betrayal of the dream of God."

That betrayal and violation continue today in the "lack of health care insurance, less access to health care, less than adequate housing, the preferential treatment given to whites over people of color in the corporate world, academic institutions and in the church," he said.

Father Judie said there needs to be "radical, systemic change ... that digs into the very depths of every person's soul."

African American young adults who marched downtown said they want their voices heard and that they need the church's support now more than ever.

Barnes-Palmer, a member of St. Martin de Porres Church, who is the mother of a 15-year-old boy and a 12-year-old girl, said the recent violence against blacks is difficult to explain to her children.

"It was challenging explaining to my 12-year-old daughter why this is going on, but it provided an opportunity for me to explain to her how some blacks are treated in America," she told The Record, newspaper of the Louisville Archdiocese.

"I have a 15-year-old son who will be driving soon and become an adult. I'm worried he could be the next Trayvon Martin. That he could be profiled, shot and killed," she said.

Martin was a 17-year-old who was shot and killed by neighborhood watch volunteer George Zimmerman in Sanford, Florida, in 2012. The unarmed teen was found with a pack of candy.

"It's not fair that our people are shot and killed," said Barnes-Palmer. "Police officers are not held accountable for murder and taking black lives."

Charles Dillard, a member of St. Augustine Church, shares Barnes-Palmer's fear.

"We're still getting targeted as African Americans by the police. It's the same fight our ancestors were fighting not even 50 years ago. I don't want to be the next guy or I don't want my child to be shot by the police or a racist man in the city," said Dillard, adding that he's been the victim of racial profiling on many occasions.

Dillard is the father of two young girls. He also has nephews whom he worries about as well, he noted.

Marshall Washington, a member of Christ the King Church, said prayers and the support of the church are critical at this time.

"What we really need is the support of the church and faith in God because that's what will get us

through these trying times. We need to maintain constant prayer and hope that our cries for help are recognized by those in power," he said.

The recent violence against African Americans is "heartbreaking, but not surprising. I expect this response from law enforcement and those in power. I'm glad it's bringing awareness of the issues we deal with to the general populace," he said.

On Memorial Day, in Minneapolis a police officer was captured on video kneeling for almost nine minutes on the neck of George Floyd, 46, who later was declared dead at the hospital. In Louisville, emergency medical worker Breonna Taylor, 26, was shot to death March 13 by police in her home. In February, Ahmaud Arbery, 25, was fatally shot by three white men now facing murder charges.

Kenya Turner, a member of St. Martin de Porres Church who helped to organize the June 6 march, said it's important at this moment to highlight Catholic social teaching, which states that humans were created in the image and likeness of God and therefore have inherent dignity.

What blacks need from the church right now, she said, is support as well as acknowledgment of "the special gifts that we bring to the whole Catholic community."

"As black Catholics, it's important also to come together in solidarity to say to the city, to say to the state, to say to the world that we see, we acknowledge what's going on and let the world know we are in support of each other in our faith," Turner, added.

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