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The Diocese of Ogdensburg Volume 75, Number 13

NORTH COUNTRY CATHOLIC

JULY 15, 2020

SUMMER SCHEDULE

The *North Country Catholic* is now on summer schedule and will print every other week throughout the summer. The next edition will be July 29.

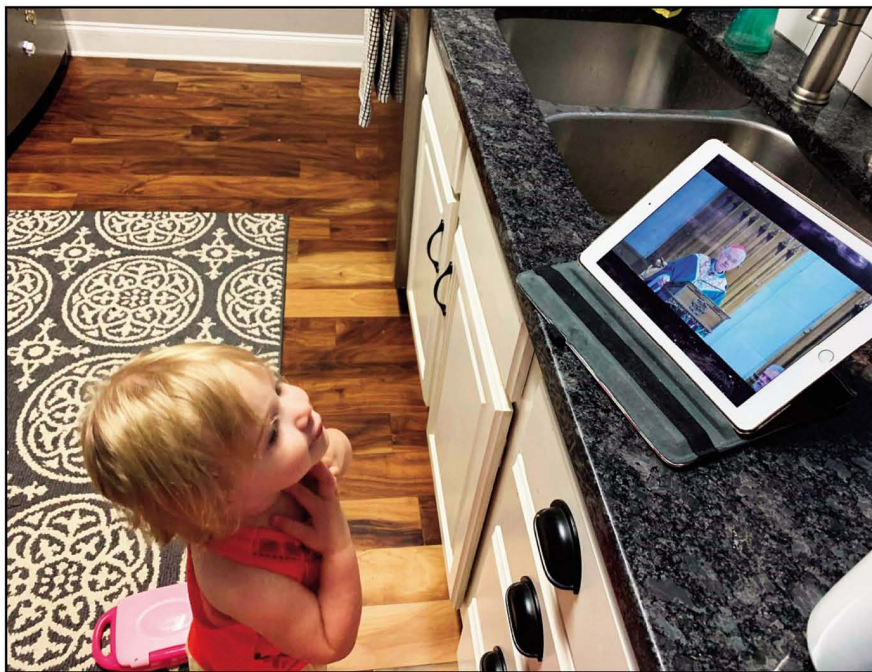
Follow Me: Celebrating St. Kateri, return to Mass

On the Memorial of St. Kateri Tekakwitha, Bishop Terry R. LaValley notes that the local saint was deeply affected by the smallpox epidemic of the 1600s, yet remained strong in her faith.

As we live through the coronavirus pandemic of our time, Bishop LaValley invites the faithful to return to Mass.

FULL STORY, PAGE 3

CELEBRATING TOGETHER FROM AFAR



Cadence Kurutz, 2, of Atlanta, Georgia, watches the livestream of Bishop Terry R. LaValley celebrating Mass from St. Mary's Cathedral in Ogdensburg. Kurutz is the daughter of Brent and Diana (Missert) Kurutz. Diana grew up in the North Country, attended Holy Family School and Immaculate Heart Central, and she worked on staff at Camp Guggenheim. Diana said watching Bishop LaValley celebrate Mass helps her "miss home less."

AND THE AWARD GOES TO...



The North Country Catholic was awarded a first place Catholic Press Association Award in the category "Best Reporting on the Celebration of a Sacrament" for "Finding Faith in a Fortress," featuring inmates at Clinton Correctional Facility receiving the Sacraments of Initiation.

FULL STORY, PAGE 4

Pope: Migrants seek new life end up in 'hell'

VATICAN CITY (CNS) – Decrying the unimaginable "hell" migrants experience in detention centers, Pope Francis urged all Christians to examine how they do or don't help – as Jesus commanded – the people God has placed in their path.

Christians must always seek the face of the Lord, who can be found in the hungry, the sick, the imprisoned and foreigners,

the pope said on the anniversary of his first pastoral visit as pope to the Italian island of Lampedusa.

Jesus warned everyone, "whatever you did for one of these least brothers of mine, you did for me," and Christians today must look at their actions every day and see if they have even tried to see Christ in others, the pope said in his homily during

Mass July 8.

"Such a personal encounter with Jesus Christ is possible also for us, disciples of the third millennium," he said.

The Mass, held in the chapel of the pope's residence, marked the seventh anniversary of his first apostolic journey to an island that has been a major destination point for migrants seeking a new life in Europe.

However, since 2014, at least 19,000 people have died, drowning in the Mediterranean Sea during those boat crossings. Pope Francis mourned their deaths during his 2013 visit with prayers and tossing a floral wreath into the rippling water.

In his homily at the Vatican chapel July 8, he remembered those who are trapped in Libya, sub-

jected to terrible abuse and violence and held in detention centers that are more like a "lager," the German word for a concentration camp. He said his thoughts were with all migrants, those embarking on a "voyage of hope," those who are rescued and those who are pushed back.

"Whatever you did, you did for me," he said, repeating Jesus' warning.

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EDITOR'S NOTE

Loving through the bite marks

"He's a biter."

That's what my husband says every time Pippin, one of our three cats, bites me.

But Pippin isn't a biter in general. Only I get bit. He also sits only on my lap, cuddles only with me at night and head butts only me in the morning when he thinks it's time to wake up. As far as Pippin is concerned, Adam, my husband, exists only as a food delivery system. Jake, our son, barely exists at all.

Pippin's bites don't break skin, and they tend to come

mostly when he thinks I should be petting him, but I'm not, or when he thinks I should be petting him with both hands. He's bitten my fingers, my forearm, my elbow and even my nose. With me, Pippin is definitely a biter.

Darcy L.
Fargo

While the bites don't typically hurt, they also don't feel great, and they sometimes surprise me. After a recent surprise bite while I was in bed, almost asleep, I ex-

claimed, "why does this cat keep biting me?"

"Because he loves you," Adam said.

"He has a funny way of showing it," I responded.

Stewing about Pippin's disruption to my pending slumber, it occurred to me that his biting behavior isn't all that dissimilar to how people behave. We tend to hurt the ones we love most.

I'm guessing most of us don't lose our tempers or say hurtful things to our colleagues, our acquaintances or the people we encounter while running errands. We lose our tempers or say hurtful things to the ones we love – to our spouses, our family members, our close friends. Why? Maybe it's because they're the people we're around the most, and we're

comfortable enough to let our guards down. Maybe it's because we know they'll absorb the moments when we're not at our best, and they'll still love us, just like I still love my biting cat.

Similarly, we do things that hurt God. We have moments of laziness and apathy with our faith. We sin. Regardless of how badly we behave and how badly we sin, God still loves us.

We all have those moments in which we figuratively bite, whether its our loved ones or our Lord. Yet we're still loved. It's such a huge blessing.

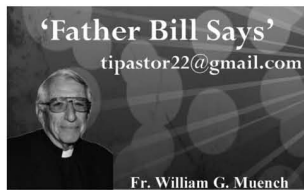
But I still wish Pippin would stop biting me and let me sleep.

Being a Catholic during the pandemic

Let me tell you about this morning. I had an appointment with my new cardiologist – a telephone appointment. First of all, let me be sure to tell you that the doctor assured me that my heart was in good shape and healthy.

After talking a while about my heart, the doctor began talking about his life as a Catholic especially during this time of pandemic. Among other things, he mentioned that in his parish, it was required to call and make a sort of a reservation for being at Sunday Mass. I suspect many of you are faced with the same situation. Our Catholic parishes these days are required to limit the congregation at Mass along with distancing and face masks and such. I believe we will be doing these things for quite a while more.

So today as I began to write, the only thing that is holding my attention these days is being a Catholic during this pandemic. I know



Fr. William G. Muench

that not much is going to change. However, I think that this should mean that living the life of a good Catholic should not really be that different, but in many ways, it is very different. I think that living a good life will demand more faith now. I believe faith means a deeper love for the Lord Jesus, a readiness to live well, to understand well how to make my life alive with the Spirit of my God. Things are much more confusing these days. So many other things are involved with living a good and healthy life, and, at the same time, turning often to the Lord to find a deeper and stronger faith.

So here we go again. My attention constantly turns to doing all that I can to keep my faith strong and alive.

Mass may be a streamed Mass on the television. As a person of faith, even this should lead me to a deeper prayer, prayer of heart and soul. Personally, I know it is not like Mass in Church, but in faith this streamed Mass can lead me to prayer and strengthen my faith.

I believe that this should and must lead me to promise the Lord to do all that I can to allow the Lord to lead me – to live well, to do something special, to lead me to bring the love of the Lord into all that I do as part of my daily life. This leads me to live with faith with a readiness to always be ready for the surprises that the Lord places in my life each day – surprises that I can bring God's love and peace to others. This is my opportunity to make my world a better place.

One more thing to share with you today. I believe this would be an excellent way for us all to extend our faith in this time of distancing and staying apart. That

would be that each of us would offer our prayers and sacrifices for very specific intentions – someone we know who needs our prayers, of a cause for this world or country, or a hope or wish in our hearts.

Over the years, I know that I have been supported and strengthened by the prayers of many – many who have promised to pray for me, many who have realized that I needed someone to pray for me. And I believe in faith that the prayers of so many have made a powerful difference in my life.

I would like to suggest finally an intention for us all: I believe it is time for us to pray for the people of our planet, a time to realize that there are far too many divisions among us, divisions that have resulted in a lack of respect and at times even a deep hatred. May the prayers of us all reach out to our God, and that with God's help, we may truly discover that we are truly brothers and sisters.

FOLLOW ME

Celebrating St. Kateri and return to worship

Dear Sisters and Brothers in Christ:

You know some of her history. Born in a Mohawk village in Auriesville, Kateri Tekakwitha was the first Native American to be canonized. Perhaps you remember that there was a nice contingent from the North Country and St. Regis parish in Akwesasne that attended the canonization ceremony in Rome back in 2012.

Did you know that this saint from our neck of the woods contracted smallpox in an epidemic in the 1600s? Her parents and younger brother died from the epidemic and her face was scarred. This woman, so much in love with God, had an urgent desire to visit the sick and receive the Eucharist. Members of her family and community were violently opposed to her conversion to the Catholic faith. Minutes after her death, her facial scars vanished and her

face appeared radiant.

I thought that today, the Feast Day of the Lily of the Mohawks, would be an appropriate occasion to share these thoughts. Like St. Kateri, we know first-hand the worries, the uncertainty, and the suffering caused by a horrific disease that continues to haunt us. Let me begin by first assuring you of my continuing prayers for you and your loved ones. We pray for those who have tested positive with the virus, those who are currently suffering from it, and we ask God to look kindly upon loved ones who have succumbed to the COVID-19 virus. We are mindful of individuals who have suffered the death of a loved one and were unable to celebrate a Funeral Mass with everyone who desired to attend. It's been heart-



**Bishop
Terry R.
LaValley**

breaking. Of course, our hard-working healthcare workers are in our prayers, as well.

As you know, our parish life has been particularly affected. Our churches are now open, albeit, with noticeable changes. I am so grateful to our pastors, staff and parishioners who worked hard to implement guidelines and introduce liturgical adaptations to reduce the risk of spreading the virus. Thank you for cooperating with the measures we have taken to provide a safe environment in which to gather for public worship.

My sisters and brothers, now is the time to come back to Mass. Now is the time for healthy adults and children to reengage with your parish family. We are a Eucharistic people. Of course, we need to observe

all the guidelines that have been issued. We don't want to risk setting back the progress we have made.

With that in mind, we know we don't social distance Jesus. He is essential! Please contact your parish office to confirm Mass times in your parish, both daily and Sunday Masses. Also, inform your pastor if someone desires a home visit, seeks to celebrate the Anointing of the Sick or wants to celebrate the Sacrament of Penance, but is unable to come to Church. It is crucial that we tend to our ministerial life, as best we can, while observing the precautions, and help refuel our parishes so that they are running on all sacramental, liturgical, and pastoral cylinders. I am humbled and grateful for your remarkable financial support of your Church during these uncertain and worrisome times. Your faith and your support are so inspiring!

Some of our parishioners have underlying health conditions or are of a vulnerable age where the prudent decision might be to remain at home for the foreseeable future. In these cases, I continue to dispense the faithful from the obligation to attend Sunday Mass. The Sunday 8:00am Masses will continue to be livestreamed from St. Mary's Cathedral.

Let us continue to pray for each other as we seek the intercession of the Blessed Mother, St. Joseph and St. Kateri for healing and peace in this time of trial and testing. See you in Church!

Faithfully yours in Christ,

**Most Reverend
Terry R. LaValley
Bishop of Ogdensburg**

Living the truth and beauty of God's plan

Dear Sisters and Brothers in Christ:

As we do every summer, our Church is participating in Natural Family Planning Awareness Week, (July 19-25). No, that doesn't mean we have another special second collection. But...we do ask for something from the faithful: take the time for some reflection and prayer on Natural Family Planning.

You might think, "I don't have time to study God's plan for married love. I have plenty of worries and concerns on my plate right now." Fair enough. Perhaps I can work on my philosophy of life when it

comes to doing God's will or doing my will. This year's theme is "Live the truth and beauty of God's plan for married love." God's plan, not mine.

But, so often, we rebel against any idea of a plan by God. We have our own plans, our own designs. For instance, today I will determine whether I want to be male or female. I'll design me in my own image. Science and technology will help me. We will call it "freedom." Or... We will define marriage according to our own pleasure, not divine designs. We will call it "equality."

Too often, we feel most

at home back in the Garden walking in the footsteps of Adam and Eve. I can do what I want, never mind what my Creator says. Pride presents itself front and center. I know better than God. 'If you do exist, God, don't call me, I'll call you when I want something, and you best respond to my request according to my personal plans.' No matter how unpopular, no matter what everybody else thinks, we are called to live the truth and beauty of God's plan for married love. The truth is God does have a plan that is beautiful, life-giving and practical.

Authentic family plan-

ning honors God's design by supporting the love-giving and life-giving nature of sexual intercourse. It promotes openness to new life and the value of the child. It helps to enrich the marital bond between husband and wife. Authentic family planning builds healthy and holy families. Through NFP, married couples celebrate and reverence God's vision of human sexuality.

Please visit our NFP office at our diocesan website: www.rcdony.org to learn more about this important element of the Church's teaching on marriage. We are truly blessed to have Suzanne and An-

gelo Pietropaoli serve as our diocesan directors of Natural Family Planning. Please contact them at the NFP office at 518-483-0459 or via email at apietropaoli@rcdony.org for more information or assistance in this important ministry that makes for stronger marriages and healthy, happier families.

Faithfully yours in Christ,

**Most Reverend
Terry R. LaValley
Bishop of Ogdensburg**

AND THE AWARD GOES TO...

JANUARY 16, 2019

Finding faith in a fortress

Inmates receive Sacraments of Initiation

By Darcy Fargo
Editor

DANNEMORA - "I've made some bad decisions, but I have a wife and son. It was time to better myself as a man and better my faith."

Those were the words of Abner Alvarez, an inmate at Clinton Correctional Facility in Dannemora. Alvarez was one of four inmates who received the sacraments of Baptism, Confirmation and First Communion from Bishop Terry R. LaValley at the Church of St. Dismas, the Good Thief, the church built behind the prison walls. Another 10 inmates were confirmed, as well.

Alvarez, serving a 25-years to life sentence, said he first became interested in the Catholic Church after talking to Deacon Frank Bushey, the prison's chaplain.

"I was working with Deacon Bushey, cleaning the

offices," Alvarez said. "He would talk to me about my family. He would talk to me about faith. It just made me think about it more."

Inmate Pedro Abad received the sacrament of Confirmation at the prison church, as well. He said he was baptized as a child, but was never confirmed, instead trying several different faith traditions over the years.

"This has been good for me," said Abad, who is serving an eight- to 25-year sentence. "There are a lot of temptations to make bad choices here. I'm trying to get where I'm constantly thinking, 'what would Jesus do?' This is about trying to be a better man."

The sacraments were administered by Bishop LaValley in a Mass held in the only Catholic Church in the United States built behind prison walls, with

inmates, clad in green uniforms, serving as lectors and musicians. One of the readings was read in Spanish, one in English.

In his homily, Bishop LaValley focused on "vision." "We all struggle with vision at some point," said Bishop LaValley. "But our God has a vision for us. If we live that plan, we'll know nothing but happiness in this life and the next. That's God's vision for you and me."

Bishop LaValley noted that we all struggle with our sinfulness, even as we try to follow God's plan. "We stumble. We commit sins. We get in trouble," Bishop LaValley said. "Sometimes we get caught, sometimes we don't, but we're all sinners."

It's in those moments that we rely on God's



The Church of St. Dismas, the Good Thief, located within the Clinton Correctional Facility in Dannemora, is the only known church structure built within a prison facility in the U.S.

The church behind the walls

By Darcy Fargo
Editor

DANNEMORA - Driving along state Route 374, the main route through the town, it's nearly impossible to ignore the long, imposing wall of the third oldest prison in New York, Clinton Correctional Facility. But from that southern wall of the facility, it's impossible to know that the complex houses the only known Catholic Church built behind prison walls in the United States, possibly in the world.

The Church of St. Dismas, the Good Thief, was constructed between 1939 and 1941. Construction of the church, named for the "good thief" who was crucified with Christ and asked to be remembered in paradise, was spearheaded by Father Ambrose Hyland, then chaplain at the facility, who was inspired to undertake the project after receiving a vision in a dream.

After clearing legal and administrative hurdles to obtain approval to build the facility, Father Hyland was tasked with gathering the materials and tradesman needed for construction.

Construction materials were obtained from local buildings that were abandoned or in disrepair, and from stones collected in the area. Other materials were donated, including red oak for pews that was

CONTINUED ON PAGE 5



Bishop Terry R. LaValley and Deacon Frank Bushey pose with Clinton Correctional Facility inmates. Recently, the 14 inmates received Sacraments of Initiation.

The two-page feature "Finding Faith in a Fortress" earned the North Country Catholic a First Place Catholic Press Association Award in the category of "Best Reporting on the Celebration of a Sacrament."

NCC wins Catholic Press Association Award

OGDENSBURG - The North Country Catholic has continued its long-standing tradition of award-winning work, earning a 2020 Catholic Press Association Award.

The NCC was awarded first place for "Finding Faith in a Fortress," a two-page feature with photos highlighting inmates at Clinton Correctional Facility in Dannemora celebrating the Sacraments of Initiation with Bishop Terry R. LaValley. The piece, written by Darcy

Fargo, the newspaper's editor, won in the category of "Best Reporting on a Sacrament."

Catholic Press Association Award judges described the piece saying: "The title is intriguing and draws in readers. The story is beautifully written and keeps readers' interest from start to finish, accompanied by

eye-catching photographs. The North Country Catholic competes against diocesan weekly newspapers with circulations up

to 25,000.

"Over the years, the North Country Catholic has continuously demonstrated excellence in telling the stories of how we are living out our Catholic faith here in the North Country," said Bishop LaValley, also the publisher of the NCC. "While we have always recognized how blessed we are to claim the NCC as our own, it's gratifying to see the high quality of our diocesan newspaper recognized by the Catholic Press Association. We are



all proud of our North Country Catholic and its outstanding staff, led by Darcy Fargo, editor/general manager, Christine Ward, editorial assistant, and the many columnists, contributing writers and photographers. Well done and congratulations!"

Fargo said the piece on the inmates' celebration of the sacraments and the opportunity to visit The Church of St. Dismas, the only Catholic church built behind prison walls in the United States, possibly the world, was a highlight of her career.

"After nearly 10 years of working for secular newspapers and two years in Catholic media, I've had a lot of exciting and inter-

esting experiences," Fargo said. "But visiting St. Dismas and interviewing the inmates who were trying to better their relationships with the Lord and better themselves was inspiring, and it was one of the most memorable moments in my career. I'm blessed to be able to share such moments with the readers of the North Country Catholic, and I'm blessed to work with a talented, dedicated and faithful NCC staff, as well as my outstanding colleagues at the diocese."

The NCC has won a number of CPA awards in its history, with the most recent being a first place and an honorable mention in 2017.

JANUARY 16, 2019

Church inside prison walls

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 4

donated by mobster Charles "Lucky" Luciano, a former inmate at the facility.

Two angel carvings, said to be rescued from Ferdinand Magellan's ship that sank in the 1500s, were donated by descendants of the Magellan family.

Much of the labor to build the church was performed by inmates, volunteers and other inmates who came to the facility with those skills.

An inmate, incarcerated for forgery, is said to have created the stained-glass windows, which also double as Stations of the Cross, after learning the trade from artisans sent to the prison to aid in the project.

The inmate, Carmelo Soraci, is said to have used the faces of other inmate volunteers as the inspiration for the faces in the windows.

Soraci's work is said to have helped him secure an early release.

"It's really a beautiful church," said Deacon Frank Bushey, who serves as a chaplain at Clinton

Correctional Facility. "And the vast majority of the population will never see it."

On the grounds around the church, inmates constructed a Grotto to Our Lady, a reproduction of the Grotto in Lourdes.

The church was added to the National Register of Historic Places in 1991.

The prison is currently maintained by an inmate crew, under the supervision of correctional staff.

"It's the best job in the prison," said one inmate on the crew. "We get to do something important."



Bishop Terry R. LaValley pours the water of Baptism on an inmate at Clinton Correctional Facility in Dannemora. Fourteen inmates received sacraments at the prison in a recent ceremony.

Inmates receive sacraments

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 4

"Seeing inmates grow in their conversion experience, making positive change, and seeing the impact on their lives and their families is rewarding," he said.

Deacon Bushey said seeing inmates work on their faith makes his work in

the facility worthwhile.

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Deacon Bushey said seeing inmates work on their faith makes his work in

the facility worthwhile. "Seeing inmates grow in their conversion experience, making positive change, and seeing the impact on their lives and their families is rewarding," he said. "Their receiving the sacraments is a new beginning for them."



(Above) A recreation of the Grotto to Our Lady at Lourdes sits below a watchtower just outside St. Dismas, the Good Thief, the church built inside Clinton Correctional Facility. (Below) Stained glass Stations of the Cross were created by an inmate during church construction. Other than Jesus and women, the faces of other individuals depicted in the windows are said to be representations of other inmates incarcerated during construction.



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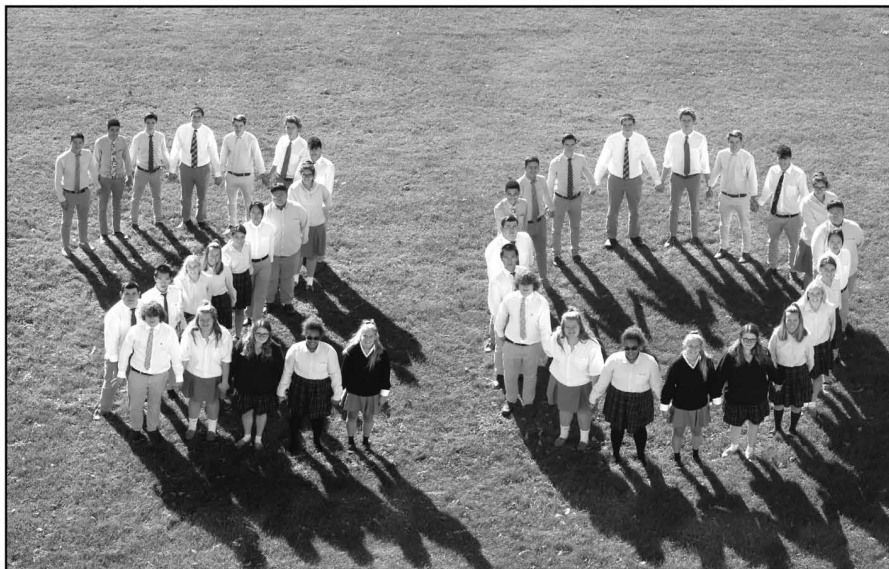
Immaculate Heart grads surprised with video

By Jessica Hargrave
Contributing Writer

WATERTOWN – Graduation is considered a rite of passage for teenagers closing the door on their high school careers. On June 7, Governor Andrew Cuomo announced high schools can hold in-person graduations in outdoor settings with a limit of 150 people starting June 26. Seniors from Immaculate Heart Central School in Watertown were able to do just that, attending their graduation on the school's athletic field.

With the COVID-19 pandemic wiping out traditional graduation ceremonies, do seniors feel shortchanged with their experience? Schools, including IHC, made sure their seniors were supported and loved in different ways. Amanda McIlroy, director of Advancement at IHC, said she wanted seniors to have a memento to cherish, surprising them with a secret video on Friday, June 26, the day of graduation. When it was announced the school was closing due to COVID-19 concerns back in March, McIlroy said she knew she wanted to do something special for the class of 2020. She started working on a senior slideshow, but after realizing it might be a project seniors would want to work on themselves, she handed the slideshow over to a small group of seniors to complete. McIlroy had something else up her sleeve, though, secretly piecing together videos and pictures being sent to her by school staff and family members.

"I'm tacking the video to the end of the slideshow, so when they think it's over, it's not actually over," said McIlroy.



The Immaculate Heart Central Class of 2020

With no order to who would be featured next in the added video, the students were surprised every step of the way. McIlroy said everyone's love and excitement to participate was heartwarming. She pointed to a memorable clip of science teacher, Mrs. Missert, putting a Mentos in a soda bottle which then erupted.

"You hear the family in the background yelling, 'Wow! What a science experiment,'" McIlroy said. "Those videos that are just so fun because one, they

made it their own, two, have fun with it, three, got the family involved, and that's what it really comes down to is the involvement and the participation."

The video was a chance to feature those who were unable to attend graduation due to social distancing and limited attendance policies required for outdoor graduation ceremonies.

"You can see how much they are loved and cared for and it's nice to be able to showcase that for

them," said McIlroy.

The video was shared on the school's YouTube and Facebook pages a few hours before the ceremony, something that the

seniors will be able to access whenever they want without having to worry about losing a disc.

IHC's graduation had a special attendee, Bishop Terry R. LaValley. Principal Dan Charlebois initially presumed a traditional Baccalaureate Mass would not be an option at this year's graduation. Fortunately, with churches allowed to open at a limited capacity, the Mass was able to take place.

As the country begins to reopen in the wake of the pandemic comes excitement for the future and putting life lessons in motion.

"They have to embrace believing in the unexpected and being able to bend and weave and being okay with that," said McIlroy. "They are the class of 2020. No one will ever forget them or what they are going through."

JOB OPENING

Wadhams Hall - Facilities Assistant

The Roman Catholic Diocese of Ogdensburg has an immediate opening for the full-time position of **Wadhams Hall - Facilities Assistant**. The Facilities Assistant will work closely with the Facilities Manager to ensure smooth operation of the facilities including maintenance of the facility, grounds and equipment. Prior relevant experience preferred.

Submit letter of interest, resume and three professional references to:

Human Resources Office, Diocese of Ogdensburg,
P.O. Box 369, Ogdensburg, NY 13669
or e-mail: ksnover@rcdony.org

Deadline for application is July 27, 2020.

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Drawing to be held Labor Day, September 7th
Any questions, call 518-585-7433

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Environmental Stewardship

All are related

As we ponder the events of these past few months and their meaning for our lives and for our global community, Sister Phyllis Tierney of the Rochester Sisters of St. Joseph, who serves as their community's peace and justice coordinator, offers us some thoughts on some connections:

"Laudato Si', Covid-19 Virus, Racial Injustice... All Are Related!"

It seems when we choose to focus our attention on one issue, others immediately pop up!

The anniversaries of Earth Day and Laudato Si' were taking much of my time and attention in the Justice Office, even as we have all been engulfed in the COVID-19 crisis. The recent events connected to the death of George Floyd have added another layer to the issue of racial injustice, which has been simmering below the surface and has again reminded us that what we choose to ignore will cost us dearly.

A recent webinar following the Laudato Si' events revealed the long history of racism. The speaker, who was from Paraguay, noted that there are no indigenous tribes in that country because they were exterminated centuries ago.

Many exterminations and genocides have followed, even in our own lifetimes! The speaker noted that we lose cultures as well as people. We lose relationships with the earth. When we seek to dominate nature, we lose natural predators and species that maintain the balance of nature. We see our oceans filled with garbage. We look down on garbage collectors; we make assumptions which have caused racial segregation in our cities.

It is strongly suspected that the COVID-19 virus originated in bats whose natural habitats were destroyed and were forced to find new homes. The virus found its way into certain animal species that were trafficked for their exotic value, and the virus has now found its home among us.

It gives us much to ponder, doesn't it? How will we choose to live now? Don't put off those life-changing, life giving decisions.

Rest in Peace

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

July 15 – Rev. John Conlon, 1881; Rev. Charles D. Thomas, 1895; Msgr. Armand Dussault, 1963; Rev. Joseph F. Quinn, 1970; Rev. Joseph F. Dowd, 1983; Rev. Joseph L. Quinn, 1970

July 16 – Rev. Eugene Carroll, 1882; Rev. H. T. Regan, O.S.A., 1937; Rev. James Torsney, 1958;

July 18 – Msgr. Joseph Domina Brault, 1966

July 19 – Rev. Francis E. Gilbert, 1939; Rev. James Karlton Dewey, 1963; Rev. Arthur J. Trudel, 1967; Msgr. Donald M. Kelly, 1969; Rev. Thomas A. Moody, 2010

July 20 – Rev. Francis Leo Desrosiers, 1956; Rev. Gerald F. McGrath, 2016

July 21 – Msgr. John H. O'Neill, 1938

July 23 – Rev. Pierre Casenave, O.M.I., 1884; Rev. Francis J. Casey, O.S.A., 1958

July 24 – Rev. George Burke, 1897; Rev. James Joseph Gainer, 1946; Rev. Bartholemew Aloysius O'Connell, 1963; Rev. Henry Wilcott, 1965; Rev. Francis Edic, O.F.M. Conv., 1975

July 25 – Rev. Simon Wallace, M.S.C., 1941

July 26 – Rev. J. Owen Barry, O.S.A., 1978

July 27 – Rev. John B. Chappel, M.S.C. 1884; Rev. Matthew J. Sweeney, 1935; Rev. Daniel A. Harron, O.S.A., 1942; Rev. Harold J. P. McCabe, 1976; Rev. Daniel F. Lyddy, 2002

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 500.

- We cannot accept letters which support ideas which are contrary to the teachings of the Catholic Church.

- Send letters to North Country Catholic, PO Box 326, Ogdensburg, NY, 13669 or e-mail to news@northcountrycatholic.org

Bishop's Public Schedule

July 15 – 11 a.m. – Pontifical Mission Society Board Meeting at Bishop's Residence

July 16 – Noon – Mass at St. Mary's Cathedral

July 18 – 4 p.m. – Mass at Notre Dame Church in Ogdensburg

July 19 – 12:15 p.m. – Mass at the 72nd Annual New York State Knights of Columbus Pilgrimage to St. Anne's Shrine at Isle La Motte in Vermont

July 21 – 9:30 a.m. – Meeting with the Seminarians followed by 4 p.m. Mass at Wadhams Hall in Ogdensburg

July 23 – Noon – Mass at St. Mary's Cathedral

July 25 – 4 p.m. – Mass at St. Mary's Cathedral

July 26 – 8 a.m. – Mass at St. Mary's Cathedral

July 29 – 10 a.m. – Mother Cabrini Health Foundation, Inc. Meeting in New York City

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 VIRTUS training, contact Jean Grizzuto, jgrizzuto@rcdony.org or 315-393-2920 x 1413, who will coordinate assigning the training to be completed online.

To Report Abuse

If you have a complaint of suspected misconduct involving diocesan clergy, religious, employees or volunteers, contact **Victims Assistance Coordinator**, Terri-
anne Yanulavich, Ph.D., LMHC, 5050 Route 374, Merrill, NY 12955; terri-
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.ReportBishopAbuse.org.

Funeral for Sister Virginia Taylor will be delayed

Sister Virginia Taylor, formerly Sister Anne Virginia, a Gray Nun of the Sacred Heart, died on June 29, 2020. She was 90 years old and had been in religious life for 73 years.

With the exception of four years as an elementary school teacher, Sister Virginia's entire service was in the area of nursing as a clinician and educator.

From 1985 to 2005, Sister Virginia served as a nurse practitioner in the Erie County Health Department, after a year at the Cattaraugus Indian Reservation Health Center in Irving, New York. Sister previously served at D'Youville College as an instructor in the School of Nursing for 11 years.

Early in her nursing career, Sister Virginia was an Operating Room supervisor at A. B. Hepburn Hospital in Ogdensburg for four years, followed by two years, at Champlain Valley Physician's Hospital in Plattsburgh.

In 1963, Sister volunteered to serve as a nurse clinician in Lima, Peru at St. Norbert's Parish. She returned to the United States in 1967 but returned to Peru in 1972 after earning an MSN/Nursing Education. Back in Peru, she worked in the Callao Barriadas for an additional two years. From 1976-79, Sister Virginia was a member of the nursing staff at the Medical Hospital of Pennsylvania. Maintaining her missionary spirit, she became a nurse practitioner at Mary Breckenridge Hospital, Kentucky Nursing Frontier Service in Hyden, Kentucky.

Sister Virginia earned a bachelor's degree in education and a bachelor's degree in nursing from D'Youville College. Her master's degree in Nursing Education was granted by Indiana University, and she earned a geriatric adult nurse practitioner degree from Miami University.

Sister held nursing licenses in New York, Pennsylvania, Kentucky and Florida, as well as Peru.

Through her education and career, she won numerous awards, including the Pi Lambda Theta, Sigma Theta Tau, Mayor of Miami Certificate of Merit and Key Council in Higher Education Certificate of Merit.

Her publications included articles in the Archives of Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation, Journal of Gerontological Nursing; Nursing 80 and Supervisor Nurse.

Born in Buffalo to Stephen and Virginia Devereaux Taylor on December 17, 1929, Sister Virginia is survived by her religious congregation, which she entered in 1947, after graduation from Holy Angels Academy.

Sister was predeceased by her parents and sister, Shirley Darrell.

Due to recent events, a Memorial Service will be held for Sister Virginia at a later time. Arrangements are through Beck-Givnish Funeral Home.

Memorial contributions may be made to the Grey Nuns of the Sacred Heart, 14500 Bustleton Ave., Philadelphia, PA 19116-1188 or at www.greynun.org.

Not coincidences, 'they're God-incidences'

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 Monfietto
Contributing Writer

EVANS MILLS – Long before Noel Voos officially converted to Catholicism, he experienced the power of prayer and learned to see God even in life's hardships.

Shortly after their marriage and the birth of their first son, Voos and his wife, Cathy, were living in Utah when Cathy developed a serious ovarian cyst that needed to be removed quickly to prevent any complications. At the time, the family was attending a Lutheran church as well as going to Catholic Mass, and they turned to their Lutheran friends and their faith for support.

"We had faith, and we both prayed," Voos said, noting Cathy had to have surgery to remove the cyst or face a hysterectomy in her mid-20s. "We would go with the group, and we would pray about this and we prayed about it."

The day Cathy went in for her surgery, doctors found no sign of the cyst when they tested her as part of the preparations for the surgery.

"What she had was so severe that within 30 days it had to be removed in order to save her reproductive abilities, and the day the surgery shows up, poof, all this bad stuff is gone," Voos said. "I can't



Noel & Cathy Voos

tell you God intervened in that, but I know He did. I can't prove it, but that is what my faith tells me."

This moment in his life was a lesson in the providence of God for Voos, a moment – which he calls God-incidence instead of coincidence – that God orchestrated to show us His presence in our lives and draw us closer to Him.

"Every little hiccup and bump along the road, you do that hindsight thing and look back at that and go, 'OK, it worked there. It's going to work here,'" Voos said. "You look back at life and you look at those circumstances that happened. ... They're not coincidence. They're incidences that were put there by the good Lord Himself, so they're God-incidences."

Voos, who lives in Evans Mills and attends St. Mary's Church there, has continued to look for the providence of God – the God-incidences – throughout his life and particularly as a candidate in the

Deacon Formation Program.

Though he acknowledged his mission is to serve God and serve Bishop Terry R. LaValley, Voos said he hopes to become involved in nursing home ministry or prison ministry once he becomes ordained as a deacon. But his ultimate goal as a deacon – and as a Catholic – is simply to touch at least one person's life through his example of faith, especially considering the impact one person could have on another and then another and so on.

"We don't know the providence," he said. "We can believe it. We can presume all we want that it's something that we can identify, but we don't know what our actual dealings, our work, our speech, our actions will actually bring about once we're beyond it."

Voos recalled seeing a poster of Bishop LaValley with the words, "Follow me" while he was involved in Rite of Christian Initia-



tion for Adults in 2007 and 2008 before he converted to the faith. He has allowed that slogan to guide him ever since, especially as he seeks to serve the bishop and his fellow Catholics as a deacon.

"If I'm following my ideas correctly and pursuing what I'm pursuing, it's simply that if someone is able to ask me, 'Why is it you believe what you believe?' I'm hoping to have an answer," Voos said. "Enough to spark an interest in an individual to say, 'I see something in this person that I either desire or I admire or I like, and I want to know more about it.' That's what I see as my personal mission once I become a deacon, not too much different than what we should do as Catholics period."

Voos also keeps in mind that the Lord's Prayer includes only one request – "Give us this day our daily bread." – while the rest of the prayer contains words of supplication to and adoration of God. That helps him to remember that God has a plan for him and to sense God's presence when he can't physically prove it.

"We're always quick on the give-mes and few on the thanks," he said. "We fail always to realize that what we expect, what we anticipate, is not necessarily what God has planned for us. ... I've seen enough without seeing God to know that He exists, and there's just too much of it around me to see any-

CONTINUED ON PAGE 8

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'They're God-incidences'

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 2

thing that would cause me to believe otherwise."

Raised Lutheran and converting to Catholicism about 12 years ago, Voos has always had a strong faith that he has built his life and his family around.

"Even as a Lutheran, I had a very strong faith," he said. "I don't know where (it comes from), other than the providence of God that I have it. That's the only reason I would say that I have it. He has a plan for each of us. Some of us refuse to see it. Some of us accept it. Some struggle with it. As my life has played out, the ups and the downs, you come to a realization eventually that there's something greater than just me."

Voos described Cathy as "a cradle Catholic" and said the two were married in a Catholic church then attended both a Lutheran church and a Catholic church. When he entered

the military in 1984, though, he never went to a Lutheran service and only went to Mass.

It was the Communion experience of the Lutheran service that eventually led Voos to convert to Catholicism, even though he said he was "absent from the body of Christ," in the sense of accepting the Eucharist, from 1984 until 2008.

"It had a fulfilling of sense for me. It was something I felt worthy enough to be done, and I did it reverently and respectfully," he said. "There was a longing deep inside for it ... like a yearning, a spiritual yearning for it."

Along with accepting the Eucharist, taking Mary into his heart also helped Voos take the final step toward conversion. During an Easter Mass, he heard the words of Jesus Christ from the cross as Christ commands the disciple John to take Mary as his

mother and Mary to take John as her son.

"We all forget the sentence that comes after that: 'From that hour, he took her into her home,'" Voos said. "If we are to be the beloved disciples to Christ, have we taken Mary into our home? ... If John took her into his home, then I said to myself, 'I have to have her as well.'"

As with the foundation of the Catholic faith – something started by Christ and His 12 disciples 2,000 years ago that continues the same way today, Voos noted – the foundation of his faith began with someone who took the initiative to say, "This is something that is true, period." He hopes to have the same kind of impact on people as a deacon.

"I'm believing fully that Christ walked the earth, spoke what He spoke, did what He did as written in

the Scripture, died, went into a tomb, three days later resurrected, and then ascended into heaven," Voos said. "I can't prove it, but I believe it as sure as I'm sitting here talking to you."

Keeping his faith strong every day is the focus of the daily morning routine Voos has kept for years. Each day at 5 a.m., he turns on his computer, and before he even opens a browser or checks his email, he goes through each of the six prayers on his desktop. As a deacon candidate, he also participates in Morning and Evening Prayer using the Liturgy of the Hours.

And as a civilian employee of the Office of Personnel Management on Fort Drum, Voos spends a lot of time on the job driving – and a lot of time in conversation with God in the car.

"I talk to Him all day long," Voos said. "If some-

one were to look over at a stop sign, my mouth is going and they're probably thinking I'm singing a song to the radio. But I'm not. I'm having an audible conversation. 'Help me with this. How do I ...?'"

He encourages his fellow Catholics to "get back to the beginning," he said, and to draw closer to one another and to God through their shared faith.

"I would like to see more unity within our faith community, take the time, break free from society, break free from the domain of the secular world, dig into your faith," he said.

Voos and Cathy celebrated their 40th anniversary earlier this year, and he said they continue to look for the God-incidence in their lives through the ups and the downs.

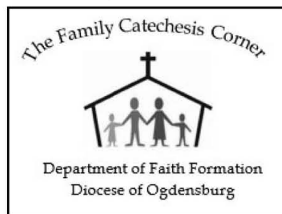
"We're blessed, my wife and I," he said. "There's no question or doubt in my mind about it."

E-book brings Scripture lessons to the home

By Jessica Hargrave
Contributing Writer

Sunday Scripture can be tricky to explain to children. Now, a new e-book is available to help parents teach children the meaning of Scripture as churches and religious education programs continue to be impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic.

"Praying the Scripture, Year A" from publisher, RCL Benziger, allows families who are continuing to watch Mass online keep religious education going in their home. The e-book contains scriptures from liturgical year A along with scripture teachings to which children can relate. Also included are



questions of the week, designed to be discussion starters, and Sunday celebrations that focus on the Gospel of the day while encouraging singing, praying and sharing. Subscribers will also receive a liturgical year calendar to use as a reference.

The Church has a three-year cycles of Sunday readings. We are currently in cycle A, which will end on the first Sunday of Advent, when cycle B read-

ings will begin. The following year will be cycle C. If you went to church every day for three years, you will take a full tour through the bible!

Anita Soltero, Eastern Regional director for Faith Formation for the Diocese of Ogdensburg, has spent 20 years as a catechist. She encourages everyone, not just children, to learn the Scriptures.

"We learn who God is and what he wants for us," said Soltero. "We hear from both the Old and New Testament and the Gospel, which are stories about all kinds of people and how they listened to God or not, and what happened to them."

Through storytelling,

children, like adults, share passions, fears, and joys and find common ground with the characters in the stories they hear. Hearing the Scriptures is no different. Children can relate them to their own life.

"Jesus was always telling stories to the

crowds. Just like Jesus told the crowds stories to teach them, our children can learn to recognize how God works in their life by learning Jesus' stories too," said Soltero.

"Praying the Scriptures, Year A" is available at store.rclbenziger.com for \$19.00.

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The female disciples of Jesus past and present

By Deanna Hagan
Guest Writer

How appropriate it is in 2020 during Coronavirus to revisit the story of Mary Magdalene and its healing effect on the nascent church? In 2016, during the Jubilee Year of Mercy, Pope Francis raised the memorial of Mary Magdalene on July 22 to a feast, the same honor accorded the male apostles. For us at St. Therese in Mooresville, North Carolina, under the care of four Jesuit priests, the celebration included a Gloria. Francis X. Reese SJ (d.2018), the oldest among them, was the celebrant.

Under the shadow of Mary, Jesus' mother, Mary Magdalene led other women disciples to become central witnesses to the crucifixion, burial and empty tomb on Easter Sunday. While the Synoptics (Mt. 28: 1-10), (Mk. 16: 1-11), (Lk. 23: 1-12) mention Mary Magdalene either alone or with other women as the first witness to the Resurrection, the Gospel of John sets the scene in a garden near the tomb, where Mary is weeping (Jn. 20: 11-18). Jesus appears and asks, "Woman, why are you weeping?" Mistaking Jesus for the gardener, she asks where her beloved's body might be; however, when Jesus calls her by name, she recognizes his voice. Jesus commissions her to go to her brothers in hiding and to give them the good news of his rising from the dead. The apostle to the apostles hurries to them and declares, "I have seen the Lord." Although amazed at her report, Peter and the beloved disciple inspect

the empty tomb.

Although sometimes conflated with Mary Magdalene, Mary of Bethany is the one who "...six days before Passover...took a liter of costly perfume... and anointed the feet of Jesus." (Jn. 12: 1-3). Judas Iscariot, a liar and a thief, complained that this perfume should have been sold and given to the poor. Jesus answered by saying Mary had anointed him for burial. Judas then left to betray Jesus for 30 pieces of silver. On Monday in Holy Week, Don Ward SJ preached that Mary had anointed Jesus as King. In the preceding gospel chapter, Jesus had raised Mary's brother, Lazarus, from the dead. Before performing the miracle, Martha, the sister of Mary, proclaimed, "Yes Lord, you are the Messiah, the Son of God" (Jn. 11: 27). The French have a folk memory that along with other disciples, Lazarus' family fled in a boat to escape persecution and landed in France. Lazarus became the first bishop of Marseilles, and he and his sister Mary evangelized the south of France. It is believed that Martha and others went on to Germany.

With Mother Mary and the female disciples, I journeyed through the Spiritual Exercises with Father Ward. We used a booklet titled "My Just One Shall Live by Faith," written by Dominic Totaro, SJ. Father Totaro gave me also an article written by Gerald O'Collins, SJ, called "Unlock the Door" (The Tablet - London, May 25, 2013). The noted Australian scholar wrote that Vatican II taught "that discrimination on the grounds of sex, race... must be erad-

icated as incompatible with God's design" (Gaudium et Spes, 29).

After reading O'Collins, my thoughts turned to the Diocese of Ogdensburg, where my sister-in-law, Sister Mary Aquinas Hagan (d. 2018), Sister of St. Joseph, prepared deacons for ministry after she had earned her master's degree in Divinity from Weston Theological Seminary. Other women religious were also working on advanced degrees to take on leadership roles. I met some of these women personally after Msgr. Robert H. Aucoin, principal, hired me to teach at Immaculate Heart Central. Msgr. Aucoin remarked to the faculty that teaching at IHC was like being in a monastery. My husband David gave me always his full support.

Sister Cecilia Marie, a Sister of St. Joseph (SSJ), vice-principal and dean of women, took on many roles depending on what was needed. She taught Latin and History, took charge of Forensics, and drew out the best from her students. Eleanor Percy (d. 2019) was another leading voice for academic excellence. A few priests and religious men and some eight dedicated SSJs, inspired the lay faculty to work harmoniously for God's glory.

In 1981, Father Michael J. Gaffney and Terry Burgess founded the IHC Mystery Players, based on the work of Father Francis Pompei. The play captured the imagination of our students. Jayne Brady thought a woman's voice was needed. Having accompanied the group for 14 years, she noted that it was when they began to add scenes of the Pieta

and moving music such as the score from The Mission that there was the "greatest outpouring of love" from people's hearts. The men referred to themselves as heavyweights and to the women as lightweights.

The Mass brought the entire student body together. We had student altar boys and girls and student Eucharistic Ministers also. Even our Protestant and Muslim students were present for the service.

When Pat Fontana arrived as principal, he began a capital campaign to fund athletic fields for boys and girls. It was not only the new fields but the prayers before games that won many championships. Sister Mary Anne was constantly taking pictures of the competitive championships and of students working, praying and playing. She and Sister James Marie were the only two SSJs still working at IHC in 2020.

If IHC had many successes it was because of the families such as that of Ralph and June Marzano. June shared some of her thoughts on women's discipleship. She recalled the days when women were rarely on the altar, but "now they are Eucharistic Ministers, serve on councils, visit nursing homes and the home bound. It is wonderful and needed. We also have young altar girls." One of her favorite

saints is Mother Theresa of Calcutta who "gave up her homeland, her comforts, her family...to put herself in harm's way by picking up the very sick and dying off the streets." As a mother, June says, "family life is difficult... we teach our children by example." She recommends "a crucifix, statue or plaque to catch their eye and... a Bible."

If laywomen have been given more power, religious women are lamenting the decrease in vocations. Each death of a sister is a blow to the community. Sister Judith Baumert, SSJ, who celebrates her 65th jubilee this year, is consoled because she has been able to assist at Mass throughout the confinement. Having Bishop LaValley consecrate the diocese to St. Joseph in the Motherhouse chapel was a special honor for the sisters.

In these times, young women put themselves at risk by working in settings where they can restore health to others and help prevent the pandemic's spread.

As for me, I will remain next to the Immaculate Heart of Mary, Mary Magdalene, and Jesus' female disciples to pray that hearts will be softened by the Holy Spirit.

When the Jesuits left our North Carolina parish, our pastor, Vince Curtin, SJ, reminded me, "Remember, it is your church, too."

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Survey shows pandemic has shaken diocesan, parish life

CLEVELAND (CNS)—Nearly every bishop responding to a survey said the coronavirus pandemic has seriously affected the celebration of the sacraments and rites and sacramental preparation programs in their dioceses.

Confirmations, first Communion, the Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults and other sacramental preparation were the ministries most often cited by the bishops as being affected, according to the survey conducted by the Center for Applied Research in the Apostolate at Georgetown University.

In addition, six out of 10 bishops said that since March when restrictions on ministry and Mass attendance were put in place, the morale of priests, lay ecclesial ministers, deacons and chancery staff has been at least somewhat affected, according to the findings released July 9.

Titled "Ministry in the Midst of Pandemic," the survey asked bishops about six areas of concern that have arisen in dioceses since the pandemic caused public Masses to be suspended and the celebration of sacraments to be restricted or postponed.

The questions focused on the pandemic's effect on dioceses; special pastoral provisions issued by dioceses; financial concerns raised by the pandemic; actions to address a diocese's financial health; the pandemic effect's on parish assessments; and diocesan technological assistance to schools and parishes.

CARA staff members mailed the survey to bishops in 177 archdioceses

and dioceses and 20 eparchies May 18 and followed up with a mailing June 8 to those who did not respond. Overall, 116 bishops, 59%, had responded by the release of the report. About 60% of diocesan bishops responded and about 50% of eparchial bishops responded, the report's authors said.

CARA officials said the results of the survey were likely affected by whether a bishop responded while his diocese or eparchy was in total lockdown or as restrictions began to be lifted.

When it came to specific sacraments, 99% of bishops said confirmation had been very much or somewhat affected; 99% said that about first Communion; 92%, about the Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults process; and 94%, about other sacramental preparation programs.

Similar numbers of respondents said the celebration of marriages (98%), baptisms (91%) and funerals (93%) also had been at least somewhat affected.

In addition, the survey found the morale of church staff members has been very much or somewhat affected. Sixty percent of bishops said their morale had been affected. Higher numbers of respondents said the morale of lay ecclesial ministers (71%), priests (68%), chancery staff (67%) and deacons (62%) had been affected.

Meanwhile, 54% of bishops said the ability of Catholic Charities to serve people in need had been impacted as well.

Jonathan Wiggins, director of parish surveys at CARA, told Catholic News Service the survey offers

an early look at how the pandemic is affecting church life.

"What really strikes me is that this is so much a work in progress because parishes are not back up to any kind of normalcy in terms of Mass attendance, sacraments, giving or anything that would characterize regular Catholic life," Wiggins said.

"This is just a couple months in and we don't know what the long-term effects will be on dioceses and parishes," he added.

A similar survey of parish pastors by CARA researchers is underway, Wiggins added.

The survey of bishops offered them the opportunity to provide brief written answers to questions about pastoral provisions they may have implemented, such as the dispensation to attend weekly Mass, instructions on the celebration of the sacraments such as baptism and marriage, and directives to comply with state and local government orders.

Those responses were not quantified in the CARA report. But it included comments from bishops describing the steps they took as the pandemic led to massive church, school and business lockdowns in March and then eased in May and June.

Some bishops said they offered updates as often as weekly with regard to liturgies, finances, how parishioners can contribute to their parish during closures, and how parishes could reopen for public Masses and reception of the sacraments.

Responding bishops said they instructed parishes to follow state guidelines when public

CATHOLIC WORLD AT A GLANCE

Navy revises policy on attending worship services off base

WASHINGTON (CNS) — A prohibition by some U.S. Navy commands against active service members participating in off-base indoor religious services over coronavirus fears has now been revised, allowing attendance at places of worship where congregants can maintain social distance and wear face coverings. But when the head of the U.S. Archdiocese for the Military Services first learned of it, he called the policy "particularly odious to Catholics." "Frequently there is no longer a Catholic program on naval installations due to budgetary constraints or many installation chapels are still closed — even though many of them could well ensure appropriate social distancing" to protect worshippers from the coronavirus, Archbishop Timothy P. Broglio said in a July 5 statement. Acting Undersecretary of the Navy Gregory J. Slavonic issued a memo July 8 saying none of the Department of Defense's priorities for protecting service members from the spread of COVID-19 including "measured activities" that commanders must consider "should be construed to restrict attendance at places of worship where attendees are able to appropriately apply (coronavirus) transmission mitigation measures, specifically social distancing and use of face covering."

Vatican: More must be done to protect rights of refugees

VATICAN CITY (CNS) — The international community must increase its efforts to help protect the lives of refugees, who are often exploited instead of being protected, a Vatican official said. While some governments, with the help of faith-based organizations, have offered "durable solutions to refugees," including resettlement programs, more needs to be done, Archbishop Ivan Jurkovic, Vatican observer to U.N. agencies in Geneva, said July 7 at a meeting sponsored by the U.N. High Commissioner for Refugees. The meeting was called to discuss the UNHCR's 2019 document, "Resettlement and Complementary Pathways," which offered a three-year strategy to increase the number of resettlement countries, develop opportunities for refugees to be more self-reliant and promote welcoming and more-inclusive societies. Archbishop Jurkovic noted "that the overwhelming majority of refugees and families remain uncertain of their future and are forced, at best, to survive without being able to fulfill their own daily needs or, at worst, are confined to detention centers, where they are deprived of access to education, health care, and decent work opportunities, and risk being subjected to the crimes of human trafficking and modern-day slavery." In his address, Archbishop Jurkovic said the Vatican recognized the U.N. High Commissioner's efforts to "increase third-country solutions for refugees."

Sanctuaries, shrines Catholics can 'visit' virtually

ROME (CNS) — Despite ongoing and unpredictable travel restrictions, there are still a number of important sites, shrines and sanctuaries people can "visit" online in Europe and the Middle East. In fact, the Shrine of Our Lady of Lourdes in France will be holding a worldwide online pilgrimage July 16 — the anniversary of the last apparition of the Virgin Mary. Everyone is invited to join the online initiative, which will be livestreamed for 15 hours in 10 languages from the Grotto of Lourdes at www.lourdes-france.org/en/lourdes-unity. For more than 160 years, the sanctuary has been a place for millions of people to visit each year seeking hope, healing, and deepened faith, the event's promoters said in a news release. "The world is facing an unprecedented economic and social crisis, coupled with an unprecedented quest for meaning," it said.

Cardinal seeks clemency for death-row inmate

NEWARK, N.J. (CNS) – Federal death-row inmate Dustin Lee Honken was convicted of "heinous" crimes but killing him "will do nothing to restore justice or heal those still burdened by these crimes," Cardinal Joseph W. Tobin said in a July 9 letter to President Donald Trump.

"Instead, his execution will reduce the government of the United States to the level of a murderer and serve to perpetuate a climate of violence which brutalizes our society in so many ways," the cardinal said, asking the president to grant Honken's pleas for clemency. He has exhausted "all legal recourses," the cardinal added.

"By commuting this death sentence, you would help stem the tide of anger and revenge that threatens our country," he told Trump.

Honken is scheduled to be executed July 17 at the federal penitentiary in

Terre Haute, Indiana.

A meth trafficker, Honken received the death penalty for the 1993 execution-style slayings of two sisters, ages 10 and 6. He received three life sentences for the killing of their mother, as well as the murder of her boyfriend and another drug-dealing associate of Honken's.

Three others are scheduled to be executed in Terre Haute, Daniel Lee on July 13; Keith Nelson on Aug. 28; and Wesley Purkey, who was granted a temporary stay of his July 15 execution by the U.S. Court of Appeals for the 7th Circuit on July 6. The three also were convicted of killing children in separate crimes.

These men would be the first federal prisoners put to death since 2003.

Cardinal Tobin told Trump he got to know Honken during his time as archbishop of Indianapolis, from 2012 to 2017, when he became Newark's arch-

bishop. The prelate said he would visit Honken and other inmates four to five times each year.

"If his death sentence is commuted, Mr. Honken expects to spend his remaining days in prison," the cardinal said. "His present spiritual guide, Father Mark O'Keefe, OSB, confirms that the spiritual growth in faith and compassion, which I had witnessed in our meetings some years ago, continues to this day. He is serene about the future and tries to show solace for his companions on death row."

Benedictine Father O'Keefe, 64, who is a moral theology professor at St. Meinrad Seminary in St. Meinrad, Indiana, has been asked by Honken to minister to him prior to his execution. On July 7 the priest filed an intervention pleading to join a lawsuit to delay the federal executions, contending the coronavirus emergency in Indiana puts him and oth-

ers at risk of catching COVID-19 by attending the executions.

The priest's intervention said Honken "has been a sincere, practicing Catholic for more than 10 years. He attends Catholic Mass and receives Communion regularly; he receives Catholic ministry regularly; and he believes sincerely in the Catholic faith."

U.S. Attorney General William Barr announced last year the federal government was reinstating the federal death penalty. At the same time, he said the executions would use a single drug instead of a three-drug protocol carried out in most recent federal executions and by several states.

The planned use of the one-drug method led to a court challenge by some of the federal death-row inmates. The lawsuit made its way to the Supreme Court, but the high court said June 29 it would not hear an appeal by the in-

mates challenging this method, paving the way for the executions to proceed. Barr had announced the execution dates June 15.

In his letter to Trump, Cardinal Tobin said the "use of capital punishment makes the United States an outlier in the world."

"Pope Francis has asked our country to end its use of the death penalty and recently clarified the teaching of the Catholic Church regarding the use of the death penalty," the cardinal said. "The official Catechism of the Catholic Church declares ... 'the death penalty is inadmissible because it is an attack on the inviolability and dignity of the person', and (the church) works with determination for its abolition worldwide."

"You are in my prayers as you consider this request" for clemency, Cardinal Tobin told Trump. "May the Lord of the Universe guide you."

Archdiocese closes 20 schools; six close in Brooklyn

NEW YORK (CNS) – Twenty schools in the Archdiocese of New York will not reopen in the fall because of the financial fallout caused by the novel coronavirus pandemic.

Archdiocesan education officials also announced that three schools will merge.

A news release from the archdiocese cited the pandemic for sickening thousands of people with COVID-19, the illness caused by the coronavirus, and leading to massive layoffs that have left people without jobs for weeks, leaving them unable to pay school tuition.

The archdiocese also pointed to "a significantly low rate of re-registration

for the fall, and added that months of canceled public Masses have resulted in a loss of parish contributions that traditionally help support the schools and also hurt fundraising for scholarships.

Meanwhile, in the neighboring Diocese of Brooklyn, New York, school leaders said six schools will close there as of Aug. 31. They also attributed the closings to the pandemic.

"Children are always the most innocent victims of any crisis, and this COVID-19 pandemic is no exception," New York Cardinal Timothy M. Dolan said. "Too many have lost parents and grandparents to this insidious virus and now thousands will not see

their beloved school again."

Cardinal Dolan added that his prayers were with the children and their families most affected.

"Given the devastation of this pandemic, I'm grateful more schools didn't meet this fate and that Catholic schools nearby are ready to welcome all the kids," he added.

The archdiocese said that about 2,500 students and 350 staff members will be affected by the closings. Eleven of the schools are located in three of New York's five boroughs – Manhattan, the Bronx and Staten Island – with the remaining nine in outlying communities including New Rochelle, New Wind-

sor, Poughkeepsie and Yonkers.

Michael J. Deegan, archdiocesan superintendent of schools, acknowledged that closing the schools was a painful decision. He said studies of the financial status of each left administrators with no option but to close them.

"I have been a Catholic school educator for more than 40 years and could never have imagined the grave impact this pandemic has had on our schools," he said in a statement.

Deegan suggested that unless additional federal assistance in any future emergency response bill would be coming, more schools would face closure.

"This is a very bad day for everyone in the extended Catholic school community. I send my love and prayers to the families, teachers, principals and staff of the affected schools," Deegan said.

In Brooklyn, the six schools are located in the New York City boroughs of Queens and Brooklyn.

The diocese said in its news release the schools have experienced declining enrollment for the last five years, but that registrations dropped off significantly as the pandemic took hold of the metropolitan area.

The schools have more than \$630,000 in outstanding tuition payments, the diocese said.

MAKING SENSE OF BIOETHICS

Language – veiling or unveiling moral truth?

To sanction or encourage certain wrongful actions, it is often necessary to manipulate language. The plain meaning of words can get in the way of convincing others they should tolerate or participate in wrongdoing, or otherwise embrace situations of evil or injustice. Verbal obfuscation becomes necessary to veil evident moral truths.

A recently-published book by Laura Fabrycky, the wife of a U.S. diplomat in Berlin, offers insight into this phenomenon during the Nazi regime. Fabrycky served for several years as a tour guide to the house of anti-Nazi dissident and Lutheran pastor Dietrich Bonhoeffer.

Fabrycky describes how bewildered she was coming across a seemingly mundane bureaucratic memorandum in an exhibition catalogue. Only after reading it through several times did its meaning begin to "coalesce with nauseating clarity. It concerned vehicles...that the Nazis designed to kill people—Jewish people, mostly. These mobile units killed through asphyxiation. Nazis loaded Jewish people into them, filled the vehicles with carbon monoxide, and then emptied the dead from the killing machines. Whoever wrote the memo, however, used language to tap dance, delicately, almost soothingly, around the sub-

ject at hand to obscure the heavy murderous fallout of its horrific realities.... The quicksand sentences swallowed more than they said; these ear-tickers softened the blow that plain and direct speech would easily level on human conscience."

The careful hijacking of language by purveyors of wrongdoing described by Fabrycky is a widely-deployed tactic in the battle for the soul of every culture. The phenomenon is especially prevalent when discussing bioethical situations in which the human person and the human body are systematically violated, often under the aegis of the medical profession and the health sciences.

A current example can be found in the April 2020 issue of the "Mayo Clinic Proceedings" in an article entitled, "Fertility Preservation for Transgender Individuals: A Review." The problem of fertility preservation in transgender individuals, of course, arises precisely because physicians carry out interventions that deliberately disrupt and suppress healthy hormonal physiology and mutilate healthy sexual anatomy to the point that properly functioning fertility may be permanently lost.

The authors consequently attempt to identify ways to "salvage" fertility while carrying out, or in the wake of, direct medical attacks on the human body. Throughout the article, the destructive interventions are carefully veiled by the almost compulsive use of jargon such as "gender-affirming hormone therapy

and gender-affirming surgery." Such euphemisms obscure the fact that the procedures, while affirming subjective gender feelings, most decidedly do not affirm objective biology.



Father Tadeusz Pacholczyk Ph.D.

The article would read quite differently if such phrases were replaced by "biology-opposing" surgery or "biology-denying" hormone therapy. Similarly, if one were to replace "gender-affirming" with the more accurate "fertility-denying" or "fertility-destroying" therapy, the moral implications and objections surrounding these "treatments" would come into much clearer focus. The use of tap-dancing and ear-tickling language, however, veils the reality of unethical medicine directed against the human person.

Similar tap-dancing is evident in the morally problematic world of infertility treatments and in vitro fertilization. As David Dodge notes in his 2014 New York Times article, "Fertility clinics, in particular, have mastered the art of sperm donor doublespeak." Instead of the clinic's staff "greeting me with, 'This way, please, to the masturbation room,' ...at my scheduled 'donation time,' a technician guides me to the 'collection room,' points out my various 'entertainment options,' and hands me a sterile cup for my 'specimen.' I realize all this veiled terminology is supposed to make the process less awkward for me. Somehow, though, it just makes things worse."

Msgr. William Smith, the late and renowned moral theologian at New York's Dunwoody Seminary, once quipped that had society

been courageous enough years ago to speak frankly about the issue of contraception, it would have termed it "life prevention" rather than "birth control." That would have led to a much different social dialogue regarding the ethical and medical harms of contraception. It would be hard to imagine husbands asking their wives the question, "Honey, did you remember to pick up the Life Prevention Pills at the pharmacy today?"

During the Covid-19 pandemic, verbal gymnastics have also been evident in media headlines like, "Abortion Services Unavailable During the Lockdown," or "Texas Clinics Resume Abortion Services." Abortion, of course, is never a "service," but rather a lethal disservice for every pre-born human victim it ensnares. The moral nausea caused by such direct acts of killing almost demands linguistic recasting to tickle our ears and assuage our consciences.

Fabrycky's provocative encounter with the Nazi memo led her to conclude that "even language has a morality, or immorality, in whether it discloses or seals off facts and responsible thought, in whether it serves the truth or lies.... Language often does our thinking for us. We take in words and phrases like air, and this ambient language forms our thoughts without ever stimulating our minds to interrogate them."

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



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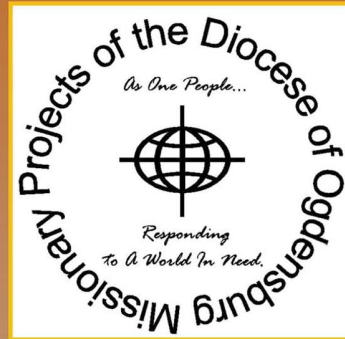
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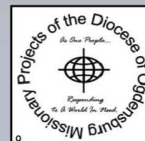
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SCRIPTURE REFLECTIONS

'Use power with clemency'

The theme of the Scripture readings this Sunday is: "Use power with clemency." We all have power – power of authority, the power of personality, the power of experience. God has given us wonderful gifts that we must use with gentleness and humility. In the Book of Wisdom, the writer praises God: "But though you are master of might, you judge with clemency." Our present Holy Father, Pope Francis, is a great example



**Monsignor
Paul E.
Whitmore**

of this. He spent a whole year teaching the world about the mercy of God, and that God expects all of us to imitate his patience and justice. In the Gospel, Jesus uses a parable of the weeds and the wheat. "The kingdom of heaven may be likened to a man who sowed good seed in his field. While everyone was asleep, his enemy came and sowed weeds all through the wheat, and then went away." Then Jesus likens

July 19

16th Sunday in Ordinary Time

READINGS

Wisdom 12:13, 16-19

Romans 8:26-27

Matthew 13:24-30

the weeds to evil around us. This evil can prevent the Word of God from growing in our hearts and minds, just as weeds drain energy from the wheat. Add to this our own giving in to evil temptations and sinful actions. Do you remember that wonderful comic strip POGO? One of Pogo's famous sayings was, "We

have met the enemy, and it is us." By our sin and pride, we join the enemy by planting weeds in God's garden of grace. And we can then be judgmental and lacking in mercy toward others.

Sometimes it's through bad example, or through our failures to instruct our children, or when we fail to help our neighbor in need or in distress, or when we fail to support Catholic teaching in our conversation or in our actions. We need to look into our hearts to see in what ways we are responsible. What then? We ask the Holy Spirit for the grace to

repent, to make a good confession, and to change our attitudes. As for the evil around us, be patient. Notice what advice the farmer in the parable gives his workers? He tells them to let the weeds grow with the wheat. The harvest-time is coming (in other words, the final judgment). Jesus tells us. Work and pray to change hearts. Heavy-handed crusaders sometimes do more harm than good. Use charity, gentleness, good example and prayer. Maybe they will have a change of heart before God has to take action.

CALLED TO SERVE

What is a deacon anyway?

Bishop Stanislaus J. Brzana established the order of permanent deacon for the Diocese of Ogdensburg. "Established" is a key word in his letter to all the priests of the Diocese on April 22, 1977, because prior to that date, our Diocese had never seen a permanent deacon. The Second Vatican Council "restored" the order of permanent deacon which had, as Bishop Brzana reminded us, existed "in the early Church and at various times since" when a man was ordained a deacon and remained in that order permanently.

Some folks were used to deacons in their parishes, but those men were moving through the order before being ordained a priest. What most people

did not know was that those men had been ordained a deacon, it was not just a title tacked on as the priesthood loomed larger on the horizon.

The Council Fathers restored the other type of deacon, the permanent kind. We are men, mostly married with children, who feel called to serve God and the people of God in a greater way. Like

the deacons who would eventually become priests, permanent deacons preach, teach and administer some of the sacraments. They visit the homebound and those in hospitals and nursing homes, provide counsel to those who need help in their journey and serve the bishop in various capacities including assignment to assist a pastor in

a parish. They might also work, at the bishop's invitation, on diocesan committees or in diocesan offices.

One summer day a few years ago, I was in Syracuse to visit a parishioner who was recovering from open heart surgery. Deacons in our diocese do not wear a Roman collar for the most part, so the only outward identification of my Church relationship was the lapel pin I was wearing. It is a cross with the deacon stole. As I walked through the hall headed for my friend's room, a lady in a wheelchair stopped me and asked, "are you a priest?" It was more a demanding question than a timid one. The kind of accusing question grandma might have asked when she already knew you kicked the dog. "No," I responded, "I am a deacon. Can I help you?" She dismissed me with the

wave of her hand. a grunt and wheeled past me.

It would have been easy to be hurt by the encounter. In fact, it highlighted an important distinction. Deacons are not priests. Permanent Deacons are called to ministry in collaboration with the priests of the diocese at the pleasure of the bishop. Deacons, perma-

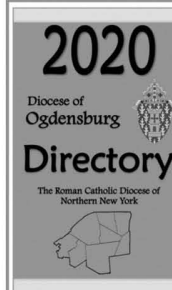
nent or transitional, are part of the three clerical orders of the Church: deacon, priest, bishop. I hope to explore how deacons serve you, how they fit, in future columns.

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



**Deacon
Kevin Mastellon**

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We can make all the difference

The theme of this summer's MPDO collection is, "Maybe we cannot be together, but together we can make all the difference."

Over the weekend of July 25-26, 2020, parishioners of the Diocese of Ogdensburg will be given an opportunity to support our missionaries with the Missionary Projects of the Diocese of Ogdensburg (MPDO) Collection at Mass. The MPDO Collection is a scheduled second collection for which there is an envelope in the sequence.

Missionary Projects of the Diocese of Ogdensburg annual collection will take place on the weekend of July 25-26, 2020. The 2020 MPDO collection will be used to help with a number of causes this year. It will support missionary priests and religious who work here in our diocese: Sisters of the Cross of Chavanod, Archdiocese of Caceras, Philippines and The Herald of Good News; it will continue to support the Church in Latin America; it will further our solidarity efforts in the Diocese of Latakia, provide continued support for our former mission parish in Mollendo, Peru, and, lastly, will help any other mission project throughout the world that Bishop Terry R. LaValley deems appropriate as part of our evangelization efforts. The MPDO collection provides hope and new life for so many in desperate and imminent need such as those impacted by flood, famine, earthquakes and war around our world. It can serve as a source of funding in a crisis or emergency conditions.

*It is worth noting, the MISSION CO-OP is cancelled this year due to the COVID-19 pandemic. It will hopefully resume in the summer of 2021. Very often, mission co-op missionaries travel here from far away mission lands or from cities here in the USA. Once here, they are guests of our local parishes, speak in our churches, interact with local parishioners, and leave a lasting impact on the communities that host them. This is just not possible in 2020. So, MPDO is a diocesan-wide collection this year. **

Our parishes offer prayers for the recipients as we fund missionary activities. Thank you for sharing in our Missionary Zeal that brings Christ's love to those living in developing countries. Thank you from the grateful people in need whose names you do not know but are praying for you. Your gift will make a difference in the life of the poor, oppressed, voiceless and hopeless worldwide.

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

Alexandria Bay – Benjamin M. Cole, 30; Funeral Services to be held at a later date.

Alexandria Bay – Carol Agnes (Amyot) Rogers, 75; Graveside Services July 3, 2020 at Barnes Settlement Cemetery.

Altona – David Raymond Bosley, 80; Mass of Christian Burial July 2, 2020 at Holy Angels Church; burial in St. Ann's Cemetery, Mooers Forks.

Altona – Ruth Deyo-Wasnick, 97; Mass of Christian Burial July 13, 2020 at Holy Angels Church; burial in parish cemetery.

Au Sable Forks – Denise (David) Blaise, 70; Mass of Christian Burial July 7, 2020 at Holy Name Church; burial in Holy Name Cemetery.

Black Brook – Thomas Augustine O'Neill, 85; Graveside Services to be July 16, 2020 at Holy Name Cemetery.

Brownville – Jean Marie (Jackson) Wager, 72; Mass of Christian Burial July 11, 2020 at Immaculate Conception Church; burial in Dexter Cemetery.

Canton – Elizabeth A. (Myers) Jaskowski, 78; Funeral Services July 5, 2020 at O'Leary Funeral Home.

Carthage – Shirley (Villeneuve) St. Louis, 87; Private Mass of Christian Burial at St. James Church; burial in St. Mary's Church, Copenhagen.

Copenhagen – Thomas E. Carroll, 74; Graveside Services July 2, 2020 at West Lowville Cemetery.

Dannemora – Daniel Lawrence Joseph Lucia, 70; Mass of Christian Burial July 9, 2020 at St. Joseph's Church.



Support And Pray For Vocations

Dannemora – Joseph F. Manalang, 48; Mass of Christian Burial to be held at later date.

Malone – Carolyn Eileen LaVenture Geravis, 85; Mass of Christian Burial July 7, 2020 at Notre Dame Church.

Malone – Robert B. Leabo Jr., 29; Funeral Services July 2, 2020 at the Bruso-Desnoyers Funeral Home.

Massena – Denise "Sherry" (Kelly) Henophy, 58; Mass of Christian Burial July 2, 2020 at the Church of the Sacred Heart.

Massena – Marjorie King, 90; Mass of Christian burial July 3, 2020 at St. Mary's Church; burial Kateri Cemetery.

Massena – Fernande "Fern" Anita (Martel) Widrick, 91; Mass of Christian Burial held July 2, 2020 at Church of the Sacred Heart; burial in St. Mary's Cemetery, Potsdam.

Morrisonville – Beverly A. (Weightman) Randall, 85; Mass of Christian Burial July 11, 2020 at St. Alexander's Church; burial in St. Alexander's Cemetery.

Morrisonville – Frank M. Sklenarik, 89; Mass of Christian burial July 7, 2020 at St. Alexander's Church.

Morrisonville – Theresa Mary (Reyell) Way, 76; Mass of Christian Burial July 6, 2020 at St. Alexander's Church.

Norfolk – Barbara A. Davis, 82; Graveside Services July 8, 2020 at Visitation Cemetery.

Ogdensburg – Robert Massia, 80; Mass of Christian Burial July 6, 2020 at Notre Dame Church; burial in Foxwood Memorial.

Ogdensburg – Katherine L. Weegar, 58; Mass of Christian Burial June 30, 2020 at St. Mary's Cathedral; burial in St. Mary's Cemetery.

Peru – Mildred M. (Buckley) Duprey, 84; Mass of Christian Burial to be held at St. Augustine's Church; burial in St. Augustine's Cemetery.

Plattsburgh – Joyce M. (Weightman) Giles, 81; Funeral Services July 10, 2020 at Brown Funeral Home; burial in Holy Angels Cemetery, Altona.

Saranac Lake – Isaac E. Skiff, 90; Graveside Services held July 10, 2020 at St. Bernard's Cemetery.

St. Regis Falls – Robert Crinklaw, 80; Private Mass held at St. Ann's Church.

Star Lake – Charles "Chuck" Ernest Rixon, 82; Memorial Services July 11, 2020 at St. Hubert Cemetery.

Tupper Lake – Christa M. (Anderes) Beline, 92; Mass of Christian Burial to be held at a later date.

Tupper Lake – Edward "Red" Clement, 77; Graveside Services to be held July 25, 2020 at St. Alphonsus Cemetery.

Watertown – Christina "Tina" Foulger Harte, 59; Funeral Services July 3, 2020 at the Reed & Benoit Funeral Home.



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Knights of Columbus Council 259 Grand Knight John Morgia presents a check to Kathleen Mastellon of St. Patrick's Church, Watertown, facilitator for the ECFL Program, and Sister Rani Selvaraj, a Sister of the Cross of Chavanod, pastoral associate of St. Anthony's, Watertown.

Grant aids Early Life program

By Deacon Kevin Mastellon
Contributing Writer

WATERTOWN – Watertown NY Council 259 of the Knights of Columbus has awarded Catholic Watertown's Early Catholic Family Life (ECFL) program a \$1,000 grant.

The grant will be used for start-up expenses for the program, which will be introduced to the Watertown parishes in 2021.

ECFL is a program designed to draw parents and their children into faith community. We wel-

come young families and empower them to raise their children confidently with Jesus. We do this by connecting parents with their peers and helping them to learn the best practices in early childhood faith development.

Flannery O'Connor film opens July 17 at virtual theaters

WASHINGTON (CNS) – "Flannery," a documentary about the life and writings of Catholic writer Flannery O'Connor, opens in select virtual cinemas nationwide July 17.

Previously, the movie, which won the Library of Congress Lavigne/Ken Burns Prize for Film in 2019, has only been shown in film festivals and college campuses.

The movie screenings have always been followed by discussions with the film's directors, not only about the movie itself, but about issues raised in it by O'Connor's writings on race, sexism and faith. The online viewings, listed at www.flanneryfilm.com/calendar, will follow a similar pattern, of sorts, this year with four live, virtual discussions on Facebook with filmmakers, a guest moderator and panelists focusing on O'Connor themes.

The discussions – at www.facebook.com/flanneryfilm/events – will focus specifically on race, faith, the craft of writing and O'Connor's disability. She died in 1964 at age 39 from Lupus complications.

The first discussion July 20 is particularly timely, looking at O'Connor's complicated relationship with race, from her characters and settings to her personal writings and positions during the civil rights movement.

"Flannery" was an eight-year project of co-directors Elizabeth Coffman, an associate professor of film and digital media at Loyola University Chicago, and Jesuit Father Mark Bosco, vice president for mission and ministry at Georgetown University.

It took a while, because as Father Bosco told Catholic News Service last year after the movie won the Ken Burns Prize, and its \$200,000 finishing grant, he and Coffman both had day jobs.

But it was a labor of love for both of them.

The 96-minute film tells O'Connor's story from interviews with contemporary writers and artists influenced by her such as actor Tommy Lee Jones and Alice Walker, author of "The Color Purple," as well as motion graphic animations of pieces of her work and archival footage of an interview with the Georgia author.

O'Connor, described as a Southern Gothic writer, wrote two novels and 32 short stories known for their portrayals of the South and also for their dark and sometimes comic imagery that revealed people's true, and not always flattering, sides. She also frequently wove together Catholic themes of grace and redemption.

The animated discussions after the screenings only reinforced the directors' views that O'Connor still has something to say to readers and audiences right now.

"People respond with passion," Coffman told CNS in between movie screenings at film festivals last fall.

The fact the film touches a nerve follows what the directors wanted to convey. Father Bosco, an O'Connor expert, said he wanted the movie to give equal time to the writer's Catholic faith, her white privilege, and her sense of being a Southern person and someone with a disability.

