

INSIDE THIS ISSUE

Lowville exhibit highlighted Eucharistic miracles | PAGE 4

First Nations delegation hopeful for meeting with pope | PAGE 10

The Diocese of Ogdensburg Volume 76 Number 30

NORTH COUNTRY CATHOLIC

DECEMBER 8, 2021

Religious never retire from their vows

As we prepare for the annual Retirement Fund for Religious collection, Bishop Terry R. LaValley offers the following reflections:

Pope Francis often highlights the role older adults play in conveying faith from one generation to the next. Recently, he noted that "there is no retirement age from the work of proclaiming the Gospel." As we approach the annual Retirement Fund for Religious collection, an appeal that benefits some 26,000 elderly Catholic sisters, brothers, and religious order priests, I am reminded that senior women and men religious never retire from their vows.

FULL STORY, PAGE 7-9

CONFIRMED IN THE SPIRIT



Bishop Terry R. LaValley recently celebrated confirmation at St. Regis Mission. In addition to confirming eight youth and one adult, Bishop LaValley was gifted a St. Kateri Tekakwitha bolo tie and keychain that was made by a St. Regis Mission parishioner.

GRATEFUL FOR GIVING



Trinity Catholic School Advancement Director Sarah Tsubulksy and WMSA radio personality Elijah Winfrey, who broadcasted from the school, give an update on the school's fundraising efforts during "One Day of Giving." As part of the event, the Massena school raised over \$70,000 to support Catholic education.

FULL STORY, PAGE 3

Pope in Athens: God's power is revealed in love

ATHENS, Greece (CNS)—God the Almighty almost always chooses the least mighty people and the most desolate places to reveal the power of his love, Pope Francis said.

Celebrating Mass Dec. 5 in Athens' Megaron concert hall, the pope touched on a theme he had explored in depth with Catholic leaders the day before: the blessing and spiritual advantage of being a small community without power and with-

out pretenses.

Catholics make up less than 2% of the population of Greece; more than 90% of the country's residents belong to the Orthodox Church.

Noting how the day's Gospel says the word of God came to John the Baptist "in the desert," Pope Francis said, "There is no place that God will not visit."

"Today we rejoice to see him choose the desert, to see him reach out with

love to our littleness and to refresh our arid spirits," he said. "Dear friends, do not fear littleness, since it is not about being small and few in number, but about being open to God and to others."

The late-afternoon Mass was the pope's last public event in Greece. After Mass he was to host a private visit by Orthodox Archbishop Ieronymos II, head of the Orthodox Church of Greece, and the

next morning he was scheduled to visit a Catholic school before returning to Rome, concluding a five-day trip that began in Cyprus.

Celebrating Mass in the Greek capital after having flown to and from the outlying island of Lesbos for a meeting with migrants, Pope Francis' homily focused both on recognizing God at work where he is least expected and on the Advent challenge of conversion.

St. Luke's description of the call of St. John the Baptist lists the civil and religious leaders in office at the time. "We might have expected God's word to be spoken to one of the distinguished personages" mentioned in the reading, the pope said. "Instead, a subtle irony emerges between the lines of the Gospel: from the upper echelons of the powerful, suddenly we shift to the desert, to an unknown, solitary man."

NORTH
COUNTRY
CATHOLICBox 326
Ogdensburg, N.Y. 13669
USPS 0039-3400**BISHOP TERRY
R. LAVALLEY**
President**REV. JOSEPH A. MORGAN**
Vice President**JAMES D. CROWLEY**
Secretary-Treasurer
DARCY L. FARGOEditor &
Communications Director

Publish 45 issues per year. Weekly except skipping every other week beginning July through Aug. and skipping one week in Dec. by the Diocese of Ogdensburg. 622 Washington Street, Ogdensburg, N.Y. 13669.

Editorial Office:
622 Washington Street,
Ogdensburg, N.Y. 13669.**Telephone:**
(315) 608-7556**E-mail:**
news@northcountry
catholic.org**Entered at the
Post Office:**
Ogdensburg, NY
13669 and
additional mailing offices as
Periodical Postage.**Subscription:**
For one year:
In-Diocese Rate: \$27
Outside of Diocese Rate: \$30Matters for publication
should be
addressed to
PO Box 326
Ogdensburg, NY 13669
and should be received by
Thursday prior to
publication.
Paper is printed each
Monday;
dateline is Wednesday.
Member, Catholic Press
Association.**POSTMASTER:**
Send address changes to
North Country Catholic,
PO Box 326
Ogdensburg, NY
13669-0326

Off the 'wall of weird'

I refer to it as "Darcy's wall of weird."

When I drop a weird quote in front of a particular friend, he writes the quote on a post-it note, dates it and adds it to a collection of similar notes. At this point, there are at least 15-20 post-it notes on the wall of his cabinet. That's "Darcy's wall of weird."

I think of myself as a bit weird. I use language in quirky ways. I have very unique combination of interests and hobbies (my hobbies over the years have included martial arts, playing paintball,

sewing and crafting, making jams and jellies... I used to joke that I'm like Martha Stewart, but I like to kick things). I have a big, bold personality.

**Darcy L.
Fargo**

Additionally, it's easy to feel weird or unique in other ways. It's easy to feel like my struggles to live out my faith are weird or unique to me. It's easy to feel like those moments of profound closeness to God I've experienced are weird or unique to me.

But now that I've been writing this column for nearly four years, I've received many emails, letters

and comments from readers who consistently refer to my writing as "relatable." It always boggles my mind. I think, "people can't possibly relate to this!"

Yet, they do.

While we're each uniquely and wonderfully made, we also have a lot in common. We all experience moments of profound grace, beauty and gratitude. We all experience moments of doubt, struggle and sin.

We're not alone.

We struggle in the same ways. We experience God's love in the same ways.

As I've discovered by writing this column (and in other ways, as well), it's in sharing our weird – sharing

our experiences and our reactions to them – that we connect with one another. It's the only way we know we're not alone and it's how we come to have companions in our journey.

God creates us each uniquely and wonderfully, but he creates us to live and share in community, and to help one another get closer to Him.

Faith is not an individual activity.

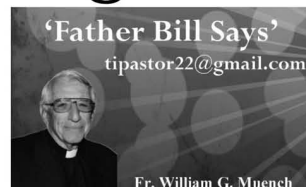
During this year of synod, there's been a lot of discussion of "journeying together." To me, part of how we do that is by sharing ourselves and by sharing our weird.

Even when it's off the wall.

Making Advent our retreat

Advent is a time of retreat. At the beginning of each new liturgical year, our Catholic Church gives us a unique opportunity for four weeks of retreat as a preparation for the celebration of the Birth of Jesus – Christmas. This is really meant to be a time of retreat. The Church asks us to take some time each day of the season of Advent for prayer to bring ourselves closer to the Lord and to make us more loving in our relationships with the Lord. This will be our way to become alive in the spirit and alive in love, a love like the Lord Jesus brought to this world through His Incarnation.

This Advent retreat is a challenge for each of us to become more prayerful. This demands that we take a few minutes of silence for prayer with the Lord. It's not always easy allowing ourselves to find a time of silence each day. Such a time of prayer should begin with a few minutes to calm our-

**Fr. William G. Muench**

selves down from the day's activities. We must find some quiet from the noise of the day. You and I live in a rather busy, noisy world. Our Advent retreat demands a moment to calm down so we can truly give ourselves to a time of prayer.

This Advent prayer is accomplished best when we find a special place for prayer. At first, I would suggest your parish church. It is always an excellent place for a private prayer. You can take a few minutes to visit your church during the quiet of the day. However, you may also have a special space at home for silence and prayer. This place should be where you can truly calm down for a time to give you the space for

prayer.

This Advent retreat is a perfect opportunity for you to welcome Jesus more completely into your life. This is the moment when you can allow Jesus to bring his love and enthusiasm into your life. The presence of the Lord guides us to a new and more complete relationship with our God that will transform each of us into real disciples of the Lord.

God knows us and helps us to know ourselves. This is one of the goals of our Advent retreat. Truly our Christmas gift to ourselves is the Lord teaching us and showing us who we are and all we can accomplish as Christians. Our discovery of God is, in a way, God's discovery of us. As we allow our Lord to become more alive in our lives, we will discover more opportunities to give of ourselves to help so many others in our part of the world. As we reach out to others, we will make our own lives more alive with

the Lord and truly embody Christmas spirit.

To make our Advent retreat all that it should be, I encourage you to dedicate your time of prayer to a special intention. I am certain that you can think of many who have meant so much to you, many you want to pray for – those special people who have made your life all that it is.

I also encourage you to include in these dedications those who have gone on before you and are now with the Lord. In a sense, these intentions are the important Christmas cards that you want to be an important part of your Christmas.

Finally, this Advent retreat is an opportunity for you to offer a prayer of gratitude to your Lord and Savior. The Lord has blessed us and continues to bless us each and every day. Our prayer of gratitude as reflected in our Advent retreat prepares us properly for the celebration of Christmas.

Trinity exceeds goal for 'One Day of Giving'

By Darcy Fargo
Editor

MASSENA – They didn't just meet the challenge, they exceeded it.

Trinity Catholic School in Massena was the beneficiary of a generous anonymous donation of \$10,000 for its annual "One Day of Giving," held annually on what's become known as Giving Tuesday, the Tuesday after Thanksgiving. However, to receive the donation, the school had to rally supporters to match it.

"Not only did we match that for a guaranteed \$20,000 to kick start our annual Trinity Fund campaign, but our supporters went above and beyond for our school," said Sarah Tsibulsky, Trinity's advancement director. "In total, we raised over \$76,000 in one day."

The school received donations from around the Massena area and around the country.

"In addition to the \$10,000 matching donation, we were also gifted an anonymous donation of \$14,000," Tsibulsky said. "This loving and generous support came from the pockets of current families, former families, grandparents, alumni, local organizations, and supporters of Catholic education. While Massena and the surrounding communities make up a large part of our donations, we have supporters from as far as Kentucky, Tennessee, Florida, Texas, Nebraska, and California! How amazing is that? Next year, I'd love to see every state represented!"

The One Day of Giving was announced to school supporters over a month ago and was communicated in a variety of ways.

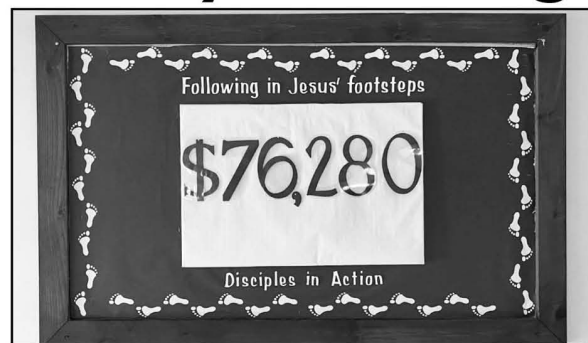
"Our One Day of Giving starts with a mailer in October, which includes a letter written both from a



parent on why they choose to send their child to Trinity and from the principal, detailing why we raise money for the annual fund; a small flyer detailing our One Day of Giving event specifically; and a donation card," Tsibulsky said. "This gets sent to all mailable constituents in our database. This year, there were just over 2,000 letters. We also promote it on our Facebook page, as well as the church bulletin. Our local radio station, WMSA, usually comes and broadcasts from our school on the day as a way of getting our event out there. On the day of the event, we go live on Facebook about every half an hour to update the total and to showcase our beautiful students. That's the fun part!"

The radio broadcast also helped listeners experience Catholic education.

"Elijah from WMSA not only broadcasted from our school, he actually followed me around as I visited the classrooms to update the total, so the radio listeners got a peek into our classrooms, whether it was hearing a song the students sang, a lesson they were learning, or hearing the students



(Left) Trinity Catholic School Advancement Director Sarah Tsibulsky and WMSA radio personality Elijah Winfrey, who broadcasted from the school, give an update during the One Day of Giving. (Above) Trinity Catholic School's One Day of Giving event, held on 'Giving Tuesday,' the Tuesday after Thanksgiving, raised over \$76,000 to support the school.

pray as part of their day," Tsibulsky said.

The funds collected as part of the One Day of Giving will be used to support Catholic education at Trinity.

"Every penny goes into giving our students the best education they can receive," Tsibulsky said. "It also helps to close the gap between the cost of educating our students and what we receive in tuition and subsidies from our local parishes. You can donate to this fund at any time, if you missed this event."

In addition to the One Day of Giving, Trinity hosts a winter raffle, which is currently running, as well as a Gala, currently scheduled for May 7, to support the school. The support

from the school community enables the school to continue providing quality Catholic education to Massena and surrounding communities.

"Although I am in the process of writing 'thank you' notes to each of our donors, I could not continue without pausing to say how appreciative we are of every one of (the school's donors, volunteers and supporters) for the extra time and energy you put into our school," Tsibulsky said. "As the saying goes, 'It takes a village.' It absolutely takes every one of our Trinity families, faculty, and staff members, as well as the kind and generous efforts of our loving donors, to keep Trinity thriving. Thank you, thank you, thank you!"

Warm up with Good News!

Visit our website at www.northcountrycatholic.org to pay by Credit Card for immediate delivery.

OR Send this coupon with payment to:
North Country Catholic

PO Box 106, Canajoharie, New York, 13317

Please allow 3-4 weeks for delivery when mailing in your renewal

Inside Diocese \$27 Outside Diocese \$30
I want to be a Patron: \$35 \$50 \$100 \$250
 New Subscription Renewal

Please send my subscription to my e-mail address:

Name _____
Address _____
City _____ State _____ Zip _____
Parish _____



Warm up with a subscription to the *North Country Catholic* and find out what is happening with the Diocese of Ogdensburg.

POLISH CHRISTMAS WAFER



The Polish Christmas Wafer or OPLATEK is available at St. Hedwig's Church, Houseville, for \$3 per package plus postage and handling. Contact 315-348-6260. The Christmas wafer or OPLATEK, is part of a Polish, Lithuanian and Slovak custom that is observed during the Vigil of Christmas (wigilia.) After the first star is visible, family and friends gather around the dinner table to share the OPLATEK which symbolizes the presence of Christ, the Newborn Child. The OPLATEK is sent and shared with family and friends all over the world as a symbol of love, unity and forgiveness.

Synod snippet:

THE DIOCESAN PHASE OF THE SYNOD:

What is a Synod?

- Synod literally means "journeying together" or "together on the way."
- The purpose of a synod is to listen to what the Holy Spirit is saying to the Church through all the members of the faithful: Bishops, Priests, Deacons, Religious, Laity, young and old, those at that center of the faith community and those on the periphery. We need to listen to the Holy Spirit and listen to each other so that we may discern the path ahead.

What is this Synod About?

- The Title of the Synod is For a Synodal Church: Communion, Participation and Mission. We are asked to consider how we journey together and how we are co-responsible for the mission of the Church.
- It is a synod about practicing synodality. Pope Francis put it this way: "What the Lord is asking of us is already in some sense present in the very word 'Synod.' Journeying together – laity, pastors, the Bishop of Rome – is an easy concept to put into words, but not so easy to put into practice." (Pope Francis, Address at the Ceremony Commemorating the 50th Anniversary of the Institution of the Synod of Bishops, October 17, 2015)

Resources can be found at 150.rcdony.org under the Synod link.



PHOTOS BY NICHOLE MOORE

(Above) Father Scott Belina stands in front of 'The Vatican International Exhibition of The Eucharistic Miracles of the World,' which was on display in the Catholic Community of St. Peter, St. Mary and St. Hedwig in November. (Below) Posters explaining various Eucharistic miracles from around the world were included in the exhibit.

Lowville exhibit highlighted Eucharistic miracles

Courtesy of the Boonville Herald

LOWVILLE - The Catholic Community of St. Peter, St. Mary and St. Hedwig hosted "The Vatican International Exhibition of The Eucharistic Miracles of the World" at St. Peter's Church hall during the Forty Hour Devotions, Friday-Sunday, Nov. 19-22. The Exhibition was open to the public from 10 a.m.-7 p.m. on Friday, Saturday

and Sunday, and from 10 a.m.-noon on Monday, Nov. 22.

All were welcomed to view this free extraordinary display of Eucharistic Miracles designed by Blessed Carlo Acutis. The exhibition included 34, out of 100, posters from the Vatican Exhibition of Eucharistic Miracles throughout the world.

Carlo Acutis, an Italian boy who was recently be-

atified by Pope Francis, is responsible for these posters. His intention was to help his fellow brothers and sisters in the Catholic faith to understand the reality that we experience in the Eucharist. Each poster displays a unique miracle of the Eucharist in the history of the Church.

For more information, go to www.therealpresence.org



MAKING SENSE OF BIOETHICS

New cures from embryonic stem cells?

A recent article in the *New York Times* by Gina Kolata chronicles the remarkable story of a patient who for many years suffered from type 1 diabetes. After receiving a newly-developed form of embryonic stem cell infusion, he became able to live insulin-free, apparently cured of his blood sugar imbalances.

It was largely a matter of time, funding and elbow grease before cures of this kind would start to appear. That makes it urgent for us, as a society, to confront and address the ethical questions arising in the wake of these up and coming therapies.

We can formulate the ethical question this way: Is it wrong to develop treatments that rely on the direct destruction of fellow human beings who are in their embryonic stages?

It should go without saying that it is always wrong to take the life of one human being to harvest body parts, even to save the life of another human being. Such medicine is fundamentally exploitative and immoral, and ought to be summarily rejected.

Many people are beginning to ask, however, whether receiving a treatment for diabetes developed from embryonic stem cells is really that different from getting vaccinated with a COVID-19 vaccine developed using abortion-derived cell lines?

The two cases are, in fact, quite different.

When it comes to abortion-derived cell lines and their use in developing some of the COVID-19

vaccines, the wrong that was committed involved taking somatic cells (not stem cells), such as kidney cells or retinal cells, from an aborted fetus and working them up in order to prepare a special "cell line" for use in research or vaccine development. The abortion, it should be noted, as wrong as it was in itself, was not performed in order to obtain research material, and the evil of this "corpse raiding" was compounded by not having obtained valid informed consent.



Father Tadeusz Pacholczyk Ph.D.

What makes embryonic stem cell-based therapies ethically worse is that a very young human being, still in his or her embryonic stage of existence, is being targeted and intentionally killed in order to obtain the desired stem cells that stand at the center of that medical treatment.

Why, then, would it be morally allowable to receive a vaccine prepared using abortion-derived cell lines, but morally unacceptable to receive a diabetes treatment developed from embryonic stem cells?

Because the type of moral offense and its gravity are different in kind and degree. Directly killing someone to obtain their cells for treatment is different in kind and worse than the wrongdoing involved in taking cells from a corpse, even from a young human whose life was unjustly ended for an unrelated reason. It is always wrong to steal, even from a ca-

daver. But it's much worse to kill in order to take.

In one case the researcher himself becomes the executioner who procures cells and tissues from the individual he has just directly and purposefully killed; in the other case, the researcher shows up at the morgue or the abortion clinic following the death, and procures cells or tissues from the individual's body (with the death having occurred at the hands of others and the researcher

afterwards profiting from the resultant cadaver). This latter case would not raise ethical concerns at all if researchers were to derive the needed cells from a miscarriage instead of a direct abortion. If an unborn baby girl, for example, were to die of natural causes, her parents could validly grant informed consent for the use of tissues and cells from her body, in effect donating her body to science.

These kinds of distinctions are important, because receiving a diabetes treatment produced with embryonic stem cells signals a willingness on our part to tolerate the killing of younger human beings in order to benefit others who are older. Meanwhile, receiving a COVID-19 vaccine produced using abortion-derived cell lines does not indicate a willingness on our part to tolerate killing for research (since the killing was not done for research, but for some other unrelated motive), and instead indicates a willingness to tolerate cells and tissues that were unethically taken from a corpse.

Should we always avoid using therapies that are produced using embryonic stem cells taken from young humans who were killed in order to obtain the cells? Yes, such therapies are unethical because killing one human being for the purpose of healing another crosses a fundamental moral line.

But the fact that the question is being raised

reminds us of the slippery ethical slope that arises whenever we try to use parts of human beings derived from abortions: legally permitting abortion only makes the confusion worse. Hence, there is an urgent need to encourage the use of alternative, non-embryo-derived cell sources by researchers, including cells derived from miscarriages, adult stem cells, or embryonic-type alternatives such as induced pluripotent stem cells, which can be obtained by genetically manipulating adult human skin cells. These approaches open a path forward in the direction of ethical research and medical therapies.

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 and www.fathertad.com.

The North Country Catholic Makes A Great Gift!

Enter a one year subscription for a member of the family or for a friend as a gift from you. We'll send a special gift card to the recipient.

Gift Recipient Information

Name _____
Address _____
City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Gift Giver Information

Name _____
Address _____
City _____ State _____ Zip _____

New Subscription

Renewal

Inside Diocese \$27 enclosed

Outside Diocese \$30 enclosed

Clip and Mail Check to:

North Country Catholic

PO Box 326, Ogdensburg, NY

Environmental Stewardship

What we need now

During the busiest season in the year amidst the current uncertainty of increased numbers of COVID in our area and rising costs of most everything, what do we need to keep our peaceful presence this Advent?

The Scripture readings for the Second Week of Advent seem to speak directly to this question. Isaiah, in the midst of great upheaval and fears, speaks of God's presence in their midst. "Take off your robe of mourning and misery; put on the splendor of glory from God forever; wrapped in the cloak of justice from God." These words of hope may be just what we need in our time of uncertainties.

One way that Advent invites us to nurture our hope is by spending some quiet moments to simply be with the Lord, and allow Him to speak to our hearts. Being still even for a few moments, while waiting at a stop light, at our computer, or in front of our microwave, etc., can provide us time to be in touch with God presence with us NOW.

Another way of nurturing our hope is to be a source of hope for others. One family, realizing that they could do well with less "stuff" at Christmastime, looked for a way to give each other a gift that would gift another family who struggles to have the essentials of life. Two such organizations are: Heifer International and World Vision Animal Gifts. Together as a family they decide on an animal that they want to give to a family as a gift and sent in a donation to the organization who will provide the animal/species. That family will in turn give another family the offspring of that animal or share the produce raised. So, this gift then keeps on giving hope to family after family.

What fills you with hope this Advent? What is one way that you can be a source of hope for another? Our responses to these questions may be a way to "Prepare for the Lord, make straight his path" that John the Baptist calls us to in the Gospel.

Bishop's Public Schedule

Dec. 8 – Noon – Mass of the Solemnity of the Immaculate Conception with the closing of the Year of St. Joseph at St. Mary's Cathedral

Dec. 9 – Noon – Mass at St. Mary's Cathedral

Dec. 10 – 10 a.m. – Mother Cabrini Health Foundation, Inc. Virtual Meeting

Dec. 12 – 8 a.m. – Mass at St. Mary's Cathedral

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

Dec. 15 – 3 p.m. – Episcopal Council Meeting in the Spratt Conference Room followed by dinner at Bishop's Residence

Rest in Peace

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

Dec. 8 – Rev. Patrick J. McGuinness, 1931; Msgr. Cornelius J. Crowley, 1946; Rev. John Leo Hammill, 1949; Rev. John Harvey, 1961

Dec. 9 – Rev. George Marion, O.M.I., 1927; Rev. Edwin Hanlon McCarthy, 1950; Rev. Arthur LaVigne, 1956

Dec. 10 – Rev. James Hogan, 1882

Dec. 11 – Rev. George Montreuil, 1914; Rev. Edward Tetrault, 1952; Msgr. George Henry Brisson, P.A., 1969

Dec. 12 – Rev. Victor Dugas, 1843; Msgr. Albert J. Farrell, 1967; Rev. Julian P. O'Brien, 1988; Deacon Floyd J. Barton, 1999

Dec. 14 – Rev. P.M. O'Shea, O.S.A., 1942, Rev. Paul Beyette, 2016

Protecting God's Children

The Diocese of Ogdensburg uses the training, Protecting God's Children for Adults. 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.



SIGNS OF THE SEASON

Students at St. James School in Gouverneur marked the opening of the Advent Season with the lighting of an Advent wreath on Nov. 29.

To Report Abuse

If you have a complaint of suspected misconduct involving diocesan clergy, religious, employees or volunteers, contact **Victims Assistance Coordinator**, Terri-ann 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.

Portugal 2023 event open to young adults

World Youth Day is a worldwide encounter of Young Adults with the Holy Father that occurs approximately every three years.

The next World Youth Day will be in Lisbon, Portugal from August 1-6, 2023.

World Youth Day is an

amazing experience of the universality of the Church with thousands of young adults from around the world.

If you are interested in attending World Youth Day in 2023 and will be 18 or older by the time of travel (late July 2023), contact Marika Donders at mdonders@rcdony.org.

Additional details will be released to interested parties as we get closer to the event.



*Support And Pray
For Vocations*

Follow Pope Francis on
Twitter!
www.twitter.com/Pontifex

 #Pontifex

BARSTOW
AN AMERICAN
R-VOLUTION GMC SUBARU'S
For More Information, Visit Our Web Page
at www.barstowmotors.com
MARKET ST., POTSDAM, NY 12563 (315) 265-8800
Your NNY Regional GM & Subaru SuperCenter

Retirement Fund for Religious



**Collection Weekend
Dec. 11th and 12th**

***Please give to those who have given
and are giving a lifetime***

“If we are truly in love with Christ and if we sense how much he loves us our hearts will light up with a joy that spreads to everyone around us.” (Pope Francis)



Dear Sisters and Brothers in Christ:

Pope Francis often highlights the role older adults play in conveying faith from one generation to the next. Recently, he noted that “there is no retirement age from the work of proclaiming the Gospel.” As we approach the annual Retirement Fund for Religious collection, an appeal that benefits some 26,000 elderly Catholic sisters, brothers, and religious order priests, I am reminded that senior women and men religious never retire from their vows.

The prayer and ministry of older religious are an ongoing witness to the Gospel. In their younger years, they laid the foundation for Catholic schools, hospitals, and works of mercy. Today, many serve in volunteer ministry. Others are frail and need assistance. Yet all remain wholly committed to their vocations, accepting the limitations of aging and embracing the opportunity to spend more time praying for our Church and world.

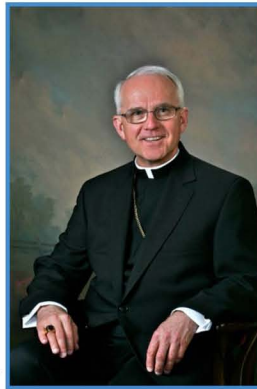
Most senior religious worked for little pay, and now their religious communities do not have enough retirement savings. Your gift to the Retirement Fund for Religious offers support that helps religious communities provide loving care for older members while ensuring younger ones can continue the good works of their elders.

Many fine religious women and men have served and continue to serve the people of God here in the North Country as teachers, health care providers, pastoral associates, administrators, pastors, and assistant priests. We are richly blessed to have a community of contemplatives, Sisters Adorers of the Precious Blood, supporting us through their ministry of prayer. We are also grateful to those missionaries (Sisters of the Cross of Chavanod, Missionaries of the Sacred Heart, Heralds of the Good News) who have left their home countries to minister here.

I recognize you may be experiencing your own financial difficulties. I ask only that you give what you can. Most importantly, please join me in praying for God’s continued blessing on our nation’s elderly sisters, brothers, and religious order priests.

Gratefully yours in Christ,

Most Reverend Terry R. LaValley
Bishop of Ogdensburg



**Please give to
those who have
given and are
giving a lifetime**



**COMFORTING • NURTURING • TEACHING • NURSING • SHARING •
LOVING • CARING**

Please give to those who have given and are giving a lifetime



- ◆ Religious communities are financially responsible for the support and care of all members. Income, earnings, and expenses are managed separately from the parish and diocesan structures of the Catholic Church.
- ◆ By 2027, retired religious are projected to outnumber wage-earners by more than three to one.
- ◆ The funding shortage is compounded by rising healthcare costs and decreased income. And, as more religious reach retirement age and leave compensated ministry, income will further decline while care needs increase.
- ◆ There are 31,000 religious past age 70 living in the United States. In 2017, the average annual cost for their care was almost \$44,000 per person.
- ◆ Many elderly sisters, brothers, and religious order priests worked for little to no pay, and now their religious communities do not have enough money for their care. Please support the Retirement Fund for Religious collection at Mass.

Orders Serving in the Diocese

- Daughters of Charity of the Sacred Heart of Jesus
- Dominican Sisters of Hope
- Mid-Atlantic Community of the Institute of the Sisters of Mercy of the Americas
- Missionaries of the Sacred Heart
- Sisters of Charity of St. Louis
- Sisters of Charity of the Blessed Virgin Mary
- Sisters of the Cross of Chavanod
- Sisters Adorers of the Precious Blood
- Sisters of St. Joseph

*We are grateful
for all the
support you have
given us
throughout
the years.*

*Religious of
the Diocese of Ogdensburg*

You can express your gratitude for all the religious have done and will continue to do by giving to your parishes annual collection.

Amount Enclosed: \$ _____

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Make your tax-deductible check payable to your parish. Write *Retirement Fund for Religious* on the memo line and give it to your parish collection or send your donation directly to:

RETIREMENT FUND FOR RELIGIOUS

P.O. Box 106

Canajoharie, NY 13317

**COMFORTING • NURTURING • TEACHING • NURSING • SHARING •
LOVING • CARING**

First Nations delegation tells of hopes for upcoming meeting with pope

TORONTO (CNS) – In one hour gathered in a room with Pope Francis, 13 Assembly of First Nations delegates plan to lay down heavy burdens and raise up the hope of nations.

"Our hope is that this visit and a potential visit from the pope on our home territories will provide some measure of dignity and respect to the survivors and the intergenerational survivors of the residential schools," Dene Regional Chief Norman Yakeleya told reporters at a news conference to announce the assembly's delegation that will go to Rome.

A delegation of Indigenous leaders, accompanied by several bishops, is scheduled to meet with Pope Francis at the Vatican in December to listen to their experiences of how they and their people have been treated by Catholics in Canada, with special attention to the impact on the Indigenous communities of Canada's residential schools, many of which were run by Catholic religious orders or dioceses. The schools separated children from their families as well as from their language and culture.

The Assembly of First Nations delegation will get one hour with Pope Francis Dec. 20. Seven Inuit delegates will meet with the pope Dec. 17. Eight Métis delegates will meet with him Dec. 18.

"This trip has been a long time coming," said Yakeleya, who has been asked by National Chief RoseAnne Archibald to lead the First Nations delegation.

Natan Obed, president of Inuit Tapiriit Kanatami, will lead the Inuit delegation.

Métis National Council President Cassidy Caron will lead her delegation.

"We seek to hear the words on our lands by the pope. We seek justice. It is only then that we can begin walking truly on the healing path of reconciliation," Yakeleya said. "I also ask every Canadian to stand with First Nations as we continue this painful but important work."

Tk'emlúps te Secwépemc Chief Rosanne Casimir hinted that she would be asking Pope Francis to visit the site in Saskatchewan where 215 unmarked graves were discovered in May.

"That, too, would be extremely significant to visit this part of Canada and to have that opportunity to meet with the survivors," she said.

While the First Nations' hour with Pope Francis will touch on a number of themes, the clear focus will be on an apology on Canadian soil, in accordance with the 2015 Canadian Truth and Reconciliation Commission's Call to Action.

"Nothing would be more important than to have the pope issue an apology from our homeland," said former Assembly of First Nations National Chief Phil Fontaine, who will represent the Manitoba chiefs on the trip. Fontaine led a delegation in 2009 to meet with Pope Benedict XVI.

The residential schools have long been at the heart of discussions and reconciliation efforts between Indigenous Canadians and the Catholic Church. The issue gained urgency in late May when the Tk'emlúps te Secwépemc First Nation reported that, using ground-penetrating radar,

an estimated 215 bodies had been found in unmarked graves at the site of the former Kamloops Indian Residential School, run by a Catholic religious order until 1969. Similar discoveries followed at the sites of other residential schools.

Both Fontaine and Yakeleya are residential school survivors.

"Whoever thought that a residential school survivor from Inuvik for seven years ... that I would have an opportunity to talk to the chief of the Roman Catholics, the head boss, the head man, the Holy Father. What would I say?" Yakeleya asked. "You gotta be careful. Prayers come pretty fast and pretty good."

Youth delegate Rosalie LaBillois said she plans to speak to Pope Francis about the intergenerational trauma that her generation has fought through.

"That opportunity that I get is something that my grandfather never got," she said. "He never got the chance to speak his truth. There are unmentionable things that he could never speak about. Now it's my opportunity to speak my truth." She said she hopes "to help represent that youth perspective from across the country, on how we are severely impacted."

LaBillois, who is the Assembly of First Nations National Youth Council co-chair, wanted to be clear that the mandate to the delegates extends beyond the time in Rome.

"After our trip, what's it going to look like when we come home?" she asked. "How do we share our experience, in being able to empower young people, to be proud of who they are?"

CATHOLIC WORLD AT A GLANCE

Study: Young adult Catholics engage in faith, not in parish

WASHINGTON (CNS) – A new study suggests that young adult Catholics ages 18-35 engage in practices to bolster their faith, but tend to do so outside their parish. Those activities often take the form of small Christian communities, according to the study, issued in November by the Center for Applied Research in the Apostolate based at Georgetown University in Washington. "Most of the people who are involved in faith groups are not involved in a known national organization" such as Cursillo, the Knights of Columbus and similar outfits, said Mark Gray, one of three co-authors of the study, "Faith and Spiritual Life of Catholics in the United States." Rather, he added, "it's a collection of friends, it might be in a neighborhood community, it might be on a dorm floor." "The biggest surprise is how boldly young adult Catholics are participating in their faith life outside the parish," Gray said. "Most research and commentary outside of data collection is that young adults are so inactive. In one way, that's right. They're disconnected from their parish ... but they're finding ways to practice it (their faith) in groups."

Vatican: Pope will bring migrants from Cyprus to Italy

NICOSIA, Cyprus (CNS) – After Pope Francis denounced putting up "barbed wire" to keep out migrants and the practice of pushing boats back to countries where they face conditions similar to a "lager," the Vatican announced he would help move a dozen migrants from Cyprus to Italy before Christmas. "As a sign of the Holy Father's concern for migrant families and individuals, the apostolic trip to Cyprus will be accompanied in the coming weeks by a humanitarian gesture of welcoming about 12 refugees, some of whom the pope greeted this evening at the end of his ecumenical prayer with migrants," said Matteo Bruni, director of the Vatican press office. At the prayer service Dec. 3, the pope said the government of Cyprus should not be blamed for knowing that it cannot welcome and resettle the thousands of migrants and asylum-seekers that have reached its shores. The country currently has the highest percentage of migrants of any country in the European Union. The government of Cyprus had said the pope would initially make arrangements for the transfer of 50 migrants.

Community picks up pieces after 'everyone's worst nightmare'

OXFORD, Mich. (CNS) – A day after a tragic shooting claimed the lives of four Oxford High School students and forever changed the lives of countless others, community members were picking up the pieces. On a chilly afternoon Dec. 1, the scene at Oxford High remained somber, with patrol cars and news vans dotting the streets and parking lots throughout the town. A few paces from the south entrance to the school, adjacent to the inverted-bowl football stadium, students arrived in small groups, many with tears on their faces, to place teddy bears, flowers, crosses and candles at the foot of the school's main sign. Downtown, a small army of volunteers tied blue-and-gold ribbons – Oxford's school colors – to every lamppost and street sign, as businesses displayed messages of support. Inside the school, authorities continued to comb through mountains of crime scene evidence. It was just the beginning of an investigation Oakland County Sheriff Mike Bouchard said could last weeks, if not months, as deputies and federal agents interview hundreds of witnesses and search for clues about the alleged shooter's motive. Authorities identified 15-year-old Ethan Crumbley, a sophomore at the school, as the suspect. Arraigned Dec. 1, Crumbley will be tried as an adult on 24 criminal charges, including terrorism and four counts of first-degree murder.

For Brooklyn's new bishop, New York is home

BROOKLYN, N.Y. (CNS) – Members of the student orchestra of St. John the Baptist Diocesan High School in West Islip, New York, Bishop Robert J. Brennan's alma mater, played holiday music outside the Co-Cathedral of St. Joseph in the Prospect Heights section of Brooklyn as people arrived to witness the installation Mass of Brooklyn's eight bishop Nov. 30.

Bishop Brennan, 59, previously the bishop of Columbus, Ohio, succeeds Bishop Nicholas DiMarzio, 77, whose retirement became effective Sept. 29, the day Pope Francis named Bishop Brennan to lead the diocese. Bishop DiMarzio was Brooklyn's shepherd for 18 years.

"I must admit, coming back this way, there is something familiar, even comfortable," Bishop Brennan told reporters ahead of his installation.

He is a native New Yorker who was born in the borough of the Bronx and raised in Lindenhurst, New York, in the Diocese of Rockville Centre, where he was an auxiliary bishop from 2012 until his appointment to Columbus in 2019.

Ahead of the Mass Bishop Brennan knocked on the doors of the co-cathedral and was received by its rector and the rector of the Cathedral Basilica of St. James.

Brooklyn Auxiliary Bishop Raymond F. Chappetto, vicar general, presented Bishop Brennan with a crucifix to be kissed. Brooklyn Auxiliary Bishop Neil E. Tiedemann then presented him with the aspergillum, the liturgical implement used to sprinkle holy water, first on himself and then on those present.

After Bishop DiMarzio welcomed everyone to the Co-Cathedral of St. Joseph, Cardinal Timothy M. Dolan of New York greeted the faithful. He invited Archbishop Christophe Pierre, apostolic nuncio to the United States of America, to read the apostolic letter on the pope's appointment Brooklyn's new shepherd.

After the reading, Bishop Brennan showed the letter to the college of consultors, the chancellor, the curia and the congregation.

Bishop Brennan sat in the cathedral, or bishop's chair, and was presented with the crozier. The new shepherd of a diocese with more than 1.3 million Catholics then greeted various representatives of the diocese, both clergy and laity.

Cardinal Dolan and Archbishop Pierre presided at the installation Mass, which was celebrated by Bishop Brennan. Bishop DiMarzio was among the concelebrants.

"The whole world is found here in Brooklyn and in Queens," Bishop Brennan said in his homily. "Every language, every nationality. We are truly the diocese of immigrants."

"Together with the joy of the Gospel, we are all called to be like Andrew and work together to share the good news, to tell others about Jesus; to share the loaves and the fish that we have, so that God will use what we have and miracles will take place," he said. "Each community renews and reinvigorates this local church with the freshness of the Gospel of Jesus Christ."

Cardinal Joseph W. Tobin of Newark, New Jersey, was in attendance along with 45 bishops, more than 300 priests and 100 deacons.

The congregation numbered about 1,800, and included the new Brooklyn bishop's parents, Patricia and Robert, who is a retired NYPD officer, and other family members.

His nephew Tom Brennan told New York's CBS2 that seeing his uncle installed in Brooklyn was "a very special opportunity" because the family has seen him "become a priest, and then a monsignor, then an auxiliary bishop and now he's the bishop of Brooklyn."

Bishop Brennan, whose episco-

pal motto is "Thy Will Be Done," has pledged to strengthen the Catholic schools and academies in Brooklyn and Queens, and work with and support the immigrant communities. He does speak Spanish.

The prelate also said he wants to focus on evangelizing Catholics through various means of communication and social media.

Among the highlights of his time in Columbus was the institution of the diocesan-wide "Real Presence, Real Future" evangelization and planning initiative, a two-year process involving clergy, lay ecclesial ministers, parish volunteers and the faithful. He also traveled regularly to meet and engage people in that diocese's 23 counties.

When Pope Francis named him to head the Brooklyn Diocese, he said he was "ready and eager to embrace the people of Brooklyn and Queens as their pastor. Knowing we are loved by Jesus, we will strive to show others his face, bearing the joy of the Gospel and the splendor of truth."

On the national level, Bishop Brennan has served as a member of the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops' Administrative Committee as well as a member of the bishops' Catholic education and priorities and plans committees.

Pro-lifers hopeful about outcome of Dobbs case

WASHINGTON (CNS) – The chairman of the U.S. bishops' pro-life committee Dec. 1 urged Catholics, people of other faiths and all people of goodwill to unite in prayer that the U.S. Supreme Court will overturn Roe v. Wade in its eventual ruling on Mississippi's ban on most abortions after 15 weeks of pregnancy.

His statement was issued the same day the court heard oral arguments in Dobbs v. Jackson Women's Health Organization, an appeal from Mississippi. Its ban was struck down by a federal District

Court in Mississippi in 2018 and upheld a year later by the New Orleans-based U.S. Court of Appeals for the 5th Circuit.

The Mississippi law is being challenged by the state's only abortion facility, the Jackson Women's Health Organization. It's the first major abortion case the court has heard in decades.

"In the United States, abortion takes the lives of over 600,000 babies every year," said Baltimore Archbishop William E. Lori, chairman of the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops' Committee on Pro-Life

Activities. "Dobbs v. Jackson Women's Health could change that."

"We pray that the court will do the right thing and allow states to once again limit or prohibit abortion, and in doing so protect millions of unborn children and their mothers from this painful, life-destroying act," he added. "We invite all people of goodwill to uphold the dignity of human life by joining us in prayer and fasting for this important case."

If the court's ruling, expected in July, upholds the ban, it possibly also could

overturn Roe and send the abortion issue back to the states to decide laws on it.

Archbishop Lori directed people to www.prayfordobbs.com for Catholic and ecumenical prayers and resources for community engagement and action "as we await the court's decision in this case."

Pro-life advocates and supporters of keeping abortion legal gathered outside the Supreme Court rallying for their respective positions on the issue as the justices heard oral arguments in the case inside the court.

Beyond the court building's steps, statements about the Mississippi law and predictions about the outcome of the case came from all quarters.

U.S. Sen. Jeanne Shaheen, D-N.H., predicted there would be "a revolution" if Roe v. Wade is overturned.

Shaheen, who is on record as a supporter of widespread access to abortion, said that young people in particular would find it unacceptable if the court strikes down the legal precedent set by Roe in 1973 legalizing abortion nationwide.

ADIRONDACK

**FIRST FRIDAY
PRAISE AND WORSHIP**

Lake Placid – Monthly praise and worship to be held.

Date: First Friday of the month

Time: 7 p.m.

Place: St. Agnes Church

Features: Music led by Joey and MC Izzo. Time for fellowship and snacks afterwards. Will be livestreamed as well on St. Agnes Facebook page.

CLINTON

BRUNCH

Lyon Mountain – Lyon Mountain American Legion to have brunch.

ADIRONDACK

Dates: Dec. 19; Jan. 9 and 23

Time: 9 to Noon

Cost: Adults, \$10; Children under 12, \$7

Menu: Scrambled eggs, sausage, bacon, pancakes, garlic parmesan wings, breaded mushrooms, homefries.

ESSEX

LATIN MASS

Port Henry – Extraordinary Form Latin Mass to be held each Sunday.

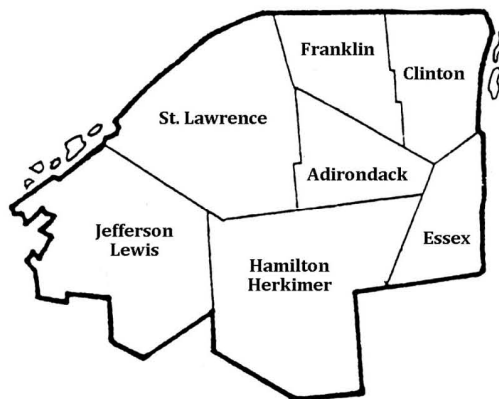
Schedule: 1 p.m. on Sundays

Place: St. Patrick's Church

Features: The traditional Latin Mass celebrated according to the 1962 Missal of St. John the XXIII.

LATIN CHRISTMAS MASS

Port Henry – Extraordinary Form Latin



The North Country Catholic welcomes contributions to "Around the Diocese."

Parishioners are invited to send information about activities to:

North Country Catholic, PO Box 326,
Ogdensburg, NY 13669; fax, 1-866-314-7296;
e-mail news@northcountrycatholic.org.

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

Mass to be held Christmas Day.

Time: 11 a.m.

Place: St. Patrick's Church

Features: The traditional Latin Mass celebrated according to the 1962

JEFFERSON-LEWIS

Missal of St. John the XXIII.

SPAGHETTI & MEATBALL DINNER

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

Date: Dec. 11

Time: 4 p.m. to 7

Place: St. Mary's Parish Center

Cost: Adults, \$9; Seniors, \$8; Children

under 12, \$5; under 5, Free; Sauce, \$5 per quart

Contact: For more information contact 315-629-4678

ST. LAWRENCE

DAY OF MERCY

Canton – There will be a Day of Mercy with confessions heard all day.

Date: Dec. 13

Time: 6 a.m. to 10 p.m.

Place: St. Mary's Church

Features: Mass will be said at 7:30 a.m.

ADVENT PENANCE SERVICES

Massena – Sacred Heart Church to have an Advent Penance Service.

Date: Dec. 15

Time: 6:30 p.m.

Features: Several priests will be available for the sacrament of penance.

PRAYER AND ADORATION

Massena – Commissioned Lay Ministers are invited to gather for Adoration and Rosary.

Date: Every third Wednesday of the month (Dec. 15)

Time: 6:30 to 7 p.m.

Place: Sacred Heart Church

**11TH AND 12TH GRADE
RELIGION CLASSES**

Ogdensburg – St. Mary's Cathedral Parish is kicking off its 11th & 12th grade religion class. Youth in the applicable grades from outside the Cathedral Parish are welcome to attend.

Date: Monthly Dec. 19, Jan. 23, Feb. 13, March 13, April 10, May 15

Time: 5 p.m. to 7:30

Place: Brzana Hall below St. Mary's Cathedral

Features: We have no curriculum; YOU will help decide what we discuss! Lots of discussion, less lecture. Games with prizes. Dinner included. We ask families to consider taking a month and providing dinner. Past families have been very creative from spaghetti dinners to breakfast dishes to bringing in pizza or subs. Classes are self-contained units. Can't make it in October,

you are still invited for November, December... No makeup assignments!

DIOCESAN EVENTS

Guests welcome! Bring a friend!

Contact: If you have questions or concerns that can't wait, contact Deacon Jim Crowley via email jcrowley@rcdony.org or Jessica Hargrave via email jhargrave@rcdony.org.

LOVING AUTHENTICALLY

Commissioned Lay Ministers and candidates are invited to this program that is designed to strengthen the participant's conviction about the truth, beauty and importance of church teaching on natural law and sexual morality and to give participants a basic understanding of the ethical basis of the teaching.

Schedule: Two remaining opportunities to attend: Jan. 29 at Emmaus Room, St. Peter's Church, Plattsburgh; April 23 at St. Peter's Church, Lowville.

Time: 9:30 a.m. to 1 p.m.

Presenters: Deacon John Fehlner & Dr. Maura Fehlner, Mr. Steve Tartaglia and other members of the Family Life Department.

Features: Cost is free and all are welcome. Must watch an 80-minute video prior to the event. Link will be sent after registration. Bring a lunch.

Contact: Register at: <https://www.rcdony.org/lovingauthentically>. If you have questions, contact Family Life Director, Steve Tartaglia at startaglia@rcdony.org or call 315-393-2920

Children's books focus on charity, joy of season

The following books are suitable for Christmas giving:

- "Ephraim's Gladness" by Madeleine Carroll, illustrated by Randy Friemel. Isaiah Books (Little Bookham, United Kingdom, 2021). 28 pp., \$16.05.

Catholic children's book author Madeleine Carroll once again has written a book with prose so gentle and calming that it reads almost like a lullaby. Illustrated with beautiful original oil scenes, "Ephraim's Gladness" combines the parable of the lost sheep with the Nativity story.

Enjoyable for adults and children alike, this book

naturally lends itself to a reading and discussion of the Gospel of Luke. The two biblical stories inspiring the story are included to help facilitate reflection. Ages 4-8.

- "The Beggar and the Bluebird" by Anthony DeStefano, illustrated by Richard Cowdrey. Sophia Institute Press (Manchester, New Hampshire, 2021). 32 pp., \$16.95.

Those who appreciate Oscar Wilde's "The Happy Prince" will find in "The Beggar and the Bluebird" a charming picture book that is memorable if not a little predictable. Laden with themes highlighting selflessness and charity,

this book will leave readers feeling a little sad but full of hope.

Set within a snowy urban Christmas season, the book is a fitting addition to author Anthony DeStefano's lengthy list of poignant children's books. Ages 5-10.

- "Joseph's Donkey" by Anthony DeStefano, illustrated by Juliana Kolesova. Sophia Institute Press (Manchester, New Hampshire, 2021). 40 pp., \$16.95.

Even the most stoic reader can't not weep just a little after reading "Joseph's Donkey," another perfectly saccharine children's book by An-

thony DeStefano. This is the story of a humble donkey's lifetime of work for and devotion to the Holy Family.

Told in simple rhyme, the book is beautifully illustrated with soft, lifelike images. Adults and children will fall in love with this gentle beast of burden and the family it serves. Ages 5 and up.

- "The Treasure With a Face" by Janeen Zaio. Perpetual Light Publishing (Columbus, Ohio 2021). 269 pp., \$12.69.

"The Treasure With a Face" is a rare find. Exciting adventures, humorous dialogue and relatable characters help make this

chapter book engaging and informative for upper elementary and younger middle school readers.

This is the story of a precocious but clumsy 12-year-old apprentice tasked by his demanding uncle to trek more than 100 miles to deliver a precious package.

Although determined to accomplish this mission, the preteen is also eager to simultaneously pursue his passion: treasure hunting. The journey along the way is dangerous and exciting, but ultimately leads to what he was meant to find: the true treasure of the Catholic faith. Ages 9-12.

NOW PLAYING

WEST SIDE STORY

By John Mulderig
Catholic News Service

NEW YORK (CNS) – What do you get when you combine composer Leonard Bernstein, lyricist Stephen Sondheim, playwright Arthur Laurents and choreographer Jerome Robbins, then throw director Steven Spielberg and screenwriter Tony Kushner into the mix?

You get "West Side Story" (20th Century), the splendid second film version of the classic 1957 Broadway musical.

It was Robbins who first had the idea to update Shakespeare's "Romeo and Juliet." Laurents later developed Robbins' original concept, ultimately exchanged a feud between families in Renaissance-era Italy for a rivalry between two gangs – one white, the other Hispanic – in the then-downtrodden Manhattan neighborhood of the title.

Caught in the middle of the contemporary conflict would be in-love-at-first-sight slum dwellers Tony (Ansel Elgort) and Maria (winning newcomer Rachel Zegler).

As Kushner's script charts their romance, as well as their effort to cross the ethnic divide that separates them, he adheres more closely to the stage play than to the 1961 movie, helmed by Robbins and Robert Wise. He also amplifies the Latino flavor of the proceedings by giving characters dialogue in Spanish.

With the whole area for control of which the Jets and the Sharks compete



CNS PHOTO/NIKO TAVERNISE, 20TH CENTURY STUDIOS

Ariana DeBose and David Alvarez star in a scene from the movie "West Side Story." The Catholic News Service classification is A-III – adults. The Motion Picture Association rating is PG-13 – parents strongly cautioned. Some material may be inappropriate for children under 13.

slated to be demolished in preparation for the building of Lincoln Center (an early example of gentrification), tensions are running high. They only intensify once Tony's pal, Riff (Mike Faist), with whom he started the Jets, proposes a climactic showdown to Maria's brother Bernardo (David Alvarez), leader of the Sharks.

Tony, here a recent parolee haunted by how close he came to committing murder in an earlier rumble – the incident for which he was imprisoned – wavers between avoiding his friends altogether and striving to make peace. The better angels of his nature are embodied in his kindly patron and boss, Valentina (Rita Moreno).

Moreno, of course, is a veteran of the previous production and won an Academy Award for her turn as Bernardo's girl-

friend, and Maria's bestie, Anita – a role now taken up, with appropriate brio, by Ariana DeBose. Another connection to the past is Valentina's backstory as the widow of Doc, the proprietor of the eponymous drugstore and hangout, played, back in the days of Camelot, by character actor Ned Glass.

By turns celebratory and heartbreaking, Spielberg's masterful enhancement of the original collaborators' already brilliant work will captivate grown-ups. Whether teens should be allowed to join in alternating toe-tapping with tearing up, however, is another question.

If Spielberg's take is even more kinetic than its lively predecessor, it's also quite a bit grittier and more visceral. That's especially true during a pivotal scene in which Anita becomes trapped

among the Jets and is sexually assaulted.

To this can be added a generally respectful but somewhat mixed treatment of faith. On the one hand, Catholic elements are, if anything, more prominent than in the earlier adaptation.

Thus the exchange of marital vows solemnized in the song "One Hand, One Heart" takes place, not in a dress shop, the frame of whose only window serves as an austere substitute for a cross, but amid the medieval splendors of The Cloisters museum. There, the would-be bride and groom are suffused by the warm light of a stained-glass window as they make their mutual commitment.

Less welcome is the fact that some of the racier lyrics given to Anita – though, admittedly, they're pretty mild by today's standards – are

here sung while she's supposed to be praying the rosary in church. More substantively, she and Bernardo are depicted as living together.

As for the principals, they're shown waking up in bed together at one point. This is after the aforementioned informal wedding ceremony, though. It's clear that they consider themselves married and, in fact, before the 16th-century Council of Trent, their intensely earnest pledges to each other would have constituted a valid bond in the eyes of the church.

Balancing these defects, however they're weighed, are the movie's fundamental messages about the pernicious effects of prejudice and the overarching unity of all. Seldom has the cost of narrow-mindedness been more dramatically or more movingly illustrated.

The film contains mostly stylized violence with minimal gore, an attempted gang rape, cohabitation, offscreen premarital sexual activity, about a dozen uses of profanity, at least one milder oath and some crude and crass talk. The Catholic News Service classification is A-III – adults. The Motion Picture Association rating is PG-13 – parents strongly cautioned. Some material may be inappropriate for children under 13.



SCRIPTURE REFLECTIONS

'Prepare ye the way of the Lord'

Unlike last Sunday's readings, today's Scripture is much more joyful, reflective and full of hope. The passage from Baruch (who was Isaiah's secretary) says right at the beginning, "Take off your robe of mourning and misery, put on the splendor of glory from God forever..." Again, Jerusalem! Stand upon the



**Monsignor
Paul E.
Whitmore**

heights...see your children gathered from the east and the west..." The deeply humbled exiles are traveling on broad, even roads unlike before. They will now live a life of justice, mercy and joy.

In the second reading from St. Paul to the Philippians, Paul prays that they will persevere in their

December 5

Fourth Sunday of Advent

READINGS

Baruch 5:1-9

Philippians 1:4-6, 8-11

Luke 3:1-6

faith and good works, so that they will be pure and blameless for the "day of Christ." His second coming. Again, this reading is so upbeat and full of joy for the future.

John the Baptist perme-

ates Advent. St. Luke's Gospel today sets the historical time of Christ's coming to earth, to be born of a Virgin. His job is to proclaim to all who will listen, "Prepare ye the way of the Lord." What a clarion call of us today as well. Our whole work in Advent is to be alert, be ready, straighten out everything in our lives - sin, indifference, lack of love for our neighbor and all whom we don't even consider our neighbor.

Then, "all flesh shall see the salvation of God."

Our world is full of division, mistrust, horrible crimes by nations against their own people. If ever we needed a fervent Advent to help us to calm down and keep our eyes fixed on our purpose in being here in the first place, it is now. Christmas is still a time to rejoice in the birth of Jesus Christ. May this Sunday's message make sure we can do just that.

CALLED TO SERVE

Say 'I believe' and then ask for God's blessing

The Liturgy of the Word at Mass ends with the Creed and the Prayers of the Faithful.

Following a reasonable amount of sacred silence to meditate on the scripture and homily, the Celebrant at Sunday Mass invites us to repeat our commitment to Christ and his Church and publicly affirm what we have heard. It is called the Profession of Faith.

I have a friend who is a baptized Catholic but who left the Church for an evangelical group. He is a musician, so he really liked the tempo, the instrumentation and the singing at this new

church. I asked him what he believes now, what is the foundation for his new "religion." He didn't have an answer. Perhaps he found comfort in a church that puts little demand on his actions.

I am asked to state my beliefs every week at Sunday Mass. You are too! I believe in the salvation story of Jesus. That's the first part.

I happen to believe the next section is the most important part of the Creed. "I believe in one, holy, catholic and apostolic church." The sentence always takes me back to Catholic grammar school and high school. Sister in the former, brother in the latter spent a lot of time, weeks, mak-

ing sure we understood what those four words: one, holy, catholic, apostolic, mean and why it is important for us to subscribe to each.

At ordination the bishop directs the new deacon, "believe what you read, teach what you believe, and practice what you teach."

All of us, not just deacons, should spend some time outside Mass reading the Nicene Creed so we really know what we are saying when we read or recite the Creed. Stephen Binz said in an article a few years ago in Our Sunday Visitor,

"Reciting the creed does not make us Christians, but it reminds us of the truths of our salvation and gives us an opportunity to personally affirm them."

If you need some help understanding the commitments in the Creed, go to the Catechism of the Catholic Church. If you do not have a catechism, ask Santa to buy you one for Christmas.

Once we finish the Creed, the celebrant prays to God, the Father. God is asked to hear certain concerns of ours for the salvation of all. These are called the Universal Prayer, the Prayer of the Faithful and occasionally the Intentions. According to the general instructions of the Mass, the intentions "should be sober, be composed with a wise liberty and in few words, and they should be expressive of the

prayer of the entire community."

The deacon announces the intentions from the ambo, also known as the pulpit, or from some other suitable place. If there is no deacon present, the intentions can be read by a reader or one of the lay faithful.

Many parishes have the lector read the Prayers of the Faithful. That was common practice when there was no deacon in the parish. In fact, if there is a deacon at Mass, he should read the intentions.

Once the celebrant closes the prayers the Liturgy of the Word is complete. The second major part of the Mass follows, the Liturgy of the Eucharist.



**Deacon
Kevin Mastellon**


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

For a New or Used Car
**Mort
Backus &
Sons**
On Canton-Ogdensburg Rd.
315-393-5899



Visit our website
www.northcountrycatholic.org

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

 Find us on Facebook!





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

The Society for the Propagation of the Faith

Sr. Mary Ellen Brett, SSI, Director

622 Washington St., Ogdensburg, NY 13669

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

mbrett@rcdony.org

Bringing forth fruits of peace and justice

The Mission Office would like to encourage everyone to reflect on and put into action these words by a group of Columbian bishops this Advent season. This message of dialogue and responsibility toward our fellow man is not only one for the people of Columbia but a message for all of us.

"Hope is reborn in our hearts at the beginning of the season of Advent," write the Colombian bishops at the beginning of the message, published at the beginning of the liturgical season of Advent. "The year which is ending – they point out – has been a period of lights and shadows: pandemic, reappearance of forms of armed violence, marches, social protest, economic recovery, concrete gestures of solidarity, return to work and classrooms, among the others."

By lighting the first candle of the Advent wreath, we are illuminated "by the Mystery of the Incarnation of the Son of God, which encourages us to strip ourselves of the garment of affliction and to put on the clothes of the feast with the conviction that, through the practice of good politics, that of selfless service and permanent social dialogue, the fruits of peace and justice that each of us Colombians needs will germinate."

The message sent to Fides, signed by Mgr. Luis José Rueda Aparicio, archbishop of Bogotá and president of the Episcopal Conference; Msgr. Omar Alberto Sánchez Cubillos, OP, archbishop of Popayán and vice-president; Luis Manuel Alí Herrera, auxiliary bishop of Bogotá and secretary general, stresses that this social dialogue must be "frank and persistent, based on the awareness that we are, as Colombians, one people, in and through our diversities, with a wealth and a natural and cultural heritage."

In this coming new year, the bishops encourage Colombians to take up the challenges of "a political debate that will allow us to build our democracy, recognizing that we have a social responsibility towards each other," and invoke the intercession of the Virgin Mary so that she helps us "to continue building a project for a nation based on the common good." Article from FIDES missionary news service of the Pontifical Mission Societies.

Please remember "The Society for the Propagation of the Faith" when writing or changing your will.
rcdony.org/mission

KNIGHTS IN ACTION



Past Grand Knight John Taillon of Sarto Council 1059 in Canton presents a \$1000 donation to Village of Canton Recreation Director Meg Richardson for the ADA Kayak/Boat launch project at Taylor Park.

OBITUARIES

Canton – Wayne Joseph Willette, 68; Mass of Christian Burial Dec. 3, 2021 at St. Mary's Church.

Champlain – Nora Mercaldi; Mass of Christian Burial Nov. 29, 2021 at St. Mary's Church.

Chateaugay – Howard I. LaClair, 84; Mass of Christian Burial Dec. 6, 2021 at St. Patrick's Church; burial in Immaculate Heart Cemetery, Churubusco.

Chateaugay – Emma (Jones) Tolosky, 92; Mass of Christian Burial Dec. 4, 2021 at St. Patrick's Church; burial in parish cemetery.

Chateaugay – Antoinette (Dominic) "Tony" Toohill, 91; Private Services to be held.

Clayton – Frederick D. LaClair, 91; Mass of Christian Burial Dec. 2, 2021 at St. Mary's Church; burial in Sanford Corners Cemetery, Calcium.

Constable – Carlos E. Griffith, 88; Funeral Services Dec. 1, 2021 at the Chateaugay Funeral Home.

Crown Point – Michael John Gunning, 85; Mass of Christian Burial Dec. 3, 2021 at Sacred Heart Church; burial in Valley View Cemetery.

Hogansburg – Julia L. (Mitchell) Beers, 96; Mass of Christian Burial to be held at St. Regis Church; burial in St.

Joseph's Cemetery.

Hopkinton – Mary Margaret Mahlstedt, 84; Mass of Christian Burial Dec. 3, 2021 at Holy Cross Church; burial in St. Mary's Cemetery, Potsdam.

Lake Placid – Margaret Ann (McCarty) McConnell, 85; Mass of Christian Burial Nov. 30, 2021 at St. Agnes Church

Lowville – Joshua D. Streeter, 26; Funeral Services Dec. 2, 2021 at Iseneker Funeral Home, Inc.

Madrid – Patricia L. (Perry) Davis, 65; Mass of Christian Burial to be held in the Spring at St. John's Church; burial in Hale Cemetery, Norfolk.

Malone – Barrie John Kennedy, 80; Mass of Christian Burial Nov. 29, 2021 at Notre Dame Church.

Malone – James Henry LaCombe, 83; Mass of Christian Burial Dec. 3, 2021 at Notre Dame Church.

Malone – Charlotte A. (Dennis) Marlowe, 89; Mass of Christian Burial Dec. 4, 2021 at Notre Dame Church; burial in Notre Dame Cemetery.

Malone – Jeffrey D. Supernault, 65; Funeral Services Nov. 26, 2021 at the Bruso-Desnoyers Funeral Home; burial in Notre Dame Cemetery.

Massena – Philip D. Charleston, 86;

Mass of Christian Burial Dec. 6, 2021 at St. Mary's Church; burial in Calvary Cemetery.

Massena – Gerald J. Gray, 68; Mass of Christian Burial Nov. 27, 2021 at St. Mary's Church; burial in St. Patrick's Cemetery.

Massena – Stella B. (Rog) Larrow, 84; Funeral Services Dec. 3, 2021 at the Donaldson Funeral Home; burial in Calvary Cemetery.

Mooers Forks – Roger Lee Sample, 74; Mass of Christian Burial Dec. 2, 2021 at St. Ann's Church; burial in parish cemetery.

Morrisonville – Donald Raymond Rabideau Sr., 84; Mass of Christian Burial Dec. 3, 2021 at St. Alexander's Church; burial in St. Alexander's Cemetery.

Port Leyden – Steven W. Weber, 54; Mass of Christian Burial Dec. 1, 2021 at St. Martin's Church; burial in Calvary Cemetery.

Potsdam – Charles F. McGowan, 88; Mass of Christian Burial Dec. 2, 2021 at St. Mary's Church; burial in St. Mary's Cemetery.

Watertown – David J. Hodgkinson, 83; Funeral Services to be held at a later date.

Pope calls world to act on climate change

By Dennis Sadowski
Catholic News Service

Pope Francis invited Catholics – and anyone else interested – to join a seven-year journey to widen the reach of his 2015 encyclical on the environment in a time of global climate change.

Known as the Laudato Si' Action Platform, the effort formally launched Nov. 14 in dioceses around the world.

The invitation came as communities globally experienced extreme heat and drought, massive flooding, intense and long-burning wildfires, rising sea levels and failed crops in 2021.

The pope introduced the platform in a video May 25, encouraging people to join the global grassroots movement to create a more inclusive, fraternal, peaceful and sustainable world.

Coordinated through the Dicastery for Integral Human Development, the platform is a "journey that will see our communities committed in different ways to becoming totally sustainable, in the spirit of integral ecology," the pope said.

He called for a "new ecological approach that can transform our way of dwelling in the world, our lifestyles, our relationship with the resources of the earth and, in general, our way of looking at humanity and of living life."

The initiative invited dioceses, parishes and individuals to build an integrated global effort to protect creation for future generations. The Vatican platform is meant to help those who want to increase their commitment to bringing the encyclical, "Laudato Si', on Care for Our Common Home," to

life by committing through 2028 to carry out a set of actions they developed based on local needs.

In the United States, 17 dioceses and 58 parishes had committed to participating in the platform at its kickoff. More were expected to join, said Jose Aguto, executive director of the Washington-based Catholic Climate Covenant.

The platform calls for integrating actions across different sectors, such as universities, parishes, dioceses, religious orders, community organizations, neighborhoods, businesses and health care institutions.

"The covenant, we're really excited about the U.S. participation in the Laudato Si' Action Platform so far. We look forward to the seven-year journey as a big step," Aguto said Dec. 1.

The effort surrounding the platform began as the two-week 26th U.N. Climate Change Conference closed in Glasgow, Scotland. Representatives of more than 200 nations came together Oct. 31-Nov. 12 with the goal of agreeing to cut global carbon emissions by half by 2030 as part of efforts to limit global warming to 1.5 degrees Celsius.

COP26, as the conference was known, was delayed a year because of the pandemic.

A Vatican delegation and several Catholic organizations and parishes were present throughout COP26. Vatican representatives joined high-level talks, while Catholics from other groups participated in sideline events.

Vatican representatives in a video message urged the conference to deliver on financing from wealthier countries to help

poorer countries respond to climate change and to take urgent action to comply with the standards of the Paris Agreement.

The final agreement, however, fell short of those goals, disappointing Catholic environmental and development advocates. Action to limit temperature increases was pushed into 2022 and wealthier nations failed to deliver on needed climate finance to help poor countries respond and adapt to climate change.

Although promises and practical action fell short in the final agreement, "we are on the road from which there is no turning back," said Christine Allen, director of CAFOD, the Catholic international development agency in England and Wales, which joined the Vatican delegation in Scotland.

"The level of realization from right across the world that we need to act and act with urgency absolutely took place," Allen said.

Chloe Noel, the coordinator of the Faith Economy Ecology Project at the Washington-based Maryknoll Office for Global Concerns, who joined the conference sideline activities online, told CNS Dec. 2 that while delegates from major fossil fuel-using countries began discussing reduction in such consumption, "there's not a clear plan about how that will be done and by when that will be done."

"We need more ambition to keep the temperature rise to even two degrees Celsius let alone to what the temperature really needs to be, which is 1.5 degrees Celsius," Noel said.

She also called for a more expansive financial commitment by the

world's richest nations to help developing countries already feeling the negative effects of climate change.

"We will continue, as the climate movement, as the faith community, to push the U.S. government to address loss and damage at COP27," Noel said.

COP27 will convene in Egypt in November 2022.

In other events, the Catholic Climate Covenant teamed with Creighton University in July to convene the second of three planned biennial "Laudato Si' and the U.S. Catholic Church" conferences. More than 2,700 participants joined a series of online programs to learn how to bring the encyclical's teaching on climate change more widely into the life of the church.

"We're continuing to grow the Catholic community (that is) concerned about climate. We're seeing steady increases in the number of Catholics being interested," Aguto told Catholic News Service.

"But we need to elevate our voices more. The science is becoming more significant and the divisions in our country are becoming more stark. We have to speak first of love of God and love of neighbor. We have to create a space for dialogue," he added.

A global campaign to divest from fossil fuels continued to gain adherents in the fall, with 72 institutions – 36 of them Catholic – announcing days ahead of COP26 that they will withdraw investments from carbon-based energy corporations. The institutions hold assets of \$4.2 billion.

Salesian Father Joshtrom Kureethadam, coordinator of Ecology and Creation at the Vatican Dicastery for Promoting Integral Human

Development, welcomed the announcement during an Oct. 26 video conference organized by leading divestment proponents.

The Vatican and Pope Francis have become increasingly vocal about shifting investment funds from fossil fuels toward clean energy alternatives. In 2020, as part of the Laudato Si' Year, the Vatican released guidelines for Catholics to implement integral ecology and other actions outlined in the pope's encyclical.

"In very strong language, divestment was recommended," Father Kureethadam told the online conference. "Last year we announced the Laudato Si' Action Platform. Among the Laudato Si' goals there's ecological economics and it mentioned the need to divest. So the Vatican is supporting this journey."

The priest called the task of reducing the use of highly polluting fossil fuels a

"huge challenge" but one that was possible. A large majority of climate scientists have concluded that the burning of fossil fuels as a leading cause of climate change.

Changes were afoot during the year in two leading Catholic environmental groups.

The Catholic Climate Covenant announced in September that Aguto would be its new executive director, succeeding Dan Misleh, who moved into the role of founder. Misleh helped establish the organization in 2006 and continues to play a leading role in its work in the United States.

In addition, the Global Catholic Climate Movement became known as the Laudato Si' Movement in July.