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The Diocese of Ogdensburg Volume 75, Number 40

# NORTH COUNTRY CATHOLIC

FEBRUARY 24, 2021

## Delivery delays

North Country Catholic readers in some portions of the diocese are reporting delays in delivery of their newspapers. These delays are due to the delivery process of the U.S. Postal Service and are, regretfully, outside of our control.

To get the paper as early as possible, consider subscribing to the e-edition, which is delivered via email, typically Monday morning. To switch to or add an e-subscription, contact Christine Ward at [cward@rcdony.org](mailto:cward@rcdony.org) or at (315) 608-7556.

## Experience our family of faith

The annual subscription campaign for the *North Country Catholic* begins this week-end.

Bishop Terry R. LaValley encourages the faithful of the diocese to "Experience Our Family of Faith."

"Sharing our stories helps connect us as a diocesan family. Many miles separate us. A resident of Constableville in Lewis County may never meet a resident of Constable in Franklin County, but by sharing our stories and learning about one another, we can forge bonds that help us learn from each other, despite the miles of separation. Certainly, we are living in challenging times. The NCC has also been an effective way for me to communicate with Catholics around the diocese as we face each challenge that comes our way with Christ as our Guide."

FULL STORY, PAGE 3

## SPRINKLING OF ASHES



BY ADAM FARGO/FOR THE NORTH COUNTRY CATHOLIC

**Father Raymond J. Moreau, pastor of St. Mary's in Brushton and St. Augustine's in North Bangor, sprinkles ashes on the head of Connor Trudeau during an Ash Wednesday Mass in Brushton. Due to the pandemic, many parishes employ the sprinkling of ashes, a practice that is both Biblical and practiced at the Vatican. Other parishes used a cotton swab to place a cross of ashes on foreheads.**

## SHARING OUR STORIES



Emily Zehr of Croghan says she grew in faith as a young adult, and that faith carried her through difficult times, including pregnancy and infant loss, in this week's "Sharing Our Stories; Sharing Our Faith," a series highlighting how lay Catholics are living out their faith here in the North Country.

FULL STORY, PAGE 5

## Pope, Curia prepare for solo retreats

VATICAN CITY (CNS) – Pope Francis sent copies of a 17th-century book of spiritual meditations to members of the Roman Curia to help guide them during their Lenten retreat.

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the Vatican announced Jan. 20 that "this year it will not be possible to have the spiritual exercises of the Roman Curia" at the

Pauline Fathers' retreat center in Ariccia, 20 miles southeast of Rome.

"The Holy Father has therefore invited the cardinals residing in Rome, the heads of dicasteries and the superiors of the Roman Curia to make their own personal arrangements, withdrawing in prayer" from Feb. 21 to 26, the Vatican said.

The Vatican also said that during the week, the

pope will suspend all of his engagements, including his weekly general audience.

To assist them in their personal retreat, Pope Francis gave members of the Curia a copy of "Abbi a Cuore il Signore," a collection of meditations and notes written by an anonymous Cistercian monk known as "the Master of San Bartolo" monastery, Vatican News

reported Feb. 18.

The book was sent along with a letter from the pope to Archbishop Edgar Peña Parra, the Vatican substitute secretary for general affairs.

"Abbi a Cuore il Signore" is the collection and translation of handwritten notes in Latin found at a flea market in the northern Italian city of Ferrara where San Bartolo Monastery is located.

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## EDITOR'S NOTE

## He's like family

I don't talk to him nearly as often as I'd like, but when we chat, it always seems effortless.

This friend and I typically go months without talking. We're not like best friends, but we are close friends. We can share very personal and private parts of our lives with one another with the knowledge that we will find support and love in every conversation. We also know we're remembering and lifting one another up in prayer.

This friend exudes a peace and calm that draws me to him. It draws others to him, too. I've witnessed it. He's self-aware, self-reflective and self-critical, but in a healthy and

honest way.

This friend loves our Lord, and he loves the Lord in other people.

He makes me want to be a better person. He makes me want that peace he has in Christ, the seeming ease with which he surrenders his will to his God. He makes me want his calm. And he helps me with his wisdom, counsel and prayers.

I sometimes worry that our relationship is imbalanced. I'm not sure he gets as much out of it as I do. But I'm exceedingly grateful I have his friendship and have him in my life.

After a particularly moving conversation with this friend recently, I was reflecting on

how important it is to have a faith family – to have people who love you and will the best for you, including a close relationship with our Lord and eternal life. Faith is not an individual activity. It grows best in community, with people supporting one another and sharing with one another.

That's why the *North Country Catholic* is inviting you this year to "Experience our family of faith." It's been a rough year. We've been separated in unprecedented ways from each other and, at times, from the Mass and Eucharist. It seems more important than ever that we experience family and connectedness.

We hope to help you, our readers, do just that. With the pandemic largely shutting down events and gatherings, we've been more focused than

ever on sharing the stories of the beautiful people who make up this diocese and how they're living out their faith and sharing it with others. We hope you'll identify with their stories. We hope you'll learn from their stories. We hope you'll feel connected to these people by knowing their stories.

We also need your story ideas. While we have contributing writers spread around the diocese, we don't hit every area. We don't hear every story worth sharing. We count on you, our readers, to let us know when you hear a great story that should be shared.

And we thank you for your continued support of the *North Country Catholic*. We thank you for being part of our family of faith.

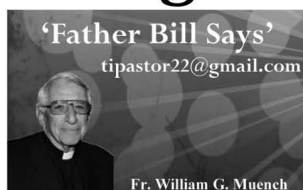


Darcy L.  
Fargo

## Focusing on trusting God

As this season of prayer begins, I have chosen trust as my Lenten goal – trust in God. Trust hits every part of life, doesn't it? I vote for a certain person because I trust them. I buy a certain product because I trust the company that makes it. I trust my doctor because I have experienced such good health at the hands of this doctor, actually I should say at the hands of all of my doctors. So, added to this list: I believe with all my faith and trust that I will be watched over best by my God.

We – you and I – are living in a time filled with anxieties. I wish it would all be solved right now, but I still have faith and trust in God. I continue to pray constantly that this pandemic will end. However, I trust God and continue to believe that something good is going to happen. The challenge for us is to remain patient. I know that the future will not be as I personally imagine it. God



has the plan.

So, let us begin by listening to today's Gospel reading at Mass from St. Mark. This story tells us that Jesus and his disciples were traveling somewhere in a boat. The disciples were anxious. They had forgotten to bring enough bread for the trip. They had only one loaf of bread. Jesus realizes that they are disturbed, and he begins by speaking to them about the leaven of the Pharisees. The disciples are confused. They do not understand Jesus. Actually, Jesus is talking to them about the teachings of the Pharisees as leaven. The disciples think Jesus is referring to the bread. Jesus is urging them to only trust him. Jesus

then reminds them how recently he himself had broken five loaves of bread and fed five thousand people with 12 wicker baskets of fragments left over. Notice the importance of the number 12 – a number that is important to the Lord. There are 12 apostles. There are 12 tribes of Israel.

So, as we start praying for trust in the Lord, we should take a moment to remember all that Jesus has done for each one of us. How can we not trust Jesus who has been so good to us? I am certain your list is as long as mine. Over and over God has actually saved me. I am certain that the Lord has been present to me to guide and lead me to avoid very unfortunate paths of life and to lead me down the good paths. Constantly, I consider that I have been saved. Jesus has shown me the way. How can I not trust the Lord Jesus?

What does it mean to trust Jesus? I often turn to the

Lord in prayer. Something that is important to find life as a Christian is surrender. I have often been directed by spiritual guides who have helped me understand how important it is for me to surrender – literally, to put my life into the hands of the Lord.

Consider this, trusting God so much that I am ready to place my life into the Lord's hands. I pray that the day will come when I simply live in the guidance of the Lord with trust in God's guidance. Surrender to God, and he will fill you with his Spirit. Only God can free us from our ignorance and sinful ways. When we surrender our lives to God, he gives us new life in his Spirit and the pledge of everlasting life with God. God wants us to be spiritually fit to love and serve him at all times and seasons. The great exchange – my life for His victorious life. What will you give to God in exchange for freedom and eternal life?



FOLLOW ME

# 'Experience our family of faith' with the NCC

**Dear Sisters and Brothers in Christ:**

*"Head of the Holy Family." "Pillar of Families." "Spouse of the Mother of God." "Foster father of the Son of God."* While St. Joseph carries many titles, a number of those titles focus on family and family relationships. St. Joseph guided and protected Jesus and Mary through troubled and difficult times. It is fitting that we would turn to him for intercession for the protection of our marriages and families.



**Bishop Terry R. LaValley**

It also seems fitting that St. Joseph carries another title: *"Protector of Holy Church."* We, as a Church, are the Body of Christ. We are called to be united. We are called to love one another. We are called to

help each other when one of us is sick or struggling. Doesn't the Church sound an awful lot like a family? That is why the *North Country Catholic* is inviting us as a diocese to "Experience Our Family of Faith" in its annual subscription campaign. As the pandemic has canceled or restructured many events and happenings, the NCC has been focused more than ever on telling the stories of the people who make up our diocesan family of faith.

Sharing our stories helps connect us as a diocesan family. Many miles separate us. A resident of Constableville in Lewis County may never meet a resident of Constable in Franklin County, but by sharing our stories and learning about one another, we can

forge bonds that help us learn from each other, despite the miles of separation. Certainly, we are living in challenging times. The NCC has also been an effective way for me to communicate with Catholics around the diocese as we face each challenge that comes our way with Christ as our Guide.

This weekend, the annual *North Country Catholic* subscription campaign begins. I ask that every Catholic family subscribe to our family paper. If you are a current subscriber, thank you for renewing your subscription in this week's campaign. Why not consider obtaining a subscription as a gift for a family member? I invite those who do not currently subscribe to consider how important it is today to be an informed Catholic Christian and allow our diocesan newspaper to be a vehicle to help you and your fam-

ilies grow in faith.

I hope that you accept my invitation to welcome the *North Country Catholic* into your home and "Experience Our Family of Faith." Thank you for your prayerful support.

Faithfully yours in Christ,

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

## BARSTOW

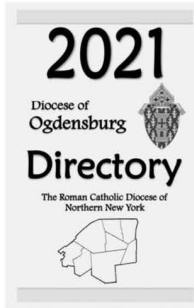
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## Diocesan Directories now available!



The Official 2021 Directory of the Diocese of Ogdensburg includes detailed information about parishes, schools and other Catholic organizations.

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## What is a Foster Grandparent?

Foster Grandparents are role models, mentors, and friends to children with exceptional needs. The program provides a way for volunteers age 55 and over to stay active by serving children and youth in their communities. They are placed in a classroom setting with a child or children who are in need of emotional support, development of basic learning skills, friendship, companionship, encouragement, individual attention, and unhurried help. The program currently has 40 volunteers and serves more than 100 kids per year.

The Foster Grandparent Program is hosted by the Catholic Charities of the Diocese of Ogdensburg and supported by AmeriCorps Seniors, a federally funded agency responsible for building volunteer based programs for over 50 years and counting.



Sometimes when you get to be my age, you wake up and say what good am I and along came the Foster Grandparent Program that keeps me going!"  
Roy Foote age 83 Foster Grandparent



### Am I Qualified to be a Foster Grandparent?

All you need to join is the ability to give the kind of comfort and love that sets a child on the path toward a successful future. If you're 55 or older and want to share your experience and compassion, you have what it takes to be a Foster Grandparent.

You'll also receive a small bi-weekly, non-taxable stipend that cannot be held against any current benefits you may already have as well as paid mileage for your travel. Additionally, you receive paid holidays, vacations, sick and personal leave.



### Want more info about how to get started?

Contact Melissa Howard, Volunteer Coordinator  
PHONE: (518)359-7688  
EMAIL: [mhoward@cathcharities.org](mailto:mhoward@cathcharities.org)

80 Park Street, Suite 2  
PO Box 701  
Tupper Lake, NY 12986



Sam Roiger, Ryan Jones and Sam Sieminski complete dribbling drills as part of the Holy Hoops program at St. Mary's in Canton.

## Canton parish offers 'Holy Hoops' program

By Darcy Fargo  
Editor

**CANTON**—It's Holy Hoops! St. Mary's in Canton is offering a parish youth basketball program for parish youth in grades one through 12.

"They had to be parish-

ioners and they had to attend Canton Central," said Paula Jones, founder and coordinator of the Holy Hoops program, describing program participants. "We started January 11. It was two weeks after the holidays, so we thought it would be a safer time with the holidays done."

As part of the program, youth gather in small groups – pandemic-related requirements dictate that no more than eight youth can participate at any given time – based on age level to work on basketball skills and drills in the St. Mary's School gym.

"With the pandemic, these kids have really lost a lot," said Jones. "And this gym was just sitting here empty. We thought this would give the kids a safe place they could be together and get some physical activity. It's for their physical, mental and social wellbeing. They need to have something."

The program runs Monday through Thursday, with three different groups playing each night. Up to grade six, boys and girls are mixed. Youth in grades seven through 12 play in same-gender groupings. Participants need to pre-reserve a space, and a new permission slip and COVID questionnaire is completed for every night of participation.

"We plan all the activities to keep them as distant as possible," Jones said. "We're not playing games at all. It's all drills and skill

work. I let them have a few minutes to free shoot at the beginning, and I let them play something like 'HORSE' at the end. It has to have some fun."

And the youth are glad to have the opportunity.

"I'd had a few opportunities to get together with my friends outside, but this is really our first opportunity to get together and play (basketball)," said Ryan Jones, 15. "I wish we were on a full-sized court, but this works, too. It's just nice to be working on our game."

"It's great to see these guys and play a little ball," added Sam Sieminski, 15, of Canton. "It's been tough not knowing if we're going to have a season (of basketball at the high school). I trust the school and the public officials to make that decision. I'm just glad to have at least some opportunity to play basketball. I love team sports. I love that one person can't do all the work. You have to play as a team."

"This gives us a chance to exercise, and we need that for our mental health," added Sam Roiger, 17. "I've only had a chance to play some pick-up ball at the pavilion. I'm glad we have this chance to work on skills and work on improving our games."

The program is staffed by six VIRTUS-trained adult coaches.

"We couldn't have done this without this great group of volunteers," said Jones.

## Now is the perfect time to volunteer.

With everything that has happened in our community this year, it is more important than ever for volunteers to stand up and support their friends and neighbors. When joining **RSVP**, not only are you helping your community, but you're joining a family who cares as much as you.

*The RSVP Program is hosted by the Catholic Charities of the Diocese of Ogdensburg and supported by AmeriCorps Seniors, a federally funded agency responsible for building volunteer based programs for over 50 years and counting.*



### Upcoming opportunities

There are so many ways you can help your community out that you might not even know about! Here are some examples of what you can do!



#### Be a Friend

Check on friends, share a meal, help around the house, go for a walk or just stop by to catch up.



#### Give a Ride

Drive your neighbors to their appointments, to pick up prescriptions or to the store.



#### Help at School

Volunteer at local elementary schools, tutor students, or be a mentor to those in need.



#### Give a Meal

Support the local food pantry by shopping, organizing, cooking, or anything else.



#### Meals On Wheels

Donate your time to your local Meals on Wheels program and prepare or deliver meals.

Not only do you get the benefit of feeling amazing after helping someone, RSVP will help pay some of your mileage (.56 cents/mile) and honor your efforts at a yearly recognition event.

### Opportunities available in Franklin and Hamilton County Want more info about how to get started?

**Hamilton County:** Contact Hanna Smith  
hsmith@cathcharities.org

**Franklin County:** Contact Melissa Howard  
mhoward@cathcharities.org

**PHONE:**  
(518)359-7688


80 Park Street, Suite 2  
PO Box 701, Tupper Lake, NY 12986



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# 'You just have to trust'

*Editor's note: Sharing Our Stories; Sharing Our Faith is an ongoing series highlighting 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

**CROGHAN** – Although Emily Zehr was raised in a Catholic family as the third of seven children and with very faithful parents, she said her faith really didn't go from her head to her heart until she was older.

But, when her faith did finally make that move, Zehr found that her faith both taught her the true meaning of womanhood and sustained her and her family through the trials they have experienced in their lives.

"For me, my faith is important because there's really no other faith that I've found that provides the best example of an authentic femininity in the example of Mary our Mother," Zehr said. "I love my Catholic faith because it has provided the fullness of the truth, and the depth of our faith is very attractive to me and there's just nowhere else that provides everything."

After falling away from her faith during her college years, Zehr said the turning point for her was when her mother gave her the book "Pure Womanhood" by Chrystalina Evert. The book provided "a little nudge in the right direction" that led her to participate in a two-year Women of Grace study at St. James' Church in Carthage.

Through that study, Zehr not only grew in her faith



but also grew as a woman of faith.

"In college and just being in the world, the world feeds you this picture of what being a woman is that's not real, and I bought into that lie," she said. "I felt like I wasn't good at being a girl. I didn't think I fit into the stereotype of the world, and I didn't think I fit into the stereotype of what I thought the church wanted me to be. ... Through that (study), I really recognized where my worth and my dignity come from – not from this world but from God."

Before finding Women of Grace, reading "Pure Womanhood" had led Zehr to seek more spiritual literature and also to attend Mass more regularly during her last two years of college, including when she studied abroad in Ireland.

"Whenever I would be lonely or whatever, I would always find my way to the church and go to Mass on Sundays," she said.

After college, she started the study and then met her husband, Kyle, and then experienced her first pregnancy, which resulted in a

miscarriage. Her second pregnancy resulted in the couple's older daughter, Natalie, now 4 years old. During her third pregnancy – in which son Grayson died at birth – Zehr experienced a trial "where I really stood by my faith, where I really had to lean on my faith to endure that."

At that time, during her 18-week ultrasound about halfway through the pregnancy, she found out Grayson had a lower urinary tract obstruction – which means the baby wasn't able to urinate, so there was no amniotic fluid. An operation can be done to help the baby survive, but only if all of the conditions are right.

The Zehrs spent time at the perinatal center in Syracuse and at the children's hospital in Philadelphia, and initially they were told Grayson would be a candidate for surgery. After more testing, though, they were told he could not have the surgery and would not survive.

"There were several times during our pregnancy that people would



Emily Zehr of Croghan with her husband, Kyle, and daughters, Natalie and Scarlet.

## REQUEST FOR PRIESTS

**WOULD YOU PRAY FOR A PRIEST EACH DAY?**

— PRAYER SUGGESTION —

Eternal Father, we lift up to you these and all the priests of the world. Sanctify them. Heal and guide them. Mold them into the likeness and holiness of your Son, Jesus, the Eternal High Priest. May their lives be pleasing to you. In Jesus' name we pray. Amen

Mass  
Rosary  
Fasting  
Day Offering  
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Offering of Sufferings  
Divine Mercy Chaplet

Or whatever the Lord inspires you to offer Him

(With ecclesiastical approval)

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CONTINUED ON PAGE 6

## Environmental Stewardship

## What kind of fast does God want?

Do you ever find yourself asking the question at the beginning of Lent, why do we fast? The people in Zechariah's time (7:4-5, 9-10) must have asked the same question. In return God asks them a question, "... was it really for me that you fasted?" Then, God tells them "Judge with true justice; show mercy and compassion to one another. Do not oppress the widow or the fatherless, the foreigner or the poor. Do not plot evil against each other." It would seem that our fasting should be about more than ourselves; it needs to consider how it will bring healing to our neighbor.

Putting fasting in this context gives the act of fasting a deeper meaning. In fact, it can mean developing a whole new attitude towards life... one that recognizes that all life is connected. Life is a gift not just to me but to every human being and living creatures. God calls us to a lifestyle that will sustain the goodness He has created within me and in all creation.

So where does the "fasting" come in? Usually, we associate fasting with refraining from eating a certain food or drink. However, one practice suggested by Ignatian Solidarity Network this Lent is called a "Fast from Food Waste." Studies have shown that food waste across the global food supply chain amounts to approximately 30% of all food produced. In the U.S., around 40% is wasted annually. (Yale Climate Connections) How does this waste have any effect on my neighbors? When we trash food, we are throwing away all the resources that went into growing, harvesting, packaging and shipping the food such as water, gasoline, land and pesticides. (NPR)

When we see so many families struggle to put food on their tables, this kind of fasting brings to light all kinds of connections with our neighbors. "Whenever food is thrown out it is as if it were stolen from the table of the poor." Laudato Si. This week, pay attention to how you may be wasting food beginning with shopping. Take one action to change that habit.

## Bishop's Public Schedule

**Feb. 24** – 9:45 a.m. – Episcopal Council Meeting at Bishop's Residence

**Feb. 25** – Noon – Mass at St. Mary's Cathedral

**Feb. 27** – 4 p.m. – Mass at St. Mary's Cathedral

**Feb. 28** – 10:30 a.m. – Mass at St. Mary's of the Fort Church in Fort Covington

## Rest in Peace

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

**Feb. 24** – Rev. George Belanger, 1932; Rev. William J. Murphy, C.S.C.O., 1959

**Feb. 25** – Rev. William Howard, 1888; Rev. P.J. O'Connell, O.S.A., 1895; Rev. James J. Duffy, 1912; Msgr. L. Kevin Conners, 1971

**Feb. 26** – Rev. Francis X. LaChance, 1916; Rev. John F. Wiley, 1984

**Feb. 27** – Rev. Ferdinand Grenier, O.M.I., 1872

**Feb. 28** – Rev. J. H. Tabaret, O.M.I., 1886

**March 1** – Rev. Louis B. Demers, 1888; Msgr. Alexander P. Landry, 1955; Most Rev. Stanislaus J. Brazana, 1997

**March 2** – Rev. Edward A. Dailey, O.S.A., 1901; Msgr. John J. Bent, 1949; Rev. Joseph E. Tessier, O.M.I., 1952

## 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-  
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Phone: 518-651-2267 days; 518-569-0612 evenings; or Father Christopher Carrara, the Episcopal Vicar for Clergy; ccarrara@rcdony.org Phone: 315-393-2920 ext. 1340. If you have a complaint of suspected sexual abuse or related misconduct by the bishops, contact the **Catholic Bishop Abuse Reporting Service** at 800-276-1562 or www.ReportBishopAbuse.org.

## DEVOTION TO THE SEVEN SORROWS AND SEVEN JOYS OF ST. JOSEPH

The Devotion to the Seven Sorrows and Seven Joys of St. Joseph is observed on the seven Sundays preceding the March 19 feast of St. Joseph (starting Jan. 31).

## Seven Sorrows

1. The doubt of St. Joseph. (Matt. 1:19)
2. The poverty of Jesus' birth. (Luke 2:7)
3. The Circumcision. (Luke 2:21)
4. The prophecy of Simeon. (Luke 2:34)
5. The flight into Egypt. (Matt. 2:14)
6. The return from Egypt. (Matt. 2:22)
7. The loss of the Child Jesus. (Luke 2:45)

## Seven Joys

1. The message of the Angel. (Matt. 1:20)
2. The birth of the Savior. (Luke 2:10-11)
3. The Holy Name of Jesus. (Matt. 1:25)

4. The effects of the Redemption. (Luke 2:38)

5. The overthrow of the idols of Egypt. (Is. 19:1)

6. Life with Jesus and Mary at Nazareth. (Luke 2:39)

7. The finding of the Child Jesus in the Temple. (Luke 2:46)

## Feb. 28, 2021

Great was St. Joseph's grief when, obeying the voice of the angel, he had to flee to Egypt with Mary and the Infant Jesus. That those who are forced to leave their homes due to war may be supported by Christ's followers in defense of their basic human rights, we pray...

Great was St. Joseph's joy to be in the presence of Jesus and Mary. That we may recognize the presence of God in each other and help one another in time of need we pray...

Our Father..., Hail Mary..., Glory be..., Act of Consecration to St. Joseph

**Act of Consecration to St. Joseph**  
*O dearest St. Joseph, we your faithful of the Diocese of Ogdensburg, consecrate ourselves to your honor and give ourselves to you, that you may always be our father, our protector, and our guide in the way of salvation.*

*Obtain for each one of us a greater purity of heart and fervent love of neighbor. After your example, may we do all our actions for the greater glory of God, in union with the Sacred Heart of Jesus and the Immaculate Heart of Mary.*

*O Blessed St. Joseph, pray for this Church of the North Country. O Blessed St. Joseph, pray for our families that we may all grow in faith, hope and love so that we may faithfully serve Jesus, Christ our Lord, all the days of our lives.*  
AMEN

## ‘Just have to trust’

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 5

recommend that we have an abortion," Zehr said. "That was an option, but it wasn't an option for us."

Zehr carried Grayson until she went into preterm labor at 30 weeks in December 2017. Grayson died a few hours after he was born.

"It was a pretty traumatic experience," she said. "Through that whole experience, eventually I think you recognize that your suffering becomes sacred. That's kind of how it was for me. Something that you wish would have never happened in your life, it really, truly brought me closer to God."

## 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, who will coordinate online training.

With so many people praying for her and her family during that time, Zehr said she could feel the power of prayer and feel Christ carrying them. It was a dark time, she said, but also a sacred one that brought new meaning for her about being at the foot of the cross.

"That deepened my faith in the Lord and has brought me to where we are today," Zehr said. "You never know what's going to happen. You truly don't know what's going to happen. You just have to trust. That's what I've learned. ... It's not guaranteed that things are always going to be wonderful. If I didn't have my faith, I don't know where I would be."

Since that time, Zehr gave birth to their younger daughter, Scarlet, who will turn 2 years old in April, and now she is expecting their fourth child in June.

"I trust in God for my children's wellbeing," she said. "One of the things that has helped me

through each pregnancy – no matter what – has been my faith."

The Zehrs live in Croghan and attend Mass both at St. James' and at St. Stephen's Church in Croghan. Zehr said she tries to live out her faith for her husband, her children, and the people around her.

"I try to live by example," she said. "I hope I bring Christ to others at work and just in general."

For Zehr, living by example includes showing her daughters and other young girls what it means to be a woman in the eyes of God and not in the eyes of the world.

"It's a struggle, just the way of the world and the things that are put out in our secular world that are kind of put in front of their face," she said. "There's more – don't sell yourself short. ... You are a daughter of a King. That message is lost upon many young girls, and it's sad to me. It's an important message and an important lesson."

# Funeral Mass celebrated for Deacon Siskavich

A private Funeral Mass was celebrated for Deacon Francis C. Siskavich, "Frenchie," 94, of Lyon Mountain. A public service will take place in the spring.

Deacon Siskavich died Tuesday, Feb. 16, 2021, at his home surrounded by his loving family and under the care of Hospice of the North Country.

Born on Oct. 4, 1926, in Lyon Mountain, he was the son of Bernard C. and Eva (Kaska) Siskavich.

He was married to Myrtle Pageau on Aug. 12, 1950, in St. Bernard's Church, Lyon Mountain. She predeceased him on March 29, 2019.

During World War II, he and other 16-year-old men worked above ground for Republic Steel after school due to all the men who were serving in the military to help the war effort. He was drafted during his senior year of school and served two years in the U.S. Navy. After returning home, he finished school. Frenchie and other returning WWII vets helped build Sorrell-Woodward Post 1623.

He was employed at the Republic Steel Company Store part time as a meat cutter, as a miner for Republic Steel and as a corrections officer for the New York State Dept. of Corrections, retiring in 1988 from Lyon Mountain Correctional Facility.

Frenchie was a communicant of St. Bernard's Church, Lyon Mountain and was ordained as a deacon on Oct. 5, 1985. He was a member of the Knights of Columbus and became a Fourth-Degree member in 1980. He was a true believer and a devout Catholic. He was strong in his faith and instilled those beliefs to his



Deacon Francis C. 'Frenchie' Siskavich

family. He actively served in church until the age of 92. He said the Rosary, the Divine Office and Divine Mercy daily.

Deacon Siskavich was a charter member of Sorrell-Woodward American Legion Post 1623 and charter member of the Legion's Firing Squad beginning in 1946. He was the last surviving WWII veteran from Lyon Mountain. Deacon Siskavich was also a former member of the Lyon Mountain Fire Dept. and original member of the Lyon Mountain Mining and Railroad Museum.

He was a jack of all trades and master of all. We can't believe how much we've learned from being his nippers. We've learned technical terms such as "which a macallits," "thing a ma jigs,"

"doohickies" and other colorful terms, "Ain't that something," "Holy ole mackinac" and "Jezum to Jezum" (before he became a deacon - sorry Bishop LaValley). He was often the go to man when neighbors needed work to be done on their homes.

In his younger years, he was an avid bowler, belonging to leagues in Plattsburgh and Malone.

He was an avid outdoorsman and belonged to the Merry Go Round Hunting Club, was "the founder" of Lucky 14 Hunting Club and "hierarchy" of Kerflacken Lodge. He enjoyed trapping, hunting and fishing. At age 73, he went moose hunting in Newfoundland then again at 82 he went elk hunting in Colorado. After his hunting trips to Long Mountain, the kids would look forward to sharing what was left of his giant Hershey candy bar and stick of pepperoni. In recent years though the trips to the woods were less frequent, he made sure the fridge was stocked with peanut butter cups so the grandkids would each get one before they left the house.

He is survived by 13 children: Bernard Siskavich and his wife, Blanch "Teko" of Wanakena, Paula Siskavich of Amenla, Kathleen Young of Lyon Mountain, Anna Morey and her husband, Keith of Ancramdale, Francis Siskavich Jr. and his wife, Donna of Morrisonville, Margaret Pittman and her husband, Moses of Poughkeepsie, Mary Poitras and her husband, Robert of Elenburg Center, Rita Benjamin and her husband, Thomas of Mooers, Janet Collins of Plattsburgh, Eva Parsons and her hus-

band, Ronald of Peru, Sandra Derr and her husband, Harold of Altona, Veronica Siskavich-De-mers and her husband, Robert of Altona, Peter Siskavich and his wife, Shelby of Cadyville; 30 grandchildren; numerous great-grandchildren; two brothers, William Siskavich and his wife, Patricia of Clayburg, Robert Siskavich of Lyon Mountain; in-laws, Priscilla Siskavich of Lyon Mountain, Leona "Siskavich" Smith and her husband, Warren of Beekmantown, Robert and Mary Pageau of Lyon Mountain, Donald and Jeanette Pageau of Merrill; his lifetime, devoted and faithful friend, Ken Davies of Plattsburgh; several nieces and nephews.

Besides his wife, he was predeceased by his parents; four brothers, Bernard "Subby", Felix, Joseph "Butch" and his wife, Linda and Edward Siskavich; sister-in-law, Sally Siskavich; son-in-law, Rodney Collins.

Donations in his memory may be made to Hospice of the North Country or St. Bernard's Church, Lyon Mountain.

Arrangements are with the Chateaugay Funeral Home.

Online condolences may be offered at [www.chateaugayfuneral-home.com](http://www.chateaugayfuneral-home.com).

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This listing reflects extraordinary, sustaining, special and patrons from Jan. 1 - Dec. 31, 2020. Although every effort has been made to include the names of every patron, some mistakes are inevitable. If, however, an omission or error has occurred, we do apologize. Please notify us at 315-608-7556 so that we may correct our records.

\*\*\*PLEASE NOTE: Parishes are listed with their legal parish name, not each individual worship site is listed as some worship sites are combined under one Parish name.\*\*\*

Thank  
You!

# Memorial planned for Sr. Joanne Clark

A public memorial service for Sister Joanne Clark, a Sister of St. Joseph, will be held at a later date.

Sister Joanne died February 17, 2021 in Pittsford, New York.

She is survived by her nieces, nephews, friends, and her Sisters in community.

Sister Joanne's mission started out at Sacred Heart School in Watertown in 1944. For the greater part of her career, she was a teacher, principal and secretary in the Diocese of Ogdensburg as well as in the Diocese of Rochester. Sister Joanne also taught piano and organ, and she

was active in music ministry.

Later in life, she volunteered in a variety of capacities including Sisters Care, a ministry that found her enriching the lives of the elderly sisters. Most recently, she participated in the Sisters of St. Joseph's prayer ministry.

"I am forever grateful for my calling to the Sisters of Saint Joseph," she said in 2018 during her 75th Jubilee celebration.

Contributions in her memory may be made to the Sisters of St. Joseph, 150 French Rd, Rochester, NY 14618 or at [www.ssjrochester.org](http://www.ssjrochester.org).



Sister Joanne Clark, SSJ

## MAKING SENSE OF BIOETHICS

# The 'quality of life' error

During "serious illness conversations," some doctors will ply their patients with this question: "What is your minimally acceptable quality of life?"

Behind the question can be the implication that if patients are experiencing a low quality of life, their medical treatments can be discontinued because their life has become "no longer worth living."

This can even become a shorthand to justify actions like physician-assisted suicide or euthanasia. Making quality of life assessments about ourselves or others can lead us to devalue the gift of human life by insisting it must have a certain amount of "quality" before it can be deemed "meaningful" or "worthwhile."

The clearest rebuttal of the "Quality of Life" error I've come across was from a 64-year-old retired Boeing computer programmer named John Peyton (1945-2009). He lived in Kent, Washington, and had an unusually aggressive form of amyotrophic lateral sclerosis, or ALS, commonly known as Lou Gehrig's disease. The dis-

ease made him totally dependent on Patricia, his wife of 40 years. She dressed him, fed him, and regularly shifted his body position in the living room recliner where he spent his declining months.

As Peyton's once-strong voice gradually began to fade away, he continued to use it publicly to oppose and lobby against Initiative 1000, the assisted suicide initiative in Washington.

When he was interviewed by Laura Ingraham of Fox News, he said, "I'm one of those people who is somewhat of a target of the initiative and I don't know how we as a society could really consider making doctors into killers."

Laura countered: "John, I think a lot of people who are for this type of assisted suicide would say, 'Look, what about the quality of life?' 'Look, you know, people suffering like you — what kind of quality of life do you really have?' What do you say to those people?"

His reply was as brilliant as it was simple:

"I have a marvelous quality of life! Right now I

am totally dependent. I can do nothing for myself. I'm effectively paralyzed. But I have a family. I have friends. I have my church community. I have loving support all around me. I don't understand how anyone could deny that I have a very high quality of life, and it gets me to understand and be compassionate toward those without the support that I have. Rather than giving them the temptation to kill themselves, we should be trying to figure out how to help them to have the quality of life I enjoy."

Peyton's answer cuts to the heart of the matter: if anyone who is sick or dying is facing a low quality of life, we should take steps to raise and improve it. His story also reminds us how the one-sided category of "quality of life" can easily tempt us in the wrong direction when it comes to basic moral duties owed to our loved ones in compromised states like a coma, ALS, stroke, Alzheimers, or dementia.

Instead of making quality of life judgments about people, we should be making "quality of treatment" judgments for those who are ailing and vulnerable, and perhaps "quality of help" judgments

against ourselves.

As such, our focus should be on the benefits and burdens of a proposed medical intervention rather than on trying to impose our own conclusion that certain individuals no longer have enough value or meaning in their lives to merit receiving a particular treatment. Their humanity is violated if they are treated according to their functionality or quality of life, rather than according to their personal dignity.

Of course everyone has a certain natural fear or hesitation when it comes to living in a disabled or compromised state. We may also be afraid of "being a burden to others." When we acknowledge that the gift of life has "absolute value," that doesn't mean we must do absolutely everything scientifically available to maintain it, but it does mean that we should exercise good stewardship over it, making use of ordinary means of treatment and receiving supportive care, even in the face of imminent decline.

It also means the decision to refuse or stop a particular medical treatment should be based on the judgment that the

treatment itself is extraordinary, that is to say, it offers minimal benefit or is unduly burdensome. It should not be because we conclude that someone's life itself lacks value and needs to end.

Individuals struggling with grave ailments, even though they may be very compromised and unable to act as their own decision makers, remain persons of great moral worth. They contribute to the common good simply by being, rather than by doing or choosing. Moreover, they continually call each of us to a higher and more beautiful standard of full acceptance, loving support and authentic care, even and especially in the midst of very challenging medical circumstances. They raise the bar for us and we should respond by elevating their quality of life.

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



Father Tadeusz Pacholczyk Ph.D.



# CATHOLIC WORLD AT A GLANCE

## COVID vaccine included in Vatican employee regulations

**VATICAN CITY (CNS)** – The Vatican will sanction employees who refuse to get a vaccine, unless they have "proven health reasons" not to, according to a new Vatican decree. A variety of sanctions for anyone violating measures intended to slow the spread of the novel coronavirus were included in a decree signed Feb. 8 and later posted on the Vatican website by the head of the commission governing Vatican City State. While the protocols apply to everyone at the Vatican, the harshest sanctions are reserved for Vatican employees whose contractual obligations include on-the-job health and safety regulations. Because of the current state of emergency, getting the COVID-19 vaccine is part of a series of mandatory health and safety requirements for all employees, unless they have "proven health reasons" to not be inoculated; in legitimate cases, those employees will be given a different job that reduces their risk of spreading or contracting the virus, the decree said. They will receive the same pay. For employees who lack a proven medical reason for forgoing the vaccine, a refusal to be inoculated during the current health emergency exposes them to the same range of potential sanctions that come with refusing any of the other mandatory health exams and safety measures that are part of their terms of employment. The harshest sanction is a termination of employment.

## Storm doesn't stop ministries, outreach in Dallas Diocese

**DALLAS (CNS)** – Despite the grip the historic winter storm had on north Texas, faith fueled outreach to Catholics and other community members in the Diocese of Dallas. "It's an opportunity for us to provide to our parishioners in any way we can," Dallas Bishop Edward J. Burns said. "We recognize that we have to do church differently these days." Winter weather that left millions without electricity and produced record-breaking temperatures blasted the region the week of Feb. 15. According to The Associated Press, state officials said surging demand, driven by people trying to keep their homes warm, and cold weather knocking some power stations offline had pushed Texas' system beyond the limits. Power outages and dangerous travel conditions forced school closures and the cancellation of sporting events. Many parishes in the diocese also announced closures, canceling Ash Wednesday services Feb. 17. A number of parishes planned to distribute ashes at the end of Sunday Masses Feb. 21.

## Holy Land Franciscans again offer virtual Way of the Cross

The Franciscan Custody of the Holy Land launched a virtual Way of the Cross project for pilgrims during Lent because the Holy Land is not accessible for a second year in a row due to the COVID-19 pandemic. When the Franciscans realized that pilgrimages would not be possible again this year, the Custody wanted to provide a way for the faithful to be able to join in a Way of the Cross that would connect them to the Via Dolorosa in Jerusalem, said Father Alberto Joan Pari, director of the Franciscan Custody of the Holy Land communication office. He noted that the Franciscans walk the Via Dolorosa in prayer every Friday and, although pilgrims cannot follow the full Via Dolorosa with them now, they hoped the videos would allow them to take a moment to reflect on each station during Lent and remember the tradition of the friars. "We wanted them to have at least a sense that we are still thinking of them ... and dreaming to have them back here. This way we are trying to link them to Jerusalem in this special period of the year," he said.

# Planned papal trip to Iraq has dual focus

**VATICAN CITY (CNS)** – Despite the COVID-19 pandemic and ongoing security concerns, Pope Francis is determined to visit Iraq to pay homage to Christian and other minorities persecuted for their faith and to strengthen the commitment of the overwhelming majority of Iraqi Muslims to creating a future of peace and harmony.

As a pilgrim March 5-8, he will visit churches that were destroyed by militants of the Islamic State group, and as a global religious leader, he will hold an interreligious meeting near the ancient city of Ur, birthplace of Abraham.

"Pope Francis is truly a father because he really wants all human beings to be united – not only Catholics, Orthodox and Protestants – but he is broadening his embrace to include the Islamic world," said Shahrzad Houshmand Zadeh, a Shiite Muslim theologian who has taught at the Pontifical Gregorian University in Rome.

Holding an interreligious meeting at the birthplace of Abraham, recognized as the patriarch of monotheistic faith by Jews, Christians and Muslims, "can shake people's consciences to remind us of our common origin," she said. "It's like going home and finding our brothers and sisters again."

Jesuit Father Joseph Casar, the Irbil-based country director for Jesuit Refugee Service, noted that the theme of Pope Francis' visit is "You are all brothers."

"That message really needs to be heard loud and clear and taken to heart by everyone, Christians included," he said.

"Years, decades, of conflict and sectarian division have really wreaked havoc on Iraq," destroying whole villages, but even more, tearing the social fabric "to shreds."

"Christians look forward to the pope's visit to be acknowledged," he said. But "across the board, all people of goodwill await this message of hope, of fraternity from the pope, and they long for a change in Iraq."

The fact that rockets were launched into Irbil Feb. 15 creates additional concern, Father Casar said. It doesn't happen often, "especially in the Kurdistan region, which is really regarded as a safe haven. This of course bursts the bubble a bit and I think it was an intentional message to the coalition forces and the U.S. forces and the new (Biden) administration to say, 'Hey, we can get you anywhere.'"

"The whole of Iraq is in a fragile situation and the outlook continues to be uncertain, but one must never lose hope," he said. COVID-19, political tensions, economic difficulties and "ongoing, low-level attacks by ISIS," including suicide bombings in Baghdad in January, increase insecurity.

The fact that the pope is going "at a time when it really is not easy because of COVID is a very strong statement," said Regina Lynch, director of projects for the Catholic charity Aid to the Church in Need. "This visit of the Holy Father also is a sign that the Catholic Church is an artisan of peace, of reconciliation and development."

While the events on Pope

Francis' schedule include meetings with top government leaders and leaders of other faiths, meetings with the country's Christians are at the heart of the visit.

Michael La Civita, director of communications for the New York-based Catholic Near East Welfare Association, said the trip tells Iraqi Christians "that despite their ever declining numbers, someone on the outside cares and that someone happens to be the bishop of Rome," the pope; about 80 percent of the Christians in Iraq are Eastern Catholics, belonging to either the Chaldean, Syriac or Armenian Catholic churches.

"He will be there to witness, to be in solidarity with this church of the martyrs," he said. Iraqi Christians "very much understand that because of their identity, which is both ethnic and faith-based, they are at any given time subject to martyrdom because of their identity as followers of Jesus."

In the past 30 or 40 years, the Eastern Catholics as well as members of the Syriac Orthodox Church and the Assyrian Church of the East have given witness to the "ecumenism of blood," their unity in martyrdom, La Civita said. "These churches are steeped in the blood of their martyrs."

"I think they are getting tired of being called resilient" after suffering through so many waves of persecution, he said, "but it is remarkable how resilient they are. But they are not 'they,' they're 'we,' our brothers and sisters."

# Word change in missal doxology takes effect

WASHINGTON (CNS) — A change in wording to the concluding doxology of orations in the Roman Missal, from "one God, for ever and ever" to "God, for ever and ever," took effect on Ash Wednesday, Feb. 17. A Feb. 4 memo to bishops from the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops' Committee on Divine Worship said the Vatican Congregation for Divine

Worship and the Sacraments wrote to the English-speaking bishops' conferences in May 2020 to point out the current English translation that concludes "in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever" is "incorrect."

"There is no mention of 'one' in the Latin, and 'Deus' in the Latin text refers to Christ. Therefore, the correct translation ... is simply "in the unity of the Holy Spirit, God, for ever and ever," the memo said, adding that the prefect of the congregation "pointed out the importance of affirming this Christological truth amid the religious pluralism of today's world."

A copy of the memo was provided to *Catholic News Service*. It said the correct translation was already reflected in the Roman Missal in other languages, including Misal Romano, the USCCB's Spanish translation of the missal. English translations of the Roman Missal for use by Catholics prior to the Second Vatican Council, such as the St. Joseph's Missal of the 1950s, "reflected the correct translation," the memo noted. "However, when the post-conciliar texts were published in English, the word 'one' was added."

When the translation of

the Roman Missal currently in use was underway in the 2000s, the International Commission on English in the Liturgy "pointed out the discrepancy to the congregation in Rome, but was told to retain the use of 'one God' in the new translation," according to the memo.

After the doctrinal congregation's directive last May, the USCCB's Latinrite bishops voted to amend the concluding doxology of orations, or "collects," of the Roman Missal to reflect the change. The congregation confirmed the decision, as it had for the episcopal conferences of England and Wales, Ireland and Canada.

The translation change — "God, for ever and ever" — applies to other liturgical books, such as the Liturgy of the Hours, the memo said, adding that there is no need to publish new Roman Missals, because "it should not be difficult for the celebrant simply to omit the word 'one' when offering the prayer."

But it added that publishers "are being informed of this change" and reprints or new editions of the Roman Missal will reflect the new translation, as will any worship aids for the faithful and other similar publications.

The Diocese of Ogdensburg

## NORTH COUNTRY CATHOLIC

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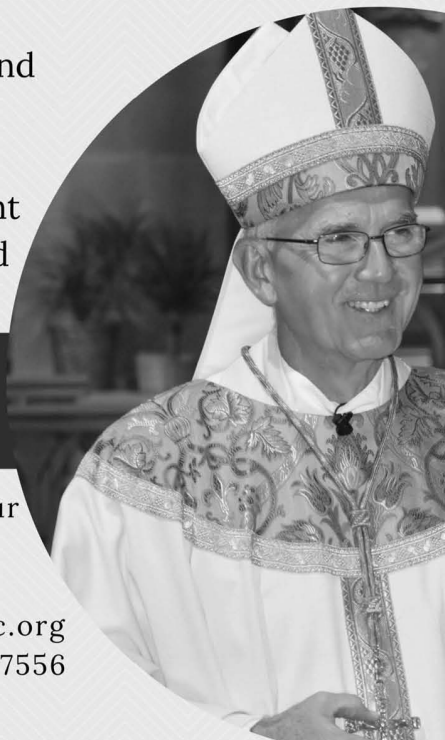


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## ESSEX

## LENTEN PARISH MISSION

Ticonderoga – St. Mary's Church is offering a special Lenten Parish Mission podcast hosted by Father J. Roger McGuinness!

**Date:** Starting Feb. 16th and new episodes added each week.

**Features:** Father J. Roger McGuinness has been a priest of the Diocese of Ogdensburg for over 50 years. He has been a pastor, seminary and university professor, retreat master, college chaplain and vocation director. Now retired from active ministry he continues to write and give spiritual direction. Father Roger will be leading us in a Lenten mission featuring weekly reflections on the Sunday gospel readings. He will also offer a special

reflection on the life of St. Joseph on March 19th, the Feast of St. Joseph. The podcast can be found on the parish website [route74catholics.org/father-roger](http://route74catholics.org/father-roger) It can also be found at Apple Podcasts, Google Podcasts and Spotify.

**Contact:** For more information or questions contact Father Chris Looby at [fatherlooby@gmail.com](mailto:fatherlooby@gmail.com).

## FRANKLIN

## TAKE-OUT DINNER

North Bangor – St. Augustine's to have a take-out Chicken and Biscuit Dinner.

**Date:** March 6

**Time:** 3 p.m. to 6:30

**Place:** St. Augustine's Parish Center

**Cost:** \$10

**Menu:** Chicken and biscuits, stuffing, vegetable, cranberry sauce, and dessert

## AROUND THE DIOCESE

**Contact:** Pre-orders can be made March 5 8 a.m. to Noon and March 6 8 a.m. to 6:30 p.m. by calling 518-483-6674, though it is not necessary.

## ST. LAWRENCE

## DRIVE THRU FISH FRY

Gouverneur – Drive thru fish fry to be held every Friday during Lent.

**Date:** Now to April 2

**Time:** 4:30 p.m. until gone

**Place:** Casablanca Restaurant

**Cost:** \$12

**Features:** To benefit St. James School

**Contact:** Call 315-287-0130 to pre-order.

## DIOCESAN EVENTS

## MARCH RETREAT

"Walking with St. Joseph as our

Guide." During this year dedicated to St. Joseph, this Retreat Day will consider the mind and heart of Joseph, as reflected in his actions and reflect on ways that he might be a faithful guide and companion on our own faith journeys. It will also provide opportunities for prayer and sharing.

**Date:** March 13

**Time:** 10 a.m. to 2 p.m.

**Place:** Virtual on Zoom

**Features:** The Facilitator will be Sr. Bethany Fitzgerald, SSJ. No cost. If you wish to make an offering for the retreat, mail to: Sisters of St. Joseph, 1425 Washington St, Watertown, New York 13601

**Contact:** To register email [sr-bethssj@gmail.com](mailto:sr-bethssj@gmail.com) or 315-212-6592

## LEAD: LIGHT THE FIRE, SPREAD THE FLAME

A live zoom event to be held about the sacrament of Confirmation, its symbolism, its sense of mission, and ideas for implementing an effective program.

**Date:** March 13

**Time:** 9:45 a.m. to Noon

**Speakers:** Deb Mullin from Catholic Community of St. Peter, St. Mary, St. Hedwig in Lowville & Peter Woolschlager from St. Stephen's Church in Croghan.

**Contact:** Adults only are welcome to register. The Zoom link will be sent as the event date approaches. To register go to:

<https://www.rcdony.org/ffleadreg>

NOW PLAYING  
LAND

NEW YORK (CNS) – Although it ultimately celebrates spiritual renewal, the meditative drama "Land" (Focus) first takes viewers through an experience of physical and emotional purgation on the part of its protagonist that, however valuable it may be to witness, is not easy to watch.

Rather than feel-good entertainment, accordingly, this is a film of authentic emotions, humane values and serious intent.

Making her feature debut as a director, Robin Wright also plays that main character, Edee Holzer. Paralyzed by grief over the loss of her husband and young son – the circumstances of whose death are not revealed until the last moments of the movie – Edee resolves to leave the world behind and become a hermit in a small, isolated cabin amid the mountains of Wyoming.

Since her plan includes depriving herself of a car or any other form of transport, Edee must learn to hunt and fish to survive. But, as the store of canned



CNS PHOTO/DANIEL POWER, FOCUS FEATURES

**Demian Bichir and Robin Wright star in a scene from the movie "Land." The Catholic News Service classification is A-III – adults. The Motion Picture Association of America rating is PG-13 – parents strongly cautioned.**

goods on which she initially relies for food dwindles, she quickly discovers just how poorly prepared she is for the rigors of life in the wilderness.

After a severe crisis, Edee gains the help and instruction of Miguel Borrás (Demian Bichir), a local man who devotes himself to

providing clean water to the Native American residents of a nearby reservation. Despite her continuing determination to remain cut off from other people, Edee gradually forms a bond of friendship with Miguel that proves a source of healing for her.

Wright sets the thoughtful mood with long periods of silence. And cinematographer Bobby Bukowski enchants with sweeping views of a magnificent, unspoiled landscape that takes on a different, but equally beautiful, aspect with each succeeding season.

Edee's struggles, which at

one point find her close to taking her own life, are too grim for little ones, but, as scripted by Jesse Chatham and Erin Digman, her story is sufficiently restrained in its brief portrayal of married sexuality and in its vocabulary to make "Land" probably an acceptable choice for mature adolescents.

Like the adults in its audience, they'll profit from this tale of endurance, re-connection and rebirth.

The film contains a suicide theme, nongraphic marital sensuality, brief partial nudity, animal gore, at least one use of profanity and a few milder oaths. The Catholic News Service classification is A-III – adults. The Motion Picture Association rating is PG-13 – parents strongly cautioned.





## SCRIPTURE REFLECTIONS

## Lent is a season of change

Lent is a time for change. When women go to the beauty salon, and men go to a barber shop, they hope to look different, and maybe even feel different when they come out! After a week and a half of Lent, do you feel any change yet?

Thousands of years ago, Abraham and his son Isaac certainly felt the shock of change in what happened to them in today's reading. God tells Abraham to take his son, Isaac, the "child of promise," and to travel to the land of Moriah, up a mountain there, where he is offer Isaac in



**Monsignor  
Paul E.  
Whitmore**

sacrifice! This request must have devastated Abraham in heart and mind. He must have felt that God had tricked him years ago when He promised himself and Sarah that their descendants would be as numerous as the stars in the sky. Nevertheless, he obeys God to the point of raising his knife to kill his son.

How was he to know that this was only a test? An angel stops his arm, and God, now satisfied, renews the covenant He had made. And Abraham is really convinced that, if he is to please God, he must offer him ab-

**February 28**

**Second Sunday of Lent**

READINGS

Genesis 22:1-2, 9a, 10-13, 15-18

Romans 8:31b-34

Mark 9:2-10

solutely everything of himself, of his dearest possessions, and his every hope of future joy. After this experience, Abraham and Isaac were certainly changed. And God knew that He could trust them to do anything He asked.

God wants to change each one of us this Lent. He wants to remove all those flaws and sins that keep Him from working through us in His World. Even if we're satisfied with

the way we are now, Jesus our Brother wants us to change. Why? He wants to combat the evil that is spoiling everything. He needs us to love everyone, to share our faith and our values with those who may be wavering and be channels of God's power through our prayer and sacrifice.

Another great encounter with God is offered us in this Sunday's Gospel. It was offered first to Peter, James, and John on a mountain, Mt. Tabor, which rises almost two thousand feet about the level land of Lower Galilee. Tired from the climb, the three disciples wake from a snooze, only to find Jesus who has been praying, suddenly

radiant before them, talking with two men. They recognize these strangers as Moses and Elijah, Moses represents the Law, and Elijah represents the prophets. The three chosen ones fall down in awe. Peter wants to build them all tents so they can stay there.

As Jesus is talking with them, He is radiant with glory. Then a cloud overshadows them, and a voice like thunder is heard. "This is my beloved Son. Listen to him!"

This Lenten season, let's resolve to listen through Scripture and prayer what Jesus wants of us. These are such dangerous times. Only God can give us enlightenment, courage, and confidence.

## CALLED TO SERVE

## Time for you to work in the vineyard?

This is the time of year when certain teenagers discover the U.S. Mail. In our formative years anything addressed to Jane or Johnny came hand delivered by Mom or Dad. How the birthday card or get-well card got from Aunt So-and-So to our parents was of no consequence. It just happened.

Then came senior year in high school and college selections for many, if not most, of these teens. It is an incredible time of decisions. It takes the oft asked question "what do you want to be when you grow up?" to new heights. It is time to choose, at least for now, a career path. The colleges and universities that are blessed with applications for admission from our "little boys and girls" will

send out their acceptances in February and March. Jane and Johnny have discovered the mailbox. They anxiously await the acceptance from those institutions.

Let's think positive and assume our little angel is accepted and will begin the collegiate preparation for the rest of his or her life. Well, maybe.

My own career path demonstrates some holes in that supposition. My degree from Potsdam College is in Computer Science. That was in the prehistoric days of punch cards and mag tape. But while in college I discovered radio, and my broadcasting career was born. So, this guy who studied bits and bytes ended up in TV and radio. I relish my college days and

everything I learned, but God helped me discern a different path.

God was not finished putting choices in front of me either. One day in the late 20th century (I love to say that!) my pastor asked if I might be interested in Lay Ministry Formation. I did not see that coming. Nor did I expect I would be checking the mail for my acceptance to the deacon formation program the summer after being commissioned a lay minister. But here I am, a deacon.

The Commissioned Lay Ministry and the Deacon Formation programs in our diocese have both started their recruitment

programs for the next classes. The commitment in lay ministry formation

is two years. All the course work is online from Boston College, and you are required to attend a few workshops during the two years. Deacon formation is a four-year commitment with lay ministry formation as a prerequisite. The first

year of deacon formation is discernment – do I really want to do this and is my wife on board with the decision? The next three years involve a combination of on-line and in-person coursework. The on-line study is through Notre Dame University. The in-person

weekends are at Wadhams Hall in Ogdensburg.

The Formation for Ministry promotion asks, "Is God calling you to a more active role in your parish?" Deacon formation can ask the same question and throw in "and your diocese." God always calls people like you and me to work in his vineyard. Perhaps it is time for you to watch for something more fulfilling than junk mail. Talk to your pastor about helping "make all the Lord has commanded."



**Deacon  
Kevin Mastellon**

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

# Continuing the Stations of the Cross

Instead of our regular reflections, throughout this holy season of Lent, the Pontifical Mission Societies of the Diocese of Ogdensburg will be featuring Stations of the Cross.

Since many of us cannot gather together in these times of pandemic, we thought we could pray these stations of the cross together, despite our separation.

These Stations of the Cross were assembled by Maureen Crowley Heil, director of Programs and Development for the Pontifical Mission Societies and the Archdiocese of Boston.

### Third Station:

Leader: We adore You, O Christ, and we bless you.

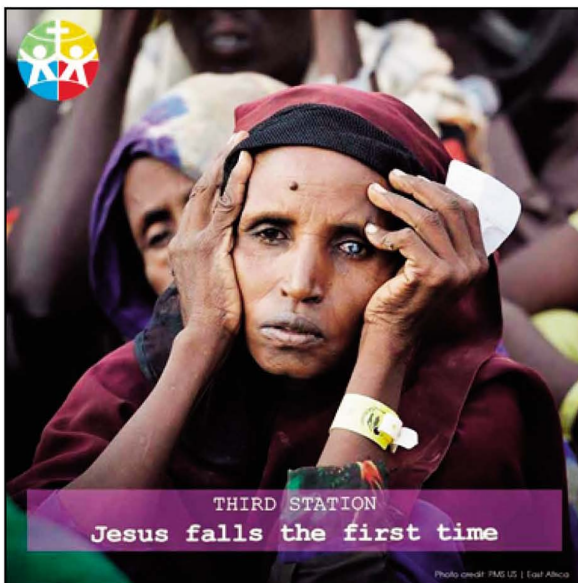
All: Because by your Holy Cross, You have redeemed the world.

Reader: This woman in Somalia sits waiting to be fed by aid workers. She may be too weak to



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

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stand. Lord Jesus, help us to reach out to those who

will go without a meal today as we share from



our bounty.

### Fourth Station:

Leader: We adore You, O Christ, and we bless you.

All: Because by your Holy Cross, You have redeemed the world.

Reader: Many missionaries, like this Irish Sister

in Kenya have become spiritual mothers to countless people. Lord Jesus, help us to remember that we are all God's children, deserving of help in our times of need.

## OBITUARIES

**Au Sable Forks** – David Trombley, 56; Mass of Christian Burial Feb. 19, 2021 at Church of the Holy Name; burial in St. Matthew's Cemetery, Black Brook.

**Canton** – Warren Bessette, 89; Mass of Christian Burial Feb. 17, 2021 at St. Mary's Church.

**Colton** – Carol "Joanie" (O'Brien) Waite, 84; Mass of Christian Burial Feb. 19, 2021 at St. Patrick's Church; burial in Chapel Hill Cemetery, Parishville.

**Evans Mills** – Helen A. Martusewicz Gamble, 99 1/2; Funeral Services to be held at a later date.

**Keeseville** – Emil Francis Karkoski, 86; Mass of Christian Burial to be held this summer at Immaculate Conception Church.

**Lowville** – Jack T. Bush, 74; Mass of Christian Burial June 5, 2021 at St. Peter's Church; burial in Brantingham Cemetery.

**Lowville** – Ann (Hotchkiss) Morse, 86; Graveside services in the spring at Lowville Rural Cemetery.

**Lowville** – Mary E. (Terrillon) Turck, 85; Mass of Christian Burial June 26, 2021 at St. Peter's Church; burial in Beaches Bridge Cemetery, Watson.

**Massena** – Theodore A. Musante Jr., 94; Mass of Christian Burial in the spring at St. Ann's Church; burial in Calvary Cemetery.

**Moers Forks** – Rena C. (Gero) Willett, 86; Memorial Mass to be held at a later date at St. Ann's Church; burial in St. Ann's Cemetery.

**Norfolk** – Thomas H. Rheume, 80; Mass of Christian Burial to be held in the spring at Church of the Visitation; burial in Visitation Cemetery.

**Ogdensburg** – Julie A. Delarge, 53; Memorial Mass Feb. 19, 2021 at Notre Dame Church; burial in Foxwood Memorial Park.

**Plattsburgh** – Herbert E. Geroux, 92; Mass of Christian burial to be held at a later date at St. Peter's Church; burial in parish cemetery.

**Plattsburgh** – Josephine M. (Unicka) Pierzynski, 99; Mass of Christian Burial Feb. 19, 2021 at St. Peter's Church; burial in St. Joseph's Cemetery, Malone.

**Plattsburgh** – Fracnis P. Ryan, MD, 85; Memorial Services to be held at a later date.

**Watertown** – Gina T. (Misercola) Patchen, 89; Mass of Christian Burial Feb. 17, 2021 at St. Anthony's Church; burial in Brookside Cemetery.

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## YOUTH IN SERVICE



Hayley Murray has served as a dedicated lead server at St. Patrick Church in Colton for over five years and has recently earned her silver cross. Hayley is a Freshman at Colton-Pierrepont Central School. St. Patrick's Parish appreciates and thanks all of their altar servers who contribute so greatly to the Liturgy. Servers are trained by Linda MacDougall.



James Deshane is the first of new student reader for this year at St. Patrick's Church in Brasher Falls.



Avery Marcil, Liam Marcil, James Deshane and Kennedy Colterman, students in Allison Deshane's Faith Formation class at St. Patrick's Church in Brasher Falls, make Valentine's Day cards that will be mailed out to parishioners who have not returned to Mass since the COVID-19 pandemic began.

## Plan now how to welcome parishioners back

WASHINGTON (CNS) – Even with many recent hopeful signs on vaccinations and the reduction in the number of COVID-19 cases, there is no date certain at which the coronavirus pandemic will be declared over.

That should not stop parishes from planning now to welcome back parishioners to Mass in the future.

"You can't be thinking, 'What will we do after the pandemic?' You have to be

doing it now," said Dominican Sister Teresa Rickard, president and executive director of Renew International, which has been offering parish renewal programs since 1976.

"I would be doing things leading up to the fall and going into next Christmas," Sister Rickard added. "People have to be creative, innovating. It can't be about maintenance, it's got to be about mission."

"Don't dwell on what you can't do, focus on what you can do," said Jack Beers, content director for Dynamic Catholic, which sees as its mission "to reenergize the Catholic Church in America by developing world-class resources that inspire people to rediscover the genius of Catholicism."

There had long been a "gravitational pull toward the parish – the social life-educational life, the worship life – all revolve around the parish," Beers told Catholic News Service in a Feb. 18 phone interview. "That's not true anymore. Worse than that, because of the pandemic, people are reluctant to come back. There's a fear to (come back). ... There needs to be something to get them over the hump to come back, to sort of overcome the repellent."

"The main reason that people will come back to church is for community," said Amy Ekeh, director of Little Rock Scripture Study, a small-group Bible study program serving Catholic parishes. "If they were already experiencing com-

munity as a parish, they'll come back to that. Small groups is one way in parishes to experience that community."

Asked whether there is a carrot-or-stick approach needed to entice pandemic-shy Catholics to return to church, Ekeh replied, "I think the carrot already had to be there," referring to the sense of community parishioners feel. "They're self-motivated by that. I don't know if you can create a carrot if it wasn't already there. And don't even try the stick!"

Nor is it likely that Catholics would embrace "back to church" on a set date any more than they would for "back to school" for their children, according to Peter Dwyer, director of Liturgical Press.

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