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The Diocese of Ogdensburg Volume 77 Number 31

# NORTH COUNTRY CATHOLIC

DECEMBER 14, 2022

## Seminarian installed as lector

Eight seminarians from the dioceses of Birmingham, Columbus, and Ogdensburg were installed as lectors or acolytes at the Pontifical College Josephinum on December 8, 2022, the Solemnity of the Immaculate Conception.

The Diocese of Ogdensburg seminarian, Dennis Ombongi, was installed as a lector.

The Most Reverend Jeffrey J. Walsh, Bishop of Gaylord, was the principal celebrant of the Mass held in Saint Turibius Chapel at the Pontifical College Josephinum, located in Columbus, Ohio.

FULL STORY, PAGE 5

## CELEBRATING SACRAMENTS



Bishop Terry R. LaValley confirms an incarcerated individual at Clinton Correctional Facility in Dannemora while Father Howard J. Venette, prison chaplain, looks on. See the full story on Page 3.

## ADVENT PRAYER



Musicians from Holy Cross Parish in Plattsburgh combined with musicians from Seton Catholic to lead the musical portion of an Advent Taizé service, a prayer service that combines silence, scripture and songs. (Pictured above) Chants and songs were led by Nate Pultorak, Holy Cross choir director and musician; Jen Toohill, Seton Catholic music teacher, band and chorus director; Emily Lawliss, choir member and soloist; and Seton seniors Shaylee Staves, violinist and Ebony Ruffin, singer. A Lenten tradition in Plattsburgh, this is the first Advent Taizé held in the parish. The prayer service was organized by a group of parish volunteers with assistance from Father Kevin McEwan, pastor of Holy Cross.

FULL STORY, PAGE 4

# Pope: Take needs of workers seriously

VATICAN CITY (CNS) – All workers should feel welcomed by the church and know that their needs and problems are taken seriously, Pope Francis said.

In fact, labor and employment are experiencing "a phase of transformation that needs to be accompanied," he told members of Italy's Movement of Christian Workers during an audience at the Vatican Dec. 9.

"Social inequalities, forms of slavery and exploitation, family poverty due to the lack of work or poorly paid work are realities

that must be listened to in our church communities. They are more or less forms of exploitation – let us call things by their real name," he said.

The movement, which was celebrating the 50th anniversary of its official establishment, promotes the church's teachings and Christian values in society, in the world of work and in government policies.

Pope Francis asked members to make a special commitment to bringing the concerns and problems of workers to the many lev-

els of the church community.

"It is important that workers feel at home in parishes, associations, groups and movements; that their problems are taken seriously, that their call for solidarity can be heard," the pope told them.

"I urge you to keep your minds and hearts open to workers, especially the poor and defenseless; to give voice to the voiceless; to not worry so much about your members, but to be leaven in the social fabric of the country, a leaven of justice and

solidarity," he said.

The pope encouraged the movement to reject all forms of exploitation and actively offer a response to today's situations.

"No one should feel excluded from work. Do not fail in your efforts to promote employment for women, to encourage young people to enter the workforce with decent contracts and not starvation wages, to safeguard time and 'breathing space' for the family, for volunteering and for nurturing relationships," the pope said.

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COUNTRY  
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Ogdensburg, N.Y. 13669  
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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.

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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: \$30

Matters 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;

deadline is Wednesday.

Member, Catholic Press

Association.

## POSTMASTER:

Send address changes to

North Country Catholic,

PO Box 326

Ogdensburg, NY

13669-0326

# That's not what I meant

It's a quirky thing in one of my online Catholic groups, one just for women. To give our husbands a measure of privacy, participants don't use husbands' first names in our online conversations.

Somehow it became relatively common to see group members refer to their husbands as Mr. (woman's first name). So, a group participant named Eve Smith might refer to her husband as "Mr. Eve."

I was talking about this convention with my husband one day.

"I just can't bring myself to call you 'Mr. Darcy.' That

name is taken."

"Oh yeah," my husband said. "The character from 'Married With Children.'"



Darcy L.  
Fargo

I was both shocked and entertained.

"No," I emphatically responded. "The character from 'Pride and Prejudice!'"

For those who don't know, "Married With Children" is a TV comedy from the '80s and '90s. While I haven't seen many episodes, I'd refer to it as crude humor (likely targeting

young men, which my husband was at that time).

"Pride and Prejudice" is a novel written by Jane Austen in 1813. It's a classic.

What "Mr. Darcy" meant to me was not what "Mr. Darcy" meant to my husband.

I've had similar experiences in my spiritual life.

I fondly recall participating in a program on Lectio Divina, a method of praying with scripture, with a group of women a few years ago. Our group discussions revealed many instances when two of us focused our prayer and meditations on the same line(s) or same few words of scripture, but we'd taken completely different messages and/or meanings from it.

I much less fondly recall a time when I was talking with a group of friends about the importance of the Church in my life, and one friend in the

group pointed out that I was talking as though my experience and description of the Church was as universal as the Church itself. Her experience of Church was very different.

It's common for me to stop and pray that the Holy Spirit speaks through me before I do anything involving public speaking – serving as a lector, presenting to one of my groups/organizations or talking in my professional life. I've been trying to make it a habit to do that at the start of my day, as well, praying the Holy Spirit speaks through me that day.

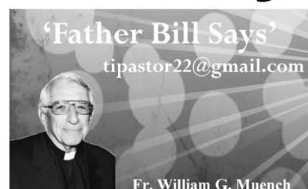
Because in communications, intended and perceived meaning can be quirky things.

## Advent with John the Baptist

I love Advent. I love St. John the Baptist. I once visited, several years ago, the place along the Jordan River in Israel where they believe John the Baptist preached and baptized. I remember that as part of the visit I was asked to walk out into the river and pour some of the river water over the heads of some of the people in our group – a baptism like that of John. It was to be a renewal of their own baptisms. That visit was rather special for me. I still remember all that I did there. I truly walked in the footsteps of St. John the Baptist.

I know that you have heard the story, however, today, I would like to remember with you St. John the Baptist and his story as we continue to celebrate this time of Advent and prepare ourselves for Christmas. John the Baptist was a cousin of Jesus. I often try to imagine what they talked about when they were together. It would be so interesting to have listened to their conversations.

The Gospels make it very



Fr. William G. Muench

clear that they knew each other well. We are told that on one occasion Jesus asked John to baptize him with the other people. We are told that John said to Jesus that he, Jesus, should baptize him. However, Jesus wanted John to realize that this was his moment to dedicate himself and his life here on earth. And he humbled did this by being baptized by the Baptist himself.

John was given the grace to recognize Jesus as the promised Messiah. John realized that the Holy Spirit had chosen him to announce to the world the Lord's coming and to prepare the way for his coming. We are told that on one occasion John actually pointed out Jesus to his own disciples, sending them to spend some time with Jesus.

When John was impris-

oned, he sent his disciples to Jesus so they would recognize how important Jesus was as the long-awaited Messiah. They listened as Jesus identified himself in the words of the Prophet Isaiah, who wrote of the coming of the Messiah as Savior centuries before the birth of Jesus. John, in prison, realized that his life was in danger, and he wanted his disciples to discover Jesus and to follow him as disciples.

The ministry of John the Baptist was so wonderful. He preached to those people – and also to us – to repent, to change what must be changed in our lives, so that we live well, so that we make our lives all that they should be, so that we live better and make our world a better place in every way we could.

John also came to give the people who came to him a way to remember their promise of repentance: he asked them to walk into the river with him and he baptized them, pushing them under the waters of the Jor-

dan River. John made it very clear that his baptism was a baptism of repentance.

John preached to them that there would be one who would come after him who would baptize with Spirit and fire. This is our baptism – our call to dedicate ourselves to the God, to walk with Jesus on the road to holiness. In baptism, we accept the challenge to dedicate ourselves to become a saint.

On the road to becoming a saint, remember that it is all about the little things. I believe that the Lord places into our lives so many opportunities to walk with him, to live our lives well. We are called to forgive others, our neighbors. As followers of Jesus we must always be ready to bring happiness to another, to bring the peace of Jesus through our lives and to our world in every little way that is ours.

So, we are to find the way. Our guide and our Advent patron, St. John the Baptist, puts it this way: "He must increase, I must decrease."

# Initiation during incarceration

## Bishop LaValley baptizes two men, confirms three at Clinton Correctional

By Darcy Fargo  
Editor

DANNEMORA – The words of “Amazing Grace” rang out from the old stone church, allowing the incarcerated individuals inside St. Dismas Church a place of worship removed from their cell blocks and recreation yards.

The incarcerated individuals gathered for Mass with Bishop Terry R. LaValley at St. Dismas Church, located inside the walls of Clinton Correctional Facility, on Nov. 7, and three men received sacraments of initiation – two were baptized and three were confirmed.

Without accompaniment, the men opened the Mass singing “The Summons” as Bishop Terry R. LaValley processed into the church with prison chaplains Father Howard H. Venette and Deacon Frank Bushey, and Deacon James Crowley, diocesan chancellor.

“We’re truly blessed to not just gather to celebrate Mass and the Eucharist, but we’re also blessed to be gathering to celebrate baptisms and confirmations,” said Bishop LaValley.

Bishop LaValley noted the men spent a period of time preparing for the sacraments, “asking questions, looking for answers and really letting go of their earlier ideas of God in some cases.”

Bishop LaValley noted that baptism and confir-

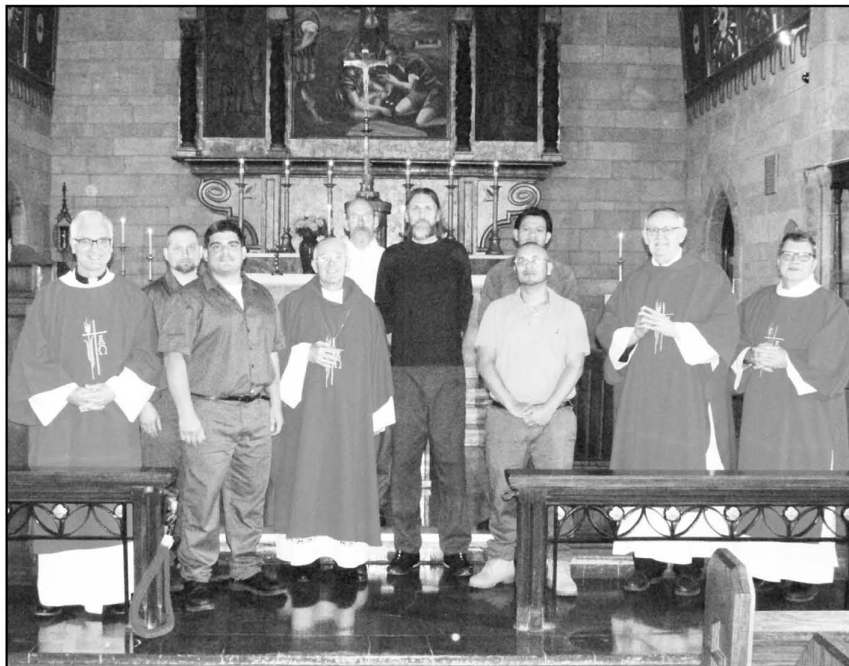
mation are sacraments of initiation, and he urged the incarcerated individuals to go beyond the initiation and continue deepening their faith through study, prayer and worship.

“It’s the difference between snorkeling and scuba diving,” Bishop LaValley said. “Like snorkelers who can go only as far as their breathing tube allows and are limited to what they can see from the surface, we can live our faith on the surface, maybe attending Mass but not really engaging in prayer or desiring to learn more. But to experience the truly remarkable wonders of what the deep of the water has to offer, one needs to go scuba diving, you need to go deeper than the surface. Sometimes there’s risk in going to the depths... but opening ourselves up to God can also be risky. We make ourselves vulnerable. We give ourselves to love.”

At the conclusion of the Mass, Bishop LaValley congratulated the men who received the sacraments of initiation and thanked everyone who helped facilitate the Mass.

“Congratulations to the newly confirmed and baptized,” he said. “We’re also very grateful to our prison chaplains, Father Venette and Deacon Bushey and the leadership and staff here at the facility. This is a special day.”

Father Venette said the three men who receive



PHOTOS BY DARCY FARGO/NORTH COUNTRY CATHOLIC

(Above) Two incarcerated individuals at Clinton Correctional Facility in Dannemora were baptized in November by Bishop Terry R. LaValley, and three incarcerated individuals were confirmed. Pictured with Bishop LaValley, the individuals who received the sacraments and their sponsors are, from left, Clinton Correctional Facility Chaplains Deacon Frank Bushey and Father Howard Venette, and Deacon James Crowley, diocesan chancellor and liaison to the prison chaplains. (Below) Bishop LaValley baptizes an incarcerated individual at St. Dismas Church, a Catholic church built within Clinton Correctional Facility.

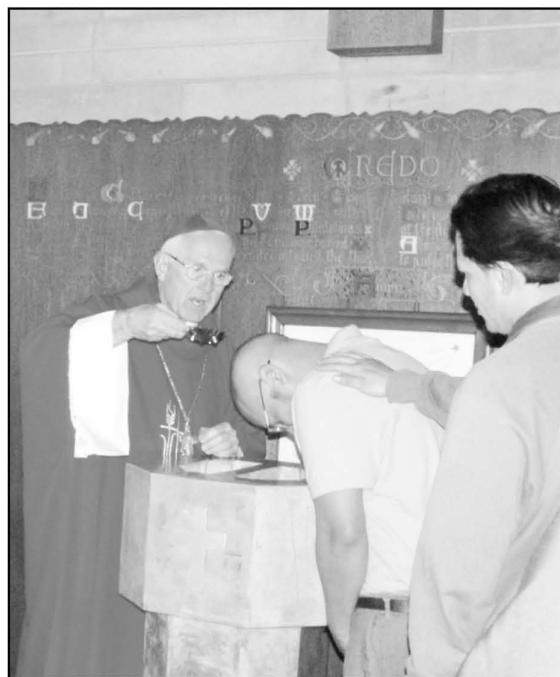
the sacraments, Jonathan, Jason and Glen, did so after the chaplains put out a notice to the prison population.

“It’s something that’s usually done annually,” said Father Venette. “The Catholic chaplaincy puts out a note asking if anyone would like to be baptized or confirmed.”

“This was the first time we’ve been able to do this since COVID,” added Deacon Bushey. “We had no services for almost two years because of COVID, so it was really nice to be doing this again.”

The chaplains noted that they met with the three men weekly.

“We were familiar with these men,” Father



CONTINUED ON PAGE 4

# First Advent Taizé service held in Plattsburgh

By Mary Beth Bracy  
Contributing Writer

PLATTSBURGH – On Tuesday, November 29 the first Advent Taizé service was held at St. John's Church in Plattsburgh. Around 40 faithful gathered from every vocation; participants included children and teens to the middle aged and elderly. The event, which included song, silence and Scripture, allowed attendants to enter into the holy season with stillness and amazement.

"Taizé is a great opportunity for ecumenism and contemplation. We typically do a Lenten Taizé but Advent seemed like a good time to give it a try," said Jen Toohill.

"I am excited that a Taizé prayer service is part of our Advent preparation this year," added Mary Skillan. "Taizé is such a beautiful form of prayer incorporating community prayer and individual prayer."

Anita Soltero provided some background about the service.

"It was Starr Burke's idea to do it for Advent," she said at the event. "We contacted Father Kevin (McEwan) back in September with the idea, he



liked it. We met as a group with him, he gave us his vision and suggestions for readings. Sue Pombrio, Marie Nacht, Starr and I pulled together readings, prayers and music, with help from Jen. We sent it to Father Kevin (McEwan), we met again and refined the program. He okayed it, and here we are. The 'theme' was developed around waiting for 'the light of Christ' to come."

Father McEwan, pastor of Holy Cross Parish in Plattsburgh, reflected on the meaning of the Taizé service.

"The intent when I met with the group to plan was the anticipation of

what is yet to come – not just with Christmas but each day we welcome God into ourselves," Father McEwan said. "We wanted to help people try and focus on the intent of Christmas and every day of our lives. The simplicity of the light that is to grow within us. We are sometimes so distracted by the world and in our prayer life."

"It was my first time helping to plan a Taizé prayer service and it was nice to see it from that angle (why certain songs/prayers are chosen, etc.)," Marie Nacht related.

Susan Pombrio read the introduction and Father

McEwan led the opening prayer. Other readers included Mary Skillan and Marge Stewart. Father Mike Marzan, parochial vicar at Holy Cross, proclaimed the Gospel and led the concluding prayer.

During the quiet reflection time attendants were invited to write prayer intentions and place them in a special basket before the empty manger.

Chants and songs were led by Nate Pultorak, Holy Cross choir director and musician; Jen Toohill, Seton Catholic music teacher, band and chorus director; Emily Lawliss, choir member and soloist; and Seton seniors Shaylee Staves, violinist and Ebony Ruffin, singer.

Taizé chants featured were "Veni Creator Spiritus," "Nada te turbe," and "En nuestra oscuridad."

"I sang for Taizé during Lent last year and was really excited to sing again," said singer Ebony Ruffin.

Jen Toohill added, "I think 'En nuestra oscuridad' is usually sung in French but we sang it in Spanish because Ebony is in AP Spanish and wanted to learn more

Spanish songs. Plus the cool thing about Taizé chants is how you can get the same song in like a bunch of different languages."

Other songs were sung acapella as well such as "Waiting in Silence," "Maranatha," and "Night of Silence," which featured Shaylee Staves on the violin. Nate Pultorak performed "O Come, O Come Emmanuel" on the dulcimer.

Prayers touched upon themes of mercy, peace, compassion, light, healing and love. Organizers and participants expressed the hope that the Advent Taizé service will become a yearly tradition.

The service concluded with the singing of "Christ be Our Light," and participants were invited to light their tea lights then bring them out into the world.

"There is also the theological understanding that we are constantly preparing for the end of time," Father McEwan said. "This is why we chose the Gospel where the infant in Elizabeth's womb leapt. Do we proclaim the greatness of our Lord and God? If not, what are we doing?"

## Incarcerated individuals

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 3

Venette said. "They're men who normally come to Mass. We had a series of meetings, and they did a lot of self-study. We'd provide them with reading materials or workbooks, and we'd discuss them when we got together."

Both prison chaplains noted that running a Rite of Christian Initiation for

Adults in a prison poses challenges.

"Scheduling was pretty difficult," said Father Venette. "This is a very busy place. You're working around meals and (recreation) time, and there's a lot of programming scheduled."

"It can also be tough to maintain the appropriate boundaries," Deacon Bushey added. "I mean,

we have some boundaries even when working within a parish, but here, there are a lot of boundaries. We have to be on guard about how people are addressed, what relationship I can have with them."

Because of those boundaries, it can also be harder to gain the trust of the incarcerated individuals.

"They're guarded because of the way the relationships are defined, because of those boundaries," said Deacon Bushey.

Despite the challenges, both Father Venette and Deacon Bushey say they enjoy the ministry.

"I retired when COVID started," Deacon Bushey said. "I felt the need and the calling to go back for

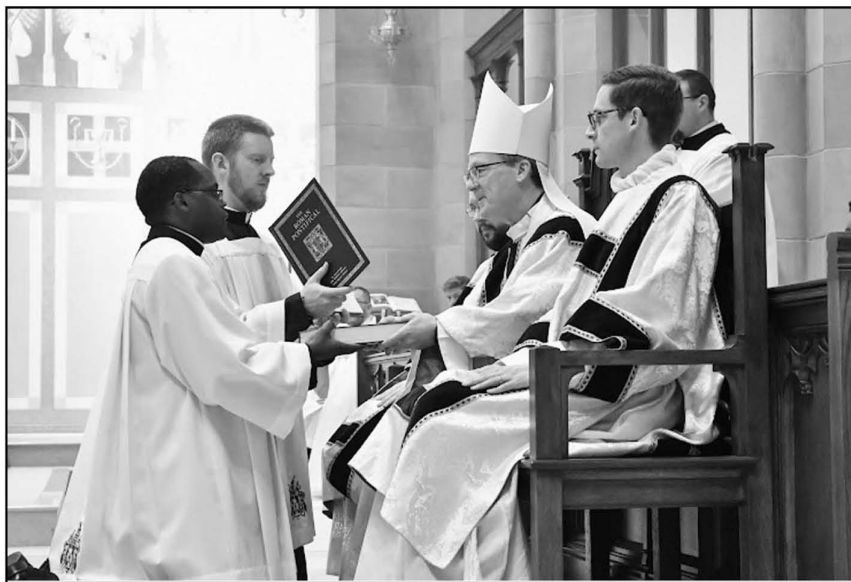
a bit. It's been a blessing to have (Father Venette) here. He's a really good presence."

"The best part is ministering to directly to the incarcerated individuals," added Father Venette. "They yearn for a connection to the Church and sacramental ministry. That's the heart and beauty of it all. It's a very rewarding ministry."

## PINE BOUGHS AND PRAYER



(Above) St. Mary's Church in Ticonderoga held an opportunity for parishioners to create Advent wreaths. This parish activity was taught and all materials provided by Francine Burke of Country Florist. Mrs. Karlene Gonyeau organized this class for students and parents alike. Many First Communion and confirmation students and their families participated and made beautiful wreaths to take home and use for family prayer during the Advent Season. (Below) Sister Sharon Dalton, a Sister of St. Joseph and principal of St. Mary's School, blesses a finished Advent wreath with holy water.



PHOTOS BY KEN SNOW, PROVIDED BY PONTIFICAL COLLEGE JOSEPHINUM

Diocese of Ogdensburg seminarian Dennis Ombongi was installed as a lector by Bishop Jeffrey J. Walsh, Bishop of Gaylord, during a Mass held in Saint Turibius Chapel at the Pontifical College Josephinum in Columbus, Ohio.

## Seminarian installed as lector on December 8

By Pontifical College Josephinum

Eight seminarians from the dioceses of Birmingham, Columbus, and Ogdensburg were installed as lectors or acolytes at the Pontifical College Josephinum on December 8, 2022, the Solemnity of the Immaculate Conception.

The Diocese of Ogdensburg seminarian, Dennis Ombongi, was installed as a lector.

The Most Reverend Jeffrey J. Walsh, Bishop of Gaylord, was the principal celebrant of the Mass held in Saint Turibius Chapel at the Pontifical College Josephinum.

Once termed minor orders, the ministries of lector and acolyte were established by Pope Paul VI in 1973 with the apostolic letter *Ministeria Quaedam*. Lectors are commissioned to proclaim the Word of God in the liturgical assembly and to instruct children and adults in the faith to prepare them to receive the sacraments. Acolytes are entrusted with attending to the altar, assisting the deacon and priest at Mass, and distributing Holy Communion during the liturgy and to the sick.

In the rite, each candidate is handed a symbol

of the ministry to which he is being instituted. Lectors receive a Book of the Gospels and acolytes are presented with a chalice, as the bishop encourages the men to fulfill the ministry faithfully.

Institution to these ministries are pivotal steps on the journey toward priesthood. Typically, seminarians are instituted as lectors in their first year of theological studies and as acolytes the following year.



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For Vocations*

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## Environmental Stewardship

Roots & shoots...  
Buds & blossoms

Have you ever noticed how often in Scripture images from nature are used to reveal spiritual mysteries? In the Advent reading Isaiah 2:1-10, the prophet seems to do just that. "On that day, a shoot shall sprout from the stump of Jesse, and from his roots a bud shall blossom... On that day, the root of Jesse, set up as a signal for the nations, the Gentiles shall seek out, for his dwelling shall be glorious." He uses the concrete images of the earth that would be familiar to his listeners to illustrate the spiritual reality of what God's kingdom will be like.

For their Advent Retreat Sisters of St. Joseph Lay Associates met in St. Augustine's North Bangor. There, Father Dan Chapin shared his reflections on this text entitling it "Roots, Shoots... Buds, Blossoms."

He recounted his own physical "roots" planted in his family farm in North Bangor and his spiritual roots in the St. Augustine Church beginning with baptism. These "shoots" were nourished by the faith of his family and countless others along his life journey. The "buds" appeared as his faith deepened and he felt a call from the Spirit to diocesan priesthood. These buds "blossomed" through his ministry in the diocesan Peruvian mission, various parishes in our diocese, and most recently in his Maryknoll ministry in Bolivia. Now he has returned to his home parish in North Bangor, where his roots began to continue his journey to witness to his faith to those he meets.

As we continue our Advent journey, we might find it helpful to recall our own roots.

Who are some of the people who planted and nurtured the seeds of faith planted at our baptism? As we reflect on the Advent scriptures that call us to repentance, what needs to be pruned or cleared away so that we can be a more dynamic, faithful witnesses of faith to the world? What can we change in our daily routine to witness to our call to be faithful stewards to God's creation? What other Scripture texts do I notice that use the natural world to reveal spiritual realities?

## Bishop's Public Schedule

**Dec. 15** – Noon – Mass at St. Mary's Cathedral

5 p.m. – St. Mary's Cathedral Staff Christmas Party in Brzana Hall

**Dec. 16** – Noon – Mass at St. Mary's Cathedral

**Dec. 18** – 8 a.m. – Mass at St. Mary's Cathedral

**Dec. 19** – 1 p.m. – Mass at Bare Hill Correctional Facility in Malone

**Dec. 20** – Noon – Mass at St. Mary's Cathedral

2:30 p.m. – Episcopal Council Meeting in the Spratt Conference Room followed by dinner at Bishop's Residence

**Dec. 21** – Noon – Mass at St. Mary's Cathedral



Bishop Terry R. LaValley greets students at Trinity Catholic School in Massena during a Dec. 1 visit. Bishop LaValley also celebrated Mass with the students.

## Protecting God's Children

The Diocese of Ogdensburg has scheduled sessions for Protecting God's Children for Adults. Pre-registration online is required.

Participants may preregister at [www.virtus.org](http://www.virtus.org).

Upcoming sessions:

**Dec. 15** – 1 p.m., Diocesan Offices, Ogdensburg  
Jan. 9 – 6 p.m., St. Patrick's Church, Watertown

## To Report Abuse

If you have a complaint of suspected misconduct involving diocesan clergy, religious, employees or volunteers, contact **Victims Assistance Coordinator**, Terriane Yanulavich, Ph.D., LMHC, 5050 Route 374, Merrill, NY 12955; [terrianeyanulavich@yahoo.com](mailto:terrianeyanulavich@yahoo.com) Phone: 518-651-2267 days; 518-569-0612 evenings; or Father Christopher Carrara, the Episcopal Vicar for Clergy; [ccarrara@rc-dony.org](mailto:ccarrara@rc-dony.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](http://www.ReportBishopAbuse.org).

## Trinity school community rallies for Giving Tuesday

By Sarah Tsibulsky  
Trinity Catholic School

When Trinity Catholic School called on our Massena community to help us raise \$10,000 on November 2 so we could receive a matching \$10,000 donation from a very generous anonymous donor, not only did they respond, they responded well!

To date, the school has raised over \$80,000!

This money assists families who are not able to pay for tuition, to en-

sure everyone who wants to receive a Catholic education is able to do so.

This loving and generous support came from students, organizations, businesses, families, parents, grandparents, alumni, and the community. What a testament!

While it may seem that the school can breathe a sigh of relief and relax fundraising efforts for the year, the truth is these much-needed funds, combined with proceeds from our Winter Raffle and Gala, also go

into the general operating fund of Trinity Catholic School. Every penny goes into giving our students the best education possible.

We are so appreciative of everyone for the extra time and energy put into our school. As the saying goes, "It takes a village!"

It absolutely takes every one of us, as well as the kind and generous efforts of our loving donors, to keep Trinity thriving.

Thank you for all you do!

## Rest in Peace

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

**Dec. 7** – Rev. Robert O. Lamitie, 2021

**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. 13** – Rev. Joseph Louis Levesque, 1939

# CATHOLIC WORLD AT A GLANCE

## 5th Circuit block on transgender mandate stands

WASHINGTON (CNS) – The Biden administration declined to appeal a unanimous ruling by the 5th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals in New Orleans that struck down a transgender mandate that the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services has implemented as a revision to the Affordable Care Act. The mandate forces doctors and hospitals to perform gender-transition procedures on their patients even if this violates their conscience and best medical judgment. A second case on the mandate is currently pending in the 8th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals in St. Louis. The 5th Circuit's ruling was handed down in late August and the Biden administration had until Nov. 25 to appeal the decision to the U.S. Supreme Court. The deadline came and went without an appeal being filed, "meaning this win is FINAL," tweeted Luke Goodrich, vice president and senior counsel at Becket, a Washington-based religious liberty law firm. Becket represented Franciscan Alliance, a Catholic health care network, and a group of nearly 19,000 health care professionals who sued HHS over the mandate in 2016.

## Pope, Council of Cardinals meet, discuss synod, safeguarding

VATICAN CITY (CNS) – Pope Francis and his international Council of Cardinals met in-person at the Vatican Dec. 5-6, discussing the continental phase of the synod process, safeguarding and the U.N. climate change summit, the Vatican press office said. Also, "the meeting was an opportunity for a mutual exchange of updates on some current affairs in different key geographical areas and for an overall assessment of the council's progress in recent years," the Vatican said. All seven members of the council participated: Cardinals Pietro Parolin, Vatican secretary of state; Seán P. O'Malley of Boston; Óscar Rodríguez Maradiaga of Tegucigalpa, Honduras; Oswald Gracias of Mumbai, India; Reinhard Marx of Munich and Freising, Germany; Fridolin Ambongo Besungu of Kinshasa; and Giuseppe Bertello, retired president of the commission governing Vatican City State. According to the Vatican press office, the pope and cardinals spent the first day reflecting on the discussions and outcomes of the 27th U.N. Climate Change conference, or COP27, held in November. The second day they discussed the continental phase leading to the Synod of Bishops 2023-24.

## USPS stamp features one of world's most revered images

BOSTON (CNS) – Every two years the U.S. Postal Service issues a traditional first-class Christmas stamp showing Mary and Jesus, and this year's stamp features an oil-on-panel painting from the first half of the 16th century titled "Virgin and Child." Attributed to a Florentine artist known since the late 1960s as the Master of the Scandicci Lamentation, the painting is in the Robert Dawson Evans Collection at the Museum of Fine Arts in Boston. The stamp was designed by Greg Breeding, co-founder and creative director of the Journey Group design firm in Charlottesville, Virginia. The painting depicts Mary gazing downward at the Christ child, with one of her arms holding him protectively at his waist and the other tenderly touching his arm, while the Christ child turns his head to look out of the frame to the left. "I am honored to represent the Postal Service as we dedicate a Christmas stamp that features one of the most revered images in the world – the Virgin Mary holding her infant child, Jesus," Jenny Utterback, USPS organization development vice president, said when the stamp was unveiled.

# As Dallas Charter turns 20, abuse has become issue for much of society

WASHINGTON (CNS) – Twenty years ago, in 2002, the revelations of clergy sexual abuse and its cover-up in the Archdiocese of Boston was the metaphorical bombshell that fell on the Catholic Church in the United States.

The U.S. bishops, when they met that June in Dallas, approved the "Charter for the Protection of Children and Young People," a comprehensive set of procedures for addressing allegations of sexual abuse of minors by Catholic clergy.

Its one-strike-and-you're-out policy did just that – permanently removing from public ministry those priests against whom abuse allegations were substantiated.

Twenty years later, at their assembly in Baltimore Nov. 14-17, the bishops acknowledged the charter's anniversary and said that they have made steps in addressing clergy sexual abuse and would continue to listen, care for and walk with survivors.

Over the past 20 years, the fallout from the Boston revelations has touched nearly every diocese. Dozens of dioceses have filed for bankruptcy protection to reach a group settlement on claims filed by abuse survivors. Many of those dioceses, though, have now emerged from bankruptcy.

The most recent diocese to announce it would file for bankruptcy protection was the Diocese of Santa Rosa, California, which said Dec. 5 it would file for Chapter 11 protection between Dec. 31 and March 1.

High-profile clergy also

have been accused of abuse. The latest was Father Michael Pflieger, a fire-brand priest who is outspoken about gun violence, gangs, poverty and racism. He serves the Faith Community of St. Sabina in Chicago, a historically African American parish.

But the 73-year-old priest in an Oct. 15 letter to parishioners said: "Let me be clear – I am completely innocent of this accusation."

It is the second time the Chicago Archdiocese has asked him to step aside from ministry over an abuse claim. In January 2021, he was accused of abuse that allegedly occurred 40 years ago. He was restored to ministry after the accusation was determined to be not credible.

In November, retired Bishop Howard J. Hubbard of Albany, New York, announced he has asked the Vatican that he be "returned to the lay state." He has long been criticized for his handling of abuse cases in the diocese. And because he himself has been accused of abuse, he said, he is forbidden to function as a priest – a policy he noted he backs.

The 84-year-old bishop stated Nov. 18 that he had made the request because of his age and the fact he is retired from active ministry. He also repeated his denial that he abused anyone.

The problem of sexual abuse of children, young people and vulnerable adults is not of course just the sole province of the Catholic Church.

The Boy Scouts of America had to declare bank-

ruptcy in 2020 after accusations of abuse roiled the organization.

Abuse has seeped into sports, in particular gymnastics. Former physician Larry Nassar is expected to spend the rest of his life in prison following his conviction five years ago on multiple charges of abuse of young gymnasts. This year, youth hockey was in the headlines about abuse cases.

On Nov. 11, a doctor who spent two decades serving providing medical youth hockey teams in Michigan and Minnesota was charged in multiple sex assault cases.

High-ranking churchmen in other parts of the world have either had to face accusations of abuse or have admitted to abusive acts. In August of this year, the Southern Baptist Convention acknowledged a federal investigation had begun into how it treated abuse accusations. And this just scratches the surface.

In an interview earlier this year with Catholic News Service, Cardinal Wilton D. Gregory of Washington recalled when he was president of the U.S. bishops' conference in 2002, when the Boston scandal broke, and his first of 13 visits to the Vatican regarding the charter.

"I was told that this was an American problem. And then it was suggested that it was an English-speaking problem," he said. "Well, now it doesn't just speak English. It speaks Polish, it speaks German, it speaks Spanish," he said, referring to abuse crises that have emerged in other countries."

## SCRIPTURE REFLECTIONS

# Third & Fourth Sunday of Advent

## THIRD SUNDAY OF ADVENT

The joy that fills this Sunday's liturgy is the closest we have to Christmas itself. We're always surprised to see the celebrant process into the Mass this week dressed in rose-colored vestments and to hear the lector proclaim in the second reading, "Rejoice, again I say to you 'Rejoice.'" The whole message is one of hope.

But, we say, we don't feel like joy. Of course, we can get pleasure out of the Christmas shopping, the lights, receiving Christmas cards from people we haven't heard from since last year. That's a real human joy, but where can we find that fulfilling, serene joy that stays with us long into the New Year?

The key is found in St. Paul's advice in that second reading. He advises us to pray without stopping, say "thank you" over and over, and don't quench the Spirit. Two

weeks ago, we agreed to humbly let God be the potter to mold us into a new shape. It's when we pray and meditate each day that we let go and let God's Spirit do the work of flooding our souls with His light. This Sunday's Gospel assures us that John the Baptizer came to give testimony

to the Light. Fear thrives in darkness. Just as turning a light on in a dark room can take fear away from a child, so the light that increases in us each day of Advent can shrink our fears and bolster our hopes. When the light intensifies to radiance, then we know joy.

Of course, it takes patience on our part – patience to wait in rock-solid faith, humble faith. The only legitimate fear we're allowed to cling to is the fear of not appreciating enough what the coming of this Child into the world really means. Historically, it was truly an earth-shaking event. Nothing would ever be the same

### Dec. 11 & Dec. 18

#### Third Sunday of Advent

##### READINGS

Isaiah 35:1-6a,10

St. James 5:7-10

Matthew 11:2-11

#### Fourth Sunday of Advent

##### READINGS

Isaiah 7:10-14

Romans 1:1-7

Matthew 1:18-24



**Monsignor  
Paul E.  
Whitmore**

again. Sin and darkness fled when the Son of God was born in Bethlehem. Of course, people can and do close their eyes to the light and choose to live without His Light. Only when we refuse to repent of our sin and hang on to the darkness can we have reason to fear. When John in prison sends emissaries to Jesus to ask if He is really the Messiah, Jesus sends back the answer that He has fulfilled that prophecy He read in the Synagogue in Capharnaum (and that we heard read in today's first reading). He tells John that the blind now see, the deaf hear, the dead are raised, and the poor have the Good News preached to them! John

must have been filled with joy, even in prison when the messenger brought that message back. That's the reason for our joy today as well.

## FOURTH SUNDAY OF ADVENT

Today's readings on this Fourth (and last) Sunday of Advent describe how God very dramatically and lovingly intervenes in human history when "there is no way out." In the first reading, God directly invites King Ahaz to ask for a sign that God would protect the southern kingdom of Judah from enemies that threaten to destroy it. Now, a wise leader would eagerly grasp at the opportunity. Not Ahaz, who in his pride has already decided on his own political solution! Isaiah decides to give him God's sign anyway, saying "the virgin shall conceive a child and bear a son, and shall name him Emmanuel." Ahaz was not interested in God's help. He foolishly trusted his own wisdom. As a result, the whole nation was defeated and sent into exile in Babylon.

The Gospel tells us of another man faced with a grave dilemma who did listen to God. Joseph, already bound by a solemn betrothal ceremony to take Mary as his wife, discovers to his dismay that she is with child. He can only suppose that she has been unfaithful to him and is now subject to very severe laws that could result in her death if he exposes her. He takes the compassionate way out. He will divorce her quietly, exposing

himself, not her, to shame. God intervenes through a dream in which an angel tells him the whole story. The angel tells Joseph not to be afraid to take Mary as his wife, for her child has God Himself as the Father! With incredible trust and humility! Joseph obediently agrees to the plan. What a contrast between this just man and crafty Ahaz.

At Christmas, God is asking of us what He asked of Mary and Joseph – complete trust in his plans. He wants each of us to help Him save His world again! He richly rewards those who say "Yes!" and accept His plans for their lives. It's even more incredible that Jesus the God-man, in turn, entrusted His life to Joseph and Mary. Again, a God entrusts the success of His plans this year to those who can love enough and sacrifice their plans for His own.

Advent has been all about getting our hearts ready to agree to let Joseph and Mary use our hearts for a manger. From there, Jesus can help our poor country and our poor world to rebuild his kingdom. He needs our witness, our courage in speaking His truth and sharing His love. He so wants us to be part of a much larger Advent, when all those prophecies we heard read in the last few weeks will be brought to fulfillment. If we can only give a simple, unqualified "yes" as Mary and Joseph did, some amazing things could happen through us in the world we live in.

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## CALLED TO SERVE

## And then there was the time...

"If it can go wrong, it will."

That's kind of a negative way to look at the world, and I am a pretty optimistic guy, but sometimes Murphy's Law prevails. The actual Murphy's Law is more dire than I thought. "If it can go wrong, it will go wrong – and it will go wrong at the very worst time."

We can all relate to that phrase. In the newsroom our producer used to say, "when did we lose control of this broadcast?" It meant the same thing.

No matter how well we plan a liturgy, something unexpected is possible.

Like the time the altar server fainted in the middle of Mass. We had not planned for that.

Then there was the time I was assisting at a funeral. Father said the prayers of reception of the body and greeted the family at the door. We were processing to the sanctuary when a gentleman in the back row collapsed. Father said, "keep going." So, we did. We had not planned for that.

It turns out the man had a heart attack. EMTs worked on him in the back row and eventually took him out a side door on a stretcher.

Only those of us in the sanctuary could see what was happening in the back pews. Well, us and anyone who spent time watching those proceedings instead of praying for the soul of the de-

ceased.

I searched the internet for information about Murphy's Law, just for fun, and found this:

"Edward Murphy was a very real man with a very real job. Murphy was actually an American aerospace engineer who was constantly seeking ways of preventing planes from falling out of the sky. Pretty important stuff.

What if an engine overheats? What if the windshield cracks? What if we start losing cabin pressure? What if we have to stay up 2 hours longer than planned? What if the pilot

passes out? These and a thousand other possible life-threatening scenarios have been carefully assessed and accounted for in the design of the planes, the creation of procedures and the training of the crew."

We assume everything will go smoothly, according to script, when we participate in a liturgical celebration. We do not plan for bad things to happen.

Some really big ceremonies, like at the cathedral, have a master of ceremonies to keep everyone on task and doing what they are sup-

posed to do when they are supposed to do it.

Every once in a while, things go a little awry. Like the time we forgot to put a celebrant host on the paten for consecration. Or the time at the cathedral when the planners had forgotten to schedule a deacon to serve the bishop at the altar.

The correct procedure for dealing with unplanned events is to work around them with as little fuss and attention as possible. Make it look like we planned it. Right!

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



Deacon  
Kevin Mastellon

## Filmmaker spreads message of *Laudato Si*

WASHINGTON (CNS) – Pope Francis is getting more non-Catholics to do his work.

The latest is Nicolas Brown, who directed "The Letter: A Message for Our Earth," a documentary on the pope's 2015 encyclical "Laudato Si', on Care for Our Common Home."

The 90-minute film will air Wednesday, Dec. 21, 8 p.m.-9:30 p.m. EST on PBS (check local listings). But for those who can't wait that long, the documentary is already on YouTube, which helped produce it.

"We decided to make this film and not put it behind a paywall. We purposely did not go to Netflix and put it behind the reach of anybody," Brown told Catholic News Service during a Dec. 7 video interview. Brown was speaking from Oxford, England, where he is at work on other environ-

ment-related projects.

"YouTube is a sort of spiritual place. PBS took on that spirit as well. They don't feel that they (the two services) overlap. They both feel they want to hear this message, which speaks to very different demographics inside society, which I think is very good sign for the environment."

Brown said he was skeptical when approached about making a film about the pope's encyclical, which addresses caring for creation and the interconnectivity of all life on the planet.

"I'm not Catholic, I'm not religious. I'm agnostic, let's say," Brown said. But when he read "Laudato Si'" in Rome, he admitted, "I was blown away. The proverbial plank was lifted from my eyes. I think I was quite prejudiced against people of faith, thinking that be-

cause they had their belief and faith, they wouldn't support my personal truth and belief."

Brown said, "As I spent more time with the cardinals and the brothers and the monks and nuns in Rome, I saw this incredible symbiotic relationship between science, faith and religion."

From his making of "The Letter," "I learned the benefits of moral leadership," he said. "Let's face it. Scientists do not have much to say about the morality of why we should care about our planet."

Brown explained that he wants "to bring 'Laudato Si' to life not only for my people, the sort of technocrats and privileged people of the world ... but also to understand this road that the pope took and many religious people took."

The filmmaker also spoke movingly of "the

favelas and to see the suffering humanity ... they were displaced by the land, which is the discovery the pope made when he made the environmental revelations he had before writing 'Laudato Si'."

"The Letter" chronicles some of the threats to the environment worldwide. The show's title refers not only to Pope Francis' encyclical, but to an invitation sent by the pope to five people – whom Brown described as "the voices of the voiceless" in their advocacy for protecting the planet – to meet with the pontiff at the Vatican.

If you think obtaining footage of Amazon rainforest clear-cutting is tough, it's simple compared to what Brown said was the hardest sequence to film: "Clearly, getting the interview with the pope was the most difficult. Even if you have the Vatican Dicastery for

Human Development and the Dicastery for Communication on your side, he's notoriously said, 'I don't do interviews.'"

Brown settled for a consolation prize: "What we got was not an interview, it was a conversation (with the five climate activists). He arrived 20 minutes early and left 20 minutes late. So we had 80 minutes with the pope, which I am told is a lot," he told CNS.

"I still don't know how it actually happened. ... He really was very generous once we were able to secure that meeting."



## ADIRONDACK-FRANKLIN

## 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.

## DEVOTION AND HOLY HOUR

St. Regis Falls – All are invited to the monthly first Saturday Devotion and Holy Hour for Vocations.

**Date:** First Saturday of the Month

**Time:** Following the 4:30 anticipated Mass

**Place:** St. Ann's Church

**Features:** Prayer after Mass, Night Prayer, Prayer for All Souls and the Holy Souls, Novena in Honor of Our Lady of the Miraculous Medal, Chaplet of Divine Mercy, The Reparation Rosary of the Blessed Virgin Mary with private meditation on the 15 Mysteries of the Rosary, Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament reposed in the Tabernacle, and Prayers for the Holy Father and his intentions.

CHRIST'S COMING  
ADVENT RECITAL

Malone – All are welcome to an advent recital as we prepare for Christ's coming.

**Date:** Dec. 17

**Time:** 7 p.m.

**Place:** Notre Dame Church

**Features:** Join Madonna Champagne, Braden Jarosz and guest musicians for classical Advent and Christmas songs. Donations will benefit St. André's Good Samaritan Food Pantry and complementary refreshments will follow. The event will also be livestreamed on Facebook.

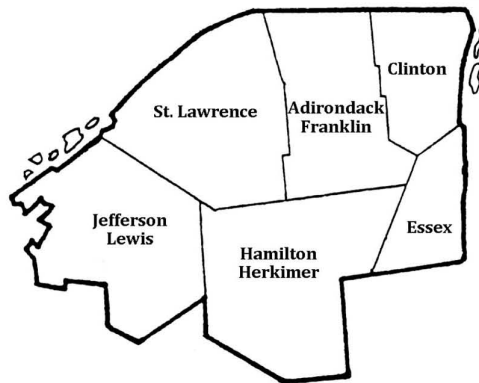
## CLINTON

## HOUSE SITTERS

Ellenburg Center – Our Lady of the Adirondacks House of Prayer is looking for many Volunteer "House Sitters."

**Time:** The responsibility is to arrive by 10 a.m. on your chosen day(s) and remain on premises until 4 p.m. to welcome visitors.

**Features:** Lunch and snack items on hand along with tea, coffee, soda,



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.

and bottled water. Training will be provided on the history of the House of Prayer, its mission, and the various ways to carry out this gentle ministry of hospitality for those seeking time in a home of Mary to listen to our Lord, browse in the library, or visit the "Gift Shop". Flexible schedule (and hours) are fine.

**Contact:** If interested in volunteering for one day a month, or week, or more, please call Sarah Anderson at 518-534-9976.

## CHRISTMAS FESTIVAL

Altona – Christmas in our Hearts, Christmas Festival to be held.

**Date:** Dec. 18

**Time:** 9 a.m. to 4 p.m.

**Place:** Holy Angels Hall

**Features:** Craft fair, Christmas concert, Christmas basket BINGO, live nativity, raffle, baked goods, food & refreshments.

**Contact:** For more information, contact the parish office at 518-236-5632

## CHRISTMAS CONCERT

West Chazy - Come and enjoy beautiful performances of Christmas Songs from our local youth and adults alike.

**Date:** Dec. 18

**Time:** 7 p.m.

**Place:** St. Joseph's Church

**Features:** This is a family event for all to enjoy. We hope to see you there! Admission is free.

**Contact:** For more information contact the Parish Office at 518-493-

4521.

## JEFFERSON-LEWIS

## LOWVILLE CHRISTMAS MASSES

All Christmas Masses for the Catholic Community of St. Peter's, St. Mary's and St. Hedwig will be at St. Peter's Church in Lowville.

**Schedule:** Christmas Eve, Dec. 24th 4 p.m. and 8 p.m.; Christmas Day, Dec. 25 at 9 a.m.

## HOLY HOUR AND DIVINE MERCY

Houseville - A Holy Hour of Adoration with the Divine Mercy Chaplet will be observed the first Sunday of the month.

**Date:** Jan. 1

**Time:** Following 11 a.m. Mass

**Place:** St. Hedwig's Church

**Contact:** 315-348-6260

## ST. LAWRENCE

## HOLY HOUR

Canton – Holy Hour for Vocations to be held.

**Date:** Every Tuesday

**Time:** 4:10 p.m.

**Place:** St. Mary's Church

**Features:** Holy hour followed by Mass at 5:15 p.m. and confessions at 5:45 p.m.

## ROSARY FOR LIFE

Canton – Rosary for life to be held.

**Date:** Every Saturday

**Time:** 4:25 p.m. preceding the 5 p.m. Vigil Mass

**Place:** St. Mary's Church

## ADORATION

Norwood – St. Andrew's Church to offer Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament every Friday.

**Time:** After 8:30 a.m. Mass until Noon

**Features:** Sign up is not needed.

## GLENN MILLER ORCHESTRA

Massena – Glenn Miller Orchestra to present a Christmas Show.

**Date:** Dec. 21

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

**Place:** Sacred Heart Church

**Cost:** \$30 Prime Seating or \$20 General Admission

**Contact:** Trinity Catholic School for tickets and more info 315-769-5911

## ROSARY WITH DEVOTIONS

Ogdensburg – The Legion of Mary will pray the rosary with devotions for First Saturday.

**Date:** Jan. 7

**Time:** 8 a.m.

**Place:** Notre Dame Church, Ogdensburg

**Features:** Rosary with devotions

FIRST SATURDAY  
ROSARY DEVOTION

Massena - Sacred Heart Church to have first Saturday Rosary Devotion.

**Date:** Jan. 7

**Time:** 3:15 p.m.

**Features:** First Saturday Rosary Devotion to OUR Lady of Fatima. Confessions will be available. Saturday Vigil Mass at 4 p.m.

## MEN'S PRAYER GROUP

Massena – First Saturday of the month, men's prayer group to meet for Mass and Adoration.

**Date:** Jan. 7

**Time:** 8 a.m. to 10 a.m.

**Place:** St. Mary's Church

**Features:** Coffee and donuts after service in the parish center

**Contact:** Bob Brothers at 315-842-2886

## MONTHLY BRUNCH

Norfolk – Parish of the Visitation and  
DIOCESAN EVENTS

St. Raymond's will have their monthly Knights of Columbus Brunch.

**Date:** Jan. 15 (Second Sunday of each month)

**Time:** 8:30 a.m. to 11:30

**Place:** Fr. Amyot Parish Center

**Cost:** Adults, \$10; under 12, \$5; under 5, Free; Omelets, add \$3; Take-outs available

**Contact:** For more information contact Grand Knight Gil Gonthier 315-212-5166.

## LOVING AUTHENTICALLY

All are invited to attend this free seminar designed to deepen our understanding of how Church doctrine on sexual morality connects with our happiness.

**Schedule:** 3 different times and locations to attend. Feb. 12, 2023 at Newman Center, Plattsburgh; April 22, 2023 at St. Bernard's Saranac Lake; May 20, 2023 at St. Mary's Ticonderoga.

**Time:** 9 a.m. to 3 p.m.

**Features:** Program will be a showing of "Unprotected: A Pope, the Pill, and the Perils of Sexual Chaos."

With Q & A led by Natural Family Planning Directors, Angelo and Suzanne Pietropaoli and Catholic Theologian, Maura Hearden Fehlner, Ph.D.

**Contact:** to register go [www.rc-dony.org/lovingauthentically](http://www.rc-dony.org/lovingauthentically). For more information contact Stephen Tartaglia at 315-393-2920 or [startaglia@rcdony.org](mailto:startaglia@rcdony.org)

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

The Society for the Propagation of the Faith

Sr. Mary Ellen Brett, SSJ, Director  
622 Washington St., Ogdensburg, NY 13669  
(315) 393-2920; fax 1-866-314-7296  
mbrett@rcdony.org

# Prayers and offerings

Contribute to the growth of a vocation, to its development, so that the "seed" bears fruit. Many are those who contribute spiritually and economically through the Pontifical Society of Saint Peter the Apostle (POSPA) so seminarians can continue to grow in their vocation, continue their journey and become priests. In turn, the seminarians benefit from this help and pray for their benefactors. This triggers an exchange of gifts and "distance" mutual aid that unites them in a true "missionary brotherhood," as Father Ambroise Kinhou, rector of the "Grand Séminaire Mgr Louis-Parisot" of Tchanvédji in Benin, tells Fides.

"An organization called 'Missio' has been set up in the seminary, the first objective of which is to make seminarians aware that other baptized people are committed to contributing to their formation. Throughout the year, and in especially during the week of World Mission Day, Father Kinhou explains, a lot of communication is made on this aspect. Exhibitions are also organized to explain how other Christians, in many parts of the world, offer prayers and offerings to ensure that the seed of a vocation may grow."

The "Grand Séminaire Mgr. Louis-Parisot" theological seminary of Tchanvédji, created 27 years ago, is the second theological seminary founded in Benin: between 10 and 12 priest educators, three nuns and 17 lay people work there. There are currently 130 seminarians following the last four years of priestly formation. Each seminarian, with the support of his family, provides by donating something for the current year in cash or in food. The seminarians devote themselves to agriculture and animal breeding, thus providing for their own food. "There are boys who come from materially poor families, they are the ones who receive the greatest support. Among the benefactors, I personally know families who live modestly and who send us their money from Slovakia, who commit themselves to the missions. This seems to me an extraordinary fact. Often, when I am in Europe, concludes the Rector of the Major Seminary, I hear people praying for vocations which are flourishing in other parts of the world, like here. Here we live a very important vocational reality. We try to do our best to form boys with this missionary openness that looks to the future."

*Article from FIDES missionary news service of the Pontifical Mission Societies.*

## OBITUARIES

**Carthage** — John M. Giovo, 76; Services to be held at a later date.

**Champlain** — Loretta (Thornton) Ashline, 88; Mass of Christian Burial Dec. 12, 2022 at St. Mary's Church; burial in St. Joseph's Cemetery, Coopersville.

**Champlain** — Pauline M. (Langlois) Scriver, 80; Mass of Christian Burial Dec. 7, 2022 at St. Mary's Church.

**Ellenburg** — Marjorie Lorretta (Rabideau) Lashway, 95; Mass of Christian Burial Dec. 6, 2022 at St. Edmund's Church.

**Glenfield** — Jerry Fr. "Franny" Root, 84; Private services held; burial in Old Glendale Cemetery.

**Lyon Mountain** — Jerry Rabideau, 65; Mass of Christian Burial Dec. 9, 2022 at St. Bernard's Church; burial in parish cemetery.

**Malone** — Eileen M. Campbell, 79; Private services held.

**Massena** — Ralph H. Frary, 80; Mass of Christian Burial Dec. 9, 2022 at St. Mary's Church; burial in St. Lawrence Cemetery, North Lawrence.

**Mooers** — Jeannette Martha (Cassatine) Trombley, 86; Funeral Services Dec. 9, 2022 at the Hamilton Funeral Home; burial in St. Patrick's Cemetery, Rouses Point.

**Norfolk** — Roger L. Murray, 62; Funeral Services Dec. 9, 2022 at the Buck Funeral Home; burial in Visitation Cemetery.

**Ogdensburg** — Patricia D. Brady, 93; Mass of Christian Burial Dec. 10, 2022 at St. Mary's Cathedral.

**Plattsburgh** — Elizabeth J. "Betty" (Trombley) Poitras, 94; Mass of Christian Burial Dec. 15, 2022 at St. Peter's Church.

**Plattsburgh** — Patricia Langlois Racine, 90; Mass of Christian Burial Dec. 6, 2022 at St. Peter's Church.

**Redford** — Kristen Nicole Ahern, 36; Mass of Christian Burial Dec. 6, 2022 at Church of the Assumption

**Rouses Point** — Arlene (Parmentier) Penfield, 86; Private services held.

**Watertown** — Jennie (Malatino) Adsit, 92; Services to be held in May 2023.

**Watertown** — Thelma E. (Scarpell) Koelme, 103; Mass of Christian Burial Dec. 5, 2022 at Our Lady of the Sacred Heart; burial in Glenwood Cemetery.

**Watertown** — Art B. Pierce, 80; Funeral Services Dec. 10, 2022 at Hart & Bruce Funeral Home.

**Waddington** — Barbara (Stubbs) Jackson, 85; Graveside services Dec. 8, 2022 at Brookside Cemetery.

## A REMINDER OF THE REASON FOR THE SEASON



When approaching Carthage on Route 3 eastbound, this billboard is located on the left side between Herings and Carthage. The Knights of Columbus Father John Cosmic Council thanks those who contributed to the success of its annual Keep Christ in Christmas program.

## Poll: 'O Holy Night' tops all hymns used in December

WASHINGTON (CNS) – The Christmas carol "O Holy Night" ranked first in a list of hymns most played in December at Christian churches in the United States.

"O Come All Ye Faithful" and "Silent Night" ranked second and third, respectively.

The list was compiled by Pushpay, which offers electronic giving options for churches and their congregants.

It asked its 15,000 subscribing churches last December what hymns they used that month, and released the results this Dec. 1. A Pushpay spokeswoman, Katie Griffin, could not supply a breakdown of Catholic parishes among those churches.

The top-10 list is filled with carols familiar to Catholics. Following the top three choices are, in order, "The First Noel," "Joy To The World" and "Angels We Have Heard On High."

Following those are two songs featured more in the repertoire of non-Catholic churches.

"Glorious Day," which ranked seventh overall, was recorded by the contemporary Christian group Passion, featuring Kristian Stanfill on vocals. It is more of a salvation narrative without any lyrics taking note of the birth or infancy of Jesus.

Still, the song's official music and lyrics video has received 6.6 million views on YouTube.

There are several versions of the eighth-ranked song, "Goodness of God." One video of the song has climbed up to 7 million YouTube views. The song is another in the Christian contemporary genre which focuses more on a first-person-singular, personal relationship with Jesus than a first-person plural voice found more often in Catholic hymnody.

Ninth is the gospel melody "Go Tell It On The Mountain," which has found a home in many Catholic hymnals and parishes.

And, to prove that the list took into account all of December and not just the week beginning Dec. 25, winding up in the 10th spot was "O Come O Come Emmanuel," an Advent song based on a chant melody familiar to Catholics not only in the United States but throughout the world.

Griffin told Catholic News Service it's conducting the poll again this December.

The top five songs from the 2020 poll were, in order, "Joy To The World," "O Come All Ye Faithful," "Silent Night," "O Come O Come Emmanuel" and "O Holy Night."

## FUNDING FOR FOOD



(Above) Knights of Columbus Father John Cosmic Council #291 Grand Knight Garry Stevens presents a \$500 check to Terri Streeter with Jennie Burke looking on to the VEM food pantry. (Right) Past Grand Knight Brian Thompson presents Sister Mary Ellen Brett with a \$500 check for the St Mary's food pantry. (Bottom) Grand Knight Stevens presents Father Todd Thibault, pastor of St. James Minor Church in Carthage, with a \$500 check for the St. James food pantry with pantry supervisor Yvonne Ablan looking on. "We were again able to support our local food pantries from C&B (Charitable and Benevolent) ticket sales and donations this year," said program director Jim Gratch. "As always, we could not have done this without the support of the patrons of the Carthage Farmer's Market, our brother knights and the parishioners of St. Mary's and St. James." The raffle is held annually by Father John Cosmic Council #291, Knights of Columbus Carthage in conjunction with the New York State Council KofC, with the proceeds going to state and local charities.

