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The Diocese of Ogdensburg Volume 77 Number 5

NORTH COUNTRY CATHOLIC

MAY 11, 2022

Following the Good Shepherd

On May 8, we celebrated World Day of Prayer for Vocations.

In this edition of the North Country Catholic, we celebrate those who are living their vocations to the priesthood, diaconate and consecrated life, and "Following the Good Shepherd."

"The Shepherd does not lose sight of us but walks beside us so that we do not stray from the flock," writes Sister Mary Eamon Lyng, a Sister of St. Joseph and Vocations coordinator for the diocese. "We can trust the Shepherd not to lead us astray."

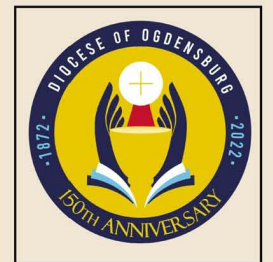
FULL STORY, PAGES 3-7

VOCATIONS OFFICE GROWS



Father Matthew Conger, right, recently joined the diocesan Vocations Office as associate Vocations director. Father Conger will collaborate with Sister Mary Eamon Lyng, SSI, Vocations coordinator, and Father Christopher C. Carrara, vicar for Clergy and director of Vocations and Seminarians in continuing efforts to create a culture of vocations in the diocese. See the full story on Page 7.

OCTAVE OF SERVICE



To commemorate the 150th anniversary of our Diocese, parishes and Catholic organizations are invited and encouraged to participate in the Octave of Service from May 19th through May 26th. The Octave of Service is an opportunity to carry our various forms of outreach in their communities while living out the Gospel values of encounter and accompaniment, journeying together as disciples in mission.

FULL STORY, PAGE 16

Pope: Divisions make fertile ground for conflict

VATICAN CITY (CNS) – Doing nothing to overcome the divisions among Christians means allowing tensions to fester and even feed conflict, Pope Francis said.

"Ignoring the divisions among Christians, whether out of habit or out of resignation, means tolerating that pollution of hearts which makes fertile ground for conflict," he said May 6 during a meeting with members of the Pontifical Council for Promoting Christian Unity.

While the COVID-19 pandemic forced many ecumenical initiatives

to be canceled or moved online, he said, it also had the benefit of creating a "renewed awareness" among Christians that they belong to one family, an awareness "rooted in the experience of sharing the same fragility and of being able to count only on God's help."

The pandemic proved the wisdom of 50 years of ecumenical work emphasizing that "for a Christian it is not possible, it is not viable, to go it alone within one's confession," he said. "Either we go together, fraternally, or we do not walk."

But, he said, even before the pandemic was truly over, "the entire world was faced with a tragic new challenge – the war currently underway in Ukraine," he said.

Pope Francis called Russia's war on Ukraine "as cruel and senseless as any war," but said its geopolitical impact "has a greater dimension and threatens the entire world."

While the pope did not get into how the war, supported by Russian Orthodox Patriarch Kirill of Moscow, is negatively impacting ecumenical relations as well as inter-Orthodox relations, he in-

sisted every Christian church must look at how it may be fomenting tension and how it can contribute to peace.

The war in Ukraine, he said, "cannot fail to question the conscience of every Christian and every church."

"We must ask ourselves: What have the churches done and what can they do to contribute to the 'development of a global community of fraternity based on the practice of social friendship,'" he said, quoting from his encyclical, "Fratelli Tutti."

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Laughter at the wrong moment

He was trying to make me laugh during a prayer service.

I was attending an event in Watertown with a camera around my neck. An outdoor event, I had plenty of space to photograph from different angles, and I was circling around the area where people were gathered taking advantage of that opportunity. As I made camera adjustments to frame a shot, I saw in the edge of my view a face that stood out.



**Darcy L.
Fargo**

One of the priests attending the event was looking directly into the camera with a

big grin – the kind I usually describe as a “cheesing smile” – like when a little kid says “cheese” and settles on an overpronounced fake smile for a photo.

The expression caught me off guard, and I started laughing. The involved priest seemed pretty pleased with himself for getting me going.

I immediately thought of my father.

My father can’t behave in church. Sitting next to him at a wedding, funeral or other Mass usually involves getting poked in the ribs, having

your hand squeezed extremely hard during the Sign of Peace or being subjected to some other action intended to make a person squirm or make a noise. His father – my grandfather – was the same way. It’s simultaneously annoying and endearing.

While part of me says prayer services, funerals, weddings... aren’t the time for clowning around, the people I know who can’t behave in church are among the most joyful people I’ve ever met. Whether a priest or a husband and father, they just can’t help but share their joy and craziness with others.

I’m fairly certain that at

least part of their joy stems from being where they’re supposed to be – my dad with his family, and this priest worshipping with the people of God. They find joy living their vocations. They share that joy with others, but they do it in their own ways.

Isn’t that what we celebrate in this edition? We celebrate the ways God calls each of us to follow Him. We celebrate the joy that comes in living our vocations and how we share that joy with the world in the service of the one who gave it to us.

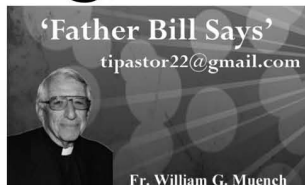
Sometimes, that joy is shared by making people laugh when they shouldn’t.

Hearing, following God’s call

During this Easter season, I have often meditated on what it must have been like to be one of those original apostles of the Lord, the original 12. They had sent a time living with and learning from the Lord, hearing his message and recognizing his call. Then they suddenly experienced his arrest and crucifixion and then the events of the Lord’s resurrection to new life. In faith and trust they accepted the challenge and vocation to bring Jesus and his message to their world.

This was certainly the most important time of our Catholic Church’s history – a time of formation. As we now realize all that our Church is in this present time and all that it experienced at the time of the formation, I for one believe it is all a miracle that we are now this Christian community. Somehow, in the wisdom of the Holy Spirit those apostles formed and followed the Lord Jesus to make this Church strong.

The Acts of the Apostles describe for us the descent of the Holy Spirit on the



apostles, transforming them from fear-filled men into bold and powerful preachers and teachers of the Lord’s message of love and peace. We are told that those original apostles became unafraid even to risk their lives and become martyrs of the Lord Jesus.

They trusted in the formation they received from Jesus. They trusted in his guidance and the leadership of the Holy Spirit. They constantly dedicated themselves to the vocation of being followers of the Lord Jesus.

Even today we believe that the Lord Jesus continues to reach out to each one of us, calling us to recognize that we discover our vocation as those who the Lord needs to bring the word and message of our Savior to this world – bringing to people of this world, to our parishes and to our communities all that

Jesus brought to our world.

Many of us answer that call by becoming ordained as priest and deacons, as well as bishops, ordained as were those original apostles ordained at the Last Supper. Through the power of the Holy Spirit, we now accept this call or our God to seek the gifts of ordination, to live out the Lord’s call to bring the sacraments of the Lord to his people – the Lord’s baptism, the blessed Eucharist through the holy Mass, the Lord’s forgiveness through the sacrament of penance, the important support of the anointing of the sick and the dying.

Our Lord continues to call many to follow him through the vocation of marriage. Spiritually, marriage is a sacrament and a spiritual union. Through this sacrament, the Church community is formed as a family, a vocation of love and peace and life in the power of the Holy Spirit, leading to families, parents and children discovering the Lord Jesus and his message – a Christian community, a powerful and fundamental part of this

world.

Our Lord continues to call many to the vocation of the single life alone or as a religious. This is a vocation – a calling, a challenge of reaching out as followers of Jesus to make this world a better place in the spirit of Our Savior.

All are apostles, disciples of the Lord. Just as those early followers of Jesus were, we are called to trust the Lord in faith, responding to the Lord’s call to make our world a community of peace. We know only too well that this trust has often failed. Our world is very vulnerable. Many turn from the Lord. Many have failed to follow the way of the Savior. So, Our Lord continues to call all to be renewed in the Holy Spirit, to discover their vocation, to discover how to use well the gifts that they have been blessed with by the Holy Spirit. Each of us have been called to a vocation as followers of the Lord Jesus, called to make our Church, our parish a power force to transform this world in the Lord’s love and peace.

FOLLOWING THE GOOD SHEPHERD

Called to love and to follow the Good Shepherd

By Sister Mary Eamon Lyng, SSJ
Vocation Coordinator

My sheep hear my voice; I know them, and they follow me. I give them eternal life, and they shall never perish. – John 10:27-30.

On this Good Shepherd Sunday, there are some “active verbs” that Jesus puts out there for all of us to ponder: “hear,” “know,” “follow,” “give.” These “active” verbs used by the Good Shepherd are the voice of Jesus calling each of us to live our vocation to its fullness with His grace and love. These verbs are the stages of growth in the call to continue the work of Jesus’ mission in the Church as a husband and wife, priest or brother, deacon, consecrated religious or single. It is a call to encounter more deeply a loving relationship of the Good Shepherd and to follow Him.

The purpose of the World Day of Prayer for Vocations is to listen more attentively to the

call to the ordained ministries (priesthood and diaconate), consecrated life in all its forms (male and female religious life, societies of apostolic life, consecrated virginity), secular institutes in their diversity of services and membership, and to the missionary life. The Church is attentive to the Good Shepherd’s instructions to “pray the Lord of the harvest to send laborers into His harvest” (Mt 9:38; Lk 10:2).

To “hear” the voice of the Shepherd is to be attentive to the tenor and sound of His call. The Good Shepherd knows each one of us by name. Just as the Father knows the Son, the Son knows the Father. So, too, for one who “knows” the Shepherd’s voice already has an intimate relationship with the Shepherd through deep listening in the quiet and solitude of one’s heart in prayer.

This mutual knowing is the communion of life between Jesus and the person who is discerning the

call for a deeper love and service to Him. The Shepherd keeps prodding until there is a response to “follow” Him more closely for the sake of the whole flock of sheep. We are ready to leave everything behind and to follow Jesus.

Once there is the “Yes” to follow the Shepherd, it

does not mean this is a “once and for all” response. It is a daily response of a loving relationship through “thick and thin” of daily living of the “ups and downs” of good times and not so good times. There is always the daily grace that strengthens us on the journey. The Shep-

herd does not lose sight of us but walks beside us so that we do not stray from the flock. We can trust the Shepherd not to lead us astray.

The Good Shepherd feeds us with His Body and Blood in the Eucharist, food for the journey, and refreshes us

CONTINUED ON PAGE 4



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Called to love

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 3

with the life-giving waters of His grace.

As the Shepherd laid down His life for us, which was the will of His Father and Jesus' loving response to the Father, so too, the Shepherd walks with us.

His Shepherd-task of guiding, caring for, and uniting His sheep continues in our daily living. The Good Shepherd keeps calling His sheep to serve and to lay down their lives for Him.

More than ever, the harvest is plentiful but the laborers are few. For those discerning the next step, will you answer the call? Will not the Good Shepherd see to it that His flock will not perish at the end of life but will be given the promise of eternal life?

"These are the ones who have survived the time of great distress; they have washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb....For the Lamb

who is in the center of the throne will shepherd them and lead them to springs of life-giving water, and God will wipe away every tear from their eyes" (Revelation 7:14b-17).

What are some of the times that you have heard the Shepherd's voice? What distractions make it difficult to listen? Do you believe Jesus may be calling you to be a priest, a deacon, a consecrated religious, a consecrated virgin?

We are abundantly blessed with the leadership of the shepherd of our diocese, Bishop Terry R. LaValley, and the priests who serve and minister to the people of the North Country.

We have also been blessed with religious congregations serving in the diocese as teachers, catechists, parish coordinators, hospital ministers and, above all, in lives and ministries of prayer.

These women and men continue to serve in the pastoral needs of the people of God. They bring to God's people His power of love, sense of mission and commission

to an unknown future that may lead to an encounter with other seekers of God's presence that will transform lives.

Jesus' invitation, "Come, follow Me," is ever the gift and the mystery of vocation.

The Good Shepherd is calling again, "Be with me, now and forever."

Pope Francis urges the Church "to continue to promote vocations, to touch the hearts of the faithful, and to enable each of them to discover with gratitude God's call in their lives and to find courage to say "yes" to God."

Let us respond with joy, "Yes, Lord, I give you my heart."



"It is your face, O Lord, that I seek,"

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NEWS BRIEF

Burial for Father McGuinness to be held May 14

Burial for Father J. Roger McGuinness will be held Saturday, May 14, 2022 at St. Joseph's Cemetery in West Chazy.

Father McGuinness died Jan. 12 at the age of 82.

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FOLLOWING THE GOOD SHEPHERD

‘It was about a deeper call’

By Mary Beth Bracy
Contributing Writer

PLATTSBURGH – “From the time I was a young child I believed I was called to be a religious,” shared Sister Debbie Blow, a Dominican. “Dominican Sisters of St. Catherine of Siena taught me and also taught at schools in the North Country. Sister Stephanie Frenette, OP was a teacher and mentor for me. But, I thought, ‘I can’t be a Sister, I don’t know how to sing and I don’t think that I can sleep in a habit and a veil.’”

Sister Debbie grew up mostly in Ellenburg, the second oldest of 10 children and the oldest girl, and she was in the first graduating class of Northern Adirondack Central High School. Following, she attended Mater Dei College in Ogdensburg for a semester in 1971, but became seriously ill.

“I knew that I needed to stop running from the call,” she said. “Sister Steph came to Mater Dei and brought me back home to my parents’ house.”

Then, Sister Debbie worked as a bookkeeper for Agway Petroleum for about two-and-a-half years.

“I was pumping gas one day and said, ‘this is it, I’m done running, and I need to let my boss know.’ He looked at me and said, ‘If you stay, I will double your salary.’ That was the moment that I knew becoming a sister was right for me. I knew it wasn’t about the money, it was about a deeper call. What drew me to the Dominican Sisters is that they stood for



Sister Debbie Blow, a Dominican Sister of Hope, holds Salome, a malnourished infant at a disability center supported by North Country Mission of Hope.

truth, justice, hospitality, and joy.”

Sister Debbie said her mother was supportive of her decision and continues to serve as a source of inspiration in her life.

“The morning I was leaving to enter the convent my mom had handwritten me a note and wanted to make sure that I didn’t miss it,” she said. “She said I was doing what I always wanted to do, to go and be happy. And, if it doesn’t work out, then we’ll always be here. She taught me devotion to the Rosary and devotion to Mary. I pray the Memorare. My mom died at beginning of Covid with a Rosary in her hands. My mom was faithful to the end. She was a strong, courageous woman who faced a lot of obstacles in her life, a lot of pain and struggles. She continues to guide and inspire me as well. I also have the blessing of being able to care for Sister Steph, giving back for all of the times that she put up with me as a student.”

Sister Debbie attended an intercommunity Do-

minican novitiate in Dover, Massachusetts, on January 12, 1974. In 1978, Sister Debbie received her bachelor’s degree from Providence College, and in 1984 she earned her master’s degree from St. Michael’s College. Sister Debbie was awarded an honorary humanities doctorate from Providence College in 2009.

Initially, Sister Debbie was sent to Plattsburgh to teach at St. Peter’s. She later became vice-principal and principal. After St. Peter’s, she worked at Seton Catholic as a campus minister and Scripture teacher.

Then, there was a hurricane in Nicaragua. A family who went to St. Peter’s and attended Seton at the time was from there.

“When I first went over to Nicaragua, I didn’t think of it as founding the mission,” Sister Debbie said. “I thought of it as doing the right thing, not a long time commitment. I brought a student who I was told was going to be trouble. As we were coming down the mountain in an old rickety bus, I was

sitting with this kid and he said ‘Sister you know what the greatest sin would be? If we never came back.’ It was at that moment that I knew it couldn’t just be a one and done. We would never be empowering them or serving them in the way that they need to be served.”

So, Sister Debbie sat down with Yamilette Flores and Eve McGill, and North Country Mission of Hope was born. Sister Debbie still operates Mission of Hope today. That was 75 trips ago.

“I am still deathly afraid of flying, don’t like the heat, spiders or snakes,” she said. “That’s when you know that you’re being sustained, responding to a personal call by something greater than yourself. My ministry and vocation are intertwined.”

In 1995, when communities were merging due to dwindling numbers of sisters, the Vatican permitted her order to revolve in a new congregation – Dominican Sisters of Hope.

At one point in her early 40s, Sister Debbie had breast cancer.

“I struggled if God was calling me to stay in the religious life,” she said. My greatest sacrifice is not having my own children. My greatest joy is not having my own children, so that I’m not restricted. I was able to see all the kids I’ve ever taught or encountered differently.”

Sister Debbie encouraged anyone who is considering a vocation to religious life to explore the calling and learn more.

“I encourage those who

are discerning to talk to nuns and sisters of different ages,” she said. “Find out what makes the blood pump in them, what is their passion in life. By doing that you understand if it’s for you. I am incredibly blessed in being a Dominican Sister of Hope because we are often on the cutting edge in response to injustice. Our sisters worked in rural Mississippi, in Oklahoma with Native Americans, and in schools, inner city ghettos, health-care for the poor, and my ministry. I love being a Dominican Sister. We aren’t afraid to ask hard questions and speak the truth to empower. I am truly inspired by so many sisters in my congregation. They are truly a delight for me.”

Sister Debbie said she views her religious vows as instrumental in developing a relationship with Jesus and others.

“The vow of obedience is really about listening with one’s heart and asking about how to live in the congregation,” she said. “Poverty of spirit allows us to be open handed, like what Jesus spoke of in the Beatitudes. Celibacy isn’t lessening but widening my circle of love.”

Sister Debbie also loves photography, writing poetry, and watching sports. She often played with the students when she was younger – even football and dodgeball.

“I want people to say she’s real: what you see is what you get,” Sister Debbie said. “I always tried to be that, as a teacher and principal. I’ve always tried to say that someone can approach me or talk to me.”

FOLLOWING THE GOOD SHEPHERD

Called by God and the bishop

By Deacon Kevin Mastellon
Contributing Writer

OGDENSBURG— Like many vocation stories, Deacon James Crowley's started early in his life. Even as a kid Crowley knew there was a calling, something different about his interests. Now he is a husband, father and deacon, all bona fide vocations, and he is chancellor of the Diocese of Ogdensburg.

There is an adult education assumption that says "as people grow older, they gain experience through the choices they make. These experiences accumulate, becoming a reservoir that adults can draw on as a personal resource for continued learning."

Deacon Crowley's life personifies that axiom.

He grew up in the Buffalo area, and he attended public schools, and weekly religious education classes through his local church.

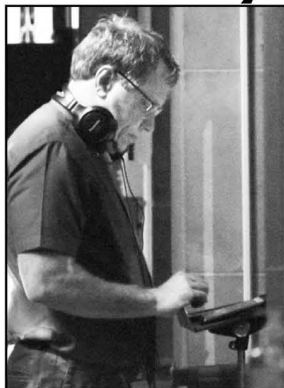
"St. Catherine of Siena was a very active '70's parish. It is now closed by the way. It wasn't the greatest religious ed program, but I had a lot of great teachers and good priests to watch," Deacon Crowley said.

One teacher in particular, Deacon Crowley said, was his Confirmation teacher.

"Ray, I don't remember his last name, kind of got through to us that it was our responsibility to pay back, that I owed something," Deacon Crowley said.

But the future deacon still could not put his finger on the "something."

Deacon Crowley found that he did not have to work especially hard to succeed in grammar and high school. He was not prepared to study in college and so, by his own admission, did not do well at the start. He worked for a while and "had a good



Deacon James Crowley, chancellor of the Diocese of Ogdensburg, operates livestreaming equipment at St. Mary's Cathedral.

time, but there was a lack of peace."

Enter Father Bob Fink, associate pastor at Deacon Crowley's parish church. Father Fink was a Wadhams Hall graduate. After long talks, Father Fink convinced Deacon Crowley, then in his 20s to enter the school, which was then a seminary college. Deacon Crowley was on a path to the priesthood.

At Wadhams he found what he called a disconnect.

"I did not feel I was a strong enough man to do that, live as a priest," he said. "That was confirmed after my sophomore year at Wadhams when I met Rita at Guggenheim."

Guggenheim Center is 150 acres in the Adirondack Mountains near Saranac Lake. The diocese operates a summer camp for youth 12 to 18 years during July and August. The camp is in operation from mid-May through mid-October and is available for diocesan individuals, groups, or non-profit organizations. Reservations are made through the diocesan office. It is ironic that many aspects of the Guggenheim operation now fall under the chancellor's watchful eye.

Deacon Crowley and Rita Seymour, his future wife, were both on staff that summer at camp. Deacon Crowley finished his bachelor's degree work at Wadhams and graduated but gave up any thoughts of the priesthood. He and Rita, an Ogdensburg native, were married.

Rita, a nurse practitioner specializing in pediatric care, and Deacon Crowley were married in 1991. They have three daughters, Allison, Bethany and Margaret. Bethany is a medical student in Syracuse. Margaret is in the veterinary program at Long Island University. She, too, hopes to become a doctor, specializing in veterinary medicine. Allison is involved in consultant work, mostly on federal government projects.

Early in their marriage, Deacon Crowley says, he and Rita talked about the diaconate.

"We had discussions that someday I would probably enter the deacon formation program," he said. "But the business, (Deacon Crowley operated a successful computer consulting company in Ogdensburg) and raising children had a priority over going back to school. When the kids were older, two were in college, that's when the bug really bit."

A deacon class had already been formed. Crowley mentioned his interest to Father Joseph Morgan, rector of St. Mary's Cathedral parish.

Father Morgan advised the future deacon, "I better talk to my brother-in-law."

Deacon Crowley's brother-in-law is Father James W. Seymour. At the time, Father Seymour was vicar of Clergy for the diocese.

He spoke with Father Seymour and with Monsignor Robert H. Aucoin, director of the Deacon

Formation program, about joining. They gave their blessing.

"My business was stable. I had a good group of employees, so I knew I could cut back my hours a little to devote time to study," Deacon Crowley said. "At home there was less stress because two of the girls were already in college, so I only had one to chase around instead of three. So, I started formation. I think I was the only guy who walked in not already knowing everybody."

Sometime during the second year, "I remember it was a Thursday," Bishop Terry R. LaValley sent Crowley an email inviting the then aspiring deacon to his office the following Monday. Bishop was the formation program instructor for Canon Law at the time, and Deacon Crowley was one of his students.

Bishop also knew Deacon Crowley before formation. He had been on the parish council and involved at the school when bishop was Father LaValley at the Cathedral Parish. Deacon Crowley had been on staff at Guggenheim and ran the sports camp. He was fairly well known around the diocese.

Rita wanted to know what might have prompted the meeting. Were his Canon Law assignments up to date? Was he not meeting bishop's expectations in class? The deacon aspirant told his wife all was well in class.

"I assured her everything was OK," Deacon Crowley said. "He (Bishop) probably has a committee he wants me to be on or a job he wants me to take."

Rita asked, "what job would that be?"

"I don't know," Deacon Crowley quipped, "something between chancellor and janitor."

He says he was kidding

about chancellor but was aware the chancellor at the time, Sister Jennifer Votraw, a Sister of St. Joseph, had just announced her retirement.

Bishop offered Deacon Crowley the position of chancellor. It is an appointed position with Canonical responsibility and other duties as directed by the bishop.

He accepted the position. He sold his company and continued his formation to become a deacon. He was ordained in October 2017.

One task that fell to the Chancellor (or was it to a deacon at the Cathedral?) was live streaming. "I had a skill set I brought to the job that had nothing to do with the job," Deacon Crowley said.

At the start of the pandemic restrictions, Deacon Crowley also became, with the diocesan IT department, the go-to guy for video/audio live streaming information and introduced the practice at St. Mary's Cathedral in Ogdensburg. Many parishes in the diocese also introduced live streaming for weekend Mass and turned to Deacon Crowley for advice. Most of that work has been handed-off to others now, "but every once in a while a guy in an alb and stole leaves the sanctuary to fix a camera."

"I love the Chancellor job," he added. "There is a lot of work, and there is always more to do, but I still enjoy doing it. Rita talks about retiring but I think my head would explode if I retired."

Though he's not done working yet, Deacon Crowley has thought about his future.

"I'm sure somebody will find something they want me to take care of," he said.

Spoken by a guy who has accumulated plenty of experience.

FOLLOWING THE GOOD SHEPHERD

Newly ordained priest grows in ministry

By Catherine Bracy
Contributing Writer

WATERTOWN – Ordained in October of 2021, Father Matthew “Matt” S. Conger said he continues to build on what he learned in formation as he begins his priestly ministry.

“I have learned that although seminary prepares you well for the questions that may come your way or give you the resources you need, you can look up answers,” said Father Conger, currently serving as parochial vicar for Blessed Sacrament Parish in Watertown – St. Anthony’s, St. Patrick’s and Holy Family churches. “What you think the parish life and priesthood will be like is much different. Every day is filled with a different but good challenge, and you just never know where you will be needed that day.”

Raised in Ogdensburg, Father Conger is a graduate of Ogdensburg Free Academy. He then completed his undergraduate studies at St. Charles Borromeo Seminary in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, before spending a couple of years studying at the Josephinum in Columbus, Ohio, before completing his studies and formation at Christ the King Seminary in Buffalo.

Father Conger said he became open to following God’s call to the priesthood because of the example of his parish priest and a desire to help others.

“The thing that inspired me to become a priest was the great example



Father Matthew S. Conger

that my former pastor Father Jim (Father James Shurtleff) showed me,” he said. “I always wanted to do something involving service for my community, and (Father Shurtleff’s) willingness to give to those in need and the great service he gave to all is what led me to consider becoming a priest.”

Since being ordained, Father Conger said he’s found service to be a source of grace and happiness for him, as well.

“Some of the great joys of being a priest is being there for your people in all of the good times but also in the bad times,” he said. “You get welcomed into everyone’s family. Another great joy that may seem weird is that hearing confession is a great joy to me. Being there when Christ sheds his mercy upon someone who’d just poured their heart out is something that brings me joy to know: that our Lord is a merciful Lord.”

Though his ministry has been fulfilling and

Father Conger starts new role in Vocations Office

By Darcy Fargo
Editor

OGDENSBURG – In addition to his role at Blessed Sacrament Church in Watertown, Bishop Terry R. LaValley has appointed Father Matthew S. Conger to a new diocesan role, associate director of Vocations.

Father Conger said he feels his role as a newly ordained, young priest gives him a unique ability to connect with individuals who may be discerning vocations. He joins Father Christopher C. Carrara, Vicar for Clergy and director of Vocations and Seminarians, and Sister Mary Eamon Lyng, a Sister of St. Joseph and diocesan Vocations coordinator, on the diocesan Vocations staff.

“I can relate well to the generation we usually think of as being at that point where they’re discerning where God is calling them and where they want to go in life,” said Father Conger. “Working in collaboration with Father Chris and Sister Eamon, I’ll be going to visit schools and college campuses, helping create vocations discernment groups around the diocese and working with those groups, and just being a presence for Vocations and answering questions. It’s all working toward continuing to create a culture of vocations.”

While the role is new and continues to evolve, Father Conger said establishing discernment groups is a key prior-

ity for him and the Vocations office.

“Talking with the seminarians so far, having discernment groups was very important to a lot of them,” Father Conger said. “When I was discerning, we had a great discernment group in Potsdam. It helps to have community and opportunities to pray, learn and discern.”

One of his key challenges in creating such groups will be identifying young men who are open to God’s call.

“To get the groups going, we have to find the guys,” he said. “Initially, it seems like it’ll be a lot of work getting the word out and getting to know people. Watertown has a young adult group. I plan to work with that group, collaborate with the youth ministers and go out to different parishes and talk to people. I also plan to be at Camp Guggenheim this summer, and that’s a good place to find people who may be interested.”

Father Conger, who started in his new role at the end of April, said he’s eager to see where the role takes him and how it develops.

“I’m very excited,” he said. “Like all things, it’ll have its challenges. But I think it’ll be very rewarding. One of my major messages is ‘just because you go to a discernment group or consider entering a seminary or convent, that doesn’t mean that’s what you’ll do. Discerning is all about becoming better Christians and growing in relationship with Christ.’”

joyful so far, it hasn’t been without challenges.

“Some of the challenges are learning that you are no longer in the seminary and that people now look at you more than they ever did when you were in the seminary,” Father Conger said. “It is also just that adjustment to the parish life – what it is like to live with other priests and making sure

that there is a good balance in your schedule.”

Father Conger said he encourages men who are still discovering their vocations to consider the priesthood.

“Some words of encouragement that I could give to someone who is discerning a vocation is to not be afraid of asking about the priesthood,” he said. “Though if you feel

that calling and think you may want to discern the priesthood, or any vocations for that matter, it is ok to try it out. Just because one enters the seminary does not mean that he will become a priest. Though what it does is forms us into becoming a better Christian, knowing that we are truly following the Lord’s will for us.”

ADIRONDACK

PRAISE & 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.

EDUCATIONAL FORUM

Paul Smiths – Mercy Care for the Adirondacks will its annual Educational Forum co-hosted by Paul Smith's College on the urgent topic of Unpaid Caregivers – Honoring, Caring For, and Supporting them.

Date: May 18

Time: 9:30 a.m. to 3 p.m.

Cost: \$25 registration fee includes networking lunch.

Features: Two expert keynote speakers will present. They are Alexandra Drane, CEO and Co-founder of Archangels and Beth Finkel, Director of AARP New York.

Contact: To register for the forum please visit Mercy Care's website at www.adkmercy.org. For more information, please contact Lexi Bevilacqua, Mercy Care's Education and Volunteer Training Manager at abevilacqua@adkmercy.org or at 518-523-5446.

MERCY CARE FRIENDSHIP VOLUNTEER TRAINING

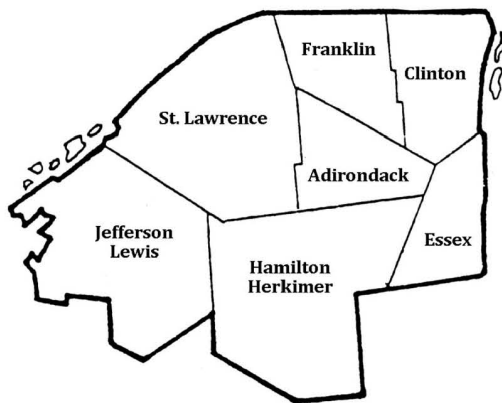
Lake Placid - Mercy Care for the Adirondacks is recruiting new volunteers and has scheduled a Friendship Volunteer Training Program.

Date: May 25

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

Features: There is no cost for the training but registration is required. Complementary lunch will be provided. New Volunteers will join Mercy Care's more than 100 Friendship Volunteers from Lake Placid, Saranac Lake, and Tupper Lake and surrounding areas who are helping their elder neighbors stay connected to their communities and helping to make their lives a little easier and happier. Volunteers of all faiths are encouraged and invited to participate.

Contact: To register for the training, please contact Lexi Bevilacqua, Mercy Care's Education & Volunteer Training Manager, at abevilacqua@adkmercy.org or visit Mercy Care's website at www.adkmercy.org or call Lexi for more infor-



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.

mation at 518-523-5446.

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, 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.

FRANKLIN

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.

JEFFERSON-LEWIS

SPAGHETTI & MEATBALL DINNER

Evans Mills – The Indian River Knights of Columbus to have a Spaghetti & Meatball dinner.

Date: May 14

Time: 4 p.m. to 7

Place: St. Mary's Parish Center
Cost: Adults, \$9; Senior Citizens, \$8; Children under 12, \$5; under 5, Free; Sauce per quart, \$5

Contact: For more information call 315-629-4678

ST. PETER'S MAY FESTIVAL

Lowville – St. Peter's May Festival to be held.

Date: May 19, 20 and 21

Schedule: Grounds open Thursday evening at 5 p.m. Friday Evening the Allan Scott Band will perform at 7 p.m. Saturday there will be Mass at the fairgrounds at 4 p.m. and Chicken Barbecue starting at 5 p.m.

Cost: Admission is a donation of canned goods for the Lowville Food Pantry.

Features: Why not stop by and sample some of delicacies we have to offer. We will offer you the opportunity to try skills at a variety of games. Festivities include a Ride Special every day of the weekend. This 'n That booth which features unique and one-of-a-kind items.

SILENT AUCTION AND BAR-B-Q

Watertown – Silent Auction and Chicken Bar-B-Q to be held.

Date: June 4

Time: 5 p.m.

Place: Our Lady of Sacred Heart Church School Gym

Features: Join us for an evening of fun and surprises.

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: June 5

Time: Following 11 a.m. Mass

Place: St. Hedwig's Church

Contact: 315-348-6260

HEALING MASS

Clayton – St. Mary's Church to host Annual Healing Mass.

Date: June 11

Time: 11 a.m.

Features: The Sacrament of the Sick will be offered, prayer teams will be available for individual prayers following the Mass, and light refreshments will follow.

Contact: For more information, contact St. Mary's Parish office at 315-686-3398 or reception@stmmarysclayton.org.

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.

THE CHOSEN: SEASON 2

Ogdensburg – Come join the fellowship and fun while watching and discussing "The Chosen – Season 2".

Date: 8 weeks on Wednesdays starting April 27

Time: 2 p.m. and 6:30 p.m.

Place: Bishop Brzana Hall at St. Mary's Cathedral

Features: Deacon Bill O'Brien will be streaming the second season of "The Chosen." "The Chosen" is an independent film series on the Life of Christ sweeping the world and told through the eyes of his disciples. It is a unique way of telling the story of Jesus and is unlike anything we have ever seen before. There will be discussion after each episode with light refreshments pro-

vided.

Contact: There will be signup sheets at the entrances of both Notre Dame Church and St. Mary's Cathedral entrances. Or you can call or email Deacon Bill at 315-528-0461 or bill0315@gmail.com.

FIRST SATURDAY ROSARY DEVOTION

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

Date: May 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.

11TH AND 12TH GRADE RELIGION CLASSES

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

Date: Monthly, May 15

Time: 5 p.m. to 7:30

Place: Brzana Hall below St. Mary's Cathedral

Features: We have no curriculum; YOU will help decide what we discuss! Lots of discussion, less lecture. Games with prizes. Dinner included. Classes are self-contained units. Guests welcome! Bring a friend!

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

ROSARY WITH DEVOTIONS

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

Date: June 4

Time: 8 a.m.

Place: Notre Dame Church, Ogdensburg

Features: Rosary with devotions

DIOCESAN EVENTS

ORDINATION TO THE ORDER OF THE PRIESTHOOD

Ogdensburg - You are cordially invited to join in the Ordination Liturgy for the Ordination to the Order of the Priesthood of Deacon Leagon James Carlin.

Date: May 21

Time: 11 a.m.

Place: St. Mary's Cathedral

Around the diocese

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 8

Features: A Reception will immediately follow the Ordination downstairs in the Brzana Hall. The Ordination Mass will also be livestreamed at www.rc-dony.org/ordination. The Ordination Mass program will be available at the same link shortly before the Ordination.

TWO-DAY EVENT CELEBRATING EUCHARIST

Lake Placid – The Department of Faith Formation invited you to a two-day diocesan LEAD event in Lake Placid.

Day 1: June 6, 7 p.m. to 8:30, St. Agnes Church. Theme will be “Music as Prayer: Its Role in Celebrating Eucharist”. Speaker will be Sr. Mary Gregory Munger, SSJ. Enjoy an interactive and lively presentation involving singing, prayer and sharing. A social at High Peaks Resort to follow.

Day 2: June 7, 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. at High Peaks Resort. Theme will be “Eucharist: Remember. Celebrate. Believe.” Speaker will be Tim O’Malley, Ph.D. from Notre Dame University Center for Liturgy. Mass will follow at St. Agnes Church.

Cost: To attend it is \$30 upon registration. You are responsible for your own room reservations. High Peaks Resort offers a reduced rate of \$169 per night.

Contact: To register go to www.rc-dony.org/lead2dayevent

LIFE GIVING WOUNDS RETREAT

Saranac Lake – Retreat to be held for anyone 18 or over whose parents are no longer together either through separation, divorce, or were never married.

Date: June 10 – 12

Place: Guggenheim Center

Cost: \$100 includes lodging, food and retreat materials.

Features: Topics will include anxiety, anger, sin, temptation and forgive-

ness. All presentations are given by trained, expert speakers who are children of divorce.

Contact: To register, go to www.rc-dony.org/lifegw. For more information about the retreat www.lifegiving-wounds.org. If you are in need of financial assistance to attend the retreat, please contact Steve Tartaglia at 315-393-2920 or startaglia@rc-dony.org

ORDINATION TO DIACONATE

Potsdam – Through the laying on of hands and the invocation of the Holy Spirit, the Most Reverend Terry R. LaValley, Bishop of Ogdensburg will Ordain to the Order of Deacon Mr. Lukas Hermann Gruber. You are cordially invited to join in the Ordination Liturgy.

Date: June 25

Time: 11 a.m.

Place: St. Mary’s Church

Features: A Reception will immediately follow the Ordination on the rectory lawn across the street from The Roman Catholic Church of St. Mary. The Ordination Mass will also be livestreamed at www.rcdony.org/ordi-nation. The Ordination Mass program will be available at the same link shortly before the Ordination.

FAMILY GUGGENHEIM

Saranac Lake – Online registration is now open for Family Guggenheim.

Date: Session 1 Aug. 18-21; Session 2 Aug. 25-28; Session 3 Oct. 7-9

Place: Guggenheim

Cost: Visit www.rcdony.org/family-life/fg for more information

Features: Family Guggenheim welcomes families of all dimensions to come enjoy a special weekend in the beauty of the Adirondacks. Expect fun family workshops and activities that will have you working and laughing together. Celebrate Christ’s presence in your lives through liturgy (often out-

side) and special prayer services. Take time for great outdoor activities like paddle boat rides, beach volleyball, and hiking. You are never too young or too old to enjoy being family at Camp Guggenheim!

Contact: For more information, please contact Steve Tartaglia at 315-393-2920 or startaglia@rcdony.org

NEIGHBORING DIOCESES

CANADA MARCH FOR LIFE

Ottawa – Rally and March for life to be held.

Date: May 12

Schedule: 12:30 p.m. Rally at Parliament Hill; 1:30 p.m. March downtown to Ottawa; 2:30 p.m. Silent No More Awareness Testimonies.

Contact: For more information see <https://marchforlife.ca/>

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. For more information or to arrange for training, contact Jeannie Grizzuto at 315-393-2920 or jgrizzuto@rc-dony.org.

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

Bishop’s Public Schedule

May 11 – Deacon Assembly at Edgewood Resort in Alexandria Bay

7 p.m. – Confirmation at St. James Church in Gouverneur with the Sacred Heart Church in Edwards and St. Hubert’s Church in Star Lake

May 12 – 11 a.m. – Priests Personnel Board Meeting at Bishop’s Residence

May 13 – 9:30 a.m. – Wadhams Hall Trustee Meeting in the Spratt Conference Room

Noon – Mass at St. Mary’s Cathedral

May 14 – 11 a.m. – Confirmation at St. Mary’s Church in Ticonderoga with Our Lady of Lourdes Church in Schroon Lake, Church of the Sacred Heart of Jesus in Crown Point, The Catholic Community of Moriah in Port Henry and St. Joseph’s Church in Olmstedville

May 15 – 10:30 a.m. – Confirmation at St. Bernard’s and St. Edmund’s Parish (at St. Bernard’s Church in Lyon Mountain)

3 p.m. – Confirmation at The Roman Catholic Community of St. Alexander and St. Joseph in Morristown with St. James Church in Cadyville, St. Augustine’s Church in Peru, Catholic Community of Holy Name and St. Matthew in Au Sable Forks, The Roman Catholic Community of Keeseville and St. Margaret’s Church in Wilmington

May 16-19 – Priest Retreat at Wadhams Hall in Ogdensburg

Rest in Peace

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

May 11 – Deacon Richard D. Hart, 2007

May 13 – Rev. Ladislaus J. Stasz, 1971; Rev. Edward E. Papp, 2016

May 14 – Deacon Vincent E. Irvin Jr., 2003

May 15 – Rev. William Rossiter, 1908; Msgr. James R. McClure, 1960; Deacon William G. Schmidt, 2016

May 16 – Rev. Moses Legault, 1908; Rev. John M. McIntyre, 1944; Msgr. Peter R. Riani, 2019

Environmental Stewardship

What’s on your list?

Last Sunday we celebrated the wonderful gift of our mothers who gave us life and continue to sustain us spiritually in one way or another. We are all familiar with Saint Francis of Assisi’ prayer of creation where he speaks of the earth as our mother.

Praised be my Lord for our mother the Earth,
Which sustains us and keeps us,
And yields diverse fruits,
And flowers of many colors,
and grass.

The indigenous people also have a deep sense of our connectedness with the earth and address her as Mother Earth in their Thanksgiving Prayer. These prayers stretch our view of life beyond our human mothers to include the very ground of our being as noted in the first chapter of Genesis. In the latest Catholic social encyclical, *Laudato Si’*, we are called to care for creation and to reconcile our relationship with God, creation and one another. As mentioned last week, when we examine our conscience, we usually include only our relationship with God, ourselves and our sisters and brothers. In the *Eco-Consciousness Examen*, a adaptation of the examen found in Ignatius spirituality, it widens our world view to include all of creation that nourishes all of life.

To begin the Eco-Examen take a moment to be aware of your breathing and the presence of God within and around you. Then, pray the six steps:

I give thanks to God for creation and for being wonderfully made.

I ask for the grace to see creation as God does- in all its splendor and suffering.

I ask for the grace to look closely to see how my life choices impact creation and the poor and vulnerable.

I ask for the grace of conversion towards ecological justice and reconciliation.

I ask for the grace to reconcile my relationship with God, creation and humanity, and to stand in solidarity through my actions.

I offer a closing prayer for the earth and the vulnerable in our society.

To see a longer version of this Prayer, go to: ecologicalexamen.org

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E-mail _____ 315-608-7556

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MAKING SENSE OF BIOETHICS

Dehumanizing one another

A female sharpshooter nicknamed "Lady Death" has recently become a Ukrainian folk hero for defiantly attacking Russian soldiers undercover. The young markswoman fought for several years in eastern Ukraine against Kremlin-backed separatists, before shifting to the front line of hostilities as Russia initiated its full-scale invasion of Ukraine. Her real name has not been made public and photos hide her identity by blurring her face or showing her with a mask. Long range sniper attacks are her area of expertise. As she assassinates enemy combatants, she militantly proclaims, "We must take them all out. These people are not human beings. Even the fascists were not as vile as these orcs. We must defeat them."

Her battle cry, though clearly motivated by the atrocities unfolding in Ukraine, should also prompt some circumspection and soul searching. Whenever we move in the direction of believing that others are "not human beings" and dehumanize them in our thoughts and words, we risk diminishing our own humanity in the

exchange. Even in the face of great depravity, we cannot fall prey to thinking that those who commit horrific evils or even war crimes are somehow no longer really human beings.

I was reminded of this recently as I viewed online videos of armed drones firing on Russian tanks traveling along Ukrainian highways. As they took successive missile hits, Russian soldiers could be seen launching themselves out of the hatch and escaping from the tank before it went up in a fireball. Sometimes they would barely get out alive, only to collapse and die by the side of the road. If the mother of a Russian tank driver were to watch a video of her son trying to escape this way under fire, she would be justly indignant, offended and even more saddened if anyone dared to declare he was "not a human being." In the posted remarks section following these videos, in fact, many commented on the hideousness of a world in which 18-year-old boys have to perish in this manner.

By demonizing others, we no longer acknowledge

the transcendent realities common to all human beings: our shared desire for truth, goodness, beauty, and love. Whenever we ignore or negate the important commonalities that unite us in our humanity and instead choose to dehumanize others, the consequences will be dire. Historically, the use of language that dehumanizes others has been a key tactic in marshaling support for atrocities.

Such language has always been central, for example, to acts of genocide. During the latter part of the twentieth century, the Tutsis were often denigrated as cockroaches and snakes in Rwanda, culminating in approximately 800,000 men, women and children being murdered during a twelve week period in 1994. In Nazi Germany, Jews and other enemies of the Third Reich, including persons with disabilities, were contemptuously viewed not as humans, but as vermin and rats, in order to justify their systematic extermination.



Father Tadeusz Pacholczyk Ph.D.

President Abraham Lincoln strongly objected to treating any person, whether slave or free, as "less-than-human" during his 1858 public debate with Stephen A. Douglas. Lincoln rebuffed the idea that African Americans fell outside the "all men are created equal" clause, declaring such a concept to be marked by "an evil tendency, if not an evil design." He repudiated every attempt to "dehumanize the negro... [and] prepare the public mind to make property, and nothing but property of the negro in all the States of the Union."


Still in our nation today, the process of dehumanization continues to derail our thinking and diminish our collective conscience, especially when it comes to those humans who are very young and still in the womb, as well as the elderly and the infirm, the mentally-fragile, and those in vulnerable medical situations, such as newborn children with genetic defects. By dehumanizing these individuals in a "progressive" society, we can subject them to a range of unjust actions, from abortion to infanticide to euthanasia. Preborn children, for example, have undergone this dehumanization for decades, being denigrated as "tissue," "preg-

nancy," or "clumps of cells," to paper over the brutal reality of abortion. The website of Planned Parenthood, to cite one instance, defines a suction abortion as a procedure where a "suction device" is used to "take the pregnancy tissue out of your uterus."

We need to fight against dehumanization both by recognizing and opposing its occurrence in our midst, and by recognizing it within ourselves. The temptation to dehumanize people who are themselves dehumanizing others can also be very strong.

In the end, our shared humanity, from the weakest to the strongest, from youngest to oldest, constitutes an ineradicable bond of unity that should prompt us to spurn our own dehumanizing impulses. Renewing hope for conflict-laden humanity begins precisely in the acknowledgement of each other's humanity, strengthening those fraternal bonds on which peace is grounded.

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



DIOCESE OF OGDENSBURG
VOCATIONS SOCIETY (D.O.V.S.)

To encourage and promote vocations to the priesthood, permanent diaconate, and consecrated religious life in our diocese.

"It was not you who chose me, but I who chose you"
John 15:16

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CATHOLIC WORLD AT A GLANCE

Academics consider fallout from leak on Roe decision

MIAMI (CNS) — The May 2 leaked draft of an opinion in the upcoming Supreme Court's abortion decision demonstrates the use of normal partisan fighting tactics seen in the other branches of government on a regular basis. The opinion draft, written by Justice Samuel Alito, shows that the court appears set to overturn its Roe v. Wade decision — which legalized abortion for nearly 50 years — in its Dobbs v. Jackson Women's Health Organization decision. The draft document, now considered authentic, was well-written and a good legal argument, but the Supreme Court has suffered in this apparent effort to undermine its legitimacy, said John Yoo, Emanuel S. Heller law professor at the University of California, Berkeley and law clerk to Justice Clarence Thomas in 1994-95. "If it shows anything it shows that the critics of Roe who said that Roe has politicized the court and politicized our constitutional law are proven right by this leak itself," Yoo said in a May 3 online forum sponsored by the Notre Dame Center for Citizenship and Constitutional Government. He added that openly bare-knuckled partisan tactics have publicly arrived at the court.

Cardinal reaffirms pope's willingness to go to Moscow

VATICAN CITY (CNS) — Pope Francis' secretary of state reaffirmed the pope's offer to go to Moscow personally to try to convince President Vladimir Putin to stop his war on Ukraine but said the Kremlin had yet to respond. Cardinal Pietro Parolin, secretary of state, told reporters late May 4, "There has been an offer from the Holy Father to go to Moscow to meet personally with President Putin. We are waiting for them to tell us what they want, what they intend to do." "I think that at this point there are no other steps to take," the cardinal said. In an interview with the Italian newspaper, Corriere della Sera, Pope Francis said he had had Cardinal Parolin send his offer to Putin in mid-March in an attempt to convince the Russian president to stop the war or, at least, to respect humanitarian corridors to evacuate innocent civilians. "We still have not had a response, and we are still being persistent, even though I am afraid Putin may not be able to and may not want to have this meeting right now," the pope had said.

Vatican exonerates Cardinal Woelki in financial investigation

COLOGNE, Germany (CNS) — The Vatican believes Cologne Cardinal Rainer Maria Woelki and his vicar general, Msgr. Markus Hofmann, did not violate canon law in their funding of investigations and hiring of communications consultants, reported the German Catholic news agency KNA. Cardinal Marc Ouellet, prefect of the Congregation for Bishops, wrote Cardinal Woelki that after an "in-depth study," the Vatican determined the financial institutions of the archdiocese did not need to be involved in the decision to spend 2.8 million euros from an episcopal fund. Journalists were given access to the letter May 3. The decision comes as a relief to the crisis-hit leadership of the archdiocese, KNA reported. After accusations of the mishandling of priests accused of sex abuse, Cardinal Woelki took a sabbatical from October 2021 to March 2022. His interim replacement, Bishop Rolf Steinhäuser, asked two church law experts to review the awarding of contracts to lawyers and communications consultants involved in producing reports on the abuse. There was a suspicion that the property council and the cathedral chapter should have been involved in the decision under canon law. KNA reported that Cardinal Ouellet's letter said the episcopal fund, set up in 1952 by Cardinal Josef Frings of Cologne, was "not bound by the will of the founder." Therefore, Cologne archbishops were authorized to freely dispose of these financial means. There was also no legal obligation to involve the diocesan bodies, as the assets were not diocesan.

Pro-life groups plan next steps after opinion leak

WASHINGTON (CNS) — Although many pro-life groups immediately reacted positively to the news that the majority of Supreme Court justices seem set to overturn the court's Roe v. Wade decision, some tempered their reaction with a continued call for more advocacy while others kept a wait-and-see approach until the court issues its opinion in the weeks ahead.

Some Catholic bishops likewise kept their response in check, but acknowledged the work done on the grassroots level by pro-life activists.

For example, hours after the draft of the court's opinion was published by Politico May 2, San Francisco Archbishop Salvatore J. Cordileone tweeted: "Tonight I am thinking of all the years of hard work by pro-life people of all faiths and none. Years and years of patient advocacy, help for unwed moms, political engagement and more."

The next day, the Archdiocese of St. Paul and Minneapolis released a statement that Archbishop Bernard Hebda will comment when the Supreme Court releases its official statement. "No matter the court's decision, the Catholic Church will continue to work toward building a culture of life and supporting women and their children," the statement said.

Archbishop William E. Lori of Baltimore, chairman of the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops' Committee on Pro-Life Activities, said in a May 4 statement that the leaked opinion draft "reminds us of the urgent need for prayer and action at this pivotal mo-

ment in our country."

"As we await the court's decision, we urge everyone to intensify their prayer and fasting that the final decision of the court will bring about the reversal of Roe and Casey," he said, referring to the court's 1992 decision that affirmed Roe.

"We hope and pray for a change in our laws and stand ready to help all pregnant women in need in each of our communities," he added.

National Right to Life, an advocacy group that has long fought against abortion, similarly said it "agrees with the statement of Mississippi Attorney General Lynn Fitch, who said, 'We will let the Supreme Court speak for itself and wait for the Court's official opinion.'"

Other groups were not so cautious. Texas Right to Life said it was encouraging news that "Roe soon may be gone. Yet new attacks on life will emerge."

In its May 2 statement, the group called its supporters to further action saying: "Already, abortion advocates are calling on Congress to ban states from passing pro-life laws."

"If and when the court overturns Roe, the pro-life movement must defeat attacks such as these and build a culture that values preborn children and pregnant mothers."

Kristan Hawkins, president of Students for Life of America, likened the potential overturning of Roe v. Wade as the beginning for the antiabortion movement.

The previous day, her group sent a letter to all the Republican members of Congress urging them to back a nationwide "heartbeat bill," banning abor-

tions at six weeks of pregnancy. Hawkins, and nine other antiabortion leaders, emphasized that the 15-week ban at stake in the Dobbs v. Jackson Women's Health Organization case before the court did not go far enough.

"If we are not focusing on limiting early abortions, we are not really addressing the violence of abortion at all," Hawkins wrote in the letter.

After the court's draft decision was leaked, she told The Washington Post: "We are on the precipice of a whole new America."

One thing many groups said they were not happy with was that the opinion was leaked to a news outlet.

Dennis Poust, executive director of the New York State Catholic Conference, said the leak was a breach of trust and "an attack on the integrity of the Judicial Branch of government."

"When our highest court cannot operate free of political interference or intimidation, it serves as a stark example that nothing is sacred anymore. While we fervently pray for legal protections of unborn children, we will not dignify the goals of the leaker by commenting on the contents of the draft document."

The California Catholic Conference said in a May 3 statement that the leak of the opinion draft "triggered the governor and California legislative leadership to announce its intent to create a California constitutional amendment to protect the right to abortion. This will destroy lives, families and significantly limit the ability of the Catholic Church in California to protect the unborn."

SCRIPTURE REFLECTIONS

Focusing on Christ's love

This Fifth Sunday of Easter focuses on love – the love among the apostles in response to Christ's command that they love one another as He loved them, and finally the love found in the New Jerusalem, as the final flowering of love at the end of time.



Monsignor
Paul E.
Whitmore

Jesus at the Last Supper. He speaks movingly of the glory they will all share with Him if they imitate His love.

"I will give you a new commandment: love one another. As I have loved you, so you also should love one another. This is how all will know that you are my disciples."

Today's Gospel is part of the Farewell address of Jesus at the Last Supper. He speaks movingly of the glory they will all share with Him if they imitate His love. The first reading today gives us a glimpse of that

May 15

Fifth Sunday of Easter

READINGS

Acts 14:21-27
Revelation 21:1-6A
John 13:31-33a,34-35

love in action in the preaching of the Apostles. When Paul and Barnabas are anointed to preach the Gospel to the Gentiles, their love for the Lord and each other is very visible to all who listened to them. And when Paul and

Barnabas came to Lystra where he had been previously stoned, dragged out of the city and left for dead, only love and zeal for the Gospel could have given him the courage. How moved the new converts were when they observed his love for the very people who had tried to kill him!

The power of love gave them strength to endure much suffering for the sake of the Gospel. We see that same love in many of our missionary priests,

nuns, and lay persons. The ability to endure imprisonment, torture, and extreme physical conditions comes from that same love for the Gospel and the people to whom they have been sent. We, too, must ask ourselves how much we are willing to give of ourselves in witness to the Gospel.

May all the fear, division, and violence of the Covid, politics, and in the nations be overcome by God's love working in us and through us.

CALLED TO SERVE

We don't do it that way in my church

The Chosen is a TV series that, in the words of an anonymous reviewer, "fills in the colors of the bare outline given in the Biblical accounts" of Jesus, his disciples and life in the world Jesus found when he became human. It has been a terrific production that is about to air its third season.

I have particularly enjoyed the development of the personalities, the men and women who are the closest to Jesus during his public ministry and how

they worked through their unique prejudices, habits and opinions.

All groups of individuals encounter challenges as they mature. Each crop of new members to a group brings preconceptions about how things ought to be done or what direction the group should follow.

And then there is the chief executive officer. The woman or man in charge, call him president or CEO or chairperson or whatever who, by action or directive, steers the thinking and

practices of the group.

Jesus was the CEO of the apostles. When he was absent from their gatherings, the apostles speculated, planned, connived all sorts of things about how they should or shouldn't act in a given situation. When Jesus was in their company, what he said was gospel, even if they did not fully understand what he said or what he was teaching.

Recently I was privileged to join the deacons who were ordained last October for a six-month-later reunion. That group made me smile as they talked about their post ordination experiences as deacons in parishes where they minister.

For the most part, in the first session, we talked about their experiences under the direction of their pastor. No one complained about his situation. It was clear each pastor, the CEO of the local organization, has his own style, his own

mode of behavior or way of thought that is peculiar to him.

I recall that for years, probably before deacons came on the scene in the 1970s in our diocese, the lay reader, the lector, would read the prayers of the faithful after the Creed



Deacon
Kevin Mastellon

at Mass in my parish. One day I mentioned to my pastor at the time that the general instructions for the Mass say the Universal Prayers "are announced from the ambo or from another suitable place, by the Deacon." If there is no deacon, then the prayers are said by a cantor, a reader or one of the lay faithful. We instituted the instruction soon after.

Sometimes in my travels people will say, "well the deacon in my church" does this or doesn't do that at Mass. My usual response is, "that's pastoral prerogative" meaning the deacon does whatever the pastor or celebrant priest told him

to do, or not do.

Actually, when it comes to assisting at Mass, there are practices in the general instruction that some priests interpret to suit their mindset. That's why I remember so well the phrase delivered by one of my instructors during deacon formation, "We will teach you how you should do it (assist at Mass for example) but once ordained you'll do what your pastor tells you."

In fairness, some deacons don't have the rituals right either and introduce their own idiosyncrasies. Some of us give our pastors heartburn.

We are just imperfect people, all of us. That's what led to the spirited conversation with the newly ordained deacons at Wadhams Hall and probably what led to the debates around the nighttime fire among the disciples in Jesus' day. Alleluia!

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

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AT THE MOVIES

DOCTOR STRANGE IN THE MULTIVERSE OF MADNESS

NEW YORK (CNS) – The award for the most appropriate film title of 2022 goes to "Doctor Strange in the Multiverse of Madness" (Disney). Truly, this is a maddening, multidimensional, decidedly strange, yet typically "Marvel"-ous movie based on the comic book series.

Taken at face value, this is your basic popcorn film, designed as grand escapist entertainment. Director Sam Raimi, who helmed the popular Spider-Man film trilogy starring Tobey Maguire, checks all the requisite boxes as the action unfolds at a furious pace with eye-popping special effects. Parents are advised that the violence, though stylized, is intense and sometimes gory, and the language occasionally salty, meaning younger Marvel fans should stick to the comics.

Viewers unfamiliar with the Marvel canon and the interconnectivity of characters and plots will be hopelessly lost as the story, written by Michael Waldron, skips across said multiverse, alternative realities featuring familiar faces (and a boatload of cameos from previous Marvel films).

For the uninitiated, Dr. Stephen Strange (Benedict Cumberbatch), introduced in the eponymous 2016 film, is a neurosurgeon turned grand wizard, having been trained in the dark arts and the manipulation of the astral plane by the supreme sorcerer (and sidekick) Wong (Benedict Wong).

When we last saw the good doctor, he helped Peter Parker (Tom Hol-

land) open the door to another dimension in the recent blockbuster "Spider-Man: No Way Home."

Old habits die hard, as quickly revealed in "Multiverse of Madness." But first there is a wedding: Strange's ex-fiancee, Christine Palmer (Rachel McAdams), is getting hitched. The former lovers pledge mutual respect and happiness before a gigantic octopus descends, a la King Kong, on Manhattan.

Ah, but this is no ordinary cephalopod. It's from another universe, and before it is vanquished by Strange and Wong, disgorges a hostage: a young woman named America Chavez (Xochitl Gomez). She has a special gift: the ability to travel at will through the multiverse. That means all the baddies are after her, including versions of Strange in other dimensions.

Among these is a familiar face: Wanda Maximoff (Elizabeth Olsen), also known as the Scarlet Witch. She intends on using Chavez to take her power and travel to another universe where she can, surprisingly, live out

her life as a single mother to two moppets, Billy (Julian Hiliard) and Tommy (Jeff Klyne).

But Marvel films are rarely so pro-family, and the wicked witch's dream would wreak havoc across all universes. A titanic battle ensues halfway across the world between the forces of good (Strange) and evil (Maximoff), with Chavez as the prize.

Needless to say, the unexpected occurs, portals

are opened and doppelgangers appear in droves. Strange comes face-to-face with a group of superheroes called the Illuminati, who may or may not be the next generation of Avengers.

"Multiverse of Madness" is awash in silliness and mumbo-jumbo, mixing sorcery, the occult and religious imagery. Sensible viewers will not take this seriously, but impressionable ones may need guidance that this is all

harmless make-believe.

The film contains pervasive occult dialogue and action, some stylized violence, fleeting gory images and a handful of crude and profane terms. The Catholic News Service classification is A-III – adults.

The Motion Picture Association rating is PG-13 – parents strongly cautioned.

Some material may be inappropriate for children under 13.

CONGRATULATIONS

Reverend Father Kevin D. McEwan

20th Anniversary of

Ordination to the Priesthood

May 11, 2002



Your Holy Cross Parish Family



KNIGHTS' ICON BEGINS TOUR

An icon of St. Joseph holding the Child Jesus is the centerpiece of this year's Knights of Columbus Pilgrim Icon Program.

Bishop Terry LaValley, chaplain of the Knights in the Diocese of Ogdensburg, launched the icon's circulation throughout the diocese with a prayer service and rosary procession at

the Sisters of St. Joseph Motherhouse in Watertown on May 1, the feast of St. Joseph the Worker.

Bishop LaValley led an outdoor prayer service at the statue of St. Joseph before the icon was processed up Washington Street to the High School and back while the rosary was said.

Those unable to join the

procession prayed the rosary while seated in front of the statue.

After the procession, the service ended with the Litany to St. Joseph.

The icon resided in the Motherhouse Chapel for a week before being circulated in Jefferson County and then throughout the diocese.



Bishop Terry R. LaValley blesses the icon of St. Joseph and the Child Jesus, part of the Knights of Columbus Pilgrim Icon Program, on May 1.



After Bishop Terry R. LaValley blessed an icon of St. Joseph holding the Child Jesus, part of the Knights of Columbus Pilgrim Icon Program, Knights and others gathered for the event prayed the rosary while processing up Washington Street in Watertown.



James Gayne from Dexter Council 7598 and New York 105 District deputy served a lector during the icon dedication.



Charles Robinson of Norfolk Council 11544, secretary/treasurer of the Bishop Brzana Chapter and former state secretary and state warden of the New York State Knights of Columbus Council discusses the icon of St. Joseph and the Child Jesus while Father John M. 'Mickey' Demo, pastor of Blessed Sacrament Parish in Watertown, looks on.



Bishop Terry R. LaValley prays the rosary after blessing an icon of St. Joseph holding the Child Jesus, part of the Knights of Columbus Pilgrim Icon Program.



John Delles of Indian River Council 7471 and chair of the Northern Conference of the New York State Knights of Columbus Council, served a lector during the icon dedication.

OBITUARIES

Clayton – Mary (Cipullo) Lindsay, 75; Mass of Christian Burial May 5, 2022 at St. Mary's Church.

Dannemora – Vernon L. Bouyea, 83; Mass of Christian Burial May 3, 2022 at St. Joseph's Church; burial in parish cemetery.

Harrisville – Warren Anthony "John" Miller, 81; Services to be held at a later date.

Lowville – Rosemary Frances (Hanno) Dean, 97; Mass of Christian Burial May 2, 2022 at St. Peter's Church; burial in Lowville Rural Cemetery.

Massena – Sharon A. (Simpson) Cash, 67; Mass of Christian Burial May 4, 2022 at Church of the Sacred Heart; burial in Calvary Cemetery.

Mooers Forks – Jane (Major) Boulterice, 93; Mass of Christian Burial May 5, 2022 at St. Ann's Church; burial in St. Mary's Cemetery, Champlain.

Ogdensburg – Arthur D. Caufield, 75; Mass of Christian Burial May 7, 2022 at St. Mary's Cathedral; burial in St. Mary's Cemetery.

Ogdensburg – Wallace Norman Martel, 94; Mass of Christian Burial May 9, 2022 at Notre Dame Church; burial Notre Dame Cemetery.

Ogdensburg – Thomas Paul George Murray, 57; Funeral Services May 3, 2022 at Frary Funeral Home.

Ogdensburg – Carol A. (Premo) West, 75; Funeral Services May 2, 2022 at the Fox & Murray Funeral Home; burial in Hillcrest Cemetery.

Ogdensburg – Ann J. (LaRue) Winters, 84; Funeral Services May 10, 2022 at Fox and Murray Funeral Home; burial in Foxwood Memorial Park.

Philadelphia – Paul N. Cocco, 76; Graveside Services May 6, 2022 at Sandy Hollow Cemetery.

Plattsburgh – Peter B. Guibord, 82; Mass of Christian Burial May 21, 2022 at Our Lady of Victory Church; burial in Divine Mercy Cemetery, Cumberland Head.

Plattsburgh – Bruce C. LaValley, 85; Mass of Christian Burial May 6, 2022 at St. Peter's Church.

Potsdam – William R. Lenney, 94; Mass of Christian Burial Aug. 6, 2022 at St. Mary's Church burial in St. Mary's Cemetery.

Potsdam – Grace M. Wheeler, 63; Graveside Services May 6, 2022 at the West Potsdam Cemetery.

Redford – Michael A. Collins, 74; Mass of Christian Burial May 4, 2022 at Church of the Assumption.

Watertown – Charles R. Sharlow, 65; Mass of Christian Burial May 4, 2022 at Our Lady of the Sacred Heart.

Memories of mission trip

Father Daniel Chapin has been serving as a priest associate of the Maryknoll Fathers and Brothers for the past six years, five in Cochabamba, Bolivia, and currently in Lima, Perú. He is accompanying the Parish Missionary Sisters of the Infant Jesus of Prague, the same community that served with the priests of the Ogdensburg Peruvian Apostolate in Mollendo. Father Chapin continues to share his account of his most recent trip in February the Parish of San Martin de Porres in Mollendo, as well as to Arequipa and to neighboring Ecuador.

I will continue the summary of my recent trip. I go almost daily to Mass at the local Vincentian parish, and on Sundays I preside at the Mass at the motherhouse of the Parish Missionary Sisters of the Infant Jesus of Prague, the group we whom we worked in Mollendo for many years (I was with them for my 10 years at San Martin).

The day following the tour of the parish with Father Gaspar, the Sosa family from Inclan [a local



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

town] invited me to lunch at a country restaurant in the Tambo Valley. It is summer, so these kinds of places are popular, as meals are served outside, kind of a picnic environment.

It had been a long time since I had quality time with Señora Clara, her husband, her son and Sister Roxana, MP. Sister is a vocation out of Inclan. During my time in Mollendo, she was just a child; she was an adolescent when I left in 1986. She entered the community of the Misioneras Parroquiales due to the influence of the sisters and is now working in Estrecho/Iquitos/Loreto, in the Amazon with two other Sisters of the MP, one

of whom is Sister Isolina. Sister Isolina was in Mollendo during my time. It was great being with Sister Roxana and the family and then we took a quick trip to the family's gas station in Matarani, a station they have owned there for decades.

Later in the afternoon, I visited one of our oldest friends, Sña. Haydeé de Salas, (Lucha's elderly mother), who is in her home and being taken good care of by the family. We have known the Salas family since our earliest days in Matarani, where they lived and where our mission really began. The family has collaborated with us from the very beginning.

JOB OPENING

Family Support Coordinators

The Diocese of Ogdensburg is seeking **Family Support Coordinators** to work at Trinity Catholic School, Massena, NY, Seton Catholic, Plattsburgh, NY and St. Mary's School, Ticonderoga, NY (3 positions).

The Family Support Coordinator will support *Healthy Families for a Hopeful Future* promoting healthy family lifestyles and choices. The Family Support Coordinators will assist students and families through an array of services that build healthy relationships and strengthens family engagement practices including parental support, efforts to coordinate and provide access to enhanced health, education, social and emotional well-being of youth and families. Bachelor's degree in childhood education, human services or related field. Prior experience as a Family Support Coordinator of youth and/or families is desirable. Strong communication and organizational skills are a must.

Submit letter of interest, resume and three professional references to: Human Resources Office, Diocese of Ogdensburg, P.O. Box 369, Ogdensburg, NY 13669 or e-mail: ksnover@rcdony.org

Deadline for applications is May 25, 2022.

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'Octave of Service' to be held May 19-26

To commemorate the 150th anniversary of our Diocese, parishes and Catholic organizations are invited and encouraged to participate in the Octave of Service from May 19th through May 26th. The Octave of Service is an opportunity to carry our various forms of outreach in their communities while living out the Gospel values of encounter and accompaniment, journeying together as disciples in mission.

MEANINGFUL SERVICE

Octave of Service projects should focus on supporting and improving your community as well as cultivating relationships with others, including through prayer. These opportunities could be new initiatives as well as initiatives with which your parish has already been involved.

Parishioners who are

unable to join in in-person projects may be able to join as prayer support, or provide service behind the scenes from home.

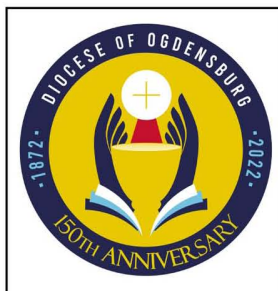
EXPECTATIONS

While the Octave of Service is an eight-day event, parishes are not expected to carry out service every day of the week. At least one day of service, though, should be planned.

The following are possible schedules a parish can use throughout the week:

- One day of service with everyone participating in the same project.
- One day of service with different groups at various sites throughout the community.
- Multiple days of service with different groups participating in different projects.

Each day can be dedicated to a particular group or issue, whether it is through service or



prayer, such as:

- May 19: Hunger and Homelessness
- May 20: Racial justice
- May 21: Addiction
- May 22: Youth
- May 23: Care for Creation
- May 24: Incarceration
- May 25: The Sick and Dying

Ascension Thursday: Displaced Persons (immigrants, refugees, asylum-seekers)

OPPORTUNITY FOR COLLABORATION

The Octave of Service is a great opportunity for collaborative efforts

among different groups, or even with those closest to you. Consider if the following groups offer feasible opportunities for partnership.

- Other parishes or churches in your area
- Community organizations such as food pantries and community resource centers
- Campus ministries or schools
- Within families

NECESSITY OF PRAYER

The Octave of Service allows us to put our Catholic faith into action, but any project or activity should be rooted in prayer and spiritual reflection. Consider including the following opportunities throughout your week of service:

- Starting and ending each service project in prayer or the daily readings.
- Including those that you are serving in your

Mass intentions.

• Scheduling a rosary or prayer service during the week for vulnerable populations.

• Asking the homebound and those who may not be able to participate in person, to pray for the project(s).

NOT A ONE-TIME EVENT

What follows from the Octave of Service is just as important as the week itself.

The Catholic Diocese of Ogdensburg's commitment to walking with those in our communities who are most in need should, and must, continue long after the projects have concluded. Consider this week not as a one-time event, but as an opportunity for your parish to kickstart a growing effort of outreach and justice.

For more information and resources, visit 150.rcdony.org.

Diocese of Ogdensburg Family Life Office

Helping to build strong families with programs and activities that strengthen family life.

Don't just pray for more priests and religious...pray for faithful, sacramental marriages, because that's where vocations to the priesthood and religious life come from.



Do you want to:

- ◇ Build a marriage that has a less than 3 percent chance of ending in divorce?
- ◇ Learn how you can strengthen your marriage and your family?
- ◇ Know why families fall apart and what you can do to prevent this?
- ◇ Benefit from a network of support with other faithful families in this diocese?

If the answer to any of those questions is yes, contact:



Steve Tartaglia
Director of Family Life
Diocese of Ogdensburg
(315) 393-2920
sttartaglia@rcdony.org