

INSIDE THIS ISSUE

Catholic Charities, schools get boost from Cabrini grants | PAGE 5

Aiding in Syria, Turkey after earthquake | PAGE 6

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NORTH COUNTRY CATHOLIC

FEBRUARY 15, 2023

Follow Me: Relationship with Christ, His people

Editor's note: With Ash Wednesday only a week away (Feb. 22), Bishop Terry R. LaValley suggests we use this time to evaluate our relationships with the Lord and His people in his annual Ash Wednesday letter.

"This Lent we want to re-energize our faith and develop an even more intimate relationship with Jesus through personal prayer and public worship. Prayer is not an activity of the human person but is God working within the prayerer. That's why our prayer is so powerful and is critical in replacing the darkness of the world with life directed to the heavenly horizon."

FULL STORY, PAGE 3

A BARN BOOGIE



Parishioners of St. James Minor Church in Carthage enjoying the photo booth at Augustinian Academy's Boot Scootin' Barn Boogie Winter Gala. Pictured are Greg and Margaret Woods, Todd and Joanne Norgard, Jim and Lucie Cassoni and Sister Mary Ellen Brett, SSI.

WELCOME, FATHER NICK



Effective January 26, Bishop Terry R. LaValley appointed Father Nicolas J. Revilla parochial vicar of St. Peter's Parish in Massena. Shortly after, Father Revilla, 51 arrived in Massena from Naga City, part of the Diocese of Caceres in the Philippines, where he most recently served as dean of Studies, spiritual director and philosophy professor at Holy Rosary Major Seminary.

FULL STORY, PAGE 4

Pope: Trafficking 'disfigures' human dignity

In a video message released on the ninth World Day of Prayer and Reflection Against Human Trafficking, Pope Francis said human trafficking "disfigures" human dignity. The annual day of prayer takes place on Feb. 8, the day the Catholic Church celebrates the feast of St. Josephine Bakhita.

The Holy Father began his message by addressing this year's theme — Journeying in Dignity — and specifically encouraged

young people to "care for dignity, yours and that of every person you meet."

"I understand that it was you who chose 'Journeying in Dignity' as your theme," he said. "This is very important: It points to a great horizon for your anti-trafficking efforts: human dignity."

"Human trafficking disfigures dignity," he continued. "Exploitation and subjugation limit freedom and turn people into objects

to use and discard. And the system of trafficking profits from the injustice and wickedness that oblige millions of people to live in conditions of vulnerability."

The pope acknowledged the rise in human trafficking and the targeting of women, children, migrants, and those "impoverished by economic crisis, wars, climate change, and so much instability."

He added: "We know we live in a difficult time, but it is precisely in this reality that all of us, espe-

cially young people, are called to join forces to weave networks of good, to spread the light that comes from Christ and his Gospel."

Pope Francis urged young people to be "missionaries of human dignity, against trafficking in persons and all forms of exploitation" and to "never tire of seeking ways to transform our societies and prevent this shameful scourge that is trafficking in persons."

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COUNTRY
CATHOLIC

Box 326

Ogdensburg, N.Y. 13669
USPS 0039-3400

BISHOP TERRY

R. LAVALLEY

President

REV. JOSEPH A. MORGAN

Vice President

JAMES D. CROWLEY

Secretary-Treasurer

DARCY L. FARGO

Editor &

Communications Director



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622 Washington Street, Ogdensburg, N.Y. 13669.

Editorial Office:

622 Washington Street,
Ogdensburg, N.Y. 13669.

Telephone:

(315) 608-7556

E-mail:

news@northcountry
catholic.org

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My 'new strategy'

I need something new. I've talked about it before. I've been in a bit of a rut. I usually refer to it as "a general malaise." Nothing is wrong, but nothing seems right, either. Things that I usually enjoy now feel like obligations.

I've been trying for months to figure out a way to snap out of it.

I'm employing a new strategy in that effort. It's a "new strategy" because it's just beginning, and it's a "new strategy" in the sense that I'm intentionally seeking out new things

to add to my life.

My family recently went on a vacation to two cities none of us had ever visited before. I felt so much joy during that trip and for a while after.

Darcy L.
Fargo

I've recently started learning a couple new skills – baking bread and crocheting. My brain is being stimulated. I'm creating things. I'm accepting mistakes and failures as part of the process. I'm finding joy in and as a result of those new endeavors.

There's no "general

malaise" when things are new. So I've been trying to introduce small new things – trying new recipes, dining at an unfamiliar restaurant, even just learning new crochet stitches.

My "new strategy" kept emerging in my mind as I prayed and thought about what I would take on for Lent this year. I know most people talk or think about "giving up" something for Lent. Sometimes I give things up for Lent, but I try to develop a Lenten practice inspired by the Holy Spirit with the intention of drawing me closer to the Lord. Sometimes that's giving something up, and some-

times it's taking something on.

I'll admit it: My spiritual life has been experiencing that "general malaise." My prayer life feels dry. Mass often feels like an obligation. It all feels blah.

I think I need something new. Maybe it'll be a new devotion. Maybe it'll be a new way of looking at Scripture. Maybe it'll be something that hasn't even occurred to me yet (I'm open to suggestions). I'm hoping and I'm confident God will show me what will help me in this season, what will help draw me to Him.

There's nothing new about that.

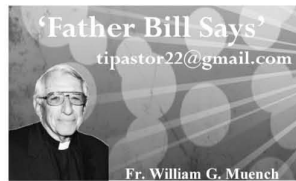
Considering the laity

Today, I would like to call your attention to the chapter on the laity, written in the *Dogmatic Constitution on the Church* – one of the documents published by the Second Vatican Council. Yes, it was written 60 years ago, and yet it continues to have great meaning for our Catholic Church today.

Most of you who read this are part of the laity of our Church. The laity is all the faithful of the Church except those who are in Holy Orders, our leaders. The Council gave special attention to the laity, making certain that all the laity would always remember their importance in our Church.

The Council reminds all pastors of the importance of the laity's participation in the life of all Catholic parishes. The Council writes this: "The pastors of the Church know well how much the laity contributes to the welfare of the whole Church."

The council goes on to challenge pastors everywhere that they were never called to undertake the salvific mission of the Church alone. "The laity, es-



pecially by the witness of their lives, resplendent in faith, hope, and charity, must manifest Christ to others."

The council quotes Sacred Scripture to help us recognize the importance of the participation of the laity in the life of the Church. The Scripture is from St. Paul's message to the Romans: "For just as in one body we have many members, yet all the members, have not the same function, so we the many, are one body in Christ, but severally members one of one another."

The council continues to make it very clear that Christ constantly guides the Church to lead all, including all the laity, to sainthood. Again, the words of the council: "In the Church, not everyone reaches along the same path, yet all are called to sanctity – and have obtained an equal privilege of

faith – through the justice of God."

The council fathers use the word "vocation" when speaking of the laity. Just as we speak of the priesthood as a vocation, a call from Our Lord to lead a man to become a priest. So, the council sees the all the men and women of the laity as called by the Lord as having a vocation, a divine invitation to participate in the life of the Church.

The words of the council: "Gathered together in the People of God and established in the one Body of Christ under one head, the laity – no matter who they are – have, as living members, the vocation of applying to the building up of the Church and its continual sanctification all the powers which they have received from the goodness of the Creator and from the grace of the Redeemer."

So, the council calls upon the laity to realize that they are to participate in the mission of the clergy, the priests and the deacons. "All the laity, then, have the exalted duty of working for the greater spread of the di-

vine plan of salvation to all men and women, of every epoch and all over the earth."

I like to put it this way: Being a member of the laity is not being a spectator in the Church – at Mass and in all the activities of the parish Church. Members of the laity should realize that they must participate so that our Church stays alive and strong, bringing the Holy Spirit and the love and message of Our Savior to all in their community and all in this world, especially by the way they live each day.

I want to remind you of a recent Sunday Gospel reading that reminded is all, clergy and laity, of Jesus' call to all his disciples to be the salt of the earth and the light of the world. I write to remind you that this is a call from the Holy Spirit that the laity is also called to bring new life to our Church, now and in all times to bring a new Spirit and good taste to all the People of God and to become the light of the world leading others from the darkness of sin to the holiness of Our Savior.

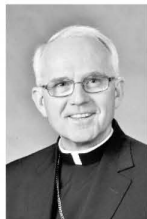
Lent: Your relationship with Christ, others

Dear Sisters and Brothers in Christ:

A personal and societal condition has become increasingly evident. We are forgetting who we are, where we come from and where we are headed. Such amnesia is causing us to lose our bearings. The ramifications are becoming increasingly obvious and alarming. The remedy for such memory loss is not to be found in any pharmaceutical elixir. It's found in strengthening our relationship with the God who made us, loves us to death, His death on the Cross, and promises eternal life to those who would follow Him.

Pope Benedict XVI once wrote: "Being Christian is not

the result of an ethical choice or a lofty idea, but the encounter with an event, a person, which gives life a new horizon and a decisive direction." By taking the time to listen and reflect on the Word of God, I learn more about my personal identity, both who I am and Whose I am. Our personal encounter with Jesus Christ is crucial. This Lent we want to re-energize our faith and develop an even more intimate relationship with Jesus through personal prayer and public worship. Prayer is not an activity of the human person but is God working within the pray-er.



**Bishop
Terry R.
LaValley**

That's why our prayer is so powerful and is critical in replacing the darkness of the world with life directed to the heavenly horizon.

As we begin this Holy Season of Lent, I encourage you to reflect on your relationship with Jesus and with the members of His Body, the Church. We recommit ourselves to the mission of the Church as passionate disciples in mission. We want to stay focused on our Diocesan Priorities of: Creating a Culture of Vocations, Strengthening Faith Formation in Family Life and Building Parishes with Living Stones.

Our efforts in addressing these priorities will help us answer questions of identity and mission. I encourage you to look for new ways to be active participants in the life of your parish. Thank you for being a source of loving support for your priests.

May the risen Lord accompany all of us on our journey of faith towards the light of Easter. Mary, Mother of our Redeemer, pray for us!

Faithfully yours in Christ,

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

Funeral Mass celebrated for Harold Granger

COLTON – A Mass of Christian Burial for Harold A. Granger, 86, a resident of 45 St. Highway 56, Colton, was celebrated on Monday, February 13, 2023 at 11 a.m. at St Patrick's Church, Colton, with Father Joseph Giroux presiding.

Burial will be held in Seneca Lake Union Cemetery in the springtime.

Mr. Granger passed away Wednesday evening, February 8, 2023 at the United Helpers Maplewood Campus after a brief stay.

Harold is survived by his wife of 64 years, Patricia of Colton; his three sons, Gary and Julie Granger of Gouverneur, Timothy and Elizabeth Granger of Gilbert, Arizona, Harry and Nicole Granger of Peoria, Arizona; his two daughters, Cindy Granger of Canton, Susan and John Al-

farone of Holbrook, New York; his 10 beloved grandchildren and six great-grandchildren; and two sisters, Janice and Jack Young of Franklin, Kentucky and Barbara and Nicholas Aurilio of Queensbury, New York; as well as several nieces and nephews.

He was pre-deceased by his parents and a brother, William.

Mr. Granger was born in Glens Falls, on August 4, 1936 to the late Karl "Gordon" and Lenora Crannell Granger.

He graduated from South Glens Falls High School, Class of 1954. He joined the U.S. Navy, serving from 1955-1959.

He married Patricia A. Grabenstein on December 6, 1958.

Mr. Granger worked as a Claims and Risk Management Manager, working for the Village of Massena, the City of Ogdensburg and most recently, the Roman

Catholic Diocese of Ogdensburg.

Harold lived life to the fullest and enjoyed giving to others. He enjoyed riding his motorcycle, restoring and driving old cars (especially his 1948 Cadillac and 1956 Oldsmobile), golfing and the outdoors. He loved to go to camp at Garnet Lake with his friends and family and was a proud U.S. Navy Veteran. Memorial donations in Harold's memory can be made to any Local Veterans Organization and memories and condolences may be shared



*Support And Pray
For Vocations*

online at buckfuneral-home.com.

The Buck Funeral

Home in Colton is serving the family of Harold A. Granger.

TRINITY CATHOLIC SCHOOL Massena, New York

Is seeking applicants for the position of

PRINCIPAL

For the School Year 2023-2024

Effective July 1, 2023

Applicants should:

- A Master's degree in Education and/or Education Administration and Supervision;
- Be a practicing Catholic;
- Successful experience(s) in a Catholic school;
- Give evidence of administrative leadership skills in the areas of Catholic identity, instructional evaluation, management, promotion and maintenance of an effective learning environment and public relations.

Applicants should send a cover letter expressing their suitability for the position, resume, a completed application (available at www.rcdony.org/catholicschools), transcripts and three letters of recommendation attesting to the candidate's proven administrative ability and one letter of recommendation attesting to the person's adherence to the Catholic Church, no later than May 1, 2023 to:

Sister Ellen Rose Coughlin, SSJ,
Superintendent of Schools
100 Elizabeth Street
PO Box 369
Ogdensburg, NY 13669

Massena welcomes Father Nick Revilla

By Darcy Fargo
Editor

MASSENA – For Father Nicolas J. Revilla from the Archdiocese of Caceres in the Philippines, a lot of things are new right now.

Father Revilla, 51, is new to the United States, new to Massena, new to snow and new to parish life.

"I always tell people, 'it is different,'" he said. "Different in the sense that I used to live in the other side of the globe that is totally different in weather, in time zone and the culture of people. But the North Country, and Massena in particular, is such a gorgeous place. It is still wintertime, and for me, experiencing winter is like being transported and be right in the middle of those Christmas lyrics we hum during Christmas in the Philippines, 'the winter wonderland.' Now that I am here the winter wonderland truly becomes a reality, and not just words



Father Nicolas J. Revilla, new parochial vicar at St. Peter's Parish in Massena, was recently welcomed to the Diocese of Ogdensburg. Pictured are, from left, Episcopal Vicar for Clergy Father Christopher C. Carrara, Father Revilla, Bishop Terry R. LaValley and Father Mark R. Reilly, pastor of St. Peter's Parish.

we sing in Christmas. I have already heard wonderful stories about the kind, warm and welcoming hearts of the parishioners of St. Mary's and Sacred Heart Churches in Massena. And, in a few days I have been here, I can rightfully say it is so. I

have been treated with utmost kindness and warm welcome by the people in our community. And, of course, the Bishop of Ogdensburg, Bishop Terry LaValley, who is the father of the Church here, has welcomed me with great joy, and has afforded me with everything that I need for my mission here in the diocese."

Though he'd visited Long Island previously, Father Revilla says he was also surprised to see how close he is now to Canada.

"I couldn't believe the river is actually the border of U.S. and Canada, and I am literally seeing it with my own eyes," he said. "It's surreal for me! I am just glad that I am here."

Father Revilla noted that while he's only been the North Country a short time, he is glad to be part of an active parish and on a team with Father Mark R. Reilly, pastor, and Father Severinus Torwoe, parochial vicar. He said he looks forward to learning about parish life.

"I guess I am still learning the ropes of parish life," he said. "Being a seminary formator practically all my priestly life, I need to make adjustments here

and there. But parish life is the heart of the local church. It is where we meet our fellow brethren who are journeying with us in the way of following our Lord Jesus."

One of nine children, eight boys and one girl, Father Revilla said his parents hoped one of their sons would become a priest.

"They would have wanted the older boys to enter the seminary, but they were not called for the priesthood," he said. "I believe God puts us in situation wherein it would be easier for us to follow his call, and that is what happened to me. I believe when my mom brought me to Church to serve God (as an altar server), God is using her to open my eyes to the reality of Catholic priesthood. Four of those altar boys from our parish entered the Minor seminary that particular year, and I was the only one who made it to the priesthood. Being 12 years old, we know nothing about what a real vocation is all about, but I know deep in my heart that I am being called to something. And I think that is how my vocation

has started. It begins like a seed that is planted in the heart of a young person. The seed needs to be nourished and taken cared of to grow to maturity. I have that vocation as a young boy, and in the seminary it grew and was nourished by my devotion and prayers. Like the apostles of Jesus, 12 of us from that group of high school seminarians became priests. And we are doing the work of God in different parts of the globe, two in Canada, four in the U.S. and 6 in the Philippines."

While here, Father Revilla said he looks forward to sharing his love of Christ and his devotion to the Blessed Mother here in the North Country.

"We have a deep devotion to the Blessed Mother way back home," he said. "We call the Blessed Virgin Mary 'Ina' in our dialect which literally means 'mother.' I think is the reason why we still have a good number of vocations to the priesthood. This devotion to Mary in her title 'Our Lady of Penafrancia' is unique in our region, and this devotion has really made the faith of the people stronger and more committed. We believe that this devotion to the Blessed Mother will lead us to Jesus, her Son. We believe in God's help and protection under the mantle of the Blessed Mother's intercession. The Blessed Mother has truly guided the faith of our people through many crises and calamities that come to us. Our region in the Philippines is in the path of what we call 'typhoons' back home. These are seasonal storms that come in different intensities. Yet we are assured of God's protection and help because we have our 'Ina' who looks after us and accompanies us in our life here on earth."

AUGUSTINIAN ACADEMY ELEMENTARY SCHOOL Carthage, New York

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For the School Year 2023-2024
Effective July 1, 2023

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- Be a practicing Catholic;
- Successful experience(s) in a Catholic school;
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Sister Ellen Rose Coughlin, SSJ,
Superintendent of Schools
100 Elizabeth Street
PO Box 369
Ogdensburg, NY 13669

Catholic Charities, schools get boost from Cabrini Foundation grants

By Deacon Kevin Mastellon
North Country Catholic

OGDENSBURG – Catholic Charities and the diocesan Department of Education, along with several other organizations in the North Country received substantial awards in the year end grants from the Mother Cabrini Health Foundation based in New York City.

The grant recipients were announced by the foundation on January 23 in New York City.

“Over 500 year-end grants will address the health-related needs of low-income and underserved New Yorkers, including food insecurity, education access, the mental health crisis, healthcare, workforce development, and social services for incoming immigrants and migrant workers,” the Mother Cabrini Health Foundation stated in a press release.

Six grants awarded to Catholic Charities will amount to nearly \$2 million dollars according to Executive Director Deacon Patrick J. Donahue.

Five of the grants to Catholic Charities will continue projects funded by Cabrini in the past.

The newest initiative, called the Transitional Housing and Supports Program, “is about certain circumstances that create vulnerability for someone in housing,” said Deacon Donahue.

He gave, as an example, the situation a young mother with a couple of children might suddenly find herself in because of the loss of a job, or a change in marital status.

“That family might

need temporary housing,” Donahue said.

The grant, \$175,000, will be used to develop existing housing into transitional homeless housing. It is not a shelter or a warming center like those that have been in the news recently.

“We developed one residence in Glenfield (Lewis County) using the rectory at St. Mary’s,” Deacon Donahue said. “We purchased property on Caroline Street (Ogdensburg) which will be converted to use as temporary housing.”

In the four years since its inception, the Mother Cabrini Foundation has awarded over two thousand grants totaling \$635 million.

The North Country, mostly diocesan entities, has received between \$4 million and \$5 million annually. This year 24 programs in the North Country, 19 of them diocesan entities or directly related to the Catholic Church, will receive \$5.2 million.

The Department of Education will administer nearly \$1.5 million. Seton Catholic and Immaculate Heart Central will each receive \$80,000 for separate programs. Funding is also included for parishes or other Catholic organizations in Ogdensburg, Lake Placid, Morrisonville, Saranac Lake, Carthage and Massena.

Community based organizations in Watertown and Plattsburgh were also awarded grants.

A list of all the grant recipients in New York is available at <https://cabrinihealth.org/grants-database/>.

“Five years ago,

Catholic Charities in the Diocese of Ogdensburg had an annual budget of about \$1.7 million. You add in Cabrini funding in the amount we are currently receiving and comparable services and we are looking at a \$4.2 million budget,” Deacon Donahue said.

Catholic Charities is in the business of developing programs and then handing them off to other funding entities when the grant money goes away. Deacon Donahue is not naive about that possibility but suggests funding may not dry up. He points to the available providers in the region to support his belief.

“We don’t know what’s going to happen with Cabrini moving forward,” Deacon Donahue said. “We know we don’t have a resource rich area. Cabrini after five years could say, ‘OK, let’s move on to another provider.’”

The problem is there are few, if any organizations available to fund. But Cabrini is committed to support programs in the region.

Donahue continued, “No organization does some of the things that Catholic Charities does. The reason we do them is that the services aren’t available from alternative organizations. Food, shelter, clothing certainly are; we have a lot of food pantries and emergency housing and things like that depending on the county you’re in. But when you get into foster care supervision and parenting education, those programs, we used to have a lot of those across the North Country but they have disap-

peared.”

Five of the six programs Catholic Charities receives Cabrini funding for are in the third year of five years of support.

“What we try to do with Cabrini funding,” Donahue told *North Country Catholic*, “is to launch programs and then over the course of the funding from Cabrini, search out alternative funding sources.”

“So, for example, in Malone, we launched a foster care supervised visitation program,” he said. “We have two caseworkers assigned to that large program. We are hoping by year five that Franklin County picks that program funding completely or at least partially, because it is a county service.”

That’s one example Deacon Donahue cites.

“We are looking for the counties to step in after three or four years and add the program to their budget to sustain the operations of this and similar programs.”

According to their press release, “the mother Cabrini Health Foundation is a private, nonprofit organization whose mission is to improve the health and well-being of New Yorkers, bolster the health outcomes of vulnerable communities, eliminate barriers to care and bridge gaps in health services. The organization is named after an advocate for immigrants, children and the poor. The Foundation funds programs and initiatives across New York State that provide either direct healthcare services or address the social determinants of health.

Correction: Advice omitted

Editor’s note: Paragraphs from the end of the article, Love, marriage, faith and family, printed in the Feb. 8 edition, were inadvertently omitted. With our regrets for the omission, those paragraphs, advice from Tyler and Megan Bourgeois, are below.

Asked what advice they might give to newly married couples, Tyler and Megan are happy to share what they have learned.

“The more you learn to give of yourself, the smoother life goes. The more you focus on yourself or act selfishly, the harder everything is. Be honest! Don’t lie, conceal, or be manipulative. Try to be patient. Listen more than you talk and remember that the person sharing with you is dear to you. They are your partner in life, so try not to write off what they’re saying. Be honest. Don’t allow suspicion or a lack of trust to enter your relationship. Put your marriage first. Remember that children need parents with a strong marriage because that is what makes a strong family.”

And, of course, the couple concludes, “Give the other person support in their walk with the Lord, but do not nag. Stay close to the sacraments, especially confession. Do NFP together; it has many far-reaching and unexpected benefits. Make it something you figure out together and it will help your relationship. Make parish life a part of your family life. Don’t just go on Sundays, but live the liturgical calendar, be involved, find families in a similar state in life and befriend them. Go to conferences and retreats: Men’s and Women’s Conferences in Syracuse; The King’s Men; Present in the Pain, which helps deal with the loss of a child through the lens of Catholic faith. Make use of your diocesan Family Life Office. And go to Family Guggenheim!”

Environmental Stewardship

Lent 2023

Over the past decades, great divisions have developed in our society, our politics, our religions and in most cultures. A fundamental principle at the core of ecology, quantum wave theory and the teachings of Jesus is that everyone and everything are all interconnected. This is why Jesus emphasized frequently that we must treat our neighbors as ourselves. Negative expressions toward an individual or any group can snowball into a much wider divide that pushes people, communities and cultures further apart.

In an opposite manner, positive thoughts, prayers and actions can heal the damage that hateful behaviors inflict. This is why Jesus stressed that we pray for our enemies and turn the other cheek. It is only through forgiveness, compassion, mercy and love that we are able to promote healthy growth and repair the injuries caused by division.

Attempting to repair the damage to our natural world and climate must incorporate a positive attitude toward everyone and everything. Because of the interconnectedness of God's works, trying to heal one component of His complex tapestry while harboring ill will toward another will only yield marginal results regardless of the effort.

This Ash Wednesday and Lent, we invite you to search your soul for any negative thoughts or bitterness you may harbor for others. Such ill-will can arise when watching or reading the news, as most of us have strong opinions. We must realize everyone involved is human, and The Creator is ultimately in charge; and we should learn to pray especially for those that we view negatively. It is not easy to grant internal forgiveness to those who wrong us or seem to be destroying our way of life, but we must never sink to hate, as it only widens the divide.

Aiding in Syria, Turkey after quake

By Jonah McKeown
Catholic News Agency

Catholic aid agencies worldwide are coordinating and sending aid after a series of massive earthquakes shook parts of Turkey and Syria, leaving continued devastation in their wake.

According to the latest available figures as of Friday morning, the 7.8-magnitude quake has left at least 22,000 people dead in Turkey and Syria, *The Washington Post* reported. In Syria, which has been ravaged by more than a decade of civil war, countless buildings collapsed Feb. 6, including several Catholic churches, reported *ACI MENA*, *CNA's* Arabic-language partner agency.

Nikki Gamer, a spokesperson for the U.S.-based Catholic Relief Services, told *CNA* that

CRS is supporting local church partners in Turkey and Syria, including Caritas Turkey and Caritas Syria, but coordination remains difficult. CRS is raising funds via a banner on its website.

"Many of our partner staff are personally affected by the destruction," Gamer told *CNA*.

"Telecommunications are disrupted and transportation is impaired, complicating relief efforts and attempts to identify and account for family members. Snow, sleet, and freezing temperatures are in the forecast, so priority needs include safe shelter, warm clothes, and hot meals. Our partners have begun to offer that support and will continue to assess and address the needs in the weeks to come."

The Catholic humanitarian organization Aid to the Church in Need (ACN) is readying an emergency aid program, spokesman

DIOCESE OF OGDENSBURG PROVIDES PRAYER, SUPPORT TO LATAKIA

At the 2017 Christ Mass, Bishop Terry R. LaValley announced the Solidarity in Faith Initiative, creating a twinning relationship with the Maronite Diocese of Latakia, Syria.

In light of the recent earthquake in Syria and Turkey, we continue to provide prayer and support to the Diocese of Latakia, an area that was already struggling to aid an influx of refugees fleeing conflict in the nation.

Prayer and fasting are encouraged for the people of the Diocese of Latakia, Bishop Antoine Chbeir and all those impacted by the earthquake.

To learn more about the Solidarity in Faith initiative, visit www.rcdony.org/about/solidarity-in-faith.

Joop Koopman told *CNA*. Their current focus is on the provision of blankets, milk for infants, and medical supplies, he said. In addition, engineers are inspecting houses making sure families can safely return to their homes, while many shelter in churches and church buildings.

"We will have more information in the next couple of days," Koopman told *CNA*.

In Syria, many cities and towns with a significant Christian population, such as Aleppo, Homs, Latakia, and

Hama, suffered major damage. In Aleppo, several UNESCO World Heritage sites were damaged, including the citadel of the old city.

Witnesses to the tragedy said the earthquake and its aftermath were, though brief, just as traumatic as the war.

"If you ask the people of Aleppo about the war they lived through, they express their feelings of pain, fear, despair about the future, loss of safety, etc. They use many different expressions to express the 12-year war. But if you ask them about the earthquake that they were exposed to, the answer is just one word: horror," Sister Annie Demerjian, a Catholic religious sister who lives and works in the city, told Aid to the Church in Need.

Chaldean Catholic Bishop Antoine Audo said they are hosting at least 50 people at the bishopry, while Bishop Ephraim Maalouli, the Greek Orthodox metropolitan bishop of Aleppo, Alexandretta, and their Dependencies, said they had already sheltered nearly 1,600 people at various churches in the city since the disaster.

Rest in Peace

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

Feb. 15 – Msgr. James H. Driscoll, 1928

Feb. 16 – Rev. André Marie Garin, O.M.I., 1895; Rev.

Joseph Alexander Fournier, O.M.I., 1904; Deacon Francis C. Siskavich, 2021

Feb. 17 – Rev. Joseph Alfred Hervieux, 1940; Rev. Francis B. Ruddy, 1976

Feb. 18 – Rev. Charles Guillot, M.S.C., 1985

Feb. 19 – Rev. Benjamin Desroches, O.M.I., 1908; Rev. William R. Bourbeau, 1954

Feb. 20 – Rev. Lucian Leger, O.M.I., 1874; Rev. Daniel O'Riordan, O.M.I., 1897

Feb. 21 – Rev. Charles A. Paquette O.M.I., 1925; Rev. John J. Kelly, 1944

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

Bishop's Public Schedule

Feb. 21 – Noon – Diocesan staff Mardi Gras luncheon in Brzana Conference Room

Feb. 22 – Noon – Ash Wednesday Mass at St. Mary's Cathedral

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.

Upcoming sessions:
Feb. 24 – 1 p.m. – Diocesan Offices, Ogdensburg

CATHOLIC WORLD AT A GLANCE

FBI retracts leaked document on investigation of Catholics

(CNA) – The FBI says it is retracting a leaked document published on the internet Feb. 8 that appears to reveal that the bureau's Richmond division launched an investigation into "radical traditionalist" Catholics and their possible ties to "the far-right white nationalist movement." In response to an inquiry from CNA, the FBI said it will remove the document because "it does not meet our exacting standards." The document, which was published on the website UncoverDC and is titled "Interest of Racially or Ethnically Motivated Violent Extremists in Radical-Traditionalist Catholic Ideology Almost Certainly Presents New Mitigation Opportunities," singles out Catholics who are interested in the Traditional Latin Mass as potentially linked to violent extremist groups. The FBI's national press office confirmed to CNA that the document came from the Richmond office but stated that it will "remove the document from FBI systems" because it does not meet the "exacting standards of the FBI."

Benedict XVI essay notes 'Protestantization' of the Eucharist

In a 2018 essay published after his death, Pope Benedict XVI said a Protestant-like understanding of the Eucharist and strong calls for intercommunion are often found together. Commenting on the current situation of eucharistic life in the Catholic Church, the pope emeritus said: "One process of great impact is the almost complete disappearance of the sacrament of penance." There is also the understanding of Communion as merely "a supper," he added. "In such a situation of a very advanced Protestantization of the understanding of the Eucharist, intercommunion appears natural." Benedict's essay on the Eucharist is part of a series of texts the pope emeritus wrote after his resignation in 2013. The essays, letters, and reflections have been collected into a single volume, "What Is Christianity?," which was published in Italian last month. According to Vatican journalist Sandro Magister, Benedict XVI had arranged for the writings to be published after his death.

Biden tells Congress to codify Roe, pass LGBTQ protections

During his 2023 State of the Union address Tuesday night, President Joe Biden called on Congress to codify Roe v. Wade and pass legislation banning discrimination based on a person's sexual orientation and gender identity. "Here in the people's House, it's our duty to protect all the people's rights and freedoms," Biden said. "Congress must restore the right that was taken away [when the Supreme Court overturned] Roe v. Wade." Codifying Roe v. Wade would establish federal abortion laws that mirror the standards that were set under the now obsolete Roe v. Wade decision. Such a law would prohibit states from banning abortion and would prevent certain state-level abortion restrictions. Since the Supreme Court overturned the ruling, 13 states have banned most abortions and another five have imposed abortion restrictions. "Already, more than a dozen states are enforcing extreme abortion bans," the president said. "Make no mistake about it; if Congress passes a national abortion ban, I will veto it."

Poll: One in three Catholic parents think it's very important kids share faith

(CNA) – A little more than a third of Catholic parents say it is extremely or very important for their children to grow up to have religious beliefs similar to their own, according to a recent Pew Research Center report.

In the study released last month and expounded further in a Feb. 6 article, 35% of Catholic parents with children under 18 said it is extremely or very important for their children to grow up to share their religious beliefs.

In total, 65% of Catholics said it was either extremely, very, or somewhat important for their children to hold their Catholic beliefs as adults.

Thirty-four percent of Catholics said it was not too important or not important at all.

Catholics recorded among the lowest enthusiasm for passing their religion to their children of any Christian denomination in the survey.

An even lower 29% of white non-evan-

gelical Protestants said it is extremely or very important for their children to share their religious beliefs.

White evangelicals were among the highest, with 70% responding that it is extremely or very important for their adult children to share their religious beliefs. In other words, white evangelical parents are twice as likely as their Catholic counterparts to strongly believe their children should share their views on religion.

The only group that registered significantly lower enthusiasm overall was the religiously unaffiliated category, those self-identifying as atheist, agnostic, or nothing. Only 8% of this group said having their children share their beliefs was either extremely or very important.

A crucial note to the study is that parents who attend services weekly or more were more than three times as likely to say having their children share their beliefs is important, 76% vs. 21%, Pew said.

Federal judge: Constitution may still protect abortion

(CNA) – Despite the U.S. Supreme Court ruling to overturn Roe v. Wade, a federal judge is claiming that the 13th Amendment, which was ratified to abolish slavery, might establish a constitutional right to have an abortion.

Under Roe v. Wade, the court previously held that the 14th Amendment protects a right to privacy and a right to privacy protects a woman's right to decide whether to have an abortion. In the Dobbs decision last June, the court revoked that precedent, stating that "the Constitution does not confer a right to abortion" and that "procuring an abortion is not a fundamental constitutional right because such a right has no basis in the Constitution's text or in our nation's history."

Regardless, U.S. District

Judge Colleen Kollar-Kotelly wrote in an order that the court was only addressing claims related to the 14th Amendment and did not evaluate the possibility that the right was protected elsewhere in the Constitution. The order was in relation to a criminal case against pro-life activists who are accused of impeding an abortion clinic.

"Here, the 'issue' before the court in Dobbs was not whether any provision of the Constitution provided a right to abortion," Kollar-Kotelly wrote. "Rather, the question before the court in Dobbs was whether the 14th Amendment to the Constitution provided such a right."

The judge said the court might have ruled differently if other constitu-

tional questions were raised.

"Of those provisions that might contain some right to access to such services," the order read, "the 13th Amendment has received substantial attention among scholars and, briefly, in one federal Court of Appeals decision."

The 13th Amendment, ratified in 1865, abolished slavery. The amendment declares that "neither slavery nor involuntary servitude, except as a punishment for crime whereof the party shall have been duly convicted, shall exist within the United States, or any place subject to their jurisdiction." Kollar-Kotelly cited two scholars who have argued that abortion bans create a type of involuntary servitude.

CLINTON

PREPARATION FOR PARISH NURSING

Plattsburgh - Mercy Care for the Adirondacks will offer preparation for the role of Parish Nurse.

Date: Beginning March 10

Place: St. Joseph's Outreach Center

Features: This course is open to registered nurses and others who are interested in health ministry in their parishes or with Mercy Care. Parish Nurses (Faith Community Nurses) promote wellness by health screening, health education, advocating for clients, connecting them to services in their community, listening and providing support. There is no charge for this course, but registration is required. It is 36 contact hour course offered on Fridays and Saturdays in March.

Contact: For further information, please contact Alexandria (Lexi) Bevilacqua, Program Director at abevilacqua@adkmercy.org or 518-523-5446.

LENTEN TAIZÉ PRAYER

Plattsburgh – Gather around the cross for prayer this Lent!

Date: March 28

Time: 7 p.m.

Place: St. John's Church

Features: Taizé Prayer includes song, silence and Sacred Scripture in an atmosphere of quiet reflection. The music is simple, with brief refrains repeated in the manner of the mantra of the Eastern Church or the rosary of the Western Church. Allow the prayerful repetitions to permeate your spirit as you enter into this song and the silence.

ADORATION

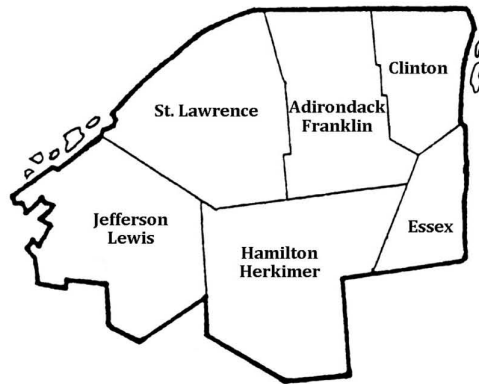
Plattsburgh – Adoration to be held weekly.

Date: Wednesdays, Thursdays and Fridays

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

Place: St. John's in the Holy Family Basement

Features: Come to an out of the way place and rest awhile in Jesus' Presence. Experience His healing power, grace, love and mercy for yourselves and loved ones. Pray for the sick, suffering, vocations, our



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.

priests, country and peace in the world.

Contact: For more information, to become a substitute or to sign up for an hour, please contact 518-563-3773.

JEFFERSON-LEWIS

CHICKEN AND BISCUIT DINNER

Lyons Falls – St. John's Church will have a drive thru chicken and biscuit dinner.

Date: Feb. 15

Time: 5 p.m.

Cost: \$12

Menu: Chicken and homemade biscuits, real mashed potatoes and gravy, vegetable, cranberry sauce, and a Valentine dessert.

Contact: To guarantee your dinner, please call 315-348-8945 or 315-348-8477. Any questions, contact 315-766-6897.

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: March 5

Time: Following 11 a.m. Mass

Place: St. Hedwig's Church

Contact: 315-348-6260

SPAGHETTI & MEATBALL DINNER

Evans Mills – The Indian River Council 7471 Knights of Columbus

will be having a spaghetti & meatball dinner.

Date: March 11

Time: 4 p.m. to 7

Place: St. Mary's Parish Center

Cost: Adults, \$9; Seniors, \$8; Children 12 and under, \$5; under 5, Free; Quart of sauce, \$6

Contact: For more information call 315-629-4678

PANCAKE BREAKFAST

Carthage – The Knights of Columbus will be sponsoring a monthly Pancake Breakfast to benefit Augustinian Academy.

Date: March 12

Time: 8 a.m. to Noon

Place: St. James Community Room

Cost: Adults, \$9; Seniors, \$7; Children under 10, \$4; Family of 4 or more, \$27

Menu: Scrambled Eggs, Pancakes, French Toast, Ham, Sausage, Baked Goods, Juice, and Coffee

Contact: For more information call 315-493-3224.

WOMEN'S PRAYER AND HEALING RETREAT

Watertown – The Department of Faith Formation will host a Women's Prayer and Healing retreat.

Date: March 31

Time: 6:30 p.m. to 8:30

Place: Sisters of St. Joseph

Hearthside Room

Cost: \$20

Features: The retreat will be run by Sister Mary Michael Fox, OP, a member of the Dominican Sisters of St. Cecilia in Nashville.

Contact: To register go to, www.rcdony.org/healingretreat

ST. LAWRENCE

MEAL DELIVERY DRIVERS NEEDED

The St. Lawrence County Office for the Aging is seeking drivers for home delivered meals in Brasher Falls, DeKalb, Canton, Gouverneur, Morristown, Ogdensburg, Potsdam and Star Lake.

Features: These drivers deliver hot, nutritious meals to older adults. Many are homebound and receive a lunchtime meal Monday through Friday. A critical component of this program is the daily wellness check that is provided by this service. Drivers receive a mileage reimbursement. Typical deliveries take place between 9:30 a.m. and 11:30 a.m. Routes can be between one hour and two hours. You can volunteer for one day a week or several. Any help is greatly appreciated.

Contact: If you are interested please contact Danielle Durant at 315-386-4730.

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.

BINGO

Canton – The Knights of Columbus will have BINGO.

Dates: Feb. 13, 20, 27

Time: Doors open at 4:30 p.m., first game is at 7 p.m.

Place: K of C Hall

Features: Bring a friend or your family. Snack bar available.

LENTEN FISH FRY

Gouverneur – Lenten Fish Fry to be held every Friday during Lent.

Date: Starting Feb. 24

Time: 4:30 p.m.

Place: St. James School

Cost: Adults, \$12; Children under 5, Free

Features: Dine in or take-out

Contact: Local deliveries available by calling 315-287-0130

40 CANS FOR LENT

Canton – The Knights of Columbus in Canton invite you to participate in the "40 Cans for Lent" program as part of your Lenten journey.

Features: Simply donate one can of food or a non-perishable item for each of the 40 days of Lent. Donations can be made at any of the doors at St. Mary's Church 68 Court St. in Canton. Lent provides an opportunity for each of us to live generously- to show gratitude for God's gifts to us and to share those gifts with others.

ROSARY WITH DEVOTIONS

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

Date: March 4

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: March 4

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.

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 8

MEN'S PRAYER GROUP

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

Date: March 4

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

Date: March 12 (Second Sunday of each month)

Time: 9 a.m. to 12:30 p.m.

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.

ALPHA

Massena – You are invited to ALPHA.

Date: Tuesdays starting April 4

Time: 6 p.m. to 8:30

Place: St. Mary's Social Hall

Contact: Parish office at 315-769-2469 or go to massenacatholics.com for info or to register.

DIOCESAN EVENTS**SURVIVING DIVORCE**

The Family Life Office is offering the Surviving Divorce Program, starting late February in Gouverneur, Canton and Potsdam/Colton.

Dates: Facilitators at each site will contact registrants to establish exact dates and times for the meetings.

Cost: \$25

Features: Surviving Divorce features twelve video presentations that cover topics such as shock and grief, anger and forgiveness, money issues, dealing with children and a former spouse, and annulment and remarriage. This program is for the

newly separated and divorced and those still struggling with issues many years later. It will help them find answers to their questions, restore their hope, and begin authentic healing.

Contact: Register online at www.rcdony.org/survivingdivorce. For more information contact Steve Tartaglia at 315-393-2920 or startaglia@rcdony.org.

RITE OF ELECTION

Ogdensburg – The Rite of Election (ROE) this year will be held the first Sunday of Lent. All parishioners are invited to come to the Cathedral to experience this liturgy and offer prayer and support to the Catechumen and Candidates preparing for full initiation into the Catholic Church this Easter.

Date: Feb. 26

Time: 2:30 p.m.

Place: St. Mary's Cathedral

Contact: Anita Soltero at asoltero@rcdony.org or 518-310-3669 with questions.

YOUTH LENTEN RETREAT

Lenten Retreats for youth in grades 7 to 12 to be held.

Schedule: March 4 at Sacred Heart Church (Dostie Hall), Watertown 1:30 p.m. to 4 p.m. with Mass at 4:30 p.m.; March 18 at St. Peter's Church (Emmaus Room) 1 p.m. to 3:30 p.m. with Mass at 4 p.m.

Features: During this retreat, young people will be able to have fun while putting together their "Best Lent Yet" plan! This compact retreat will contain moments of fun, reflection, conversation, and workshops. Drinks and snacks will be provided. There is no fee to attend and, retreatants are encouraged to attend the Mass offering.

Contact: Registration is required to attend. The deadline to register is: March 1. To register visit: www.rcdony.org/lentenretreat When registering, please choose the date and location that works best for you. For more information, contact Tom Semeraro @ 315-393-2920 ext. 1415

MIDDLE SCHOOL RETREAT

Massena – The Vocation Office

and the Office of Youth Ministry is sponsoring a Middle School Retreat (Grades 6-8) in the St. Lawrence/Franklin region of the Diocese.

Date: March 22

Time: 9 a.m. to 2 p.m.

Place: St. Mary's Social Hall

Features: The purpose of a Middle School Retreat is to guide young women and men to prayerfully consider what God's plan is for their lives. This invitation is open to students in Grades 6-8 both in the Catholic schools and public schools. This is a Retreat Day for the students and is considered a legal excused absence.

Contact: Contact your pastor, Catholic school principal, or Religious Education Coordinator for a registration form.

CHRISM MASS

Ogdensburg – All the faithful of the Diocese of Ogdensburg are invited to join Bishop LaValley in the annual Renewal of Priestly Commitment, the Blessing of the Holy Oils, and the consecration of the Sacred Chrism for use in all the churches of our Diocese.

Date: March 30

Time: 11 a.m.

Place: St. Mary's Cathedral

Features: This ritual symbolizes that we are one family in Christ. The Chrism Mass will also be livestreamed at <https://www.rcdony.org/livemass>.

DAY OF REFLECTION

Ogdensburg – The Department of Faith Formation will be hosting a Day of Reflection.

Date: April 1

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

Place: Wadhams Hall

Cost: \$30, lunch is included

Features: Sister Mary Michael Fox, OP, a member of the Dominican Sisters of St. Cecilia in Nashville will present "Blessed, Broken, Given: Living Eucharistia!"

Contact: To Register go to www.rcdony.org/dayofreflection

YOUTH RALLY

Lake Placid – "We are Jesus in the

World" Youth Rally to be held for Middle and High school age students.

Date: April 22

Time: 10:30 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. with Mass to follow at St. Agnes Church

Place: High Peaks Resort

Cost: \$35, includes full day pass, lunch, snacks, games and giveaways.

Features: A super presentation from Monet Souza and a bouncing concert from Catholic recording artist, Joe Melendrez. Closing Mass will be offered by Bishop Terry R. LaValley.

Contact: To register please go to www.rcdony.org/youth/rally If you have any questions please contact Jeannie Grizzuto at the Youth Office, 315-393-2920.

LOVING AUTHENTICALLY

All are invited to attend this free seminar, Loving Authentically: Sex, Happiness and Catholic Teaching designed to deepen our understanding of how Church doctrine on sexual morality connects with our happiness.

Schedule: 2 different times and locations to attend April 22, 2023 at St. Bernard's Saranac Lake 9 a.m. to 3 p.m.; May 20, 2023 at St. Mary's Ticonderoga 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. Lunch will be provided.

Contact: to register go www.rcdony.org/lovingauthentically. For more information contact Stephen Tartaglia at 315-393-2920 or startaglia@rcdony.org

GUGGENHEIM SUMMER CAMP

2023 registration is open. New

this year is a mini session for youth 11-13 years old along with the annual sleepaway camp weeks for ages 11 to 18.

Dates: Sason starts July 5 and ends Aug. 11

Cost: Mini session is \$200 and the weeklong sessions is \$425 per camper. Meals and accommodations are included in the registration fee.

Features: There are so many fun things to do at camp! Like arts and crafts, Project Adventure, Liturgy, rappelling, hiking, basketball, or soccer. Guggenheim has its very own beach where you can swim, enjoy watercrafts and play water-sports. Evenings at camp are packed with fun activities like bonfire time, a dance, outdoor movies, and camp-wide games.

Contact: To sign up for camp please visit: www.rcdony.org/youth/camp or call, Jeannie Grizzuto at 315-393-2290 ext. 1413

NEIGHBORING DIOCESES**CATHOLIC MEN'S CONFERENCE**

Syracuse – Diocese of Syracuse Catholic Men's Conference, Ignite 2023 to be held.

Date: March 25

Time: 9 a.m. to 4:45 p.m.

Place: SRC Arena & Event Center

Cost: \$55 through March 7, \$65 after March 7, \$70 at the door

Features: Scheduled speakers include Timothy Cardinal Dolan, Christopher Stefanick, Mike McGlinn and Gus Lloyd. Open to men ages 16 - 96. We are expecting a close to sell-out crowd based on the slated speakers.

Contact: For more information and to register: <https://www.ignitecatholicmen.org>



SCRIPTURE REFLECTIONS

Making choices

Young people need challenges in order to grow. "Go for the gold" is not just for Olympic contenders. It's for all of us. All three of today's Sunday readings shout out to us that challenge. God, speaking through Moses, says to the whole house of Israel, "Be holy, for I the Lord, your God, am holy." It's a call to love one's neighbor as oneself, and not to hold any kind of grudge, or ever to seek revenge.

In the Gospel, Jesus makes it clear that He has not come to destroy the

Law that His Father laid down centuries before, but that He came on earth to fulfill that law. His new law and covenant will go even further. As we resume hearing the Sermon on the Mount this week Jesus goes into detail. "An eye for an eye, and a tooth for a tooth" was the standard rule under the Mosaic law. It meant that a pious Jew could retaliate an injury to the extent that his neighbor had injured him. If a neighbor knocked out one of your teeth, you could only knock out one



Monsignor
Paul E.
Whitmore

February 19

Seventh Sunday in Ordinary Time

READINGS

Leviticus 19:1-2, 17-18

1 Corinthians 3:16-23

Matthew 5:38-48

of his teeth in retribution! But Jesus taught his followers not to retaliate at all! In fact, if a Roman soldier commanded you to carry his baggage for a mile, which was allowed by law, then Jesus' followers were to go with the soldier for two miles. Even today, we admire the person who goes the extra mile for someone.

Jesus' listeners must have scoffed at Jesus

when He told them not only to love your neighbor, but to love your enemies as well! While that may have seemed absurd foolishness, we all know that keeping our distance, and viewing our enemy as somehow sub-human, doesn't get us anywhere. Treating our enemy with compassion can often bring about a reconciliation, and even turn our enemy into a friend.

How can we ever possibly get the grace and strength to follow Jesus' advice? Today's second reading from St. Paul's letter to the Corinthians tells us how. First, he tells us that we are stronger and holier than we think. "Do you not know that you

are the temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwells in you?" Incredible! Talk about bolstering our confidence in ourselves to become perfect! Then St. Paul tells us not be worried if society thinks us fools for acting on Jesus' advice. "For the wisdom of this world is foolishness in the eyes of God..." When we act according to God's wisdom, then we belong to Christ, and Christ belongs to God!"

Jesus' teaching changes our whole attitude toward those with whom we live and work. It brings not only spiritual health to ourselves but a more peaceful world around us.

CALLED TO SERVE

A good marriage doesn't just happen

Congratulations! If you are married, we celebrated a week for us.

Sunday February 12 was World Marriage Day and the week, February 7 to 14, 2023, was observed as National Marriage Week.

The bishops of the United States see this week as "an opportunity to focus on building a culture of life and love that begins with supporting and promoting marriage and the family." In fact, they chose a theme for the week: "Marriage... one flesh, given and received" highlighting "the

one-flesh union of husband and wife that is willed by God. It also indicates the personal self-gift of each spouse, one to the other."

Children are the God-given fruit of marriage. "Children are truly the supreme gift of marriage and contribute greatly to the good of the parents themselves." That quote comes from the Order of Celebrating Matrimony, the official ritual book of the Roman Catholic Church in the United States.

Sounds perfect. We know marriage is not

easy. In fact, the latest statistics I could find report 41% of all first marriages in the U.S. in 2022 would end in divorce.

I looked at the marriage/divorce statistics from our New York State Health Department for 2013 for the counties in our diocese, the Health Department had good solid numbers for that year, and the shocking percentage of failed marriages.

There were 3,645 marriages, civil and religious, in our counties in 2013. There were 1,726 divorces granted. That's 47% folks. Admittedly the divorce cases are not necessarily from the same group that was married, but I believe the numbers have been sim-

ilar in subsequent years.

I'm no sociologist, so I can't begin to explain why couples, who presumably had good intentions when they entered into marriage, suddenly soured on their relationship.

Some of it has to do with attitudes toward commitment. Some people are influenced by what they grew up with. A broken home is a natural environment. Some folks divorce because of infidelity, one spouse or the other, maybe both. Some people divorce because of an abusive situation. They are all sad.

Some of us in the deacon community started talking last week about celebrating the diocese-wide marriage jubilee

this fall at St. Mary's Cathedral with Bishop Terry LaValley.

Of the deacons in this diocese, 95% are married or are widowers. The willingness of our wives to support our clerical vocation and the strength of our marriages contribute greatly to our work for the church. That's why deacons and their wives are natural promoters of the annual Marriage Jubilee. You will see and hear more about the celebration in coming months.

We pray for those folks who, for whatever reason, have dissolved their marriages. May the peace of Christ abide in you.

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



Deacon
Kevin Mastellon

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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

Parish welcomes quake survivors

"The situation in Antioch is dramatic. Entire buildings have collapsed. Mosques and churches have been destroyed. There are dead, there are people buried under the rubble, and in many places no one has yet arrived to try to save them. It is freezing cold, there is no light, there is no water, bread ovens have been destroyed, shops are closed. The streets, filled with debris, are impassable even for rescue vehicles. I am told that at least half of the city is destroyed or has suffered serious damage, especially in the oldest part." This is the dramatic testimony to *Fides* by Father Domenico Bertogli, 86, a Capuchin Friar from Modena, who from the late 1980s until 2022 served as parish priest to the Catholic community of Antakya, the ancient Antioch on the Orontes, now located in the southwestern Turkish province of Hatay. Antakya is less than 200 kilometers from Gaziantep, the closest urban area to the epicenter of the earthquake that has sowed death between Syria and Turkey.

Father Dominic is now in Istanbul, but he is in daily contact with Father Francis, who succeeded him in Antakya as parish priest of the Catholic church dedicated to Saints Peter and Paul. "Our parish," Father Bertogli tells *Fides*, "was not destroyed. It is a low building, and it withstood the shock of the tremors. Only the reception house suffered serious damage. But the mosque and minaret that were right next to the parish collapsed. Two major mosques in the city were also gutted, as well as the Orthodox church and the Protestant church."

Now, the small parish has opened its doors to accommodate displaced families living nearby.

"They feel safer, because the parish has a garden that is an immediately accessible escape route, in case of new tremors," Father Dominic said. "And the looming fear of further tremors also prevents people from facing the emergency with lucidity. There is a need for food, tents and blankets. There is a need for everything."

It was Father Dominic himself who had inaugurated the parish of Saints Peter and Paul so many years ago, in a city laden with memories associated with early apostolic preaching. He had established it by restoring two old crumbling houses in the old Jewish quarter, where presumably the dwellings of the city's first Christians were also concentrated. Having finished the work, he had carved on the stone above the doorway the inscription *Türk Katolik Kilisesi*, which means Turkish Catholic Church.

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

OBITUARIES

Altona – Rosa "Lillian" (Schoepl) Mahony, 91; Mass of Christian Burial Feb. 6, 2023 at Holy Angels Church; burial in Holy Angels Cemetery.

Carthage – Wilfred F. Lewis, 80; Mass of Christian Burial Feb. 11, 2023 at St. James Church; burial in Hillside Cemetery, Great Bend.

Carthage – Marie (Solomon) Millard, 89; Mass of Christian Burial Feb. 6, 2023 at St. James Church; burial in St. James Cemetery.

Ellenburg – Dale M. Boulrice, 68; Mass of Christian Burial Feb. 9, 2023 at St. Edmund's Church; burial in St. Bernard's Cemetery, Lyon Mountain.

Lisbon – Paul J. Brouillette, 85; Mass of Christian Burial Feb. 8, 2023 at St. Philip and James Church.

Hogansburg – Benjamin Joseph Kelly, 94; Mass of Christian Burial Feb. 9, 2023 at St. Regis Church; burial in St. Joseph's Cemetery, Hogansburg.

Malone – Virginia Ann (Prue) LeDuc, 88; Memorial Mass July 8, 2023 at Notre Dame Church; burial in Notre Dame Cemetery.

Massena – Marie M. (Julius) Kerr, 91; Mass of Christian Burial Feb. 9, 2023 at Church of the Sacred Heart; burial in Notre Dame Cemetery, Ogdensburg.

Massena – Dale R. Landon, 87; Funeral Services Feb. 10, 2023 at Phillips Memorial Home; burial in Calvary Cemetery.

Morrisonville – Jerry Reid Ero, 72; Mass of Christian Burial Feb. 10, 2023 at St. Alexander's Church.

Morrisonville – Rita D. (Brault) Goddeau, 97; Mass of Christian Burial Feb. 7, 2023 at St. Alexander's Church; burial in St. James Cemetery.

Morristown – Ellen Burke Hefferman Long, 86; Mass of Christian Burial Feb. 11, 2023 at St. John the Evangelist Church; burial in Pine Hill Cemetery.

Ogdensburg – Kathleen Joyce Brouse, 69; Funeral Services Feb. 9, 2023 at Oswegatchie Memorial Park.

Ogdensburg – Barbara J. (Rider) Lang, 58; Funeral Services Feb. 7, 2023 at the Fox & Murray Funeral Home.

Peru – Richard Steven Agoney Sr., 72; Funeral Services Feb. 8, 2023 at the Hamilton Funeral home; burial in St. Augustine's Cemetery.

Plattsburgh – Joan Florence (Glenn) Lukasiewicz, 97; Mass of Christian Burial Feb. 11, 2023 at St. John's Church; burial in St. Mary's of the Lake Cemetery.

Potsdam – Penny Marie LaValley, 60; Mass of Christian Burial Feb. 7, 2023 at St. Mary's Church.

Redford – Robert W. Wood, 88; Mass of Christian Burial Feb. 8, 2023 at Church of the Assumption.

Saranac Lake – Jewel Ann Foley, 80; Mass of Christian Burial Feb. 19, 2023 at St. Bernard's Church; burial in St. Paul's Cemetery, Bloomingdale.

Star Lake – Anita L. (Rider) Backus, 81; Mass of Christian Burial at St. Hubert's Church.

Utter Lake – Gary J. Plumley, 85; Memorial Services June 24, 2023 at St. Alphonsus; burial in parish cemetery.

Waddington – Patrick Edward Ruddy, 77; Mass of Christian Burial at St. Mary's Church; burial in parish cemetery.

Watertown – James E. Fitzpatrick, 70; Mass of Christian Burial March 17, 2023 at St. Patrick's Church; burial in Immaculate Conception Cemetery, Fairport.

Watertown – Joseph Anthony Scordo, 65; Mass of Christian Burial Feb. 14, 2023 at St. Anthony's Church.

KNIGHTS OF THE COURT



PHOTO BY SCOTT E. NILES/KNIGHTS OF COLUMBUS

Knights of Columbus Sarto Council 1059 in Canton and Assembly 707 held its annual Free Throw Contest. Grand Knight Bob Clemmer and Faithful Navigator Corey Swinwood present certificates for winners in each age group. Winners included Logan Stiles, Jeffrey McCarthy, and Hunter Richardson. All will be able to participate in the next round, Northern District Free Throw Contest, to be held at a later date.

SPECIAL COLLECTION ASH WEDNESDAY - FEBRUARY 22, 2023

SUPPORT THE CHURCH IN CENTRAL AND EASTERN EUROPE

RESTORE THE CHURCH BUILD THE FUTURE

In late February 2022, after years of simmering tensions and a months-long buildup of troops on the Russia-Ukraine border, Russian forces invaded Ukraine in a nationwide assault involving ground forces, armored vehicles, warships, and airstrikes. The need for humanitarian aid and pastoral support for the Ukrainian people was great and immediate, especially the millions of internally displaced persons fleeing war-torn areas for other locations within the country. The United States Conference of Catholic Bishops' Subcommittee on Aid to the Church in Central and Eastern Europe was poised to provide immediate aid to Ukraine thanks to well-established, decades-long relationships with bishops and Catholic organizations in the region.

Through the generosity of parishioners to the Collection for the Church in Central and Eastern Europe, nearly 50 emergency aid grants, totaling more than half a million dollars, brought humanitarian aid to victims and refugees in Ukraine, Poland, Slovakia, and Moldova between February and May 2022. For example, the Kyiv archeparchy of the Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church (UGCC)

provided emergency shelter in its cathedral basements to Kyiv residents fleeing bombardment. The UGCC's patriarchal curia was provided with a satellite communications package that allowed key personnel to maintain contact and coordinate priestly ministry and emergency relief to people nationwide. Caritas Ukraine acquired the food, tents, blankets, and personal hygiene products so desperately needed by people who sought aid at relief centers throughout the country with collection funds.

Your support for the collection is crucial to helping the Church fulfill its mission to minister to people's spiritual and material needs in Ukraine and more than 25 other countries throughout Central and Eastern Europe, especially in times of serious hardship.

More information about the collection and the range of projects it supports can be found at www.usccb.org/ccce.

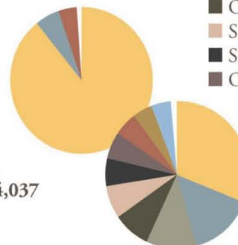
2021 DISTRIBUTION OF GRANTS

Total Number of Grants Approved: 348

Total Amount Approved: \$6,495,498

EXPENSES

Grants and Donations	89.18%
Program Costs	5.71%
Promotions and Fundraising Expenses	4.07%
Administrative Expenses	1.04%
Total Expenses	\$7,264,037



PROGRAM AREA	GRANTS	AMOUNT	PERCENT
Construction	79	\$2,031,151	31.27%
Evangelization	74	\$941,883	14.50%
Scholarships	70	\$734,708	11.31%
Operational Support	31	\$538,358	8.29%
Seminary Support	15	\$471,160	7.25%
Social Aid	27	\$406,000	6.25%
Other	5	\$379,338	5.84%
Vehicle Purchase	17	\$333,342	5.13%
Education	9	\$296,000	4.56%
Equipment/ Accommodation Purchase	14	\$280,588	4.32%
Multimedia	7	\$82,970	1.28%



Collection for the Church in Central and Eastern Europe

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