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The Diocese of Ogdensburg Volume 77 Number 43

# NORTH COUNTRY CATHOLIC

MARCH 22, 2023

## AND THE WINNERS ARE...



PHOTO BY TERRY WHITE

**Jeffrey McCarthy, 14, and Logan Stiles, 13, won the Knights of Columbus Regional Free Throw Contest earlier this month in Champlain. Stiles and McCarthy were slated to represent the region at the Conference Challenge in Syracuse March 18. The event in Champlain included winners of free throw contests around the district.**

## HELPING PARISHES PROVIDE CONFIRMATION RETREATS



The Office of Faith Formation and Youth Ministry recently worked with Father Raymond J. Moreau and Deacon Lee Trudeau at St. Augustine's in North Bangor and St. Mary's in Brushton to hold a confirmation retreat for students from those communities, as well as students from Malone and Fort Covington. In previous years, the diocese sponsored confirmation retreats featuring NET Ministries. With that group unable to staff this year's program, the Faith Formation Department developed a retreat offering of its own.

FULL STORY, PAGE 3

## Pope: Focus on advancement is 'paganism'

By Hannah Brockhaus  
Catholic News Agency

Pope Francis said Wednesday that everyone in the Church is equal in dignity, thus a focus on hierarchical advancement is "pure paganism."

"Within the framework of the unity of the mission, the diversity of charisms and ministries must not give rise, within the ecclesial body, to privileged categories," the pope said at his March 15 general audience in St. Peter's Square.

"There is no promotion here, and when you conceive of the Christian life as an advancement,

that the one above commands others, because he has succeeded in climbing, that is not Christianity," he said. "That is pure paganism."

At his weekly meeting with the public, Francis reflected on the call to apostleship as part of the larger theme of evangelization.

"What does it mean to be an apostle? It means being sent for a mission," he said, adding that it is also a vocation.

Being an apostle of Christ is not just a matter for bishops or priests but the call of every baptized person, Pope Francis said.

"Who has more dignity in the

Church? The bishops, the priests?" he said. "No. We are all Christians in service to others."

He said a religious sister is just as an important for the Church as anyone else: the baptized, unbaptized, a child, a bishop.

"We are equal. And when one of the parts believes himself to be more important than the others, and he sticks his nose up like this, he errs," he emphasized.

"The vocation that Jesus gives to everyone, and also to those who seem to be in the highest positions, is service."

The pope said if you see someone in a "high" position in the

Church who is vain, you should pray for "the poor guy," because he has not understood his vocation.

"The vocation of God is adoration of the Father, love of the community, and service," he added.

Pope Francis drew from documents of the Second Vatican Council to illustrate what it means to be an apostle today.

"The Council says: 'The Christian vocation by its very nature is also a vocation to the apostolate,'" he said, quoting the decree on the apostolate of the laity, *Apostolicam Actuositatem*.

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

## Editorial Office:

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

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(315) 608-7556

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news@northcountry  
catholic.org

## Entered at the

Post Office:

Ogdensburg, NY

13669 and

additional mailing offices as  
Periodical Postage.

## Subscription:

For one year:

In-Diocese Rate: \$27

Outside of Diocese Rate: \$30

Matters for publication

should be

addressed to

PO Box 326

Ogdensburg, NY 13669

and should be received by

Thursday prior to

publication.

Paper is printed each

Monday;

deadline is Wednesday.

Member, Catholic Press

Association.

## POSTMASTER:

Send address changes to

North Country Catholic,

PO Box 326

Ogdensburg, NY

13669-0326

# The streak was broken

I broke my streak. It was probably a decade ago. Several colleagues and I were competing as a team in a weight-loss competition at the industrial facility where we were employed.

Our employer had a fitness center on-site, so one of my teammates and I would meet at the end of our workdays to hit the gym. I had a routine for days days I wasn't at work, too. My goal was to exercise at least six days

each week through the six-week contest. My team was in it to win it, and I wanted to carry my weight for the team (or lose it, as the case may be).



Darcy L.  
Fargo

We were just over a month into the contest, and I had done every workout – six days every week.

And then there week when I didn't.

I don't remember what happened, but I remember not getting in a workout two days in a row – my rest day and one other.

I failed in my attempt to hit my six-days-a-week goal. I beat myself up about it. I kept telling myself I had failed to meet a commitment and had let my team down.

As I apologized to my workout buddy for failing to live up to my commitment, she snapped me back to reality. "You've lost the highest percentage of weight on the team. You can take a day off. Missing one day didn't negate the 30-plus days before that."

I thought of that recently as I completely and utterly failed in my Lenten com-

mitment and caught myself dwelling on the failure.

One bad day didn't negate the efforts before it. I'm not an expert, but I don't think God grabs an eraser and blots out all the times we've tried to be close to Him when we have one little lapse in our efforts. I'm pretty sure God takes joy in our attempts. I think He also takes joy in the fact that we're sorry for our failings and seek His forgiveness.

He gives that forgiveness freely and time and time again.

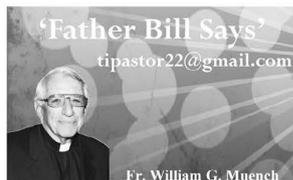
That's a streak that'll never be broken.

## Spend some time with three gospels

Among the crowning glories of Lent are the three glorious Gospel stories that are read on the middle Sundays of Lent. First is the story of Jesus and the Samaritan woman at Jacob's well. The second is the healing of the man born blind. The third is the resuscitation of Lazarus. Today, I would like to share with you some things about each of these readings.

So, the first of these stories – Jesus is alone at Jacob's Well when the Samaritan woman comes to the well to get some water. Jesus asks her for a drink of water. He then begins a conversation with her. We know that this is an unheard-of thing to do in those days. The Jews and the Samaritans have nothing to do with each other. They do not get along with each other. So, the woman is rather surprised that Jesus begins to speak with her.

Then we learn how Jesus leads this Samaritan woman on a journey of faith. Jesus leads her to discover God in a special way, and she discovers belief in Jesus as the Messiah who is to come. Later in the story, we learn



that she brings several of the townspeople to this same faith in the Lord Jesus. Today, this story teaches us that Jesus meets us where we are each day. Jesus knows a great deal about this Samaritan woman, yet he is never judgmental toward her. Instead, Jesus reaches out to her hoping to make her realize her own self-worth.

Throughout this story of Jesus meeting the Samaritan woman, we can realize that all that happens does so because of the presence of Jesus. This is certainly true for you and I today. When we recognize the presence of Jesus, we will realize that Jesus comes to lead and guide us in love and peace when we pray or participate at Mass. We realize that the Lord comes to be with us to guide us, to teach us and to lead us to come alive as disciples of the Lord.

In the next story, Jesus

gives the man born blind the gift of sight. The story goes on to describe to us how the man born blind must try hard to prove to the Pharisees that he is truly born blind and now is able to see through the hand of Jesus. We learn that after a while, Jesus meets the man and leads him to find faith in God.

This story teaches us to recognize that there are too many times when we are truly blind, even though we have sight. We do not see that the Lord Jesus asks so much of us; we do not see that we do not realize how much our God loves us; we do not see that Jesus wants us to be his disciples and that he has so many gifts to give us through his love. The story helps us recognize that we are in need of healing. We are missing so much, just as truly as this man who was born blind.

Finally, on another Sunday we listen to the story of Lazarus, the brother of Martha and Mary, who has died and is brought back to life by Jesus. Jesus comes and speaks at length with Martha. Jesus wants Martha, and each one of us, to real-

ize that our God wants to be with us in love and wants to unite us with him in our time of resurrection to new life. Jesus declares to Martha that he is the resurrection and life. And we learn that we must meet with Our Lord so as to experience his resurrection.

Jesus goes to Lazarus' tomb. I find it wonderful to learn from the story that Jesus wept for all of us often, especially when we lose a loved one. The Lord understands our grief. The Lord wants to comfort us and be with us and weep with us. This story then tells us of the dramatic moment when Jesus calls Lazarus from the tomb and back to life. I believe that one day, Jesus will call each of us to resurrection and new life.

I would like to encourage you to make these three stories an important part of your Lent. After you listen to them at Mass, take time to read them again slowly and attentively. So, John 4, Jesus and the Samaritan woman; John 9, Jesus and the man born blind; and John 11, Jesus resuscitates Lazarus.

# Helping parishes provide student retreats

By Darcy Fargo  
Editor

With NET Ministries unable to travel to the Diocese of Ogdensburg to provide confirmation retreats this year, the Department of Faith Formation is offering parishes support as they plan for their youth to have an opportunity to experience a retreat.

"One of the preparation requirements for reception of the sacrament of confirmation is a retreat experience," said Anita Soltero, Director of Youth Ministry and Assistant Director of Faith Formation. "Our parish Faith Formation directors are very talented and provide great retreat experiences for their students. Offering a good retreat requires a great deal of preparation and some parishes have limited resources. To relieve that burden, the diocese has in the past secured the services of NET Ministries to run retreats on both the East and Western sides of the diocese where up to 100 youth can gather for a unique retreat experience. NET ministries trains young adults year-round to minister to their peers. They travel around the country offering retreats on a wide variety of topics in addition to confirmation."

After a two-year hiatus due to COVID, NET ministries returned to the diocese in 2022 for confirmation retreats. This year, however, NET Ministries did not have enough staff to send a team to the North Country.

Unable to find a similar replacement, the diocesan Department of Faith Formation and Youth



(Front to back) Jacob Debyah, Tristan Russell, Gage Halavin and Jacob Fargo, all confirmation students from St. Augustine's in North Bangor and St. Mary's in Brushton, serve as altar servers for the vigil Mass with Father Raymond J. Moreau, pastor, at St. Augustine's on March 11 after their confirmation retreat.

Ministry collaborated to create a retreat experience that could be rolled out virtually or in-person around the diocese.

Soltero, Faith Formation Assistant Director Catherine Russell and former Youth Ministry Director Tom Semeraro worked together to develop the retreat.

"The three of us came together and were talking about the fact that kids that age seem to think their religious education and training is done with confirmation," Soltero said. "We all kind of came to the idea at the same time – God's Not Done

With You Yet."

The program includes a series of video presentations created by the local Faith Formation/Youth Ministry team, as well as a video of popular priest and speaker Father Mike Schmitz and witness testimonies from young adults who served as counselors at Camp Guggenheim.

"We tie in the sacrament of Baptism and the vows made for them when they were babies by their parents and Godparents," Soltero said. "We talk about how it's time for them to take ownership of those vows

## A different delivery for confirmation class

By Darcy Fargo  
Editor

While conducting a confirmation retreat in the parish, the Department of Faith Formation discovered a vibrant confirmation program being run in an innovative way at the parishes of St. Augustine and St. Mary's of Brushton.

After trying various confirmation program models at parishes where he's served over the years, Father Raymond J. Moreau, pastor of St. Augustine's in North Bangor and St. Mary's in Brushton, says he feels his current model of delivery has been the most successful.

"He puts the onus on the students to complete all necessary requirements in order to receive the sacrament," Soltero said.

Father Moreau currently runs the program with

CONTINUED ON PAGE 4

and what they mean in terms of our beliefs."

In addition to the videos, the retreat includes plans for prayer reflections and journaling, which the youth complete around the video segments.

"There's a popular Christian song, 'God's Not Done with You,' by Tourin Wells," Soltero added. "It's a beautiful song, and we use it as a reflection piece during the retreat."

While the retreat is packaged in such a way that it could be easily rolled out by a catechist or youth ministry leader, Department of Faith Formation and Youth Ministry staff is also available to conduct the retreat in parish/regional locations.

On March 11, Soltero worked with St. Mary's in Brushton and St. Augustine's in North Bangor, Father Raymond J. Moreau, pastor, and Deacon Lee

Trudeau, director of Religious Formation, to conduct a confirmation retreat for seven youth from those parishes, as well as several from Malone and Fort Covington.

"It's great when smaller groups can come together to share the retreat, and that is the idea of offering a diocesan event," Soltero said. "Some parishes have only one, two or three students preparing for the sacrament. Group discussion and faith sharing are part of the retreat experience, which is hard to do with only two or three students, so it's great when multiple parishes can pool resources in this way."

The youth concluded their retreat experience by attending the vigil Mass at St. Augustine's. Confirmation students served as altar servers, greeters and in other ministry roles for the Mass.

## KNIGHTS SUPPORT FOOD PANTRIES



The Knights of Columbus, Father John Cosmic Council #291, Carthage, recently provided support to community food pantries with \$250 donations for each. (Left) Grand Knight Garry Stevens presents a check to Father Todd E. Thibault and St. James Food Pantry Supervisor Yvonne Ablan. (Middle) Past Grand Knight Brian Thompson presents Sister Mary Ellen Brett with a check for St. Mary's food pantry. (Right) Past Grand Knight Jim Gratch presents a check to Jennie Burke in support of Village Ecumenical Ministries (VEM).

## Different delivery of confirmation class

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 3

Deacon Lee Trudeau, director of Religious Formation for the parishes in North Bangor and Brushton, and three other instructors.

The program is divided into eight topics – God and Jesus Christ, Liturgy and the Sacraments, Belonging and Church, Scripture, Morality, Christian Vocation, Social Justice, and Holy Spirit and Confirmation – spread over two years. Each

topic is covered in two classes, each two hours long. Classes are held only in the months of September, October, November and December.

“(Students) can choose to do it over time,” Soltero explained. “They are required to complete all eight topics. If they miss a topic, they can make it up when it comes around again.”

This year, the classes were held on Sunday afternoons, a time Father

Moreau set after consulting with the participating students and families in a meeting before the start of the 2022-23 program.

Participants are also required to attend Mass weekly and sign in upon arrival or exit. If students and their families attend Mass in another parish, they are asked to obtain a copy of that parish's bulletin and have it signed by the celebrant of the Mass.

“In addition to the Confirmation Retreat, (students) are also required to participate in the parish's Lenten mission for two years,” Soltero said. “There is a service requirement and interview with the pastor.”

Soltero said the format of the program made it easier to recruit instructors.

“The other benefit to running four topics each year the way (Father Moreau) does is that he is able to obtain four teachers who each teach only one topic, two sessions, each year. The ministry is spread over four individuals who each give two Sundays.”

Soltero said it may seem at first glance like the program is too abbreviated to be effective, but she said her experience working with the students from the parish program convinced her otherwise.

“Based on my experience of this group, hearing the answers they gave to questions and what they said in the dis-

cussions, they are very well prepared and have a solid knowledge of their faith,” Soltero said. “They not only have knowledge, but they also have an ownership as well, which is something we rarely see in this age group. It's what we strive for.”

Soltero also noted that Father Moreau attends nearly every class and is actively involved with the students' preparation for the sacrament.

“When I left the retreat after Mass on Saturday, March 11, my heart was full of joy because of these young people who are faith filled and joyful about it,” Soltero said. “So many of our young people have turned away from the faith or have been driven away by societal pressures, but not this group. It is possible to foster great faith in young people, and we can see it in this group.

At the end of the day, I felt very strongly that Father Ray's students are certainly not done with God yet! Praise God!”

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# 'A Call to Service': Committee plans event

By Darcy Fargo  
Editor

Work continues for the Living Stones Planning Committee, and the committee is planning an event to engage others in being Living Stones in their parishes.

The Living Stones Committee assists the diocese in planning activities.

"Our committee is kind of a liaison between what's happening at the diocesan level, starting with Bishop (Terry R.) LaValley, and the local parish level," said committee Chair Gary West. "Our role is to reach out to the pastors. That's what we're doing right now."

As a continuation of its efforts to reach the "local parish level," the Living Stones Committee is

working with the Commissioned Lay Ministers in the Jefferson-Lewis Deanery to host a program for that group, "Living Stones: A Call to Service," on April 20 at St. Anthony's Church in Watertown. The event begins with Mass at 5:30 p.m., followed by dinner in Sechi Hall (downstairs of St. Anthony's Church) and the program. The cost for dinner is \$15. There is no cost for those who attend only the program, which begins at 6:45 p.m. and is scheduled to last 30 to 45 minutes. Registration is required and can be found at [www.rcdony.org/clm-event](http://www.rcdony.org/clm-event). The event is open to the public.

"We're hoping to replicate this program around the diocese," said West. During the program,

representatives of the Living Stones Committee will cover four main objectives, West said.

"The first objective is letting people know what the Living Stones Committee is, the committee's goals and plans for the future," West said. "Second, we're going to share the challenges that lie ahead for the local Church, specifically looking at the years 2025 to 2030. Third, we're going to look at how we can engage the laity more at different levels of ministry in the Church. Our fourth objective is looking at how we create vibrant parishes."

West said the main focus will be on the engaging the laity and creating vibrant parishes.

"The focus is how do we engage the laity more in the ministry of the

Church," West said. "We have laity involved now in a variety of ways, but the reality is that they're going to have to take a greater role."

West pointed to an event, Stations of the Cross, held recently in Watertown.

"The event was run by laity and a deacon," he said. "That's what we need. We need laity helping in those ministries."

Key to that, West said, is "looking at how we define Church."

"As a youth, if you asked me how I define Church, I'd talk about the building, the place we go for Mass on Sundays and feast days, the place we go to pray. We have to look at the Church as the people, following the leadership of Christ. It's the ministries that go out in our communities and

serve those outside our church walls. It's also the ministries that take place within that building. But, in a nutshell, Church is the people. That's been hard for me to wrap my head around at various times, but it's the reality."

Presenters include Father Christopher C. Carrara, Father Jay Seymour and Deacon Peter Wooschlager. West will also give introductory remarks.

"These are presenters who were recommended based on their familiarity with specific topics," West said. "The hope is that we'll get different presenters for different regions of the diocese, and we'll get to hear from a variety of voices."

After the April event, the committee will evaluate plans for future similar gatherings.



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## Environmental Stewardship

## Diversity &amp; inclusion

One of the most worthwhile endeavors that can be undertaken during Lent is to try to look at others through the eyes of God. God's vision is always accompanied by His profound sense of compassion, mercy, forgiveness and unconditional love for everyone. Jesus never expressed bitterness or hatred toward anyone, always trusted in the will of His Father and allowed the Creator's plan to evolve. We should, too.

All too often we see people of a different color, from a different cultural or religious background, or displaying a non-traditional sexual orientation as individuals to avoid or shun. We frequently view these people as a threat to our traditions and way of life, even though we know nothing about them. However, God sees only their souls, which are no different than ours, and He loves them as deeply as He loves each one of us. Ash Wednesday impresses upon us that we are all made of the same earthen dust.

As a general rule, the more diverse an ecosystem, the better chance it has to deal with various types of adversities. Human communities are no different. Because of the rapidly changing facets of life around the planet, we need a diverse population that includes as many types as possible in order to contend with changes that will inevitably occur.

In order to heal the overall environment, we must first heal the divisions that have opened in our society, and we must learn to embrace everyone, especially outsiders, in order to face the challenges approaching. We must never be afraid to smile at another person, regardless of who they may be. Jesus made it a point to associate with the outcasts of His society at that time. He never turned away from tax collectors, prostitutes, lepers, Gentiles and Samaritans. Let us try to heal nature by embracing diversity.

## Albany diocese files for bankruptcy

By Kevin J. Jones  
Catholic News Agency

The Catholic Diocese of Albany has decided to file for bankruptcy, saying a financial reorganization will help provide some compensation for the hundreds of sex abuse victims who have filed lawsuits.

"I understand this filing causes uncertainty, but as a Church and a community of faith, we must recognize that victim-survivors are our sons and daughters, and our brothers and sisters, and all of us, without exception, must work together to find ways to help them," Bishop Edward B. Scharfenberger of Albany said in a March 15 statement.

## Rest in Peace

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

**March 23** – Msgr. Paul T. Joly, 1987; Deacon David L. Clark, 2020

**March 24** – Rev. George Roskwitalski, O.F.M. Conv., 1980

**March 25** – Rev. Michael D. Charbonneau, 1909

**March 26** – Rev. Jean P. Bernard, O.M.I., 1885; Rev. Thomas J. Rodgers, O.S.A., 1971; Msgr. William E. LaVallee, 1976

**March 27** – Rev. Bernard Marron, 1927; Rev. Henry Cormerais, 1938; Rev. Lawrence J. Gerrity, O.S.A., 1981; Rev. John L. Gallagher, O.S.A., 1982

**March 28** – Rev. Francis McShane, O.S.A., 1932; Rev. Walter C. McMahon, 1978; Rev. Lawrence A. Mallette, 1989; Rev. Joseph P. Trombley, 2001

"It's a natural thing for us to do, especially for those who have been hurt by an institution we are all called to be a part of. We must reach out to all and journey with them through the healing process," the bishop's statement read. Parishes and schools are not part of the filing and are incorporated as different entities, the bishop said.

"It is very important for me to point out that the mission and ministries of the diocese and parishes will continue during the reorganization proceedings," he said. He asked for prayers "for all involved, that God's peace and healing can prevail."

Scharfenberger said the diocese has been named in more than 400 lawsuits filed from August 2019 to August 2021 under the Child Victims Act of 2019. The

act allowed a retrospective one-year "look back" window during which alleged abuse victims could file lawsuits long after the statute of limitations had ended. Then-Gov. Andrew Cuomo extended the window through 2021, citing the obstacles caused by the coronavirus pandemic.

The diocese has settled more than 50 of these lawsuits. Settlements have been "large" and the "limited funds" have been depleted, the bishop said.

Chapter 11 bankruptcy will ensure "some compensation" for all abuse victims with pending litigation. The collection of debts and legal actions against the diocese will halt and a reorganization plan will determine available assets and insurance carrier participation "to negotiate reasonable settlements" with abuse victims and other creditors.

There is no timeline for the Chapter 11 bankruptcy, the Albany Diocese said in a statement. Other reorganizations have continued for several years.

Bankruptcy reorgani-

zation plans usually must be approved by the affected creditors, including lawsuit plaintiffs, and also by the bankruptcy court.

The bankruptcy announcement follows months of negotiations between attorneys for the diocese and for the plaintiffs.

Several attorneys for plaintiffs complained that the diocese's offer of a global settlement fell far short of a reasonable amount and alleged that the diocese's attorneys had obstructed the legal discovery process, the Albany Times-Union reported.

Scharfenberger took office in 2014. According to the diocese's website, the Albany Diocese serves about 316,000 Catholics in a population of 1.4 million. About 68 diocesan priests are in active ministry, the diocese's website reports.

The Albany Diocese joins five New York dioceses that have declared bankruptcy amid the lawsuits brought under the Child Victims Act. The other dioceses are Rochester, Syracuse, Buffalo, and Rockville Centre.

## To Report Abuse

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

## Bishop's Public Schedule

**March 22** – 10:30 a.m. – Council of Priests Meeting at Bishop's Residence  
**March 23** – Noon – Mass at St. Mary's Cathedral  
**March 26** – 8 a.m. – Mass at St. Mary's Cathedral  
11 a.m. – Mass at St. Mary's Cathedral  
**March 29** – 9 a.m. – St. Joseph's Home Board of Managers Meeting at St. Joseph's Home in Ogdensburg

## Protecting God's Children

**The Diocese of Ogdensburg** has scheduled sessions for Protecting God's Children for Adults. Pre-registration online is required. Participants may preregister at [www.virtus.org](http://www.virtus.org).  
Upcoming sessions:  
**March 21** – 6 p.m. – Immaculate Heart Central, Watertown  
**March 29** – 6 p.m. – St. Mary's Church in Massena.



# Roman Catholic Diocese of Ogdensburg Report of Special Funds

## A Letter From The Diocesan Fiscal Officer

### A Message from Bishop Terry LaValley

Dear Sisters and Brothers in Christ:

I am pleased to provide this introduction to the *Report of Special Funds* for the Fiscal Year ending June 30, 2022. As is our custom, each year this report is published for your review. It completes our accounting of all those funds entrusted to the Diocese of Ogdensburg for the 2021-2022 Fiscal Year. These monies are set aside for special purposes and investments.



Your generous giving provides essential resources for the Diocese of Ogdensburg to proclaim the Gospel and minister faithfully to our sisters and brothers in Christ. Through economic distress and uncertain financial times, the people of the North Country continue to support generously our Church's various ministries. We are truly blessed!

I especially wish to thank our former Diocesan Fiscal Officer, Michael J. Tooley who retired in November 2022 and Mark T. Mashaw, our new Diocesan Fiscal Officer as well as our excellent fiscal staff for the careful manner in which they safeguard all the financial resources that have been entrusted to our Diocese, ensuring that they are used for the purposes intended. I am also grateful to the members of the Diocesan Finance Council and Investment Advisory Committee who meet regularly and offer their expert counsel in service to the Church of the North Country.

Please know of my sincere appreciation to all the members of our Diocesan family, particularly during these most challenging times. May Mary, under the title of the Immaculate Conception, our Diocesan Patroness, help us all to follow her Son as a people richly blessed.

Faithfully yours in Christ,

Most Reverend Terry R. LaValley  
Bishop of Ogdensburg

The Diocesan Fiscal Office is pleased to present in the *North Country Catholic* the Report of Special Funds for the year ended June 30, 2022, along with comparisons to prior years. Special Funds are funds that the diocese holds for special purposes, such as Disability Insurance, Property and Liability Insurance, Missionary Projects, Priests Retirement and Unemployment Insurance. Also included in Special Funds are funds that belong to diocesan institutions which have been forwarded to the diocese for investment, such as the Diocesan Trust Fund and the Deposit & Loan Fund. Information is included in this report for the Lay Employees Retirement Trust. All Special Funds statements for 2021-22 presented herein except for the Lay Employees Retirement Trust have been extracted from the audited financial report that was published in the November 23, 2022, issue of the *North Country Catholic*. The Lay Employees' Retirement Trust is a separate entity with its own audited financial statements and the 2021-22 information contained herein was obtained from those audited statements.

#### DIOCESAN TRUST FUND

As of June 30, 2022, the Diocesan Trust Fund had principal assets with a cost of \$26,334,866 and a market value of \$24,978,769. The investment portfolio had a negative rate of return of 12.48% in 2021-22. In the first six months of the 2022-23 fiscal year the Diocesan Trust Fund had a negative rate of return of 0.20%, and its market value was \$24,422,383 as of December 31, 2022. The diocese paid dividend distributions from the Fund in the amount of \$875,000 during the fiscal year, a rate of return of 3.50% on investments in the Fund.

#### DEPOSIT & LOAN FUND

The Deposit & Loan Fund had a decrease of \$2,708,473 in its net assets in 2021-22, bringing its net asset balance to \$1,652,985. The interest rate to depositors was 1.5% in 2021-22, and the interest rate on loans was 4%. The interest rate paid to depositors was reduced to 0.5% effective October 1, 2022. In the first six months of 2022-23 the Deposit & Loan Fund net assets decreased by \$31,508. As of June 30, 2022, total deposits in the Fund, including diocesan central office monies, totaled \$18,801,239, and the balance of loan principal due the Fund amounted to \$3,367,108.

#### PROTECTED SELF-INSURANCE PROGRAM

Expenses exceeded revenue by \$82,303 in the Protected Self-Insurance Program in the fiscal year ended June 30, 2022. The program remains financially sound, as it has reserves for claims in the amount of \$1,074,031 and net assets of \$1,674,866 as of June 30, 2022. The program received a department grant of \$100,000 from the Deposit & Loan Fund to cover the cost of settlement of certain sexual misconduct claims in 2021-22.

#### LAY EMPLOYEES' RETIREMENT TRUST

The Lay Employees' Retirement Trust had a decrease in net assets of \$5,947,220 during the fiscal year ended June 30, 2022, more than offsetting the previous year's increase of \$5,159,386, reducing its total net assets to \$26,051,034. The investment portfolio had a negative rate of return of 12.2% in 2021-22. The market value of Trust investments was \$24,948,437 at December 31, 2022, and \$25,918,815 at June 30, 2022. The Fund's July 1, 2022, actuarial valuation

determined the Fund's funded status dropped from 85.5% one year earlier to 67.4%. The Plan is 97% funded as it relates to covering obligations to current retirees. Diocesan employers contributed 10% of lay employee wages to fund the Plan in 2021-22 and will contribute 11.1% of wages in 2022-23.



#### UNEMPLOYMENT INSURANCE FUND

The Unemployment Insurance Fund had an increase in net assets of \$10,181 for the year ended June 30, 2022, bringing total net assets to \$316,186. The diocese received notice from the NYS Department of Labor in February 2022 that self-insured programs would not be liable for unemployment insurance claims from March 9, 2020, through December 31, 2021. A receivable of \$74,287 was recorded on June 30, 2021, for reimbursement by NYS on claims previously paid during that time. The diocese received payment during the year ended June 30, 2022.

#### MISSIONARY PROJECTS FUND

The Missionary Projects Fund had an increase in net assets in the amount of \$16,157 for the year ended June 30, 2022, bringing its net assets to \$239,759. The Diocese of Ogdensburg continues to provide monthly financial support to its former mission in Mollendo, Peru, as well as other missions in the world as deemed appropriate by Bishop LaValley. Moneys are given to support the U.S. Bishops' annual appeal for Latin America. Additionally, with Bishop LaValley's approval, financial support is given from the Fund to urgent need collections taken at times of global emergency/crisis.

#### DISABILITY INSURANCE FUND

The Disability Insurance Fund had a surplus in the amount of \$9,063 for the year ended June 30, 2022. Claims paid in 2021-22 were \$6,156 lower than those paid in 2020-21. Net assets of this Fund as of June 30, 2022, were \$275,558.

#### PRIESTS' RETIREMENT FUND

Net assets of the Priests' Retirement Fund decreased by \$2,317,189 during the year ended June 30, 2022. The Fund recorded investment income of \$195,386 and net losses on investments in the amount of \$1,413,147 in the fiscal year. Support from Christmas collections was \$196,251, as compared to \$122,608 from the prior year. The diocese reduced the requested Christmas collection contribution rate from 75% to 50% in the prior year to assist local parish finances during the pandemic.

The Diocesan Fiscal Office is available to answer any questions regarding the Report of Special Funds. Please feel free to call the Diocesan Fiscal Office at (315) 393-2920, ext. 1210, email at [mmashaw@rcdony.org](mailto:mmashaw@rcdony.org) or visit the Fiscal Office at 604 Washington Street in Ogdensburg during normal office hours.

Mark T. Mashaw  
Diocesan Fiscal Officer

## THE ROMAN CATHOLIC DIOCESE OF OGDENSBURG

*Diocesan Trust Fund Principal*

January 1, 1977 - June 30, 2022

STATEMENT OF CHANGES IN PRINCIPAL

	January 1, 1977 - June 30, 2020	July 1, 2020 - June 30, 2021	July 1, 2021 - June 30, 2022	January 1, 1977 - June 30, 2022
Opening Book Balance	\$ -	\$ 27,948,236	\$ 24,052,707	\$ -
Net Deposits	14,218,013	(2,865,405)	(559,037)	10,793,571
Net Realized Gain on Sales	25,300,624	3,988,180	1,754,300	31,043,104
Fees [Custody/Management]	(3,266,508)	(277,604)	(292,516)	(3,836,628)
Transfers to Pay Dividends	(14,003,027)	(875,000)	(875,000)	(15,753,027)
Net Adjustments*	5,699,134	(3,865,700)	2,254,412	4,087,846
Closing Book Balance	\$ 27,948,236	\$ 24,052,707	\$ 26,334,866	\$ 26,334,866
Market Value	\$ 32,015,971	\$ 31,055,291	\$ 24,978,769	\$ 24,978,769

\* includes income reinvested for fund, funds in transit, etc.

\*\* Assets at NBT Bank, Dimensional Fund Advisors, Christian Brothers Investment Services &amp; The Investment Fund for Foundations.

	Book Value	Market Value	% Yield (Book)	% Yield (Market)
<b>NBT BANK INVESTMENTS</b>				
Bonds & U.S. Government Agencies & Bond Funds	\$ 9,353,658	\$ 8,497,249	1.72%	1.89%
Equities & Equity Funds	7,538,576	8,089,010	1.63%	1.52%
Real Estate and Real Estate Trusts	552,014	718,798	2.24%	1.72%
Money Market	1,274,000	1,274,000	1.41%	1.41%
<b>TOTAL NBT BANK INVESTMENTS</b>	<b>18,718,248</b>	<b>18,579,057</b>	<b>1.68%</b>	<b>1.69%</b>
<b>CHRISTIAN BROTHERS INVESTMENT SERVICES</b>				
Bond Funds	2,013,427	1,844,135	1.56%	1.70%
Equity Funds	4,872,476	3,925,314	0.96%	1.19%
<b>TOTAL CHRISTIAN BROTHERS INVESTMENT SERVICES</b>	<b>6,885,903</b>	<b>5,769,449</b>	<b>1.14%</b>	<b>1.36%</b>
<b>DIMENSIONAL FUND ADVISORS</b>	<b>626,000</b>	<b>537,603</b>		
<b>THE INVESTMENT FUND FOR FOUNDATIONS</b>	<b>104,715</b>	<b>92,660</b>		
<b>TOTAL INVESTMENTS</b>	<b>\$ 26,334,866</b>	<b>\$ 24,978,769</b>		

*Deposit & Loan Fund*

July 1, 2020 - June 30, 2022

BALANCE SHEET

	June 30, 2022	June 30, 2021
<b>ASSETS</b>		
Cash and Cash Equivalents	\$ 277,821	\$ 57,270
Interest Receivable	77,481	74,291
Notes Receivable - Borrowers	3,367,108	3,210,507
Reserve	(700,567)	(681,099)
Investments	16,577,802	21,456,084
Investment - Collateral Account	856,755	892,072
Due From Operating Fund	22,049	839,743
<b>TOTAL ASSETS</b>	<b>\$ 20,478,449</b>	<b>\$ 25,848,868</b>
<b>LIABILITIES AND FUND BALANCE</b>		
Notes Payable - Depositors	\$ 18,801,239	\$ 21,459,549
Accrued Interest Payable	24,225	27,861
Fund Balance	1,652,985	4,361,458
<b>TOTAL LIABILITIES AND FUND BALANCE</b>	<b>\$ 20,478,449</b>	<b>\$ 25,848,868</b>

STATEMENT OF INCOME AND EXPENSE

	July 1, 2021 - June 30, 2022	July 1, 2020 - June 30, 2021
<b>INCOME</b>		
Interest on Notes Receivable	\$ 105,169	\$ 104,990
Investment Income	483,103	517,908
Unrealized Gain (Loss) On Investments	(2,940,712)	(25,230)
Realized Gain (Loss) On Investments	1,025,756	2,115,084
<b>TOTAL INCOME</b>	<b>(1,326,684)</b>	<b>2,712,752</b>
<b>EXPENSES</b>		
Interest on Notes Payable	286,932	321,861
Investment Management Fees	124,439	125,965
Fiscal Office Administration	100,413	100,050
Office Supplies	237	-
Increase in Reserves	19,468	82,390
Departmental Grant	850,300	1,275,000
<b>TOTAL EXPENSES</b>	<b>1,381,789</b>	<b>1,905,266</b>
<b>EXCESS (DEFICIT)</b>	<b>\$ (2,708,473)</b>	<b>\$ 807,486</b>

**THE ROMAN CATHOLIC DIOCESE OF OGDENSBURG**  
*Diocesan Protected Self-Insurance Program*  
 July 1, 2018 - June 30, 2022

**BALANCE SHEET**

**STATEMENT OF CHANGES IN NET ASSETS**

	June 30, 2019	June 30, 2020	June 30, 2021	June 30, 2022		July 1, 2018 - June 30, 2019	July 1, 2019 - June 30, 2020	July 1, 2020 - June 30, 2021	July 1, 2021 - June 30, 2022
<b>ASSETS</b>					<b>INCOME</b>				
Cash and Cash Equivalents	\$ 4,410	\$ 5,917	\$ 14,625	\$ 16,519	Earned Premiums	\$ 2,004,982	\$ 2,071,772	\$ 2,005,894	\$ 2,176,614
Investments	1,045,390	1,095,797	892,072	963,178	Contributions	55,000	-	-	-
Notes Receivable	2,855,174	1,533,354	-	-	Net Gain (Loss) On Investments	6,957	86,912	119,911	(2,990)
Accounts Receivable	255,403	246,164	256,044	313,377	Department Grant	-	-	725,000	100,000
Due From Operating Fund	676,668	1,060,049	1,175,093	875,547	Investment Income	29,416	29,871	15,278	-
BPIC Member Share	311,851	348,356	405,474	443,028	<b>TOTAL INCOME</b>	<b>2,096,355</b>	<b>2,188,555</b>	<b>2,866,083</b>	<b>2,273,624</b>
Stock in NCRRG	132,248	132,248	132,248	132,248					
<b>TOTAL ASSETS</b>	<b>\$ 5,281,144</b>	<b>\$ 4,421,885</b>	<b>\$ 2,875,556</b>	<b>\$ 2,748,897</b>	<b>EXPENSES</b>				
					Reinsurance Premiums and Bonds	985,352	1,072,742	1,127,332	1,215,779
<b>LIABILITIES AND NET ASSETS</b>					Professional Services	98,950	148,475	113,050	45,703
Claims Payable	\$ 2,713,424	\$ 1,533,354	\$ -	\$ -	Gallagher Bassett Service Fee	26,685	27,750	30,425	22,668
Unearned Insurance Premium	-	-	900	-	Adjustment in Reserves	(225,249)	(205,211)	30,177	(43,456)
Reserves For Claims	1,292,522	1,087,310	1,117,487	1,074,031	Self-Insured Claims	1,124,284	347,013	1,308,321	713,813
Net Assets	1,275,198	1,801,221	1,757,169	1,674,866	NYS Compensation Board Assessments	42,557	37,814	33,128	31,965
					Department Grants	125,062	97,229	104,938	115,689
<b>TOTAL LIABILITIES AND NET ASSETS</b>	<b>\$ 5,281,144</b>	<b>\$ 4,421,885</b>	<b>\$ 2,875,556</b>	<b>\$ 2,748,897</b>	Grants	-	-	-	80,000
					Diocesan Administration	174,132	136,720	162,764	173,766
					<b>TOTAL EXPENSES</b>	<b>2,351,773</b>	<b>1,662,532</b>	<b>2,910,135</b>	<b>2,355,927</b>
					<b>EXCESS (DEFICIT)</b>	<b>\$ (255,418)</b>	<b>\$ 526,023</b>	<b>\$ (44,052)</b>	<b>\$ (82,303)</b>

*Diocesan Protected Self-Insurance Program - Claim Payment and Reserve Experience*  
 As of June 30, 2022

Policy Year	Claims	Reserves	Total	Losses In Excess of Specific Retention	Losses In Excess of Aggregate Retention	Net Claims	Maximum Amount Single Claim	Maximum Amount Aggregate Claims
XLVII - 2021-22	\$ 471,299	\$ 215,474	\$ 686,773	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 686,773	\$ 250,000	\$ -
XLVI - 2020-21	151,243	194,247	345,490	-	-	345,490	250,000	-
XLV - 2019-20	163,265	95,408	258,673	-	-	258,673	250,000	-
XLIV - 2018-19	183,820	70,193	254,013	-	-	254,013	250,000	-
XLIII - 2017-18	523,780	-	523,780	-	-	523,780	250,000	-
XLII - 2016-17	159,622	-	159,622	-	-	159,622	250,000	-
XLI - 2015-16	291,154	-	291,154	-	-	291,154	250,000	-
XL - 2014-15	6,030,681	-	6,030,681	5,286,008	-	744,673	250,000	-
XXXIX - 2013-14	492,859	-	492,859	-	-	492,859	250,000	-
XXXVIII - 2012-13	379,292	-	379,292	-	-	379,292	250,000	-
XXXVII - 2011-12	371,607	-	371,607	-	-	371,607	250,000	-
XXXVI - 2010-11	787,328	-	787,328	242,768	-	544,560	250,000	-
XXXV - 2009-10	176,267	168,333	344,600	96,712	-	247,888	250,000	-
XXXIV - 2008-09	605,358	-	605,358	-	-	605,358	250,000	850,000
XXXIII - 2007-08	321,690	-	321,690	-	-	321,690	250,000	850,000
XXXII - 2006-07	192,555	-	192,555	-	-	192,555	250,000	815,000
XXXI - 2005-2006	554,178	26,202	580,380	118,000	-	462,380	250,000	815,000
XXX - 2004-2005	726,961	-	726,961	92,090	-	634,871	250,000	815,000
XXIX - 2003-2004	759,922	-	759,922	199,816	-	560,106	250,000	780,000
XXVIII - 2002-2003	802,835	138,053	940,888	446,294	-	494,594	250,000	750,000
XXVII - 2001-2002	275,460	-	275,460	22,193	-	253,267	125,000	525,000
XXVI - 2000-2001	299,143	-	299,143	-	-	299,143	125,000	500,000
XXV - 1999-2000	302,681	-	302,681	-	-	302,681	125,000	500,000
XXIV - 1998-1999	329,654	-	329,654	-	-	329,654	125,000	500,000
XXIII - 1997-1998	551,728	-	551,728	105,085	-	446,643	125,000	500,500
XXII - 1996-1997	478,202	-	478,202	98,570	-	379,632	125,000	583,500
XXI - 1995-1996	301,341	-	301,341	-	-	301,341	125,000	550,000
XX - 1994-1995	779,580	10,289	789,869	290,902	9,497	489,470	125,000	475,000
XIX - 1993-1994	1,210,293	92,464	1,302,757	681,080	-	621,677	125,000	450,000
XVIII - 1992-1993	326,553	-	326,553	-	-	326,553	75,000	355,000
XVII - 1991-1992	233,464	-	233,464	-	-	233,464	75,000	355,000
XVI - 1990-1991	92,322	-	92,322	-	-	92,322	75,000	355,000
XV - 1989-1990	190,546	-	190,546	-	-	190,546	75,000	330,000
XIV - 1988-1989	175,616	-	175,616	-	-	175,616	75,000	330,000
XIII - 1987-1988	217,604	-	217,604	38,762	-	178,842	75,000	300,000
XII - 1986-1987	189,446	-	189,446	-	-	189,446	75,000	300,000
XI - 1985-1986	56,965	-	56,965	-	-	56,965	75,000	260,000
X - 1984-1985	160,034	-	160,034	-	-	160,034	75,000	260,000
IX - 1983-1984	109,584	-	109,584	-	-	109,584	75,000	260,000
VIII - 1982-1983	184,852	-	184,852	18,990	-	165,862	75,000	260,000
VII - 1981-1982	103,136	-	103,136	-	-	103,136	75,000	260,000
VI - 1980-1981	323,071	-	323,071	112,199	-	210,872	75,000	225,000
V - 1979-1980	1,106,650	386,178	1,492,828	1,138,968	61,207	292,653	75,000	212,000
IV - 1978-1979	40,498	-	40,498	-	-	40,498	75,000	212,000
III - 1977-1978	153,930	-	153,930	36,879	-	117,051	50,000	150,000
II - 1976-1977	61,217	-	61,217	-	-	61,217	50,000	150,000
I - 1975-1976	63,403	-	63,403	-	-	63,403	50,000	150,000
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$ 22,462,689</b>	<b>\$ 1,396,841</b>	<b>\$ 23,859,530</b>	<b>\$ 9,025,316</b>	<b>\$ 70,704</b>	<b>\$ 14,763,510</b>		

## THE ROMAN CATHOLIC DIOCESE OF OGDENSBURG

### *Diocesan Lay Employees' Retirement Trust*

July 1, 2018- June 30, 2022

#### BALANCE SHEET

	June 30, 2022	June 30, 2021	June 30, 2020	June 30, 2019
<b>ASSETS</b>				
Cash & Investments	\$ 25,918,815	\$ 31,966,518	\$ 26,961,397	\$ 27,946,496
Accrued Income	24,435	36,993	27,952	35,524
Receivables	127,070	19,389	94,414	40,344
<b>TOTAL ASSETS</b>	<b>\$ 26,070,320</b>	<b>\$ 32,022,900</b>	<b>\$ 27,083,763</b>	<b>\$ 28,022,364</b>
<b>LIABILITIES AND NET ASSETS</b>				
Accounts Payable	\$ -	\$ 24,646	\$ 244,895	\$ 604,678
Deferred Revenue	19,286	-	-	10,783
Net Assets Available for Benefits	26,051,034	31,998,254	26,838,868	27,406,903
<b>TOTAL LIABILITIES AND NET ASSETS</b>	<b>\$ 26,070,320</b>	<b>\$ 32,022,900</b>	<b>\$ 27,083,763</b>	<b>\$ 28,022,364</b>

#### STATEMENT OF CHANGES IN NET ASSETS

	July 1, 2021 - June 30, 2022	July 1, 2020 - June 30, 2021	Sept. 1, 1967 - June 30, 2021	Sept. 1, 1967 - June 30, 2022
<b>ADDITIONS</b>				
Employer Contributions	\$ 1,200,760	\$ 1,200,534	\$ 29,495,278	\$ 30,696,038
Department Grants	-	-	500,000	500,000
Net Gain (Loss) on Investments	(3,962,961)	7,185,415	31,977,133	28,014,172
Investment Income	565,385	474,644	20,593,921	21,159,306
<b>TOTAL ADDITIONS</b>	<b>(2,196,816)</b>	<b>8,860,593</b>	<b>82,566,332</b>	<b>80,369,516</b>
<b>DEDUCTIONS</b>				
Benefit Payments	3,438,323	3,365,228	43,849,217	47,287,540
Administrative Expense	312,081	335,979	6,718,861	7,030,942
<b>TOTAL DEDUCTIONS</b>	<b>3,750,404</b>	<b>3,701,207</b>	<b>50,568,078</b>	<b>54,318,482</b>
<b>NET ADDITIONS (DEDUCTIONS)</b>	<b>\$ (5,947,220)</b>	<b>\$ 5,159,386</b>	<b>\$ 31,998,254</b>	<b>\$ 26,051,034</b>
<b>CASH &amp; INVESTMENTS</b>			<b>Book Value</b>	<b>Market Value</b>
Cash and Cash Equivalents			\$ 1,210,112	\$ 1,210,112
U.S. Government & Agency Obligations			2,160,321	1,977,593
Equities			8,707,867	9,341,346
Manning & Napier Advisors Investment Funds			5,986,555	5,588,855
Christian Brothers Investment Services - Funds			9,265,284	7,701,957
The Investment Fund for Foundations - Real Opportunities Fund			111,825	98,952
<b>TOTAL CASH &amp; INVESTMENTS - JUNE 30, 2022</b>			<b>\$ 27,441,964</b>	<b>\$ 25,918,815</b>

### *Diocesan Lay Employees' Retirement Trust*

Annual Amounts (Book and Market Value) of Investments

	Book Value	Market Value
August 31, 1968	\$ 32,855	\$ 33,344
August 31, 1969	105,040	97,828
August 31, 1970	167,236	144,704
August 31, 1971	244,322	248,784
August 31, 1972	328,375	341,430
August 31, 1973	397,979	357,121
August 31, 1974	442,091	374,519
August 31, 1975	485,652	502,393
August 31, 1976	651,402	661,536
August 31, 1977	746,759	758,276
June 30, 1978	707,676	873,290
June 30, 1979	1,091,077	1,066,747
June 30, 1980	1,333,304	1,240,533
June 30, 1981	1,637,330	1,468,851
June 30, 1982	1,966,375	1,685,948
June 30, 1983	2,332,800	2,766,951
June 30, 1984	2,866,861	2,832,430
June 30, 1985	3,314,597	3,748,256
June 30, 1986	4,200,610	5,189,275
June 30, 1987	5,686,447	6,363,937
June 30, 1988	6,280,104	6,713,049
June 30, 1989	6,849,652	7,569,606
June 30, 1990	7,716,476	8,434,613
June 30, 1991	8,285,622	8,951,313
June 30, 1992	9,025,501	10,401,337
June 30, 1993	11,107,406	11,674,275
June 30, 1994	11,653,168	12,127,575
June 30, 1995	12,338,738	13,734,082
June 30, 1996	13,031,227	15,645,877
June 30, 1997	14,013,279	18,380,013
June 30, 1998	15,646,840	21,676,585
June 30, 1999	16,243,415	24,534,082
June 30, 2000	19,524,488	27,831,969
June 30, 2001	21,013,619	23,928,041
June 30, 2002	21,362,600	20,539,549
June 30, 2003	19,524,488	20,622,313
June 30, 2004	22,017,665	22,691,214
June 30, 2005	22,914,541	24,896,701
June 30, 2006	24,356,734	27,020,395
June 30, 2007	25,561,685	30,677,000
June 30, 2008	27,564,499	28,332,067
June 30, 2009	23,030,416	20,674,813
June 30, 2010	21,625,470	21,322,358
June 30, 2011	22,640,200	25,259,933
June 30, 2012	23,074,757	24,490,221
June 30, 2013	23,845,778	26,396,267
June 30, 2014	25,462,694	29,928,554
June 30, 2015	26,826,022	28,222,277
June 30, 2016	25,720,923	26,053,449
June 30, 2017	25,237,149	27,056,268
June 30, 2018	25,528,622	27,862,188
June 30, 2019	25,317,161	27,946,496
June 30, 2020	23,751,808	26,961,397
June 30, 2021	24,452,357	31,966,518
June 30, 2022	27,441,964	25,918,815

## *Diocesan Unemployment Insurance Fund*

July 1, 2020 - June 30, 2022

#### BALANCE SHEET

	June 30, 2022	June 30, 2021
<b>ASSETS</b>		
Investments	\$ 153,456	\$ 177,573
Due From Operating Fund	159,595	51,010
Prepaid Expenses	3,135	3,135
Accounts Receivable	-	74,287
<b>TOTAL ASSETS</b>	<b>\$ 316,186</b>	<b>\$ 306,005</b>
<b>LIABILITIES AND FUND BALANCE</b>		
Fund Balance	316,186	306,005
<b>TOTAL LIABILITIES AND FUND BALANCE</b>	<b>\$ 316,186</b>	<b>\$ 306,005</b>

#### STATEMENT OF INCOME AND EXPENSE

	July 1, 2021 - June 30, 2022	July 1, 2020 - June 30, 2021
<b>INCOME</b>		
Unemployment Premiums	\$ 61,519	\$ 69,217
Net Gain (Loss) on Investments	(24,116)	9,558
Investment Income	5,259	4,582
Insurance Reimbursement	-	38,173
<b>TOTAL INCOME</b>	<b>42,662</b>	<b>121,530</b>
<b>EXPENDITURES</b>		
Claims Paid	8,131	-
Consultant	6,270	6,270
Diocesan Administration	18,080	17,962
<b>TOTAL EXPENDITURES</b>	<b>32,481</b>	<b>24,232</b>
<b>EXCESS (DEFICIT)</b>	<b>\$ 10,181</b>	<b>\$ 97,298</b>

## THE ROMAN CATHOLIC DIOCESE OF OGDENSBURG

*Missionary Projects/Ogdensburg*

July 1, 2020 - June 30, 2022

	<u>July 1, 2021 - June 30, 2022</u>	<u>July 1, 2020 - June 30, 2021</u>
<b>FUND BALANCE - JULY 1</b>	\$ 223,602	\$ 228,487
<b>RECEIPTS</b>		
Diocesan OPA Collection	\$ 31,523	\$ 42,806
Interest	3,874	3,868
Transfers from Other Programs	10,000	-
Bequests	<u>1,898</u>	<u>-</u>
<b>TOTAL RECEIPTS</b>	<u>47,295</u>	<u>46,674</u>
<b>TOTAL JULY 1 FUND BALANCE AND RECEIPTS</b>	270,897	275,161
<b>EXPENDITURES</b>		
Grants and Donations	<u>31,138</u>	<u>51,559</u>
<b>TOTAL EXPENDITURES</b>	<u>31,138</u>	<u>51,559</u>
<b>FUND BALANCE - JUNE 30</b>	<u>\$ 239,759</u>	<u>\$ 223,602</u>

## THE ROMAN CATHOLIC DIOCESE OF OGDENSBURG

*Diocesan Disability Benefits Program*

July 1, 2020-June 30, 2022

BALANCE SHEETSTATEMENT OF INCOME AND EXPENSES

	<u>June 30, 2022</u>	<u>June 30, 2021</u>	<u>July 1, 2021 - June 30, 2022</u>	<u>July 1, 2020 - June 30, 2021</u>
<b>ASSETS</b>				
Cash & Money Market Funds	\$ 4,818	\$ 4,498		
Due From Operating Funds	<u>270,740</u>	<u>261,997</u>		
<b>TOTAL ASSETS</b>	<u>\$ 275,558</u>	<u>\$ 266,495</u>		
<b>LIABILITIES AND FUND BALANCE</b>				
Fund Balance	<u>275,558</u>	<u>266,495</u>		
<b>TOTAL LIABILITIES AND FUND BALANCE</b>	<u>\$ 275,558</u>	<u>\$ 266,495</u>		
<b>INCOME</b>				
Premiums			\$ 67,280	\$ 70,348
<b>TOTAL INCOME</b>			<u>67,280</u>	<u>70,348</u>
<b>EXPENSES</b>				
Claims Paid			18,092	24,248
Fiscal Office Administration			<u>40,125</u>	<u>38,426</u>
<b>TOTAL EXPENSES</b>			<u>58,217</u>	<u>62,674</u>
<b>EXCESS (DEFICIT)</b>			<u>\$ 9,063</u>	<u>\$ 7,674</u>

## THE ROMAN CATHOLIC DIOCESE OF OGDENSBURG

*Priests' Retirement Fund*

July 1, 2020 - June 30, 2022

	July 1, 2021- June 30, 2022	July 1, 2020 - June 30, 2021
<b>FUND BALANCE - JULY 1</b>	\$ 11,392,436	\$ 9,995,114
<b>ADDITIONS</b>		
Share of Christmas Collection	\$ 196,251	\$ 122,608
Diocesan Assessment	70,418	72,452
Donations in Lieu of Christmas Collection	-	1,668
Bequests and Donations	5,824	450
Investment Income	195,386	214,734
Net Gain (Loss) on Investments	(1,413,147)	2,409,834
<b>TOTAL ADDITIONS</b>	<u>(945,268)</u>	<u>2,821,746</u>
<b>TOTAL JULY 1 FUND BALANCE AND ADDITIONS</b>	10,447,168	12,816,860
<b>DEDUCTIONS</b>		
Payments to Retired Priests	966,671	986,209
Retired Priests' Health Insurance	242,193	230,008
Diocesan Administration	163,057	208,207
<b>TOTAL DEDUCTIONS</b>	<u>1,371,921</u>	<u>1,424,424</u>
<b>FUND BALANCE - JUNE 30</b>	\$ <u>9,075,247</u>	\$ <u>11,392,436</u>

FIFTY-FOUR YEAR SUMMARY  
JUNE 30, 2022

	1968-2022
<b>ADDITIONS</b>	
Share of Christmas Collection	\$ 9,096,431
Assessment Per Priest	1,487,280
Diocesan Assessment	818,184
Donations in Lieu of Christmas Collection	417,891
Bequests and Donations	3,058,504
Investment Income	8,059,415
Net Realized & Unrealized Gains on Investments	14,132,669
Self-Insurance Fund Grant	90,000
Loan Account Interest	119,839
Loan Account Grant	30,000
<b>TOTAL ADDITIONS</b>	\$ 37,310,213
<b>DEDUCTIONS</b>	
Payments to Retired Priests	21,608,194
Retired Priests Health Insurance	3,948,202
Diocesan Administration	2,678,570
<b>TOTAL DEDUCTIONS</b>	<u>28,234,966</u>
<b>FUND BALANCE - June 30, 2022</b>	\$ <u>9,075,247</u>

## PRIESTS' RETIREMENT FUND ASSETS

	Book Value	Market Value
Cash and Cash Equivalents - NBT Bank	\$ 593,995	\$ 593,995
Accounts Receivable	3,357	3,357
Due from (to) Operating Fund	(202,171)	(202,171)
Interest Receivable	14,743	14,743
Deferred Revenue	(1,403)	(1,403)
Stocks	1,521,051	1,656,053
Bonds and U.S. Government Obligations	2,894,437	2,635,621
Manning & Napier Funds	1,205,591	1,232,795
Christian Brothers Investment Services	3,325,803	2,787,159
The Investment Fund for Foundations: Real Opportunities Fund	43,631	38,607
Dimensional Fund Advisors - Emerging Markets Social Core Equities	364,750	318,491
<b>TOTAL ASSETS - June 30, 2022</b>	\$ <u>9,763,784</u>	\$ <u>9,075,247</u>

*Priests' Retirement Fund*

The Fund Balance has Accumulated as Follows:

1968	\$ 17,501
1969	10,330
1970	20,579
1971	19,266
1972	27,915
1972-1973	5,071
1973-1974	18,329
1974-1975	55,741
1975-1976	44,466
1976-1977	36,976
1977-1978	54,046
1978-1979	66,582
1979-1980	133,680
1980-1981	113,243
1981-1982	22,235
1982-1983	99,794
1983-1984	173,959
1984-1985	30,889
1985-1986	153,453
1986-1987	111,359
1987-1988	204,215
1988-1989	188,567
1989-1990	226,549
1990-1991	143,441
1991-1992	445,497
1992-1993	272,881
1993-1994	463,490
1994-1995	491,107
1995-1996	960,060
1996-1997	1,021,061
1997-1998	408,417
1998-1999	829,004
1999-2000	719,110
2000-2001	660,810
2001-2002	(1,184,839)
2002-2003	330,281
2003-2004	1,009,257
2004-2005	693,493
2005-2006	722,134
2006-2007	1,178,509
2007-2008	(1,037,245)
2008-2009	(1,814,311)
2009-2010	92,957
2010-2011	1,351,135
2011-2012	(403,955)
2012-2013	632,958
2013-2014	1,249,004
2014-2015	(400,661)
2015-2016	(1,078,531)
2016-2017	610,631
2017-2018	4,466
2018-2019	(268,245)
2019-2020	58,453
2020-2021	1,397,322
2021-2022	(2,317,189)

FUND BALANCE - JUNE 30, 2022

\$ 9,075,247

# CATHOLIC WORLD AT A GLANCE

## California sued for equal access to special education

(CNA) — A group of Jewish parents filed a lawsuit Monday against the California Department of Education, calling for the state to provide religious schools with equal access to special needs education funding for their students. Under California law, federal and state special education funding is available to public schools and secular private schools. However, state law prohibits these funds from going to private religious schools, such as the Orthodox Jewish schools these parents want their children to attend. The prohibition also applies to Catholic schools, Protestant Christian schools, Muslim schools, and any other religiously affiliated school. Becket, which provides pro bono legal assistance to defend religious liberty, is representing the parents. “California politicians can end this unlawful discrimination the easy way or the hard way,” Eric Rassbach, vice president and senior counsel at Becket, said in a statement. “Either they change the law that is hurting children with disabilities, or they can shamefully fight in court for the right to discriminate.”

## Historic building near Vatican to become Four Seasons hotel

(CNA) — A Catholic order of knighthood has signed a leasing agreement that will allow a Four Seasons hotel to manage part of a historic building close to the Vatican. The Equestrian Order of the Holy Sepulchre of Jerusalem signed an agreement with Fort Partners, a Miami-based development company, on March 10, according to a statement published Tuesday. The lease to Fort Partners includes an agreement to use that part of the building for a hotel under the management of Four Seasons Hotels and Resorts. The other part of the building houses the headquarters of the Equestrian Order of the Holy Sepulchre of Jerusalem. The order is a lay institution under the protection of the Holy See whose first mention in historical records dates to 1336. Today, the charitable group has approximately 30,000 members in almost 40 countries and is dedicated to supporting the Church in the Holy Land. The Renaissance-era Palazzo della Rovere is about a three-minute walk from St. Peter's Basilica.

## U.S. bishop to help prepare Synod on Synodality assembly

(CNA) — Bishop Daniel E. Flores of Brownsville, Texas, has been named to a small committee planning the Vatican's October assembly for the Synod on Synodality. Flores, 61, is one of three bishops on the preparatory commission. The committee was put together by Secretary General of the Synod of Bishops Cardinal Mario Grech, who will also oversee its work. The Catholic Church's Synod on Synodality has been underway since October 2021. It will include two nearly month-long Vatican assemblies: in October 2023 and October 2024. The continental phase, which followed a diocesan phase, concludes this month. The two sessions of the XVI Ordinary General Assembly of the Synod of Bishops will bring together bishops from across the world to discuss and prepare a document to counsel the pope.

# Prayer breakfast speakers address attacks on dignity

By Peter Pinedo

Catholic News Agency

Ongoing attacks against human dignity were the focus of this year's National Catholic Prayer Breakfast, which took place in Washington, D.C., Tuesday morning.

Addressing an audience of more than 1,000 people, Ukrainian Greek Catholic Archbishop Borys Gudziak brought attention to the human toll of the continuing war in Ukraine.

“What is the worth of our dignity?” Gudziak asked during his keynote address. “Ukrainians are sacrificing their lives for the land, justice, truth, and dignity that God gives us.”

“In the 21st century ... when truth is transactional, when media, politics, diplomacy, and popular culture are by a post-truth anti-ethic,” Gudziak said, “Ukrainians have been saying, ‘No, not so fast. There is good and there is evil. There is truth and there are lies.’ And they are doing it at the risk of their own lives.”

Gudziak brought up to the stage a Ukrainian father whose son was killed fighting against the Russian invasion in the Ukrainian armed forces.

“Last June his son ... gave his life for human dignity,” Gudziak said. “Like the heavenly Father, he blessed his son on a mission that led to the sacrifice of his life.”

Gudziak thanked the American Church for its support and asked for continued prayers as Ukraine fights Russian aggression.

Speakers at the National Catholic Prayer Breakfast also addressed violations of human dignity occurring within the United States.

Catholic bioethicist Carter Snead, director of the de Nicola Center for Ethics and Culture at the University of Notre Dame, spoke about the continued threat of abortion to the unborn and mothers.

Snead called for a compassionate Catholic response to attacks against human dignity through abortion, especially now in a post-Roe v. Wade world.

Abortion, Snead said, divides the world into “persons who bear human rights and nonpersons who live on the sufferance of others based on their interests and desires. And in doing so, isolating the woman in her moment of need and absolving us of our obligation to care for her and her child. ‘Her body, her choice, her problem.’”

“We are made for love and friendship,” Snead said. “We as Catholics are specially equipped and called upon and have a special obligation to build a culture of life and a civilization of love.”

“[Catholics must] respond with love — radical, unconditional, self-emptying love,” Snead added. “Love of neighbor, love of mothers, fathers, and their babies. Love of our enemies ... locking arms to care for moms and babies and families, seeking to put women and children and families first as we rise to build a culture of life and civilization of love in a post-Roe world.”

Mary Rice Hasson, a fellow at the Ethics and Public Policy Center, accepted the 2023 Christifideles Laici Award honoring the work of the laity. She is the co-founder and director of the Person and Identity Project. In her speech, Hasson brought attention to the increasing gender ideology indoctrination in public schools, yet another form of attack against human dignity facing children outside the womb.

According to Hasson, 80% of Catholic children attending non-Catholic schools are inundated by an LGBTQ+ ideology that is both antithetical to Catholic teaching and human dignity.

“It's impossible for 40 hours a year of religious education to overcome 1,200 hours of being saturated in an anthropology that is false, that renders [children's] hearts and minds inhospitable to the Gospel,” Hasson said. “Drawn in by this false anthropology, burdened with a false freedom to have to create themselves, young people don't know who they are.”

“But there's hope. Our hope is in the Gospel of Jesus Christ. This moment, where gender ideology is flooding our culture is a tremendous opportunity,” Hasson added. “Young people are seeking meaning; they want to know who they are. And we have an answer to give them: ‘You are a son or daughter of the Lord. You are loved incredibly. God has a plan for your life.’”

Since 2004, the National Catholic Prayer Breakfast has gathered politicians and Catholic leaders from across the country for a morning of prayer and fellowship.

Other key leaders in attendance this morning included Sen. Pete Ricketts, R-Nebraska; former U.S. Attorney General William Barr; and the apostolic nuncio to the United States, Archbishop Christophe Pierre.

# German bishops plan to bless same-sex unions

By AC Wimmer  
Catholic News Agency

Following the conclusion of the German Synodal Way, several bishops have announced plans to put into practice resolutions passed by the process, including liturgical blessings of same-sex unions in their churches.

The Synodal Way, which concluded in Frankfurt on March 11, “give[s] us the tailwind we need for concrete changes in our diocese,” Bishop Franz-Josef Bode of Osnabrück said March 14.

Bode — who is vice president of the German Bishops’ Conference — said his diocese encour-

aged “all couples in our diocese who cannot or do not want to marry in church but still want to put their relationship under a church blessing” to “get in touch with us.”

He added that such celebrations were already available in some parishes of his diocese.

Bode on Tuesday also announced that laypeople would be able to baptize babies and “regularly” preach at homilies, CNA Deutsch reported.

Another German prelate, Bishop Heiner Wilmer of Hildesheim, added his support, telling staff in his diocese: “It is of great importance to me that LGBTQ people are ac-

companied pastorally, spiritually, and liturgically. I welcome the Synodal Way’s endorsement of establishing a task force to develop a hand-out for celebrations of blessing for same-sex couples as well as remarried divorcees,” CNA Deutsch reported.

On Friday last week, the German bishops and other delegates of the Synodal Way passed a resolution to develop and provide Church blessings to same-sex unions.

Titled “Blessing ceremonies for couples who love each other,” the measure was opposed by only nine of 58 bishops, while 11 bishops abstained.

German bishops who

have previously voiced public support for the blessing of same-sex unions in the Catholic Church include Cardinal Reinhard Marx of Munich and Freising and Bishop Heinrich Timmermeyer of Dresden-Meißen.

In March 2022, Cardinal Marx said he had personally blessed a same-sex couple in Los Angeles.

One year earlier, in March 2021, the Vatican confirmed that the Catholic Church does not have the power to give liturgical blessings to homosexual unions. Answering the question “does the Church have the power to give the blessing to unions of persons of the same

sex,” the Congregation — now the Dicastery — for the Doctrine of the Faith responded: “Negative.”

In an accompanying note, the Vatican’s doctrine office explained that blessings are sacramentals, and “consequently, in order to conform with the nature of sacramentals, when a blessing is invoked on particular human relationships, in addition to the right intention of those who participate, it is necessary that what is blessed be objectively and positively ordered to receive and express grace, according to the designs of God inscribed in creation, and fully revealed by Christ the Lord.”

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## ADIRONDACK MOUNTAIN

## COFFEE AND CATHOLICISM

Wells - Please join us at our Coffee and Catholicism program, where we will enjoy brunch as we view and discuss Word on Fire's Catholicism series.

**Date:** Every Saturday (except for Holy Saturday), beginning March 4 and ending May 13

**Time:** 9 a.m. to 10

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

**Features:** We will enjoy brunch as we view and discuss Word on Fire's Catholicism series. Parents of small children are encouraged to attend! We will have toys and books set up for little ones.

**Contact:** For more information, please call 757-817-4700.

## CLINTON NORTHERN FRANKLIN

## LENTEN FISH FRY

Plattsburgh - Holy Cross Parish to have a Lenten Fish Fry hosted by the K of C Council #255.

**Date:** Fridays through March 31

**Time:** 4:30 p.m. to 6:30

**Place:** Parish Center behind OLV

**Cost:** \$12 per person. Dine in only

**Menu:** Alternating weeks of cod and haddock with fries, cole slaw, drink and dessert.

**Contact:** For more information call 518-563-0730

## 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.

## FISH FRY

Chazy - Sacred Heart Church to have a Fish Fry.

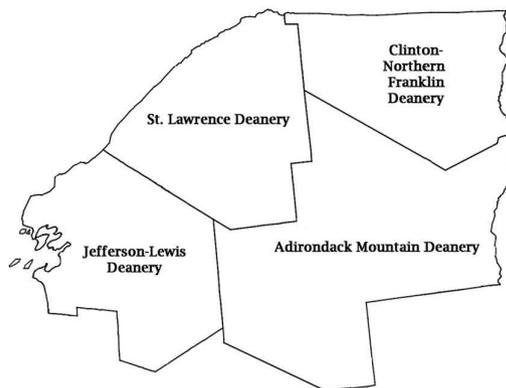
**Date:** March 31

**Time:** 4:30 p.m. to 7:30

**Place:** Parish Center

**Cost:** Adults, \$15; Children 5-12, \$9; All take-outs, \$15

**Menu:** Fried Perch, Homemade



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

e-mail news@northcountycatholic.org.

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

## JEFFERSON-LEWIS

## PRE-SCHOOL ENROLLMENT

Watertown - St. John Bosco Pre-school program to have open enrollment.

**Date:** March 20 for current IHC Families and April 3 for the public

**Features:** Must be 4 by Dec. 1

**Contact:** For more information visit [www.ihcschool.org](http://www.ihcschool.org) or call 315-788-4670 ext. 1

## KINDERGARTEN REGISTRATION

Watertown - Immaculate Heart Central to have Kindergarten Registration and screening for the 2023-24 school year.

**Date:** March 22

**Time:** By Appointment only

**Contact:** Call 315-788-7011 to set up a time.

## BOTTLE DRIVE

Watertown - Immaculate Heart Central School to have a bottle drive.

**Date:** March 25

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

**Place:** IHC High School

## SOCIAL MEDIA - THE PATHWAY TO HUMAN TRAFFICKING

Watertown - Panel Discussion to be held addressing the recent trends regarding Human Trafficking.

**Date:** March 26

**Time:** 1:30 p.m. to 3

**Place:** The Children's Home of Jefferson County Dining Hall.

**Features:** The Sisters of St. Joseph Social Justice Committee in collaboration with The Alliance for a Better Community, The Victim's Assistance Center/Safe Harbor and local law enforcement and schools invite all to attend a panel discussion addressing recent trends regarding Human Trafficking, statistics from community surveys and advice for parents and caregivers to help safeguard our children. Refreshments will be served. Event is free and open to the public.

**Contact:** For more information please call Sister Bethany Fitzgerald, (315) 782-3460

## DRIVE THRU CHICKEN &amp; BISCUITS

Lyons Falls - Drive thru chicken and biscuit dinner to be held.

**Date:** March 29

**Time:** Pick-ups start at 4:30 p.m.

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

**Cost:** \$12

**Menu:** Chicken and homemade biscuits, mashed potatoes, gravy, vegetable, cranberry sauce, and dessert.

**Contact:** For pre-orders call 315-348-8577. The day of the dinner call the church at 315-348-6599. Deliveries are available too!

## WOMEN'S PRAYER AND HEALING RETREAT

Watertown - The Department of Faith Formation will be having 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](http://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.

## LENTEN FISH FRY

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

**Date:** Fridays through Lent

**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

## BINGO

Canton - The Knights of Columbus will have BINGO.

**Dates:** March 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.

## DIOCESAN EVENTS

## SURVIVING DIVORCE

The Family Life Office is offering the Surviving Divorce Program, 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

CONTINUED ON PAGE 16

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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](http://www.rcdony.org/survivingdivorce). For more information contact Steve Tartaglia at 315-393-2920 or [startaglia@rcdony.org](mailto:startaglia@rcdony.org).

### 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](http://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](http://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](http://www.rcdony.org/lovingauthentically). For more information contact Stephen Tartaglia at 315-393-2920 or [startaglia@rcdony.org](mailto:startaglia@rcdony.org)

### RACHEL'S VINEYARD

Saranac Lake - Rachel's Vineyard After Abortion Healing Retreat to be held.

**Date:** May 26 to 28, Memorial Day Weekend

**Place:** Guggenheim Lodge

**Features:** If you or friend are hurting after abortion loss, please consider attending a Rachel's Vineyard healing retreat. You aren't alone, help is available.

**Contact:** Registration is online at [www.rcdony.org/pro-life](http://www.rcdony.org/pro-life) or by contacting the Respect life office at [cmriner@rcdony.org](mailto:cmriner@rcdony.org). A list of retreat locations outside of our diocese is available at: [www.rachelsvineyard.org](http://www.rachelsvineyard.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:** The season starts July 5th and ends Aug. 11th.

**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, tool around on our watercrafts and play watersports.

Evenings at camp are packed with fun activities like bonfire time, a dance, outdoor movies, and camp-wide games. Summer Camp Guggenheim is a fun place where you can make great friends, escape the craziness of the world, and just chill with cool people like you.

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

### FAMILY GUGGENHEIM

Saranac Lake - Family Guggenheim registration is open.

**Schedule:** Aug. 17-20; Aug. 24-27; Oct. 6-8

**Features:** Family Guggenheim welcomes families of all dimensions to come enjoy a weekend in the Adirondacks. Expect fun family workshops and activities that will have you working, laughing and praying together. Celebrate Christ's presence in your lives!

**Contact:** For more information and to register, go to [www.rcdony.org/family-life/fg.html](http://www.rcdony.org/family-life/fg.html) or contact Steve Tartaglia at 315-393-2920, [startaglia@rcdony.org](mailto:startaglia@rcdony.org).

### RHINE RIVER CRUISE

Join Father John Yonkovig of Lake Placid on the Rhine River with Viking Cruises from Amsterdam, Holland to Basel, Switzerland in the spring of 2024.

**Date:** May 30 - June 6, 2024

**Contact:** For information call Deb Rothermel at 800-223-3884 or [BTAGROUPS@gmail.com](mailto:BTAGROUPS@gmail.com)

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# Star of 'The Office' blasts 'anti-Christian bias'

By Peter Pinedo  
Catholic News Agency

Actor Rainn Wilson, best known for his role as Dwight in the hit TV series "The Office," criticized Hollywood's "anti-Christian bias" in a tweet this weekend.

Wilson's tweet responded to a depiction of a cannibalistic Christian preacher in a new episode of HBO's popular zombie series "The Last of Us," starring Pedro Pascal.

"I do think there is an anti-Christian bias in Hollywood," Wilson said. "As soon as the David character in 'The Last of Us' started reading from the Bible I knew that he was going to be a horrific villain."

"Could there be a Bible-reading preacher on a show who is actually loving and kind?" Wilson asked.

Based on an award-winning video game of the same name, "The Last of Us" depicts a post-apocalyptic world in which the main characters are constantly on the run from hordes of zombies and crazed villains.

In one of the latest episodes, a Christian cult led by a preacher named David quotes Scripture to justify their cannibalism.

David the preacher also attempts to rape the show's main female character, Ellie, who is

14. Other Twitter users commenting on Wilson's tweet pointed out that the show changed the character of David from the video game, intentionally making him a preacher to bash Christianity.

"As SOON as the pastor started reading from the Bible I knew he was going to be awful. I was like 'watch that guy be David the creepy cannibal from the video game.' And then it was David. Shocked. Surprised. Never seen it before. He wasn't a pastor in the video game," one Twitter user responded.

A Twitter user replying to Wilson's tweet attacked Catholic priests, saying, "Hey maybe they could do a show about Catholic priests and all their fine work with children. Oh wait..." In response to this tweet, Catholic podcaster Patrick Neve said: "You read 'anti Christian bias' and thought he was asking for a demonstration."

As one of TV's best-known actors, Wilson's comments came as a surprise to many who

are used to Hollywood's attacks on Christianity. Wilson is a member of the Baha'i faith and describes himself as a "spiritual being."

"Defamation of Chris-

tianity has become the most unoriginal and tired cliches in movie/TV series storylines. Its prevalence is much more than a bias against an entire people,

it is meant to undermine faith and position the secular-minded as only ones with altruistic intentions," another user responded to Wilson's tweet.



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The *NCC* shares stories of individuals, couples and families who love the Lord and do great things in His service here in the North Country. The newspaper shares information about events and happenings around the diocese and helps us learn about opportunities to further connect and grow in faith and love of the Lord. Through the *North Country Catholic*, Bishop LaValley communicates with Catholics around the diocese as we move forward together in this journey of faith, guided by the One we encounter at the Sacred Table, Jesus Christ.

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## SCRIPTURE REFLECTIONS

# Jesus wept over Lazarus, weeps over us

We're getting closer to the end of our Lenten Journey, and there is much for us left to do in strengthening the weak spots in our spiritual armor.

What great symbols we've had to attract our imaginations and challenge our minds – water instead of dryness on the Third Sunday, light in place of darkness on the Fourth Sunday, and now life coming forth from the tomb of Lazarus on the Fifth Sunday.

It's such a startling story – Jesus arrives in Bethany only to find that his dear friend Lazarus has died. Martha has broken the

news, "Lord, if you been here, my brother would never have died!" Is she reproaching Jesus, or merely expressing her faith in Him? And what does he do? He sheds tears, his heart torn with sorrow. How grateful we are for this glimpse of the tender heart of God!

Then Jesus tells them to roll the stone back. They try to stop him, warning him of the stench. But Jesus persists. And the Spirit of God enters into body of Lazarus, and he comes out alive. When the Spirit enters, death departs, for death cannot prevail over Life.

The people are as-

March 26

Fifth Sunday of Lent

READINGS

Ezekiel 37:12-14

Romans 8:8-11

John 11:1-45

tounded. No one has ever come back from the dead before. He must be the promised Messiah. Yet, in a few short days, how skillfully the propagators of deceit will convince the people that it must have all been in their imaginations! And, through innuendo and suggestion, the crowd will prepare themselves to betray Goodness, and demand an end to innocence and a cross on which to hang the Compassionate One.

As we go forward on

our journey to Calvary, may we not fear the power of evil that so clearly fuels the plotting of the Pharisees. That power was conquered once and for all. We need fear only our own weakness and vulnerability to falsehood and betrayal. While the action of this divine drama builds to a seemingly final catastrophe, the end is not the end. The epilogue plays out on a bright Sunday morning, and a whole new drama begins. We are the characters of this second and final drama – sharing in the role of the Hero-God whose victory is shared with millions upon millions, suffering a million crucifixions on a million crosses, right to the present moment.

How amazing and loving and compassionate is our God in the person of Jesus! He wept over Lazarus, wept over Jerusalem, wept over those killed through terrorism and war, through

famine and disease, through murders and rapes – weeps when we fail to forgive one another.

As a great and holy woman, Caryll House-lander once said in her book, "The Reed of God," "To the degree of the truth of our understanding of God, our own minds grow broader and deeper and warmer – our hearts grow wiser and kinder, we become more aware of the wonder of life – our senses become more sensitive – our capacity for giving and receiving greater; our minds more radiant with a burning light, and the light is the light of Christ"

This is the truth that will set us free; this is the power that will transform our lives. Let us pursue it ever more ardently all the days that remain in our lives. To know God is to be on the road to salvation. To be ignorant is to be lost in a deep darkness.



Monsignor  
Paul E.  
Whitmore

## FORMATION FOR MINISTRY

Is God calling you to deepen your spirituality  
and to serve in parish ministry?

Enrollment is now open for 2023-2025 cycle

Interested? Attend a virtual information session on Zoom  
hosted by Formation for Ministry Director Cathy Russell:

Tuesday, April 4 at 6 p.m.

Saturday, May 13 at 6 p.m.

Registration is required to attend a session.

Go to [www.rcdony.org/newcan](http://www.rcdony.org/newcan)

or contact Cathy Russell at

[crussell@rcdony.org](mailto:crussell@rcdony.org) or 315-393-2920

A link to the session will be emailed as the date approaches.

Diocese of Ogdensburg



## Editor's Note: No 'Called to Serve' column this week

The 'Called to Serve' column authored by Deacon Kevin Mastellon is on a planned two-week vacation. The column will return in the March 29 edition.

### Warm up with Good News!

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

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Sr. Mary Ellen Brett, SSI, Director

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## Working together

"Despite all the limitations that the environment imposes on the evangelizing mission among indigenous communities, there is great pastoral vitality and significant efforts to continue on paths that go beyond the colonizing mentality, which considers the native only as the recipient of pastoral action and assistance, without sufficiently recognizing his condition of missionary discipleship, as well as his cultural values, his visions of the world and his spirituality, in which the presence of God is also manifested." This is what emerges from the final message of the first National Meeting of Indigenous Pastoral Care in Venezuela, which was held in Ciudad Bolívar, Bolívar State, from March 2 to 5.

This meeting, promoted by the National Missionary Council (COMINA) and by the Department of the Missions of the Venezuelan Episcopal Conference, was the first after the celebration of the Synod for the Amazon, although the Meetings of indigenous peoples and missionaries (ENIMIS) had taken place for years.

Indigenous pastoral agents from Venezuela participated and shared the experiences of their respective geographic areas and ministries.

The final message, addressed "to the indigenous peoples, to our brothers and sisters who share with us the faith in Jesus Christ, to our pastors, priests and bishops of Venezuela," recalls the meeting held in Ciudad Bolívar, where lay people, consecrated persons, priests and bishops have gathered who belong to indigenous communities or accompany them.

The call for help from our indigenous peoples, who see their human dignity threatened by numerous situations such as the devastation of their territories of origin, mining extractivism, pollution of rivers, abuses by the authorities, human trafficking of young girls and women, the precariousness of health care, drug trafficking and the presence of irregular groups, among other realities, also resounded during the meeting.

Hope comes from young indigenous lay people and seminarians, as well as priests and nuns, children of these peoples, "who give an indigenous face to our Christianity."

The bishops present at the meeting, who share the joys, sufferings and hopes of these peoples, as well as the whole Church, are invited to "continue to trust the indigenous peoples" and to accompany them in living their baptismal vocation as missionary disciples, "May God grant us to continue to build together a ministry at the service of the fullness of life of the indigenous peoples!"

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

## OBITUARIES

**Altona** — Gerald E. Sayah, 84; Mass of Christian Burial Aug. 8, 2023 at Holy Angels Church; burial in Holy Angels Cemetery.

**Bloomingdale** — George L. Reynolds, 69; Funeral Services held March 19, 2023; burial in St. Bernard's Cemetery.

**Cadyville** — Terry Aubin, Sr., 85; Mass of Christian Burial March 13, 2023 at St. James Church.

**Champlain** — Carol Lee (Higgins) Pinsonneault, 78; Mass of Christian Burial March 20, 2023 at St. Mary's Church; burial in Glenwood Cemetery.

**Clayton** — Dorothy C. "Dottie" (Powers) LaLonde, 95; Mass of Christian Burial March 31, 2023 at St. Mary's Church; burial in St. Mary's Cemetery.

**Colton** — Eva "Vivian" (Tucker) Swift, 89; Graveside services to be held in spring at St. Patrick's Church.

**Gouverneur** — Patricia M. (Chateau) Klock, 95; Memorial Services to be held in the summer at St. James Church.

**Gouverneur** — Barbara L. (Throop) Roeser, 83; Mass of Christian Burial March 16, 2023 at St. James Church; burial in New St.

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James Cemetery.

**Lowville** — Barbara Ann (Stuhler) Evans, 94; Mass of Christian Burial May 5, 2023 at St. Peter's Church; burial in Lowville Rural Cemetery.

**Malone** — Adele Eleanor Fleury, 95; Mass of Christian Burial Aug. 1, 2023 at Notre Dame Church.

**Massena** — Lloyd Joseph Neaudoin, 91; Mass of Christian Burial March 21, 2023 at Church of the Sacred Heart; burial in Calvary Cemetery.

**Morrisonville** — Rose Marie (Varin) Phaneuf, 81; Mass of Christian Burial March 16, 2023 at St. Alexander's Church; burial in parish cemetery.

**Ogdensburg** — Gary L. Bouchard, 76; Mass of Christian Burial March 20, 2023 at Notre Dame Church.

**Plattsburgh** — Lorraine (Godin) Laframboise, 85; Memorial Mass March 18, 2023 at Our Lady of Victory Church.

**Potsdam** — Margaret Ann

(McKenna) Cardinal, 83; Mass of Christian Burial March 17, 2023 at St. Mary's Church; burial in St. Mary's Cemetery.

**Potsdam** — Huguette (Levesque) Domingos, 95; Mass of Christian Burial to be held in the spring.

**Watertown** — Dr. Thomas A. Baker, 72; Mass of Christian Burial March 14, 2023 at St. Anthony's Church; burial in Brookside Cemetery.

**Watertown** — James Fitzpatrick; Mass of Christian Burial March 17, 2023 at St. Patrick's Church; burial in Immaculate Conception Cemetery, Fayetteville.

**Watertown** — Thelma R. (Van-Gordon) McManaman, 94; Mass of Christian Burial March 14, 2023 at Our Lady of the Sacred Heart; burial in Glenwood Cemetery.

**Watertown** — Martha "Marty" (Maine) Smith, 88; Mass of Christian Burial March 15, 2023 at St. Patrick's Church; burial in Glenwood Cemetery.

WEEKEND RETREAT

Healing  
AFTER ABORTION

Rachel's Vineyard

MAY  
26-28, 2023

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The Respect Life Office [cmminer@rcdony.org](mailto:cmminer@rcdony.org)

## STATIONS IN SHADOWS



On March 10, religious education students from St. Alphonsus Holy Name of Jesus in Tupper Lake gathered to reenact The Stations of The Cross by using the shadow format. Ben Jones helped add to the contemplative mood by playing his guitar, with students of various ages doing the acting and narrations. Lisa and Dennis Jones were the first religious education instructors to have CCD students do this particular style of the Stations, and they have continued to direct and lead this moving style every year since. Actors involved in the 'Shadow Production of The Stations of The Cross' are (front row, from left) Heather Bujold, Alyza Symonds (back row) Brennan Arsenault, Mary Becker, Lilli Hollingsworth, Campbell Cassagrain, Keleigh Dukette, Eliza Bujold, and Sean Bujold. (Right) Students act out the eighth station: Jesus meets the women of Jerusalem. Heather Bujold played Jesus. Kaileigh Dukette and Campbell Cassagrain played the Women of Jerusalem.



## Pope hears confessions at Rome parish

By Courtney Wares  
Catholic News Agency

Pope Francis heard confessions at a parish in Rome on Friday and en-

couraged people to remember that God "holds out his hand and lifts us up whenever we realize that we are 'hitting rock bottom.'"

In the presence of eucharistic adoration, the pope presided over a Lenten penitential service on March 17 to open "24 Hours for the Lord," an

initiative in which certain Catholic churches around the world will remain open 24 consecutive hours with round-the-clock confession and adoration.

"Brothers, sisters, let us remember this: The Lord comes to us when we step back from our presumptuous ego. ... He can bridge the distance whenever, with honesty and sincerity, we bring our weaknesses before him," Pope Francis said.

"He holds out his hand and lifts us up whenever we realize we are 'hitting rock bottom' and we turn back to him with a sincere heart. That is how God is. He is waiting for us, deep down, for in Jesus he chose to 'descend to the depths.'"

The pope underlined that God waits for us, especially in the sacrament of penance, where he said the Lord touches our wounds, heals our hearts, and leaves us with inner

peace.

Pope Francis visited the Church of Santa Maria delle Grazie al Trionfale, a parish located about one mile from the pope's residence inside Vatican City.

Upon his arrival at the parish, the pope kissed a small Marian icon from his wheelchair and gave a bouquet of flowers to Our Lady. He offered greetings and shook hands with many people inside the parish from his wheelchair.

The pope offered a homily on God's mercy before leading the parish in the Confiteor prayer.

Many people made confessions to priests — and some to the pope himself — during the Holy Hour at the Roman parish just outside the walls of Vatican City.

Pope Francis began the "24 Hours for the Lord" initiative in 2014, one year before he announced the Extraordinary Jubilee of Mercy.

### What is a Foster Grandparent?

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

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



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

Roy Foote  
age 83  
Foster  
Grandparent

### Volunteers Needed



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

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

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



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

Contact Melissa Howard,  
Volunteer Coordinator

PHONE:

(518)359-7688

EMAIL:

mhoward@cathcharities.org

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