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The Diocese of Ogdensburg Volume 78 Number 13

NORTH COUNTRY CATHOLIC

JULY 5, 2023

No NCC next week

The *North Country Catholic* will begin its summer schedule next week.

There will be no NCC the week of July 12.

The next edition will be dated July 19.

COMMISSIONED FOR MINISTRY



PHOTO BY JESSE SOVIE FOR THE NORTH COUNTRY CATHOLIC

On June 25, Bishop Terry R. LaValley commissioned 14 new lay ministers for the diocese. Read Bishop LaValley's homily from the commissioning on Page 3. The names and ministries of the new ministers, along with additional photos, can be found on Page 9.

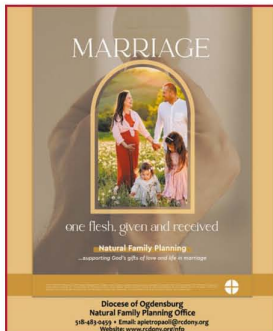
A NEW U.S. CITIZEN



PHOTO COURTESY OF MSGR. DENNIS J. DUPREY

Father Fernando Solomon receives a certificate of citizenship from New York State Supreme Court Justice John T. Ellis in a ceremony held June 23 in Plattsburgh.

FULL STORY, PAGE 16



Marriage: One flesh, given and received

Natural Family Planning Week is celebrated in the U.S. from July 23 to 29. In preparation for that week, the NCC highlights Natural Family Planning (NFP) in this edition.

Read Bishop Terry R. LaValley's reflections on NFP on Page 4. Learn more about NFP and a local family practicing it.

SEE STORIES ON PAGES 4 - 7

Pope reflects on Sts. Peter, Paul

Joe Bukuras
Catholic News Agency

In Pope Francis' Angelus address Thursday on the solemnity of Sts. Peter and Paul, the Holy Father reflected on the different meanings of the first pope's name, which he said can mean "rock, stone, or pebble."

First, Pope Francis reflected on Peter as "rock," which is how Jesus identifies the first-century saint in today's Gospel passage from Matthew 16:13-19.

"And I tell you, you are Peter, and on this rock I will build my church,

and the powers of death shall not prevail against it," Jesus says to Peter in the passage after Peter correctly identifies him as the Messiah.

Pope Francis said to the crowd in St. Peter's Square that "Peter is a rock: There are many times when he is strong and steady, genuine and generous."

"He leaves everything to follow Jesus; he recognizes Christ, the Son of the living God; he dives into the sea to go quickly toward the Risen One," the Holy Father said.

"Then, he boldly and

courageously proclaims Jesus in the temple, before and after being arrested and flogged," he said.

Pope Francis notes that according to tradition, St. Peter was martyred in Rome, where the Vatican is located today.

"Peter, however, is also a stone: He is a rock and also a stone, able to offer support to others — a stone that, founded on Christ, acts as a support to the brothers and sisters for the building up of the Church," he said.

Pope Francis said that Peter cares for the suf-

fering and promotes the Gospel message.

"He is 'stone,' a reliable point of reference for the entire community," Pope Francis said.

Then Pope Francis reflected on Peter as "pebble," remarking that "his littleness emerges often."

"At times he does not understand what Jesus is doing; when confronted with Jesus' arrest, Peter allows fear to overtake him and denies Jesus, then repents and weeps bitterly, but he does not find the courage to stand under the cross," Pope Francis said.

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I have questions

When my reminder goes off on my phone, the calendar entry says only, "Questions."

After nearly 21 years together and 19 married, my husband and I realized we weren't connecting as frequently as we used to. We were still talking regularly, but our conversations tended to center around day-to-day activities and not how we're feeling mentally, physically and/or spiritually.

Thus, we started "Questions" around a year ago. While we've been a bit sporadic about it lately, we try

to gather at a set time each night to ask each other three questions.

The format sometimes changes, but one thing has been consistent since about a month into this: We always start with "how are you feeling?" After that, we sometimes have questions that have formed naturally. Other times, we draw cards from general or couples' conversation card

decks or ask questions we've found through other sources of "conversation starters."

Even after all these years, we regularly learn new in-

formation about each other through these questions. They create conversations that strengthen our bond with one another. One question card may result in a conversation that goes on for hours. On the days we do "questions" when I'm annoyed by or upset with my husband, it lessens those feelings dramatically.

I thought about our "Questions" exercise as I read the articles about Natural Family Planning (NFP) in this week's edition. Those articles helped me realize what makes "Questions" special and helpful in our relationship. It's part of why NFP is special and helpful. Both involve loving intentionally.

By doing "Questions," we're intentionally making time and space for our love in a way that helps us be who we're called to be as a married couple. We're not leaving it to our day-to-day whims and emotional fluctuations. We're saying, "we want to make time and space for each other even when it doesn't seem convenient, even when we don't feel like doing it. We want the unity to which God calls us." Isn't that what NFP is? It's being intentional with our love. It's following God's call through our emotions and whims. It's following God's call to unity and beautiful love.

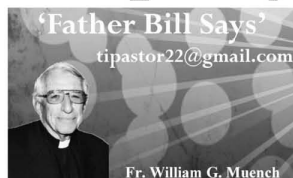
I'm not questioning that.

**Darcy L. Fargo**

'Help my unbelief'

I often like to preach the homily at Mass with a consideration of our faith, our trust in the Lord. As followers of Jesus and members of the Catholic Church, everything begins and ends with our faith. Each Sunday at Mass, we proclaim our Catholic faith for all to hear by saying together the Creed, by proclaiming that "I believe in God." I want all to know that my concern as a Catholic is my relationship with God. I love and adore and am ready to obey my God. My relationship with Jesus is an important part of my faith. The Lord saved me, and so I know I can always trust him to protect me. In love Jesus wants to be my friend, a forgiving friend. My faith is a free, human act that leads me to the Lord Jesus in all my actions and decisions, and I testify to this each time I pray the Creed.

Each of us, Catholics, have many wonderful and meaningful ways to declare our faith and to strengthen our readi-

**Fr. William G. Muench**

ness to trust our God. We may be reminded by the crucifix over the altar; it may be a favorite prayer, something like the Lord's Prayer; it may be a hymn that we join in at Mass and then remember all during the day. These are opportunities to trust our God and seek the love and protection of Our God.

The challenge for us is to remain strong in faith, especially in our good relationship with Our Savior, and to do it not only when we need help or protection in a crisis. Do I only turn to the Lord when life is difficult or unhappy? God should be part of my life on the good days as well.

To teach faith I always go to Sacred Scripture, especially St. Matthew's Gospel story of Jesus who

joins the apostles in a boat sailing across the Lake of Gennesaret. As they progress, a storm begins, we are told, that the apostles become very afraid. Jesus, however, is asleep in the back of the boat. They always depend on the power of the Lord, so they awaken him with the question, "Master, do you not care about us?" Jesus calms the storm and then turns to his apostles, "Why are you so frightened? How is it that you have no faith?" I know that the Lord speaks to me in this way when I have my doubts about the Lord's concern for me.

I know only too well that there are challenging days when my faith and trust is the Lord Jesus is weak, my doubts great - the day when storms come into my life and, in fear, I forget the Lord. I truly lose my faith. I doubt God's concern for me. I forget the words of the Lord: "Do not be afraid."

Jesus says, that if we have faith as small as a mustard seed, we will be

able to move mountains. No, I have never moved a mountain. I realize my faith is not what it should be. I know the Lord Jesus is serious about the power of faith. He wants me to bring his love and peace into this world and that truly needs the power of faith. This is as great as moving a mountain. I know I must never give up praying and seeking a new and more powerful faith. I must realize that God will support and guide me. I must have confidence in God. Each time I celebrate the Holy Eucharist, I must pray that the Lord will strengthen my faith and trust in this Savior of mine. I have so much to accomplish these days, especially as I grow older.

I remember often the story in the Gospels of the man who came to seek the Lord Jesus' healing for his son who was suffering so much. Jesus asked him if he believed that he could do this. The man responded, "Lord, I believe, help my unbelief."

FOLLOW ME

‘We have been called by name’

Editor’s Note: The Following is Bishop Terry R. LaValley’s homily from the Commissioning of Lay Ministers held on June 25 at St. Mary’s Cathedral.

As we just heard from his letter to the people of Rome (Rom. 16:3-24), St. Paul greets a whole host of individuals who worked in the Lord’s vineyard in those early days of the Church. We are probably not very familiar with most of the names. Paul refers to them as co-workers as he expresses gratitude for their ministry.

The bishops of Vatican II observed that: It is hard to see how the Church could make her presence and action felt without the help of such dedicated laity. (cf. AA,1) AMEN to that! The urgent need for lay ministry is shown by the action of the Holy Spirit moving lay women and men today to a deeper and deeper awareness of their baptismal responsibility and everywhere urging them on to generous and selfless service of Christ and His Body, the Church.

I chose this passage from Paul’s letter to the Romans for our reflection this afternoon because Paul personalized his message to the Romans. He names his co-workers and writes about their relationships with others. In our ministry, we must never forget to recognize every person to whom we minister as a unique child of God worthy of our gracious hospitality and respect. It is good to remember that we are all companions on this journey of faith as we accompany one another to the Promised Land.



PHOTO BY JESSE SOVIE/NORTH COUNTRY CATHOLIC
Bishop Terry R. LaValley gives his homily at the Lay Ministry Commissioning on June 25.

We have been called by name.

You know that we do not live in solitary splendor, we are not nameless beings, unconnected to one another.

Regardless of where artificial intelligence takes us, we are flesh and blood, heart and soul, children of God. Baptism is the great leveler - each of us possesses equal dignity and is worthy of care and concern from our neighbor.

My sisters and brothers, today this local Church sends you, disciples that you are, on a mission that must continually adapt itself to the needs of the moment. “Therefore, be firm, steadfast, always fully devoted to the work of the Lord, know-

ing that in the Lord your labor is not in vain.” (1Cor.15:58) It’s important to remember Paul’s phrase to the Corinthians: “in the Lord your labor is not in vain!”

Sometimes, we might get discouraged or frustrated in our parish ministry. Perhaps, it’s the parents of our children, or a student. Maybe, the parish secretary, a fellow catechist, the deacon, the pastor or, God forbid, your bishop frustrates your ministry. All sorts of obstacles may be encountered and, perhaps, too often we may feel that our efforts are in vain. When such feelings surface, it is good to ask myself: How do I measure success?

Is absolutely everything I do in ministry

motivated by an honest desire to be about doing the will of God? That desire receives its necessary fuel from my prayer. Our ministry suffers in so many ways without a personal relationship with Jesus Christ. A disciplined prayer life is where we set time aside to be quiet, to listen and discern the Father’s will. Prayer is the school where we learn how to listen.


Our ministry risks becoming shallow, insincere and a mere façade, without the personal relationship with Jesus Christ that develops in our prayer. Prayer will see us through the challenges we encounter in ministry. It will provide you with the inspiration to develop relationships, attitudes and behaviors that will affirm others, recharge you and your ministry and give you the grace to accompany, encourage and support rather than avoid the challenging, even troublesome people we meet along the way.

I want to thank Cathy Russell and all the members of the Formation for Ministry and Christian Formation staff, for their efforts in helping to prepare you to be commissioned lay ministers for the Diocese of Ogdensburg.

It’s no secret the Church of the North Country will rely more and more on your ministry in the local parish. Your communication with and support of the pastor is crucial for effective collaborative ministry. Strengthening your relationships with fellow commissioned ministers will be of invaluable support for you. Please avail yourselves of the opportunities you will have to meet regularly and accompany one another in your ministry to God’s holy people.

The Diocese of Ogdensburg and your home parish are so very proud of your commitment and strong faith. Thank you for learning more about your faith and committing to sharing it. The grace you received on the day of your baptism is being embraced and will multiply a hundred-fold. This is truly an inspiring and exciting time for you and for the Church of Ogdensburg.

Let us continue to pray for one another, by name, discerning God’s will as we minister to our sisters and brothers. I pray that in your ministry, you will come to know, more and more, the Joy of the Gospel. Through it all, May God be praised...forever may God be praised!



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MARRIAGE: ONE FLESH, GIVEN AND RECEIVED

'In harmony with God's design'

Dear Sisters and Brothers in Christ:

The recently deceased music icon, Tina Turner, famously sang the question: "What's love got to do with it, got to do with it? What's love but a secondhand emotion?" Love is more than an emotion. Love is a decision to sacrifice oneself for the good of the beloved. Love has everything to do with it! Self-discipline, delayed gratification, sacrifice, and unconditional love seem like foreign words to our vocabulary and mode of operating today.

The Church teach-

es that the sacrament of marriage symbolizes Christ's relationship with His Church. It's a relationship of generous, self-sacrificing passion-filled and fruitful love. Today, the Church's teachings regarding sexuality meet aggressive resistance. Many consider her teaching regarding artificial contraception to be outdated, unrealistic or too burdensome.

During *Natural Family Planning Awareness Week*, (July 23-29), our Church focuses our attention on **Marriage: One Flesh, Given and Received**. Responsible parenthood asks

couples to discern God's will in their lives and to live in harmony with God's design through natural means of family planning. In his Encyclical, *Humanae Vitae*, Pope St. Paul VI wrote a beautiful reflection on married love and the gift of life.

Marriage is a sacrament where spouses freely commit themselves to loving one another with a love that is fully human, respecting God's design for marriage and sexuality. Love is not a "secondhand emotion." While society insists that using artificial means to avoid a pregnancy are morally neutral, our faith teaches us that it is the whole person and the whole mission to which he and

she are called that must be considered, both its natural, earthly aspects, and its supernatural, eternal aspects. Tragically, today we give little attention to the supernatural or things eternal.

St. Paul VI wrote that it is important to remember that one is "not the master of the sources of life but rather the minister of the design established by the Creator and to accept that there are certain limits to the power of the human person over his or her body and its functions out of reverence for God's creation" (*HV*, 13, 17).

To assist you in your faith journey, I encourage you to learn more about what the Church teaches about marital love by visiting our Nat-

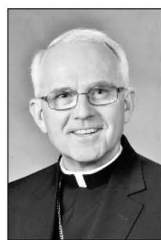
ural Family Planning office at our diocesan webpage. We are so fortunate to have Angelo and Suzanne Pietropaoli as directors as well as all those who help with its instruction in our marriage preparation classes.

May we all grow in respect and appreciation for our creation as male and female in the image and likeness of God. May our hearts be open to ever deeper conversion.

Faithfully yours in Christ,



Most Reverend
Terry R. LaValley
Bishop of Ogdensburg



Bishop Terry R. LaValley

CELEBRATING THE SACRAMENTS



Photos by Dr. RJ "Dolly" McDonald

(Left) First Communion at St. Regis Mission Church was May 21. Thank you to Director of Religious Education Dr. RJ Dolly McDonald, catechists Connie Thompson, Lucy Papineau, and their assistant Verda Tarbell, Father Jerome B. Pastores and to the loving parents and families of the Communicants. Pictured are (back row, from left) Haze Gibson, Kinzley Thompson, Lenny Thompson Lazore, Fr. Jerome Pastores, Travis Adams, Jakob Two Bulls, (front row) Brielle Benedict, Aria Thompson Lazore, Graycie Thompson and Sydney Lazore. (Right) St. Regis Mission Church hosted Confirmation with Bishop Terry R. LaValley on June 24. Our Confirmation candidates were Broc Adams-Peters, Phillip Gray, Lexi Mitchell and Brynlee Roundpoint. Most Reverend Bishop Terry LaValley confirmed our candidates during a Mass concelebrated by Father Jerome B. Pastores. Arie Francis-Harris and Mason Laffin, RCIA candidates, attended classes with our Confirmation candidates as part of their continuing Faith Formation journey. Niawen:kowa (thank you) to Bishop LaValley, Father Jerome Pastores, the Knights of Columbus Cory Haynes, Director of Religious Education Dr. RJ Dolly McDonald, Catechist Jamie Ross and our Mohawk Choir. Pictured are (back row) Father Jerome B. Pastores, Arie Francis Harris (RCIA candidate), Broc Adams-Peters, Phillip Gray, Knights of Columbus Color Corp Cory Haynes, (front row) Mason Laffin (RCIA candidate) Bishop LaValley, Lexi Mitchell and Brynlee Roundpoint.

Marriage: one flesh, given and received

By Suzanne Pietropaoli

Co-Director, Diocesan Natural Family Planning Office

Each July, the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops sponsors Natural Family Planning Awareness Week. And each year, the event raises questions: What exactly is NFP? How does it concern the Bishops? Why should it concern me/the rest of us?

First things first. NFP is an umbrella term for certain natural methods used to achieve or avoid pregnancy. These methods are based on observation of the naturally occurring signs of the fertile and infertile phases of a woman's cycle.

This alternation of fertility and infertility means that women are fertile only a few days in each cycle; barring illness or injury, a man is generally fertile every day from puberty to death.

NFP methods track the changes associated with ovulation, treating each woman and each cycle as unique. Unlike the old Rhythm method, modern NFP methods are not based on calendars and predictions of fertility, but on real time observations and guidelines that have emerged from more than 50 years of scientific research and statistical verification. Correct application of this data lets a woman reliably identify the fertile/infertile phases of her cycle.

Couples then use this information according to their family planning intention. To avoid



pregnancy, they abstain from intercourse during the fertile time. Though the number of fertile days varies from woman to woman and cycle to cycle, these make up the smallest segment of any cycle. Knowing how to identify the fertile time also helps couples achieve pregnancy when they wish to.

Since it does not involve any devices, drugs, or surgery, NFP stands alone as a healthy, organic, highly effective (98-99%) approach to family planning.

Husband and wife share responsibility for NFP, a collaboration that tends to deepen their communication and their respect for one another.

Natural Family Planning is also unique because it respects God's design for life and love: in creating us male and female in his image, God made sexual union to be - like God's himself - both life-giving and love-giving.

The bishops present this truth clearly and beautifully in Married Love and the Gift of Life (USCCB 2007): "Married love is powerfully embodied in the spouses' sexual relationship,

when they most fully express what it means to become 'one body' (Gn 2:24) or 'one flesh' (Mk 10:8, Mt 19:6). The Church teaches that the sexual union of husband and wife is meant to express the full meaning of love, its power to bind a couple together and its openness to new life. When Scripture portrays God creating mankind 'in his image' (Gn 1:27), it treats the union of man and woman as joining two persons equal in dignity ('This one at last is bone of my bones and flesh of my flesh,' Gn 2:23), and as being open to the blessing of children: 'Be fertile and multiply,' Gn 1:28)...Therefore, the mutual gift of fertility is an integral part of the bonding power of marital intercourse."

It is also, the bishops affirm, an essential part of the free, total, faithful, and fruitful love that couples promise to each other at the altar on their wedding day.

For this reason, "When married couples deliberately act to suppress their fertility, sexual intercourse is no longer fully marital intercourse. It is something less powerful and

intimate, something more 'casual.' Suppressing fertility by using contraceptives denies part of the inherent meaning of married sexuality and does harm to the couple's unity. The total giving of oneself, body, and soul, to one's beloved is no time to say: 'I give you everything I am - except...' The Church's teaching is not only about observing a rule, but about preserving that total, mutual gift of two persons in all its integrity."

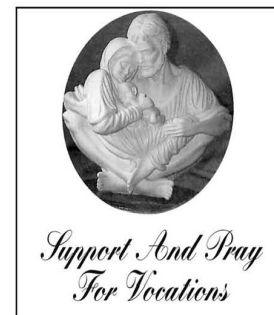
This Bishops' document acknowledges that this is a hard teaching, one that "many (if not most) couples, through no fault of their own, have never heard (or not heard in a way they could appreciate or understand)."

Yet our story, caught up in the life-giving love of God, need not end there.

The Bishops conclude with a clear and hopeful message: "Living God's design for human sexuality in marriage can be difficult. But hus-

bands and wives have not been left alone to live out this fundamental life challenge. If you have failed to do so in the past, do not be discouraged. God loves you and wants your ultimate happiness."

"Loving as Christ loves is a possibility opened to us by the power of the Holy Spirit, as a free gift of God. Through prayer and the sacraments, including Reconciliation and the Eucharist, God offers us the strength to live up to this challenge. Recall the words of Christ, repeated so often by John Paul II: 'Be not afraid!' The Church's teaching on marital sexuality is an invitation for men and women - an invitation to let God be God, to receive the gift of God's love and care, and to let this gift inform and transform us, so we may share that love with each other and with the world." (Married Love and the Gift of Life, United States Conference of Catholic Bishops, 2007. Copies of this document are available upon request from the Diocesan NFP Office, apietropaoli@rcdony.org or at 518-483-0459.)



MARRIAGE: ONE FLESH, GIVEN AND RECEIVED

Love, marriage, faith, and family

By Suzanne Pietropaoli

Co-Director, Diocesan Natural Family Planning Office

In 2016, the couple met on a blind date. One year later they married with their eyes wide open.

Tyler and Megan Bourgeois were introduced by mutual friends who convinced each that the other “would be a good match because we were Catholic.” And in fact, the matchmakers got that exactly right, the couple explains as they reflect on their relationship.

From the beginning, “We just connected well. It was good to know we were both Catholic, and that faith would not be an obstacle,” they observe. “We both agreed that faith is the most important aspect of a strong marriage. We were excited to start a relationship, to have a partner, someone on your team – who, yes, is a different person, but has the same worldview and values.”

Tyler and Megan were married October 13, 2017, at Megan’s home parish of St. Stephen’s in Croghan. Their common commitment to faith and teamwork has strengthened their relationship and deepened their love. It has also proved founda-

tional for appreciating the joys and surviving the sorrows that have come their way as they settled into marriage and started a family.

“Marriage,” they offer, “has been what it is supposed to be. We have had some really beautiful and exciting times. The births of our children – Meredith 4 ½; Elizabeth 2 ½; and Ambrose 3 months – of course stand out for us! It’s been a great blessing to have our little kids; they’re fun, energetic, and funny to watch! The innocent joy that children have is such a beautiful thing to witness. Of course, it can be challenging, three kids under five, when they’re all having a bad day, or are mad, or crying, or pestering each other – no fun. We’re working on growing in virtue, especially in patience. But we see the great blessing that a family is.”

“Sometimes it’s really great, others not so much. But at the end of the day, we are on the same page with the important things; we are a team. Whatever we are going through, we’re not going through it alone. It really is a blessing to know that you have a solid teammate to face those challenges with. If we simply put first things first – the

Church, living our faith well with our family, and embracing Catholic traditions all week and all year long – then we don’t have to feel alone. And of course we think that is what marriage is supposed to be: the struggles are supposed to make you better!”

The couple speaks openly about their toughest struggle.

“The biggest challenge we have faced is losing two babies through miscarriage. We lost both Emmanuel René and Gabriel Frances in the same year. Of course, there is no resolution to something like that, but we just generally leaned into our faith and all the beautiful wisdom of the Church. She really is an expert in humanity, and there is so much she can help you with if you know it is there and seek it out.”

But this is not a merely theoretical approach to grieving the loss of beloved children.

“From the practical perspective, we keep their memories alive. During the summer, when the cemetery is open, we often visit Emmanuel after church on Sunday. The girls talk to him at his grave, tell him about their week, and then get ice cream. We also ask both Emmanuel and Gabriel to pray for us at the end of Grace before meals and at the end of night prayers.”

How did this loss affect Tyler and Megan’s relationship?

“It’s been tough,” they acknowledge. “But like

we said before, if you have the right mindset, put first things first, thank God for all your blessings even in the hard times, you grow through it. We grew closer through those experiences because we relied on each other and each of us had the opportunity to be supportive of the other (imperfectly, of course). Through that you build trust. You start to believe, not just know, that the person you’ve dedicated your life to is really there to be your partner. They’re on your team, and you are not alone.”

For these teammates, taking their faith seriously is primary. Part of that involves actively supporting one another’s faith efforts.

“We try to encourage each other in the faith, we try to live our faith as part of our daily lives. We try to make time for each of us to attend different retreats, and we all attend Family Guggenheim. Faith helps us have an awareness that we need to offer each other grace and space in our daily lives. We belong to St. Joseph’s parish in Boonville (which Tyler has attended all his life). In the past, we have taught Confirmation preparation there, and helped out with building and beautification projects.”

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

“The more you learn to give of yourself, the

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

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

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www.northcountrycatholic.org

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MARRIAGE: ONE FLESH, GIVEN AND RECEIVED

Natural Family Planning considered

By Suzanne Pietropaoli

Co-Director, Diocesan Natural Family Planning Office

Congratulations! Perhaps you are newly married, or perhaps you are still busy getting ready for the big day. Issues and adjustments of all kinds demand your attention, and it might be easy to let some things just slide. Even so, starting a new life together is the perfect time for the two of you to have a heart-to-heart talk about family planning.

Really? Wasn't that all settled at the clinic or the doctor's office? Well, that is the first thing to consider: being a fertile woman is not a disease that needs medical treatment. The ability to conceive and bear children is a good and healthy thing, and the alternating phases of female fertility and infertility have been well documented for nearly a century. Today any woman can learn to understand her own fertility by observing its physical signs or biomarkers. These reflect the hormonal changes that govern the female cycle and indicate times of fertility and infertility within that cycle. Natural Family Planning teaches women to identify and evaluate these changes.

This knowledge gives her an entirely natural, healthy, highly effective (98-99% effective) way to plan a family - simply by abstaining during the fertile time of the cycle. Also, because Natural Family Planning is true family planning,

the same knowledge enables couple to identify the optimum time for conception when that is their family planning intention. NFP is also unique because responsibility for conception is shared by both husband and wife. After all, since a woman is fertile only a few days each cycle and a man is continuously fertile from puberty until death, it hardly makes sense that she should bear the burden of risky contraceptives.

And yes, the hormonal contraceptives currently used by 61 million American women carry significant health risks. Learn all you can, even if you may need a magnifying glass to read the fine print in the package inserts. This information will alert you to some of the immediate medical hazards risked by women who use the Pill and other chemical contraceptives including Norplant, patches, Yaz, rings, and IUDs. In addition to raising the risk of blood clots, heart attacks, strokes, gallbladder disease and depression, these chemicals substantially increase the lifetime risk of breast cancer. (Learn more at <https://bcpinstitute.org>, website of the Breast Cancer Prevention Institute.) Let the facts inform your choices.

There are also other values to consider in your approach to family planning. Couples who choose contraceptive drugs and devices view fertility as a problem - HER problem, which she must fix. But of course,

a fertile woman is not broken or defective, but is perfectly healthy. Natural Family Planning recognizes this truth and educates couples to accept and respect the woman in her totality. NFP empowers women: family planning is no longer a female "problem," but a responsibility shared by husband and wife. Knowledge is always powerful, and learning to understand and respect how our bodies are designed has a powerful influence on couples who use it. It fosters attentiveness, appreciation, patience, and communication, which tend to strengthen a couple's relationship.

It is also important to consider this question in light of God's plan for married love. Especially in a culture that regards sex as something that human beings fashion for themselves, it is essential to consider sexuality from the perspective of the God who made it, and all of us. When you stand before the altar of God on your wedding day, you promise yourselves to one another in a love that is free, permanent, faithful and open to the gift of children. This is the kind of love with which God loves us, and it is the absolutely unconditional love for which we all long. It is the love that God intends should be embodied in every act of sexual intercourse, an act that by its nature says: "I love you totally. I give all of myself to you forever, and I freely and completely

accept all that you are." Yet contracepted intercourse says something quite different: "I love you, but not all of you. I give myself to you, but not all of me. I withhold my fertility /I will not accept your fertility." In this way, married love can become conditional, demanding, and divisive rather than uniting a couple in giving and receiving the total gift of each to the other.

At every level - health, effectiveness, relationship, faith - God's plan is good. Time spent learning it yields tremendous benefits over a lifetime. NFP methods, and modes of learning, have evolved to include many online options, as well as in-person classes. Different NFP methodologies appeal to different people, and there is certainly something that will suit your preferences. The

Catholic Church, which has always taught and continues to teach that God made sex to be both unitive AND procreative, has endorsed natural methods of birth regulation for the better part of a century and supported research and teaching organizations. Such organizations approved by the Church thus have long histories of reliability, which is not the case for the many random fertility awareness methods currently crowding the internet. The most comprehensive single site for this information is hosted by the US Conference of Catholic Bishops: <https://www.usccb.org/topics/natural-family-planning>. We also invite you to connect with our diocesan NFP Office at www.rcdonynfp.org or email us at apietroapoli@rcdonynfp.org.

NEWS BRIEF

Register now for the New York State Eucharistic Congress

Catholics from across New York State are planning to come together at Our Lady of Martyrs Shrine in Auriesville on October 20-22, 2023 to celebrate the real presence of Our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ in the Eucharist. The Congress will feature inspiring talks, Mass, Eucharistic adoration, opportunities for confessions, inspiring music and more. For details and to register (EVERYONE ATTENDING MUST REGISTER), log onto <https://nyseucharisticcongress.org>

Surviving Divorce: New location in Plattsburgh

The Family Life Office will be offering the Surviving Divorce program starting August 30 in the St. John the XXIII Newman Center, 92 Broad Street, Plattsburgh. Twelve weekly meetings will be held from 6 to 8 p.m. Surviving Divorce features twelve video presentations that cover topics such as shock and grief, anger and forgiveness, money issues, dealing with children and a former spouse, and annulment and remarriage. This program is for the newly separated and divorced and those still struggling with issues many years later. It will help them find answers to their questions, restore their hope, and begin authentic healing. To register, go to <https://www.rcdonynfp.org/survivingdivorce>. For more information, contact Steve Tartaglia at 315-393-2920.

MARRIAGE



one flesh, given and received

Natural Family Planning

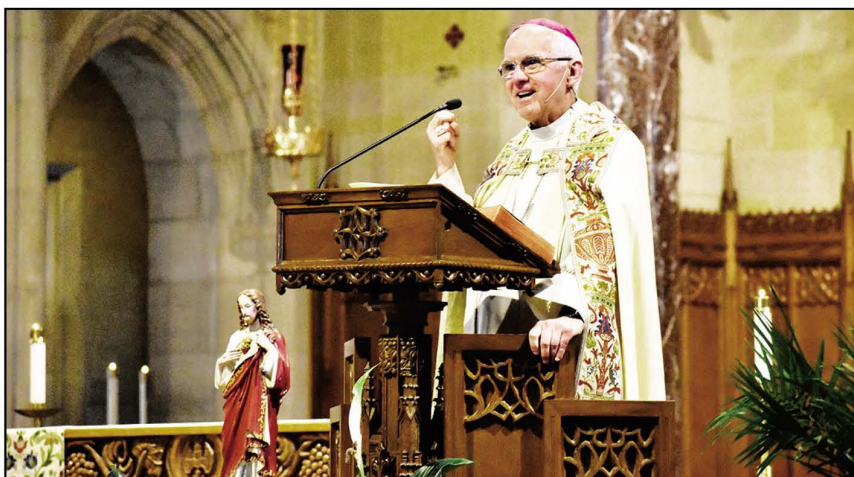
...supporting God's gifts of love and life in marriage

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**Diocese of Ogdensburg
Natural Family Planning Office**

**518-483-0459 • Email: apietropaoli@rcdony.org
Website: www.rcdony.org/nfp**



PHOTOS BY DARCY FARGO & JESSE SOVIE

(Top left) Kathleen "Kitty" Samuel of St. Peter's Parish in Massena receives a certificate marking her commissioning as a lay minister from Bishop Terry R. LaValley at the commissioning held June 25 in St. Mary's Cathedral. Samuel was commissioned with her husband, James, and fellow parishioner John Schneider. (Top middle) Catherine Russell, diocesan assistant director of Faith Formation, thanks the new lay ministers and all who supported them through their training. (Top right) Altar servers lead the new lay ministers as they process out of the cathedral. (Bottom left) Jeremiah Eppler of Plattsburgh receives a certificate marking his commissioning as a lay minister. (Bottom right) Bishop LaValley gives his homily at the commissioning.

New lay ministers commissioned

On June 25, 14 individuals were commissioned as lay ministers by Bishop Terry R. LaValley in St. Mary's Cathedral in Ogdensburg.

The individuals commissioned, their ministries, parishes and sponsors are listed below by deanery.

CLINTON-NORTHERN FRANKLIN DEANERY

Holy Cross Parish, Plattsburgh

Jeremiah Eppler - Youth Ministry
Pastor: Father Kevin D. McEwan

St. Joseph's Parish, West Chazy

Walter Brockway, Jr. - Ministry to the Sick and Elderly
Pastor: Father Theodore A. Crosby

JEFFERSON-LEWIS DEANERY

St. Mary's Church, Clayton

Alynda Haycock - Liturgical Ministry
Daniel Haycock - Ministry to the Sick and Elderly

John Lucia - Liturgical Ministry
Lora Stopper - Parish Outreach Ministry
Corrine Willis - Youth Ministry
Andrew Willis - Parish Outreach Ministry
Sacramental Minister and Supervising Priest: Father Arthur J. LaBaff, VF
Pastoral Life Coordinator: Deacon Neil J. Fuller

Our Lady of the Sacred Heart, Watertown

Jessica Hanlin - Faith Formation Ministry
Christopher Hanlin - Liturgical Ministry
Jayme St. Croix - Youth Ministry
Pastor: Father Frank T. Natale, MSC

ST. LAWRENCE DEANERY

The Roman Catholic Church of St. Mary, Canton

Russel Backus - Liturgical Ministry
Pastor: Father Bryan D. Stitt

St. Raphael's Church Heuvelton

Alexis Michael - Faith Formation Ministry
Pastor: Father Kevin J. O'Brien

St. Peter's Parish, Massena

John Schneider - Faith Formation Ministry
Kathleen Samuel - Parish Outreach Ministry
James Samuel - Parish Outreach Ministry
Pastor: Father Mark R. Reilly, VF

Andrew Willis, Parish Outreach Ministry, will be commissioned at a Mass at St. Mary's Church in Clayton.

Environmental Stewardship

Considering micro-plastics

Micro-plastics are tiny plastic particles measuring less than 5mm in size and have become a pressing environmental issue. These tiny fragments are a result of degradation of larger plastic debris, and the breakdown of synthetic textiles like polyester and acrylic. From polluting our bodies of water to infiltrating the food chain, micro-plastics create far-reaching consequences.

Humans are exposed to these particles through the consumption of contaminated seafood, water and even air. While the full extent of the impacts is yet to be determined, studies suggest potential risks including inflammation, cellular damage and the accumulation of toxic chemicals within the body.

Addressing the environmental problems associated with micro-plastics requires a multi-faceted approach. Efforts should focus on reducing plastic waste through improved waste management systems, promoting the use of sustainable materials, innovative packaging and implementing stricter regulations on plastic production and disposal. Furthermore, public awareness is crucial in educating individuals about the consequences of micro-plastics.

Innovative solutions are emerging. Researchers are exploring the use of filtration systems to remove micro-plastics from wastewater treatment plants, preventing their entry into natural water sources. Advancements in biodegradable and compostable materials offer promising alternatives to traditional plastics.

Micro-plastics are an environmental threat. Recognizing the urgency of the issue, it is vital for individuals, industries and governments to take steps to reduce plastic pollution and the proliferation of micro-plastics. Try to avoid using plastic items and advocate for sustainable alternatives.

By Jack Lucia,
St. Mary's Clayton

"Walking the path of forgiveness." With this expression and with this spiritual attitude the Church in South Korea celebrated the special "Day of prayer for national reconciliation" on June 25, the 73rd anniversary of the start of the Korean War (1950-1953), thus inaugurating a time of prayer and

Bishop's Public Schedule

July 5 – Noon – Mass at St. Mary's Cathedral

July 6 – Noon – Outstanding Teacher of the Year Award to honor Danielle Fitzgerald from St. Bernard's School in Saranac Lake and Karlene Gonyeau from St. Mary's School in Ticonderoga at Bishop's Residence

July 7 – Noon – Mass at St. Mary's Cathedral

July 8 – 4 p.m. – Mass at St. Joseph's Church in West Chazy

July 9 – 8 a.m. – Mass at Sacred Heart Church in Chazy

July 11 – 1 p.m. – USCCB Subcommittee on Native American Affairs Zoom Meeting

July 13 – Noon – Mass at St. Mary's Cathedral

July 14 – 9 a.m. – Mass at the Sisters of St. Joseph Motherhouse in Watertown followed by a Presentation

6:30 p.m. – Prayer Service followed by the Blessing of the New Pavilion at St. Anthony's Church in Watertown

July 15 – 11 a.m. – Sisters of St. Joseph Jubilee Mass at the Sisters of St. Joseph Motherhouse in Watertown

July 16 – 12:15 p.m. – Mass at the 75th Annual New York State Knights of Columbus Pilgrimage at St. Anne's Shrine at Isle La Motte in Vermont

July 18 – Noon – Mass at St. Mary's Cathedral

4:30 p.m. – Mass for Youth Camp at Camp Guggenheim in Saranac Lake

July 19 – Noon – Mass at St. Mary's Cathedral

Prayer for reconciliation



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

The Society for the Propagation of the Faith
Sister Mary Ellen Brett, SSI, Director

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

reflection that will last until July 27, the date of the 70th anniversary of the armistice that end-

Protecting God's Children

The Diocese of Ogdensburg

has scheduled sessions for Protecting God's Children for Adults. Pre-registration is required. Preregister at www.virtus.org. Upcoming sessions:

July 20 – 1:15 p.m. – Diocesan Offices, Ogdensburg

August 31 – 2 p.m. – St. Agnes School, Lake Placid

Rest in Peace

July 5 – Rev. Paul F. Lederman, 2016

July 6 – Rev. Armand Baron, O.M.I., 1936

July 7 – Rev. Felician Fehlner, O.F.M. Conv, 1952

July 9 – Rev. John Rogers, 1887; Rev. Joseph H. Emard, O.M.I., 1924

July 10 – Rev. Mary Ignatius Grom, 1936; Rev. John F. McNamara, 1971; Deacon Victor Fisher, 1999; Rev. James A. Delbel, 2013

July 12 – Rev. James Salmon, 1835; Rev. John J. Brennan, 1881; Most Rev. Albert Pascal, O.M.I., 1920

July 13 – Rev. George Garand, 1941

July 15 – Rev. John Conlon, 1881; Rev. Charles D. Thomas, 1895; Msgr. Armand Dussault, 1963; Rev. Joseph F. Quinn, 1970; Rev. Joseph F. Dowd, 1983; Rev. Joseph L. Quinn, 1970

July 16 – Rev. Eugene Carroll, 1882; Rev. H. T. Regan, O.S.A., 1937; Rev. James Torsney, 1958;

July 18 – Msgr. Joseph Domina Brault, 1966

ed the armed confrontation.

Archbishop Peter Soon-Taick Chung OCD, Archbishop of Seoul and Apostolic Administrator of Pyongyang, celebrated the solemn Eucharist in the Seoul Cathedral, urging the faithful to pray together so that "South Korea and North Korea may walk the path of reconciliation and forgiveness with courage."

Forgiveness is the key word, according to the archbishop. Referring to the passage from the Gospel of Matthew (Mt 18, 21-35) in which Jesus invites us to "forgive seventy times seven," Msgr. Chung stressed that "it is urgent that we follow the path of forgiveness, which leads to peace."

Many priests, men and women religious

To Report Abuse

If you have a complaint of suspected misconduct involving diocesan clergy, religious, employees or volunteers, contact **Victims Assistance Coordinator**, Terriane Yanulavich, Ph.D., LMHC, 5050 Route 374, Merrill, NY 12955; terrianeyanulavich@yahoo.com Phone: 518-651-2267 days; 518-569-0612 evenings; or Father Christopher Carrara, the Episcopal Vicar for Clergy; ccarrara@rcdony.org Phone: 315-393-2920 ext. 1340. If you have a complaint of suspected sexual abuse or related misconduct by the bishops, contact the **Catholic Bishop Abuse Reporting Service** at 800-276-1562 or www.ReportBishopAbuse.org.

and some 900 faithful attended the mass. The Korean Catholic Church has confirmed that it will do everything possible to be an instrument of reconciliation and unity of the Korean people. The Eucharist for Unity has been celebrated every year on June 25 since 1965, the archbishop recalled. "The reconciliation and peace of the Korean people are more necessary than ever today," he added, as the international political circumstances surrounding Korea have gradually worsened, and tension and military escalation in the confrontation between South and North Korea.

Msgr. Chung also wanted to lament the current internal South Korean situation, pointing out: "The culture of hatred, the exclusion of people who have a different position from ours strongly permeates communication. The time has come for relations to overcome 70 years of conflict and seek authentic coexistence," he stressed.

The archbishop concluded his homily by inviting the faithful to pray together so that the two Koreas do not threaten each other but take steps to restore mutual trust and "courageously walk the path of reconciliation and forgiveness, even if it is a long and difficult process." "Let us always remember our brothers and sisters in the North, who are suffering from food and medicine shortages, and let us not tire of praying for true peace on the Korean peninsula," he concluded.

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

SCOTUS rules in favor of Christian postal worker in religious freedom case

By Peter Pinedo
Catholic News Agency

The U.S. Supreme Court issued a unanimous ruling Thursday in favor of a Christian postal worker who says he was targeted and disciplined by his employer for refusing to work on Sundays because of his religious beliefs.

In its ruling in *Groff v. DeJoy*, written by Justice Samuel Alito, the court said federal law requires an employer that denies an employee a religious accommodation must show that the burden of the accommodation would result in substantial increased costs.

The court rejected the “de minimis” interpretation of the “Hardison Standard,” which has been used to deny employees’ religious accommodation requests if they present more than a “trivial cost” to the employer.

The Hardison Standard, established in the 1977 case *TWA v. Hardison*, interpreted Title VII of the Civil Rights Act to mean that employers were not obligated to accommodate workers’ religious requests if they posed more than a trivial cost. The court’s decision Thursday overturns that interpretation.

“The erroneous de minimis interpretation of Hardison may have had the effect of leading courts to pay insufficient attention to what the actual text of Title VII means with regard to several recurring issues,” Alito wrote.

“What is most important is that ‘undue hardship’ in Title VII means what it says,” the decision’s syllabus said. “Courts should resolve whether a hardship would be substantial in the context of an employer’s business in the commonsense manner that it would use in applying any such test.”

Though granting that “Title VII requires an assessment of a possible accommodation’s effect on ‘the conduct of the employer’s business,’” Alito wrote that “impacts on coworkers are relevant only to the extent those impacts go on to affect the conduct of the business.”

Alito clarified that bias or hostility toward religion cannot be considered a factor in determining whether to grant a religious accommodation request.

“A hardship that is attributable to employee animosity to a particular religion, to religion in general, or to the very notion of accommodating reli-

gious practice cannot be considered ‘undue,’” Alito said. “If bias or hostility to a religious practice or a religious accommodation provided a defense to a reasonable accommodation claim, Title VII would be at war with itself.”

Besides rejecting the de minimis interpretation, the Supreme Court returned Groff’s case to lower courts to be examined under the new standard.

“Without foreclosing the possibility that USPS will prevail, we think it appropriate to leave it to the lower courts to apply our clarified context-specific standard and to decide whether any further factual development is needed,” Alito wrote.

At the heart of this case is Gerald Groff, a former postal worker who is also an evangelical missionary.

In 2019, Groff resigned from his position with the U.S. Postal Service (USPS) after years of allegedly being harassed, targeted, and disciplined for refusing to work Sundays so that he could abide by the Third Commandment, to “keep holy the sabbath day.”

Groff then sued the USPS for violating his religious rights.

After his claims were denied by both a Pennsylvania district court and the 3rd Circuit Court, the Supreme Court agreed to take up his appeal in January.

The court’s decision is expected to have a major impact on the religious rights of employees across the country.

According to the religious liberty law firm Becket, under the Hardison precedent, 86% of workplace religious accommodation requests are denied. “Hardison’s ‘de minimis test’ has been used by large companies to deny even the most basic of religious accommodations for their employees — especially employees with minority religious beliefs,” the law firm said.

“Big corporations got away with firing employees for their religious practices for decades, thanks to a fundamental misreading of civil rights law,” Becket President Mark Rienzi said in a press release in response to the court’s ruling.

“Today was a win for the little guy — all those who want to live and work in accordance with their religious beliefs,” Rienzi added. “The Supreme Court has made it so hardworking religious Americans no longer have to choose between their job and their faith.”

CATHOLIC WORLD AT A GLANCE

Bishops rebuke Catholic Democrats supporting abortion

(CNA) — The United States Catholic Conference of Bishops (USCCB) has issued a strong response to a group of Catholic lawmakers who signed a letter citing Catholic teaching in support of abortion. The group of 30 Democrats, led by Connecticut Rep. Rosa DeLauro, cited their Catholic faith and St. John Paul II’s apostolic exhortation *Christifideles Laici* as reasons to support abortion. “The fundamental tenets of our Catholic faith — social justice, conscience, and religious freedom — compel us to defend a woman’s right to access abortion,” the letter stated. “Our faith unflinchingly promotes the common good, prioritizes the dignity of every human being, and highlights the need to provide a collective safety net to our most vulnerable.” Archbishop Timothy P. Broglio, president of the USCCB; Bishop Michael F. Burbidge of Arlington, Virginia, chairman of the USCCB’s Committee of Pro-Life Activities; and Bishop Daniel E. Flores of Brownsville, Texas, chairman of the USCCB’s Committee on Doctrine, issued a joint corrective statement in response: “Members of Congress who recently invoked teachings of the Catholic faith itself as justifying abortion or supporting a supposed right to abortion grievously distort the faith. It is wrong and incoherent to claim that the taking of innocent human life at its most vulnerable stage can ever be consistent with the values of supporting the dignity and well-being of those in need,” the U.S. bishops wrote.

Half a million Catholics abandon Church in Germany

The Catholic Church in Germany is facing an unprecedented crisis, with more than half a million baptized Catholics leaving the Church in 2022, according to figures released by the German Bishops’ Conference on June 28. This marks the highest number of departures ever recorded, with 522,821 people choosing to leave the Church, according to CNA Deutsch, CNA’s German-language partner news agency. The total number of departures, including deaths, exceeded 708,000, a stark contrast to the 155,173 baptisms and 1,447 new members recorded during the same period. The figures reveal a historic negative trend, with the number of departures doubling from over 270,000 in 2020 to the current record. Despite these departures, Church statistics for 2022 show that nearly 21 million people in Germany remained officially Catholic by the end of the year, representing 24.8% of the country’s resident population of 84.4 million. Several German bishops expressed dismay over the figures. Bishop Stefan Oster of Passau described the numbers as “frighteningly high,” while Bishop Bertram Meier of Augsburg acknowledged the Church’s need to regain trust with “patience and credibility.” A 2021 report by CNA Deutsch noted that 1 in 3 Catholics in Germany were considering leaving the Church. The reasons for leaving vary, with older people citing the Church’s handling of the abuse crisis and younger people pointing to the obligation of paying church tax, according to one earlier study.

CLINTON NORTHERN FRANKLIN

HEARTY FAMILY BREAKFAST

Ellenburg - Sponsored through the kind hearts of the Knights of Columbus, Catholic Daughters of America, and Altar Rosary Society of Ellenburg to benefit Our Lady of the Adirondacks House of Prayer, a Hearty Family Breakfast is offered.

Date: July 9

Time: 8 a.m. to 1 p.m.

Place: St. Edmund's Parish

Cost: Adults, \$10; Children 6-12, \$5; 5 and under, Free

Menu: Pancakes with real North Country Maple Syrup, Sausage an Ham, Scrambled Eggs and Home Fries with OJ, Coffee (reg and decaf), Tea and Milk.

PATTERNS OF DISCIPLESHIP

Moors Forks - A day of sharing and reflection on what it means to be a disciple and say YES to the Lord's invitation to follow him.

Date: July 15

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

Place: St. Ann's Hall
Speaker: Marika Donders

Contact: Sign up by calling the Parish Office at 518 236 5632.

FIRST SATURDAY DEVOTIONS

Ellenburg - Our Lady of the Adirondacks invite you to First Saturday Communal Devotions.

Schedule: Aug. 5, Sept. 2, Oct. 7

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

Features: You are warmly invited to join us as we pray for peace by meeting the conditions of this powerful devotion made in reparation to our Lady's Immaculate Heart.

Contact: For more information, contact Sarah at 518-534-9976.

DEVOTION AND HOLY HOUR

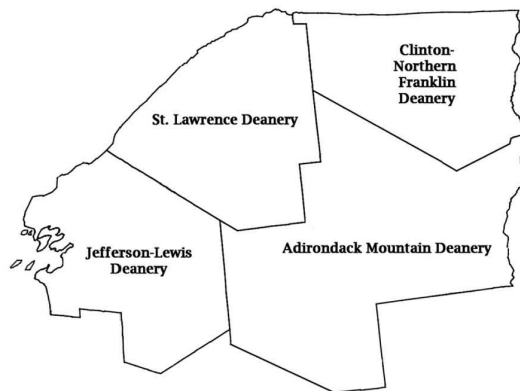
St. Regis Falls - All are invited to the monthly first Saturday Devotion and Holy Hour for Vocations.

Date: First Saturday of the Month

Time: Following the 4:30 anticipated Mass

Place: St. Ann's Church

Features: Prayer after Mass, Night Prayer, Prayer for All Souls



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@northcountrycatholic.org.

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

and the Holy Souls, Novena in Honor of Our Lady of the Miraculous Medal, Chaplet of Divine Mercy, The Reparation Rosary of the Blessed Virgin Mary with private meditation on the 15 Mysteries of the Rosary, Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament reposed in the Tabernacle, and Prayers for the Holy

JEFFERSON-LEWIS

Father and his intentions.

ST. MARY'S GALA AND RAFFLE

Clayton - St. Mary's Church to have their annual Gala and raffle.

Date: Aug. 5

Time: 5:30 p.m. to 10

Place: Cerow Arena at the Town of Clayton Recreational Park

Features: Your \$100 ticket is good for dinner for 2 and 2 drinks and enters you in all drawings.

Contact: For more information and tickets, contact St. Mary's parish office at 521 James Street,

ST. LAWRENCE

Clayton or 315-686-3398.

BINGO

Canton - The Knights of Columbus will be holding BINGO.

Date: July 3, 10, 17, 24 and 31

Time: Doors open at 4:30 p.m.,

First call at 7 p.m.

Place: 30 Miner Street

Cost: Admission is \$5 at the door

Features: Come sit with family, bring your friends, enjoy good

company, have a snack and maybe win a game. Maybe even a bonus ball game.

PATRIOTIC ROSARY

Ogdensburg - The Legion of Mary will host a patriotic rosary.

Date: July 4

Time: 7:45 a.m., before daily Mass

Place: St. Mary's Cathedral

Features: This lovely prayer will include patriotic music, prayers for our country, as well as prayer for our elected officials and for the citizens of each individual state.

MONTHLY BRUNCH

Norfolk - Parish of the Visitation and St. Raymond's will have their monthly Knights of Columbus Brunch.

Date: July 9 (Second Sunday of each month)

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

Place: Fr. Amyot Parish Center

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

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

DO IT YOURSELF RETREAT

Ogdensburg - 33 DAYS TO MORNING GLORY: A CONSECRATION TO JESUS THROUGH MARY - A Do-It-Yourself Retreat to be held.

Date: Thursdays starting July 13 for 5 weeks

Time: 4:30 p.m. to 6

Place: Bishop Brzana Hall

Features: Want to transform your work, your marriage, your family, and your life, but don't have time? Are you looking for the quickest, surest, and easiest way to holiness, but don't know where to begin? In our hectic day and time, Pope John Paul II and Blessed Mother Teresa knew that the quickest way to be transformed into a saint is through a relationship with Our Blessed Mother, Mary. We will be offering this do-it-yourself Retreat Series hosted by Fr. Michael Gaitley of the Marian Helpers. Deacon Bill will be facilitating this Consecration to Jesus through Mary. Books will be provided. We accept any donations to defray cost. Thank you. All are welcome to join us! We hope to see YOU there.

Contact: You may sign up on the front page of our parish website at our parish website here: <https://ogdensburgcatholics.org/33-days-to-morning-glory> OR you may email or call Deacon O'Brien at- billob315@gmail.com or 315-528-0461.

TRIVIA NIGHT

Canton - St. Mary's Church to have their second trivia night.

Date: July 15

Time: Doors open at 5:30 p.m.

Place: St. Mary's parish center

Cost: \$20 per person, includes 2 alcoholic beverages (beer or wine), 2 Slices of Pizza, popcorn & chips. Non-alcoholic beverages included.

Features: Must be 21 or older to attend. Childcare will be provided. Teams will be of 4-6 players. Single players are welcome and will be placed with a team. Door prizes and grand prize!

Contact: Call 315-386-2543 for more info or to sign your team up or visit <https://cantoncatholics.com/trivia>

DIOCESAN EVENTS

com/trivia

LIFE GIVING WOUNDS RETREAT

Ogdensburg - Retreat for adults

whose parents separated or divorced and also for those who grew up in single-parent families.

Date: Aug. 11-13

Place: Wadhams Hall

Cost: \$200 for a shared room or \$250 for a single room.

Features: Financial assistance is available...do not let cost prevent you from experiencing the healing you deserve.

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

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 special weekend in the beauty of 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 or contact Steve Tartaglia at 315-393-2920, startaglia@rcdony.org.

SURVIVING DIVORCE

The Family Life Office is offering the Surviving Divorce Program in Plattsburgh.

Date: 12 weeks starting Aug. 30th

Place: St. John the XXIII Newman Center

Time: 6 p.m. to 8

Features: Surviving Divorce features twelve video presentations that cover topics such as shock and grief, anger and forgiveness, money issues, dealing with children and a former spouse, and annulment and remarriage. This program is for the newly separated and divorced and those still struggling with issues many years later. It will help them find answers to their questions, restore their hope, and begin authentic healing.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 13

From playing Jesus to 'Sound of Freedom'

By Francesca Pollio Fenton
Catholic News Agency

Catholic audiences know actor Jim Caviezel for his iconic performances in movies such as "The Passion of the Christ" and "The Count of Monte Cristo." His latest film, "Sound of Freedom," which will be released by Angel Studios in theaters nationwide on July 4, is, in his view, among his best work.

Caviezel plays Homeland Security agent Tim Ballard, who, after rescuing a young boy from traffickers, learns that the boy's sister is still captive. He quits his job and puts his life at risk as he embarks on a dangerous journey through the Colombian jungle to save the little girl.

In 2013, Ballard and a number of former government operatives left their jobs to found Operation Underground Railroad (O.U.R.), which works around the world and in conjunction with law enforcement to rescue children from slavery and exploitation.

Caviezel spoke with CNA about the upcoming film, the impact it had on him, and the effect he hopes it will have on others.

"This is the best film I've done since the 'Passion of the Christ,'" he said. "This film is phenomenal and it is worth being seen."

Caviezel was drawn to playing Ballard in the film. "As an actor, it's kind of like a baseball player where you have a particular pitch you like, and when you connect to it, you can hit it out of the park, and with this one, I

felt I could do that."

Caviezel spoke about the work that went into preparing for the role. He and the real Tim Ballard spent time training, specifically in close-quarter combat, and Caviezel even joined Ballard on missions.

"I go and literally sit in on these missions and I'm watching him and his analysis of what he sees. And it has to be done very methodically. And I'm trying to find out who he is and what I am and how we're similar," he recalled.

While filming, a group of Navy Seals and other armed forces were assigned as protection. Caviezel, unaware at the time, shared the story of the day of filming where there was no protection. He later found out that the group of special forces went out and saved 100 children from traffickers that day.

"You can't make this stuff up," Caviezel said.

The actor, a devout Catholic, hopes that people will leave the movie theater with "a new heart."

"A heart that's not afraid," he added. "I was praying the other day and I said, 'Can we love God's children more than we fear evil? Can we love Jesus more than we fear the cross?' And this is the problem right now with modern-day Christians is that we want the easy route. And right now you see the world changing. You're going to have to make a decision at some point."

"There's good, there's evil. But a big part of that evil is those

that are sitting on the fence. And we have to make a choice. And some are more leaning towards Jesus, more towards good, some are more leaning towards the evil, but they're on that fence and that fence belongs to the evil one," he continued. "And so we have to make that decision... And I love that about Tim Ballard. He's a battle hero's story."

About 2 million children are trafficked every year worldwide. The United States is considered one of the top destinations for victims of child trafficking and cases have been reported in all 50 states. According to a 2019 report from the Human Trafficking Hotline, California, Texas, Florida, Ohio, and New York rank at the top with the most cases. There are more than 350,000 children who go missing in the U.S. each year. Of those 350,000, it is estimated that roughly 100,000 are being trafficked.

"God's children are no longer for sale," is a powerful line in the film, and Caviezel told CNA why he believes children are under attack, not just through child trafficking, as seen in the movie, but also through abortion. (According to the Guttmacher Institute, almost 1 million abortions took place in the United States in 2020.)

"The most vulnerable are under attack for one reason - children are the most innocent of humans," Caviezel said.

"It wounds God to the deepest core to kill those unborn babies, but now they kill them when

they're born, don't they?"

He continued: "That's where Jesus is going to have a deep conversation with all of us when we die, and I don't want to be a part of that. I want to tell him that I love him. That's what I want to say. And that I tried to live the life that it was supposed to be, that I give my life for him. Because he deserves to be loved."

"Pope John Paul said, 'Every generation of Americans needs to know that freedom exists not to do what you like but having the right to do what you ought.' That's the freedom I wish for you, for us. Freedom from sin, freedom from our weaknesses, freedom from the slavery that sin makes out of all of us. That is the freedom that is worth dying for."

"I'm here because this warrior saint, Tim Ballard, gave his life and continues to do it to go down to the cartel, risking his head like John the Baptist did. Risking his head like St. Paul did," he said.

Angel Studios, an American media company and film distribution studio that uses equity crowdfunding to finance its productions and is known for the popular series "The Chosen," is encouraging "Sound of Freedom" supporters and viewers to 'pay it forward' so those who might not be able to see the movie can claim a free ticket.

The studio's goal is to have 2 million people attend the film's opening weekend to represent the estimated 2 million children trafficked each year.

Around the diocese

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 12

<https://www.rcdony.org/survivingdivorce>. For more information, contact Steve Tartaglia at 315-393-2920.

WOMENS HEALING RETREAT

Ogdensburg – Our Lady of the Rosary Healing Retreat for Women to be held.

Date: Oct. 5-8

Place: Wadhams Hall

Cost: \$275 per person, \$100 Deposit

Features: Retreat for women 18 years or older. Registrations begin July 1, 2023

Contact: For more information call Kathleen Nichols 518-651-6895. Donations accepted to be payable to OLRHR and sent to Wadhams hall.

NEIGHBORING DIOCESES

PADRE PIO RELIC TOUR

Authentic Relics of Saint Pio of Pietrelcina will be on display for veneration around the Diocese of Burlington Vermont.

Schedule: July 13, St Mary Star of the Sea 191 Clermont Terrace, Newport, VT 05855, 802-334-5066 Masses: 9 a.m., 6:30 p.m., Veneration: 9:30 a.m. to 6 p.m.; July 14, St

Monica Parish, 79 Summer Street, Barre VT 05641, 802-479-3253, Mass: 7 a.m., Veneration: 7:30 a.m. to 7 p.m.; July 15, Christ the King Parish, 136 Locust St, Burlington, VT 05401, 802-862-5784, Mass: 10 a.m., 6 p.m., Veneration: 10:30 a.m. to 6 p.m.; July 16, St John the Baptist, 3 Houghton St, North Bennington, VT 05257, 802-447-7504, Mass: 10 a.m., Veneration: 10:30 a.m. to 6 p.m.

Features: All events are free to the public. Contact parishes for information.



SCRIPTURE REFLECTIONS

Seeking peace

July 9

14th Sunday in Ordinary Time

READINGS

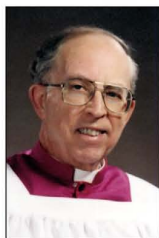
Zechariah 9:9-10
Romans 8:9, 11-13
Matthew 11:25-30

Summer is here! And it's just so good to enjoy longer days and brighter evenings. At the same time, the prospects of another summer under the shadow of the corona virus, the persecuted Christians in so many countries, floods, fires, and cyclones, casts a dark cloud over our joy. We need to listen carefully to the first reading from Zechariah. It can refresh our spirits.

The vision of the King of Peace coming to abolish all fighting is a

cause for hope. And, of course, it's more than a dream, since we are children of the Covenant. God has promised us a time of peace. We must never give up on the dream of our founding fathers and mothers.

After all, our country was founded on a dream. Otherwise we would not be celebrating the Fourth of July this weekend. Their dream is very like God's dream, His Providence. We are all entitled to be dreamers. We must



Monsignor Paul E. Whitmore

never give up hope that God's dream of peace will come true. It His plan! There's nothing wrong with the American Dream. It's based on reality of God's dream, so whatever we dream and work for in America is based on his principles of life. Why are politicians so unwilling to give life a chance? God gave us a chance before we were

ever born!!

How do we help make His plan come true? By speaking out - not being afraid or timid of our Catholic principles. By living in the Spirit as our second reading explains. As members of Christ, every good individual action strengthens the whole body.

We need to faithfully pray for peace, respond with serene charity to the many frustrations and "downers" in our lives, and influence others to do the same. Living in the Spirit will reduce our tendencies to live in the flesh and all its temptations. It's called choosing the nar-

row door. Of course, we live in the flesh - from hugs to hot dogs - but it's so easy to let our desires get out of hand. More prayer, more getting out of ourselves to think of other people brings lightness of heart and freedom of Spirit.

When we're scared and think that it's just too hard, think of the Lord's words in today's Gospel: "Come to me all you who labor and are heavily burdened and I will refresh you." In other words, Jesus says to us "Here, give it to me. I'll carry it for a while." Just listen to the Spirit.

CALLED TO SERVE

It will never happen in your church

There is nothing quite as embarrassing as crashing into a priest or fellow deacon during Mass. I have had that happen once or twice. It was never intentional. Perhaps I zipped when I should have zagged. Most people in the pews never saw it happen or forgot about it almost immediately. We score those bumps "incidental contact."

The collision becomes more memorable if someone is knocked to the deck.

That almost never happens. At least it never happened to me, thank you, God.

Which brings me to the point of this column. Things like stepping into someone's path by mistake or being where you shouldn't be at any given time will happen during a live

event, performance or show.

Mass is no different. We try not to think of Mass as live theater, but the similarities are striking. Without some pre-planning, in theater it is called "blocking," people are bound to crash into each other.

The Mass, according to New Advent Catholic Encyclopedia, is "The complex of prayers and ceremonies that make up the service of the Eucharist in the Latin rites."

Many of the movements by the priest Celebrant, the assisting deacon, the servers and the other ministers have been prescribed in the rituals published by the Church or are planned ahead of time by the ministers.

In my parish, for example, the lector comes

to the ambo from the congregation after the opening prayer, reads from scripture and stays in the sanctuary until after the Prayer of the Faithful. It might be slightly different where you attend Mass. It is nice and orderly.

The deacon usually kneels from the Epiclesis until after the chalice with the Blood of Christ is lowered by the celebrant. The Epiclesis, by the way, is "the prayer petitioning God to send the Holy Spirit so that the offerings at the Eucharist may become the Body and Blood of Christ."

If the deacon has bad knees, or an unfor-

giving back, he might remain standing. That's

allowed. The deacon proclaims the Gospel. Let's say the celebrant is preaching. When they swap places at the ambo, they might have to cross each other in the sanctuary. Some parishes work out how they will meet, bow and cross so there is no confusion, and a potential accident, at the exchange of places. That's good planning.

Things get complicated when more people are added to the participant list. Maybe there are concelebrating priests or additional deacons. The occasion might include first communicants or confirmands. Blocking their movements is part of

the planning.

If all goes right, you will never be distracted from your principal reason for being at Mass; to thank God for all he has done for you and to worship Him.

The last thing any of us needs is a minister not paying attention and crashing into the incense bearer. I can see that server tripping and falling to the ground with a thurible full of lighted coals and incense. That must have happened somewhere. Not in our diocese, but somewhere.

Planning might have avoided the original collision.

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



Deacon Kevin Mastellon

JULY 5, 2023

OBITUARIES

Au Sable Forks – Nancy (Kastings) Santo, 91; Funeral Services June 30, 2023 at Heidrick-Zaumetzer Funeral Home; burial in Holy Name Cemetery.

Brushton – Joanne D. (White) McElwain, 88; Mass of Christian Burial June 30, 2023 at St. Mary's Church; burial in St. Joseph's Cemetery, Bombay.

Cape Vincent – Frank L. Florio, 94; Mass of Christian Burial June 23, 2023 at Saint Vincent of Paul Church; burial in St. Vincent of Paul Cemetery.

Chateaugay – Mary (McManus) Harrigan, 97; Mass of Christian Burial July 7, 2023 at St. Patrick's Church; burial in St. Patrick's Cemetery.

Clayton – Patricia M. (Lynch) Keal, 85; Mass of Christian Burial June 24, 2023 at St. Mary's Church; burial in St. Mary's Cemetery.

Croghan – Bruce H. LaChausse, 83; Mass of Christian Burial June 29, 2023 at St. Stephen's Church; burial in St. Stephen's Cemetery.

Edwards – Katherine Almina Wagner, Sr., 100; Mass of Christian Burial June 28, 2023 at Sacred Heart Church; burial in Hermon Cemetery.

Fort Covington – Robert MacDonald, 70; Mass of Christian Burial June 27, 2023 at St. Mary's of the Fort.

Gouverneur – Jeanne E. (Hentz) Legacy, 84; Private Services to be held.

Gouverneur – Beulah M. (Youngs) Walrath, 88; Mass of Christian Burial July 8, 2023 at St. James Church; burial in Oxbow Cemetery.

Hogansburg – Catherin S. (Lazore)

Edwards, 86; Mass of Christian Burial June 19, 2023 at St. Regis Church; burial in St. Joseph's Cemetery.

Madrid – Ronald J. Burke, 83; Mass of Christian Burial June 23, 2023 at St. John the Baptist Church; burial in St. Mary's Cemetery, Canton.

Malone – Agnes V. Amyotte, 97; Mass of Christian Burial June 22, 2023 at Notre Dame Church; burial in St. Joseph's Cemetery.

Malone – Donald W. Carr, 91; Mass of Christian Burial June 30, 2023 at Notre Dame Church; burial in St. Patrick's Cemetery, Chateaugay.

Massena – Fernand A. "Fudgie" Granger, 96; Mass of Christian Burial June 29, 2023 at Sacred Heart Church; burial in Calvary Cemetery.

Massena – Hannah Lee Hayden, 31; Mass of Christian Burial June 30, 2023 at St. Mary's Church.

Mooers Forks – Ruth A. LaValley, 80; Mass of Christian Burial July 7, 2023 at St. Ann's Church; burial in St. Joseph's Cemetery, Mooers.

Mooers Forks – Harold M. Rabideau, 86; Private services to be held.

Morrisonville – Allen F. LaFountain, 66; Mass of Christian Burial June 30, 2023 at St. Alexander's Church;

Morrisonville – Lynda A. Myers; Mass of Christian Burial June 27, 2023 at St. Alexander's Church; burial in parish cemetery.

Ogdensburg – Shirley E. (Bushnell) Burnett, 89; Private Services to be held; burial

in Oswegatchie Mausoleum.

Ogdensburg – Henry J. "Jack" Carmody Jr., 82; Mass of Christian Burial June 20, 2023 at St. Mary's Cathedral.

Ogdensburg – Barbara A. (Rivet) Grizzuto, 80; Mass of Christian Burial June 22, 2023 at Notre Dame Church; burial in Notre Dame Cemetery.

Ogdensburg – Frank Thomas Jermano, 82; Mass of Christian Burial June 23, 2023 at St. Mary's Cathedral.

Peru – Ruth Sarah (LaFlore) Fleury Guglielmo, 96; Funeral Services June 29, 2023 at the Hamilton Funeral Home; burial in St. John's Cemetery, Keeseville.

Peru – Todd Walter Nelson, 61; Funeral Services June 21, 2023 at the Hamilton Funeral Home; burial in St. John's Cemetery, Keeseville.

Peru – Marvin David Ransom, Sr., 75; Funeral Services June 22, 2023 at the Hamilton Funeral Home.

Plattsburgh – Patricia Ann Cronkrite, 61; Mass of Christian Burial June 29, 2023 at St. Patrick's Church.

Plattsburgh – Patricia A. Leonard, 72; Mass of Christian Burial July 10, 2023 at St. John's Church; burial in Mount Carmel Cemetery.

Plattsburgh – Elizabeth "Joan" (King) Martin, 91; Mass of Christian Burial June 26, 2023 at St. Peter's Church; burial in Plattsburgh Community Mausoleum.

Port Henry – Constance Mae Williams Bennett, 89; Graveside services July 11, 2023 at St. Patrick's Cemetery.

Port Leyden – M. Jeanne (Keough) Callaghan, 81; Mass of Christian Burial July 3, 2023 at St. Martin's Church; burial in Calvary Cemetery.

Russell – James J. Ouellette, 73; Memorial Service Oct. 7, 2023.

Ticonderoga – Richard Liddell, 78; Mass of Christian Burial July 10, 2023 at St. Mary's Church; burial in St. Mary's Cemetery.

Watertown – Mary Jane (Manigold) Derrigo, 89; Mass of Christian Burial June 20, 2023 at St. Anthony's Church; burial in Glenwood Cemetery.

Watertown – A. Julee (Malara) Gorri, 101; Mass of Christian Burial July 3, 2023 at St. Anthony's Church; burial in Glenwood Cemetery.

Watertown – Joan (Pierre) Geno, 94; Funeral Services June 23, 2023 at Cummings Funeral Service, Inc.; burial in St. Stephen's Cemetery, Croghan.

Watertown – Carol (King) Mangini, 99; Mass of Christian Burial June 22, 2023 at St. Anthony's Church; burial in Glenwood Cemetery.

Watertown – Katherine A. "Kay" (Florentine) O'Brien, 82; Mass of Christian Burial June 23, 2023 at Holy Family Church; burial in Glenwood Cemetery.

Watertown – Virginia R. (Caltabiano) Palumbo, 95; Mass of Christian Burial June 27, 2023 at St. Anthony's Church; burial in Glenwood Cemetery.

Watertown – Anita L. (Chiumento) Parish, 88; Private Services to be held.

Friar gets jail for blocking abortion clinic

By Tyler Arnod
Catholic News Agency

Catholic priest and pro-life activist Father Fidelis Moscinski, CFR, has been sentenced to six months in federal prison for blocking access to a Planned Parenthood abortion facility by placing locks and chains on the gated entrance.

Judge Steven Tisci-

one laid down the six-month sentence, which is the maximum available for the specific crime. Moscinski was found guilty of violating the Freedom of Access to Clinic Entrances (FACE) Act, which imposes harsh penalties for obstructing access to an abortion facility or a pregnancy center.

"My actions ... were done because Planned

Parenthood as an organization is in the business of killing," Moscinski told the judge while asking for a lenient sentence, according to his remarks provided by the pro-life organization Red Rose Rescue.

Although the priest is a member of Red Rose Rescue, the organization has emphasized that his effort to block

access to an abortion clinic was not sanctioned by the group. Red Rose Rescue said members can engage in pro-life activism outside of their organization, but they are a sole agent when doing so.

"Every procured abortion that occurs on [Planned Parenthood's] premises constitutes the deliberate killing of an innocent human

being," Moscinski continued in his statement to the judge. "Furthermore, these bloody and violent acts also cause grave spiritual and psychological harm to the mother of the child. All of my actions then and now are directed solely towards preventing the murder of defenseless children and the wounding of their mothers."

Father Solomon takes naturalization oath

By Darcy Fargo
Editor

"There's this feeling of joy. This is a great, great thing. I thank God for calling me to this journey and for this blessing."

That's how Father Fernando Solomon described taking his Naturalization Oath of Allegiance to the United States of America and becoming a U.S. citizen.

Father Solomon pledged that oath at a ceremony held Friday, June 23, in Clinton County Court before state Supreme Court Justice John T. Ellis.

"For this part of the process, naturalization, I applied last year in June," Father Solomon said. "After six months, I received a reply scheduling an interview. I interviewed in Colchester, Vermont. After the interview, I waited a few months before this naturalization ceremony."

Father Solomon first came to the United States in 2011 on a Religious Worker Visa.

"The visa is good for three to five years," he explained. "Before the



PHOTO BY DARCY FARGO/NORTH COUNTRY CATHOLIC

When Father Fernando Solomon took his Oath of Allegiance to the United States of America on June 23 in Plattsburgh, he was joined by Bishop Terry R. LaValley, priests of the diocese and parishioners from Malone and Port Henry. Pictured are (from left) Father Leagon Carlin, Msgr. Dennis Duprey, state Supreme Court Justice John T. Ellis, Father Solomon, Bishop LaValley, Father Al Hauser and Father Medenel Angrand.

three years expired, usually six months before, I had to renew. I was on that renewal when I started preparing for my Green Card. I got that earlier than expected, and I stayed on my Green Card for 5 years. Then, I was qualified to apply for citizenship."

Initially, Father Solo-

mon said he considered remaining in the U.S. on the Green Card.

"Thinking and praying about it, I decided I am going to be here for the rest of my life, and God brought me here. I decided to apply for citizenship."

Father Solomon was joined by individuals

from around the world in taking the oath of allegiance on June 23. He was also joined by Bishop Terry R. LaValley, priests and deacons of the diocese, and parishioners from both Malone and Port Henry, places he has served.

"I thank God almighty for calling me on this

journey and for all the help and support," he said. "It was a wonderful experience to see those people who love me and were there for me. They're all blessings."

Father Solomon said he looks forward to both the benefits and responsibilities of citizenship.

"I'm looking forward to getting my passport," he said. "I'm looking forward to visiting my mom. It's been a long, long time since I've been able to go. I updated my driver's license, registered to vote and applied for a passport. I've already received a letter about jury duty."

Father Solomon said he's also relieved to no longer have to worry about completing complex paperwork and other steps previously required of him.

"I know I'm not the only one to experience this, other international priests do, as well, but it appears to be normal to feel nervous going through the paperwork and the personal appearances," he said. "No more."

Friar sentenced to jail

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 15

also criticized the FACE Act.

"This pseudo-law seeks to cloak the act of killing preborn children under the euphemistic and Orwellian language of 'reproductive health care,'" Moscinski said. "I am not guilty of violating this law because this law cannot be seen as anything other than null and void since it attempts to give legal protection to actions which are intrinsi-

cally evil and unjust."

Moscinski asked Tiscione to "somewhat mitigate the injustice this court has perpetrated" by providing him the most lenient sentence possible. Instead, the judge handed him the most severe sentence and cited his previous arrests for pro-life activism as his justification for the sentence.

The priest's pro-life activism occurred on the morning of July 7, 2022,

at the Planned Parenthood of Greater New York clinic in Hempstead, New York. He effectively shut down the clinic for about two hours by placing locks and chains on the entrance and covering some of them with glue, according to the Department of Justice.

Once the fire department and police department cut through the locks, Moscinski laid down in front of the entrance to prevent cars

from entering the gate, according to a press release from the U.S. Attorney's Office.

Moscinski has previously been arrested for his pro-life activism, but this is the first time he has been found guilty of violating the FACE Act. Last year, he was arrested for trespassing in an abortion clinic after entering the facility in protest and refusing to leave when ordered by staff and then by police.

Earlier this month, New York Attorney General Letitia James filed a lawsuit against Red Rose Rescue that seeks to bar Moscinski and other members of Red Rose Rescue from going within 30 feet of an abortion clinic. Even though Moscinski's FACE Act violation was not part of a Red Rose Rescue, the attorney general cited that incident as one of the incidents to justify the lawsuit.