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The Diocese of Ogdensburg Volume 78 Number 39

# NORTH COUNTRY CATHOLIC

FEBRUARY 14, 2024

## Follow Me: 'We must grow closer to Jesus'

In his annual Lenten message, Bishop Terry R. LaValley reminds us Lent "calls each of us to follow the poor, humiliated and rejected Jesus."

"We recommit ourselves to grow ever closer to Him, particularly at this moment in history when such a commitment encounters so many challenges. Are we willing to follow Jesus even through the real struggles we face in trying to be faithful today? Can we overcome the weariness, frustration and confusion that wells up within us because the way of following Jesus has clearly become the Way of the Cross?"

FULL STORY, PAGE 3

## Human trafficking: It happens here

On Feb. 8, we celebrated the feast day of St. Josephine Bakhita, patron saint of human trafficking victims. The Sisters of St. Joseph Social Justice Committee looks at this humanitarian crisis, how we can learn more about it and what we can do about it.

FULL STORY, PAGE 4

## CELEBRATING CATHOLIC SCHOOLS



Students and staff recently celebrated Catholic Schools Week at Immaculate Heart Elementary School in Watertown. The school held an Art Extravaganza, Spirit Day, Bingo with the Principal, and a beautiful prayer service celebrating the school's Saint John Bosco preschool, which has been in existence for 40 years. One of the school's special events was the "Souper Bowl," in which students dressed in their favorite jerseys and donated canned goods and non-perishable food to be donated to the food pantry at the Urban Mission. Mrs Roberts' fourth grade was the winning team, but the real winners are the people in need who will benefit from the over 1,700 items students and families donated!

# Pope: Sorrow is an 'ailment of the soul'

By Matthew Santucci  
Catholic News Agency

Pope Francis continued his general audience catechetical series on vice and virtues on Feb. 7 by focusing on sorrow, observing that it can be "understood as a despondency of the soul, a constant affliction that prevents man from feeling joy at his own existence."

During the audience the pope observed that sorrow can assume a sinister and destructive form and could be understood as an "ailment of the soul" that "creeps into the soul and prostrates it in a state of despondency" and "must be fought reso-

lutely."

Sorrow can be particularly difficult for man to deal with as it "is linked to the experience of loss" and consequently "arises in the human heart when a desire or hope vanishes," the Holy Father said to the faithful gathered in the Paul VI Audience Hall.

"In the heart of man, hopes arise that are sometimes dashed. It can be the desire to possess something that instead we are unable to obtain, but it can also be something important, such as an emotional loss," the pope said. "When this happens, it is as if man's heart falls from a precipice, and the sentiments he

feels are discouragement, weakness of the spirit, depression, and anguish."

Reflecting on the universality of this second type of sorrow as an experience that is inherent to the human condition, the pope observed that "we all go through ordeals that generate sorrow in us, because life makes us conceive dreams that are then shattered."

The pope contrasted the different ways we can react to these tumultuous and jarring situations by saying that some people "rely on hope" while "others wallow in melancholy, allowing it to fester in their hearts."

"Sadness is the pleasure of

non-pleasure," the pontiff emphasized.

The pope cautioned the faithful to be vigilant, highlighting the destructive and isolating conditions that often come about by being caught in "certain protracted griefs."

"Certain resentful bitterness, where a person always has a claim in mind that makes them take on the guise of the victim, does not produce a healthy life in us, let alone a Christian one," the pope said. "There is something in everyone's past that needs to be healed. Sorrow... can turn into an evil state of mind. It is a devious demon, that of sorrow."

NORTH  
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# If you lead...

"You have eight seconds to capture your readers' attention."

I remember hearing that line early in my first journalism class. I remember my first editor saying it to me. I remember telling new reporters that after I became an editor. I'm told journalism students are now told five seconds, sometimes less.

That lesson is generally delivered when journalism professors or editors are talking about "leads," sometimes spelled "ledes," the first line/few sentences of an article, column, review...

Writing leads is my favorite part of writing this

column. Why? It's partly because the editorial style gives me more flexibility than I have when writing traditional news stories, and I can be a bit more creative, but it's really my favorite part because I generally don't have to do it.

**Darcy L.  
Fargo**

No, I don't have a ghostwriter - someone who writes work to be published under someone else's name - helping me fill this space. Ok.

Maybe I sort of do. But it's more of a Holy Ghostwriter.

I've said it eleven billion times: I used all my ideas for this column in my first six months working here. The Holy Spirit is

solely responsible for filling it since.

Nearly every week, I'll start my Friday morning (deadline to file the NCC pages is Friday afternoon) worried about what I'm going to write in this space. Then, on my commute to work or when I'm working on pages or as I'm eating my lunch, a lead randomly jumps into my brain. As soon as it happens, it's like the column writes itself.

"You have eight seconds..." jumped into my brain as I was stressing about writing a column looking ahead to Ash Wednesday and Lent.

We don't have only eight seconds. We have 40 days to give our attention in a special way to the Lord. Journeying with the Lord isn't about that instant

gratification we were told our readers needed back in journalism class. It's just that - a journey.

Living our faith isn't easy. Living Lent isn't easy, or at least I don't find penance, almsgiving and prayer inherently easy. In my experience, Lent is full of ups and downs - moments of struggle and sharing in Christ's cross, as well as moments of beauty and grace sitting in His love and mercy.

And, like the leads on my columns, it's better when we allow the Holy Spirit to inform our Lenten practices and show us where we need to take it. When it happens, it's like a fruitful Lenten journey writes itself.

Better yet, God takes the lead.

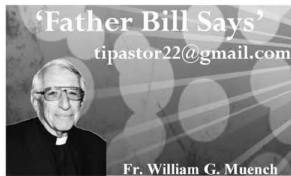
## 'Mass is truly our best prayer'

Lately, I have been speaking and writing a great deal about prayer. I am sure it's because Lent is coming. Lent is all about prayer. Lent is also a time for silence and fasting.

Today, I have decided on one more look at prayer. I would like to share with you about making the Mass a prayer. Mass is truly our best prayer. Please join me as we discover the prayer times during each Mass.

Our prayer should begin as we enter the church building as we gather for Mass. I know God is present in our churches in a special and sacramental way. So, each time we enter a church, God is there to welcome us with love and peace. God calls us to Eucharist as we go through the door. Each time we enter, we must find Jesus. We must bring our love and joy to the Lord. As the People of God, we must bring ourselves ready for our prayer.

Our Mass begins with a penitential rite. In prayer,

**Fr. William G. Muench**

we turn to the Lord in repentance. We seek forgiveness for our failings and sins. We prepare our hearts and souls to celebrate with the Lord, to celebrate the Eucharist.

Then we listen as the Scriptures are read to us. The Scriptures become our prayer when we put ourselves into each of these stories. We come closer to Jesus when we spend some time with the apostles. We seek Jesus and his healing power as we join the crowds listening to his teaching. We experience the love of Jesus and hear his message as we spend time with the Lord, who wants to be our friend.

When we enter the stories of Scripture, we are truly transformed by the presence of the Lord Jesus.

In the Mass, we are now invited to the altar for the Eucharistic Prayer. All of us in the church must join with the priest celebrant at the altar to pray with Jesus united with the apostles as they were at the Last Supper. As the people of God, our prayer becomes united with Jesus - ever present in the consecrated Holy Eucharist. In this way, we become the Body of Christ each time we are united at Mass. And each of us are united with the Lord who is our Eucharist. It is a time of deep gratitude.

I cannot emphasize enough that Mass is not a spectator sport. We must all participate. We must all be a part of what is happening at the altar. At a children's Mass, I invite the children to stand with me around the altar. I want them to realize God wants them to be close as they pray together at the Mass with each other and with the priest. The Lord wants us all to be overwhelmed by the presence of Jesus

in the Eucharist. All of us must be well aware of the Lord's presence with us at each Eucharist.

Then, we are invited to come forward to receive the Holy Eucharist. I wish we had the time so that each person could take a moment as they present themselves to the priest or Eucharistic Minister to receive the Eucharist and say, "Here I am Lord, I come in gratitude for all your blessings. Become one with me, Lord. Lead me and guide me this day that I may live well through the support of your Body and Blood."

So, that is our Mass. At the end of each Mass, we are sent as the people of God to make this world a better place.

Our prayer at the Mass is transformative. We should leave Mass - every Mass - a new person, more alive in the Lord, a true disciple of the Lord and ready to meet the challenges the Lord has prepared for us this day.

## Fr. Normand C. Coté died Feb. 8

Father Normand C. Coté died late in the evening on Thursday, February 8. He was 95.

Father Coté had been residing in Plattsburgh, where he retired as pastor in 2003.

Funeral arrangements were incomplete at *North Country Catholic* press time.

A full obituary will appear in next week's edition.

### Local news briefs

#### Scholarship available to high school seniors

The Mater Dei College Foundation is pleased to offer a scholarship opportunity to Catholics who are currently in their senior year of high school and who currently reside in the Diocese of Ogdensburg and are planning to attend a Catholic college or university in the fall.

To request an application form, please email Valerie Mathews, Mater Dei Foundation Scholarship chair, at [vmathews@rcdony.org](mailto:vmathews@rcdony.org).

Application deadline is June 1, 2024.

#### 'Double Your Donation' to St. James School

Thanks to the generosity of a parishioner, St. James School in Gouverneur will have a "Double Your Donation" event from March 3 to 17.

Any donations made to the school during that period will be matched by the generous donor.

To participate, drop envelopes clearly marked "St. James School" in the collection basket at any Mass on the weekends in that parish or log onto [stjamesk-6.org](http://stjamesk-6.org) and hit the "DONATE NOW" button.

All funds raised will go directly to the school to offset expenses. For more information, call 315-287-0114.

#### Participate in the Foster Grandparent Program

FGP is a local program that shows you how you can apply the skills and wisdom you have acquired throughout your life to make a difference in the lives of others. Get involved in the community and build relationships to last a lifetime. 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.

Participants 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. Opportunities available in Franklin, Essex, Clinton, St. Lawrence and Jefferson County.

Contact: Melissa Howard, Volunteer Coordinator at (518) 359-7688 or E-mail: [mhoward@cathcharities.org](mailto:mhoward@cathcharities.org).

### FOLLOW ME

## 'We must grow closer to Jesus'

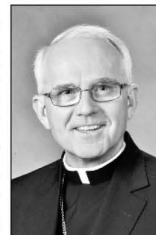
#### Dear Sisters and Brothers in Christ:

Soon after learning that I was to be the next Bishop of Ogdensburg, I discovered that I needed to select an Episcopal motto, a brief phrase that would express the theme of my future ministry as a bishop. I was inspired to select two simple words of invitation by Jesus to his disciples: Follow Me. These words continually challenge me to be a faithful disciple of Jesus in my journey of faith in this life, in good times and bad. They motivate me in my ministry as your bishop to offer the best possible guidance in all our earthly journeys of discipleship.

Lent 2024 calls each of us to follow the poor, humiliated and rejected Jesus. We recommit ourselves to grow ever closer to Him, particularly at this moment in history when such a commitment encounters so many challenges. Are we willing to follow Jesus even through the real struggles we face in trying to be faithful today? Can we overcome the weariness, frustration and confusion that wells up within us because the way of following Jesus has clearly become the Way of the Cross?

This Lent can be a pivotal juncture in our faith journeys. First and foremost, we must grow closer to Jesus and discover the hope and

confidence that such a relationship brings. We ask ourselves what concrete steps am I willing to take this Lent to strengthen our relationship with Jesus? Does my prayer life need to be tweaked? Am I committed to participating even more attentively at Eucharist? Will I celebrate the Sacrament of Penance more regularly, spend time in Eucharistic Adoration, read Scripture; and assist in my parish's outreach to the needy,



Bishop Terry R. LaValley

These Spiritual Exercises are among many others that help us tend to our relationship with our Lord. With ongoing

growth in my prayer life and nourishment by the Sacraments, I can confidently participate in the mission of Christ, knowing Jesus is always by my side. Let us seek the intercession of Mary, Our Lady of Hope and Mother of the Eucharist, in our Lenten efforts to draw closer to Jesus and His Body, the Church.

God's blessings and prayers for a fruitful Lent for you and your loved ones!

Faithfully yours in Christ,

Most Reverend  
Terry R. LaValley  
Bishop of Ogdensburg

## JOB OPENING

### Diocesan Coordinator – Office of Parish Audit & Financial Support Services

The Roman Catholic Diocese of Ogdensburg is seeking a **Diocesan Coordinator – Office of Parish Audit & Financial Support Services**. This position provides support in the financial operation of parishes, schools and related entities in the diocese including technical support in the use of QuickBooks and standard accounting practices. This position also oversees the process by which reviews of parish fiscal operations are conducted and reviews annual submission of Parish Financial Reports to assure financial statements are in balance and in accordance with diocesan accounting regulations. A Bachelor's Degree in accounting with two years audit experience is preferred. Knowledge in QuickBooks accounting software is required. Candidates should possess excellent verbal and written communication skills, have the ability to work independently and manage/establish priorities for several projects at the same time. Travel throughout the diocese is necessary on occasion. Salary: \$47,537 - \$58,794.

Submit letter of interest, resume and three professional references to: Human Resources Office  
Diocese of Ogdensburg

P.O. Box 369, Ogdensburg, NY 13669  
or e-mail: [ksnover@rcdony.org](mailto:ksnover@rcdony.org)

**Review of applications will begin immediately and continue until the position is filled.**

# Human trafficking: It happens here

By the Sisters of St. Joseph  
Social Justice Committee

When you hear the words 'human trafficking' what is your first thought? There are many myths about it that are simply not true. Here are some common myths and misconceptions about human trafficking:

**Myth:** Human trafficking does not occur in the United States. It only happens in other countries.

**Fact:** Human trafficking exists in every country, including the United States. It exists nationwide - in cities, suburbs, and rural towns - and possibly in your own community.

**Myth:** Human trafficking victims are only foreign born individuals and those who are poor.

**Fact:** Human trafficking victims can be any age, race, gender, or nationality. They may come from any socioeconomic group. A socioeconomic group is the social standing or class of an individual or group. It is often measured as a combination of education, income and occupation.

**Myth:** Human trafficking is only sex trafficking.

**Fact:** Sex trafficking exists, but it is not the only type of human trafficking. Forced labor is another type of human trafficking; both involve exploitation of people. Victims are found in legitimate and illegitimate labor industries, including sweatshops, massage parlors, agriculture, restaurants, hotels, and domestic service.

**Myth:** Individuals must be forced or coerced into commercial sex acts to be victims of

## Help Stop Human Trafficking: It is Everyone's Work

A brief film, "Chosen," will be shown, panelists will share information and insights about the signs, the ins and outs of grooming, social media dangers and kidnapping from the perspective of the predator, the child, and the parent.

### WATERTOWN

**For Whom:** Parents, grandparents and parishioners

**When:** March 3 from 2 to 4 p.m.

**Where:** Sisters of St. Joseph Motherhouse, 1425 Washington Street, Watertown

**Sponsors:** Sisters of St. Joseph in collaboration with churches, community organizations and schools.

### PLATTSBURGH

**For Whom:** Parents, grandparents and parishioners

**When:** March 3 from 2 to 4 p.m.

**Where:** Temple Beth Israel, 1

Bowman Street, Plattsburgh  
**Sponsors:** Interfaith Council of Plattsburgh and Clinton County

Adults attending are encouraged to bring youth.

human trafficking.

**Fact:** Under U.S. federal law, any minor under the age of 18 who is induced to perform commercial sex acts is a victim of human trafficking, regardless of whether he or she is forced or coerced.

**Myth:** Human trafficking and human smuggling are the same.

**Fact:** Human trafficking is not the same as smuggling. "Trafficking" is based on exploitation and does not require movement across borders. "Smuggling" is based on movement and involves moving a person across a country's border with that person's consent in violation of immigration laws. Although human smuggling is very different from human trafficking, human smuggling can turn into trafficking if the smuggler uses force, fraud, or coercion to hold people against their will for the purposes of labor or sexual exploitation. Under federal law, every minor induced to engage in commercial sex is a victim of human trafficking.

**Myth:** Human trafficking victims will attempt

to seek help when in public.

**Fact:** Human trafficking is often a hidden crime. Victims may be afraid to come forward and get help; they may be forced or coerced through threats or violence; they may fear retribution from traffickers, including danger to their families; and they may not be in possession of or have control of their identification documents.

Could you identify with any of these myths? If so, you are not alone. You may have been one of the millions of people who viewed the film "Sound of Freedom" in a local theater last year. It starred Jim Caviezel who played the role of Christ in the movie "The Passion." He plays Tim Ballard, a former U.S. government agent who embarks on a mission to rescue children from sex traffickers in Colombia.

When the actor is asked why he embarked on this dangerous mission to rescue this little girl, his answer was "God's children are not for sale!" This powerful film based on real life has opened

the eyes of many to the reality of this heinous crime against humanity. While the film focuses on human trafficking in another country, the reality is that it exists here in our Country in nearly every zip code.

**What is our role in ending human trafficking?**

In the struggle to end slavery in our country in the 1800's it was religious individuals and groups who were at the forefront of this movement. Today there are more women, men and children who are slaves than ever before in human history. Human trafficking is the second largest organized crime in the world and it is happening right here in our own backyard. As people of faith, as Christians, "what is our role in ending this reality of human trafficking?" If people of faith in the nineteenth century became advocates for freeing slaves in their time, how can we become actively involved in this work now?

**Taking action against human trafficking**

**First Action is prayer.** On Feb. 8, we celebrated the feast day of St. Josephine Bakhita. As a young girl in southern Sudan in 1869, she was kidnapped and sold into slavery. She was brutally treated by her captors as she was sold and resold. After years of abuse, a white merchant brought her and brought her to Italy. It is there that she was baptized and became a religious sister of Sudanese-Italian Canossian in Italy. There she ministered for over 45 years. She is the patron saint of victims of Human Trafficking. Prayer is a powerful means to bring about conversion

for the perpetrators and for those who are enslaved.

**Second action is learn.** On Sunday, March 3, there are two information presentations being offered by interfaith groups in our Diocese on the topic of human trafficking. The goal of these programs is twofold: first, to help protect God's Children by educating and challenging others to take informed action; and secondly, to consider the role of our faith communities in the challenge of ending human trafficking. See the box on this page for details.

Third is ACTION: Explore ways to share this information with others through your local parish, youth groups and parents. For more information and resources, see:

- United States Conference of Bishops Human Trafficking
- Alliance To End Human Trafficking: Founded & Supported By U.S. Catholic Sisters
- St. Josephine Bakhita Prayers
- Blue Campaign U.S. Dept. of Homeland Security

**Prayer:** *Loving God, rewarder of the humble, You blessed St. Josephine Bakhita with charity and patience. May her prayers help us, and her example inspire us to carry our cross and to love You always. Pour upon us the spirit of wisdom and love with which You filled St. Josephine. By serving You as she did, may we please You by our faith and our actions. Grant this through our Lord Jesus Christ, Your Son, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, God, forever and ever. Amen*



Last year's during Trinity Catholic School's celebration of Catholic Schools Week, Miss Augenstein, fifth grade teacher, reading a book to then-third graders on teacher swap/pajama day!

## Trinity celebrates Catholic Schools Week

This year, Trinity Catholic School is celebrating CSW February 9-16.

The school started its celebration of Catholic Schools Week with a Mass on Friday, February 9, at Sacred Heart Church. Students were also dismissed early that day.

Another CSW staple is the community Pancake Breakfast! This year, it was held on February 11. Not only is this a delicious way to kick off the week with families and the parish, it's also an important fundraiser for the school's cafeteria.

Throughout the week, the school will host:

- Monday, Feb. 12, we'll be wearing Trinity logo wear or Trinity colors to show our TCS pride! In the morning we'll be celebrating our school volunteers during a special Monday Morning Prayer Service. In the afternoon, we'll come together and play board games.

- Tuesday, Feb. 13, we'll be wearing

red, and making Valentine's Day cards in the morning, and celebrating classroom Valentine's Day parties in the afternoon.

- Wednesday being Ash Wednesday, we'll be wearing purple. In the morning, our younger grades will be heading to Nicandri Nature Center for snowshoeing. The school will attend Ash Wednesday Mass together and finish the day with Lenten activities.

- Thursday, Feb. 15, is dress down day. In the morning, older students will head to Nicandri Nature Center for cross-country skiing. In the afternoon, the school will attend the Stations of the Cross at church.

- Friday, Feb. 16, is a student and staff favorite: pajama day! In the morning, the school will welcome Her\*petology Reptile Shows for animal fun. In the afternoon, the school will be living the school theme "40 Years of Building Bridges" by building bridges!

### 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: 518-358-3145, Ext. 7179 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](http://www.ReportBishopAbuse.org)

### Bishop's Public Schedule

**Feb. 14** – Noon – Mass at St. Mary's Cathedral  
**Feb. 15** – Noon – Mass at St. Mary's Cathedral  
**Feb. 16** – Noon – Mass at St. Mary's Cathedral  
**Feb. 18** – 8 a.m. – Mass at St. Mary's Cathedral  
 2:30 p.m. – Rite of Election at St. Mary's Cathedral  
**Feb. 19** – Noon – Mass at St. Mary's Cathedral  
**Feb. 21** – Noon – Mass at St. Mary's Cathedral

### Protecting God's Children

**The Diocese of Ogdensburg** has scheduled sessions for Protecting God's Children for Adults. Pre-registration is required. Preregister at [www.virtus.org](http://www.virtus.org). Upcoming sessions:  
**Feb. 27** – 1 p.m. – Diocesan offices in Ogdensburg

### Rest in Peace

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

**Feb. 14** – Msgr. Gerald F. Kellogg, 1979; Rev. Charles Joseph Richard, 2007

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

**Feb. 16** – Rev. André Marie Garin, O.M.I., 1895; Rev. Joseph Alexander Fournier, O.M.I., 1904; Deacon Francis C. Siskavich, 2021

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

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

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

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

### Environmental Stewardship

#### Praying always this Lent

We all experience some feeling of fulfillment when someone responds favorably to something we did. Whether it is watching an individual enjoy a cookie you baked, smiling at a snowman that you made, or eagerly putting on a hat that you knit, a positive reaction, regardless of how small, generates a sense of personal pleasure in the individual whose works are receiving attention.

In a similar way, the Creator is every bit as joyful when He sees one of us delighting in one of His countless works. Yet, all too often, we rush through the day without ever taking a moment to pause and note how the things surrounding us are gifts from God.

This Lenten season, try to pause every so often to reflect, if only for an instant, on the beauty around you and allow these creations to put a smile on your face and warmth in your heart. You don't have to be on the summit of one of the High Peaks or on the shoreline of a lake to experience the incredible beauty and magnificence of nature. A small spider tucked in a corner, an unopened bud on a geranium, or a chickadee perched outside your window are all miracles in their own respect and reflect the creative genius of the Divine for incorporating these delicate items into the web of life that surrounds us in the North Country.

We need to take time and appreciate the richness of creation wherever we go. Rather than fretting about the actions of a co-worker or seething about the outcome of an event miles away, learn to recognize that you are deeply loved by God and He has showered us with more gifts than we could possibly imagine. Praying with God's 'unwritten scriptures' written in every niche and cranny of creation can be a renewing way of praying.

**By Tom Kalinowski**  
 St. Bernard's Church  
 Faith and Ecology Member

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CATHOLIC RELIEF SERVICES

[crsricebowl.org](http://crsricebowl.org) | [crsplatodearroz.org](http://crsplatodearroz.org)

#### About Catholic Relief Services:

Catholic Relief Services is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization;  
Donations to CRS are tax-deductible to the full extent allowable under the law.



Catholic Relief Services eases suffering and provides assistance to people in need in more than 100 countries, without regard to race, religion or nationality. We are the official overseas relief and development agency of the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops and a member of Caritas Internationalis.

All of the information here can be found at: [www.crsricebowl.org](http://www.crsricebowl.org)

**CRS RICE BOWL**  
CATHOLIC RELIEF SERVICES

#### WHAT IS A CRS RICE BOWL?

CRS Rice Bowl is a staple on the table of Catholic families across the country during Lent. This simple cardboard box is a tool for collecting Lenten alms—and comes with a Lenten calendar that guides families through the 40 days of Lent with activities, reflections and stories.

CRS Rice Bowl is the Lenten program of Catholic Relief Services, the official relief and development agency of the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops.

Rooted in the history of the Eucharistic Congress, CRS Rice Bowl invites Catholics and faith communities in the United States to encounter God and our global family throughout Lent by practicing the pillars of prayer, fasting and almsgiving. Lenten alms donated through CRS Rice Bowl support the work of CRS in more than 120 different countries each year. Twenty-five percent of donations to CRS Rice Bowl stay in the local diocese, supporting hunger and poverty alleviation efforts. Since its inception in 1975, CRS Rice Bowl has raised more than \$330 million.

#### WHAT IS ALMSGIVING?

We all want to be “good Samaritans.” When we see our sister or brother suffering, we are moved by compassion. We want to help. We are inspired to give.

Almsgiving is central to how we practice Lent. Almsgiving flows from prayer and fasting. We reflect on the needs of the world and how God is calling us to meet those needs through prayer. We make room for the needs of others—and for the Holy Spirit to work within us—through fasting. Through a recognition of the world’s needs and a personal commitment to act, we give alms.

What are alms? Alms are money or goods that are given to—or other acts of charity that are performed for—those in need. **Catholics look to the Catechism**, which says that almsgiving is “a witness to fraternal charity” and “a work of justice pleasing to God.”

#### GIVING ALMS

When we reflect on the charity of the good Samaritan, we sometimes miss the second part of the man’s almsgiving. He leaves the innkeeper with these words—and a few coins: “Take care of him. If you spend more than what I have given you, I shall repay you on my way back.” He gives freely and wholeheartedly in equal measure to the need of the one whom he serves. No reservations. No disclaimers.

This Lent, almsgiving is your way to become a “good Samaritan.” As we journey from Ash Wednesday through Holy Week to Easter, we invite you to consider CRS an innkeeper in your Lenten almsgiving.

#### HOW CRS USES ALMS

For nearly 50 years, Lenten alms given through CRS Rice Bowl have supported programs that prevent hunger and poverty around the world, including the countries featured in the Lenten stories of hope. Seventy-five percent of gifts help support CRS’ work in more than 120 countries. Twenty-five percent of gifts remain in each U.S. diocese where they are given to support hunger and poverty alleviation efforts in those communities. Each diocese uses this differently. Contact your local **CRS Diocesan Director** to find out how the local 25% is used in your diocese at 315-393-2255.



## WAYS TO PARTICIPATE

### When does Lent begin and end?

Lent is a liturgical season that focuses on the three spiritual pillars of prayer, fasting and almsgiving. This 40-day journey, beginning with Ash Wednesday and ending with Holy Week, is a time for sacrifice and spiritual reflection preparing us for the joyful celebration of Christ's resurrection on Easter Sunday.

### Bring Lent to Life at Home

Enrich your family's Lenten experience with stories, prayers, meatless recipes and more.

Rooted in the history of the Eucharistic Congress, CRS Rice Bowl invites Catholic families in the United States to encounter God and our global family throughout Lent by practicing the pillars of prayer, fasting and almsgiving. As you and your family experience deeper communion with the Eucharist during this sacred season, may this encounter with the Bread of Life lead you to share bread *for* life with our sisters and brothers most in need around the world.

Be sure to share your Lenten journey with us on social media by using **#CRSRiceBowl**.

- If you don't have a CRS Rice Bowl, print the **DIY Rice Bowl label** and adhere it to a container.
- **Use the Lenten calendar** each day to practice the Lenten pillars of prayer, fasting and almsgiving.
- Put your Lenten sacrifices into your CRS Rice Bowl. **Give your CRS Rice Bowl donation online** and make a difference in the lives of people in your local community and around the world!

Visit <http://www.csricebowl.org/families> to learn more about the activities described above.

### Stories of Hope

Read weekly stories about how your Lenten prayers and almsgiving help families who are affected by hunger, poverty and the impact of climate change.

[www.csricebowl.org/stories-of-hope/intro](http://www.csricebowl.org/stories-of-hope/intro)

### Lenten Activities for Families

Download free worksheets and activities for your children to learn more about Lent, Catholic social teaching and our connection as one global family.

<https://www.csricebowl.org/families>

### Stations of the Cross

Pray the Stations of the Cross on Good Friday and throughout Lent as a family using our downloadable booklet or video series.

<https://www.csricebowl.org/families>

Photos are ©  
Catholic Relief Services

### LOOKING FOR MEATLESS MEALS TO PREPARE THIS LENT?

Each Friday of Lent, we abstain from eating meat as a way to experience a little of the hunger that many experience daily. Journey with us around the world and incorporate these Lenten recipes into your meatless Fridays. Give the money you saved each week by not eating meat—about \$3 per person per meal—to your CRS Rice Bowl to feed those in need around the world.

Go to [www.csricebowl.org/recipe](http://www.csricebowl.org/recipe) to find many different meatless recipes like the one below from all around the world.

### Rellenos de Coliflor - El Salvador

Rellenos de Coliflor—or cauliflower fritters in tomato sauce—is a traditional dish from El Salvador. It is a vegetarian dish where cauliflower is battered and fried until golden and crispy, then served with tomato sauce.

#### Ingredients:

- 1 medium head cauliflower, cut into bite-sized florets
- 3-4 large eggs, separated
- 1 teaspoon flour
- Vegetable oil for frying, enough to cover the cauliflower pieces

#### Directions:

- In a large pot, boil cauliflower until tender, about 2 minutes. Remove and drain.
- Beat the egg whites until stiff peaks form. Add flour to the egg yolks and mix until just blended. In a large bowl, fold the egg whites into the yolk mixture. Add the cauliflower and coat entirely.
- In a large pot over medium-high heat, heat the

- 1 cup of water
- 3 medium tomatoes, diced
- 1 green chili pepper, finely chopped
- 1/2 small onion, finely chopped
- 1/2 tablespoon vegetable bouillon powder
- Salt to taste

vegetable oil until very hot. Add the pieces of coated cauliflower and fry until golden brown all over. Remove and set aside.

- In a large pot, add water, tomatoes, chili pepper and onion and stir to combine. Add the vegetable bouillon powder. Heat to a simmer. Add the cauliflower and continue simmering for 3 minutes. Add salt to taste. Serve immediately.



Start to finish: 25 minutes  
Servings: 4-6

## VIRTUAL EVENTS

## PODCAST PARISH MISSION

This Lent, join us for a unique spiritual experience with our new podcast, "Rending and Mending Our Hearts: Reflections on the Stations of the Cross."

**Date:** this 14-day parish mission, starting Feb. 19

**Place:** Subscribe now and join us in this sacred walk. <https://www.route74catholics.org/lent>

**Features:** Aligning with our Lenten theme "Rending and Mending Our Hearts," invites you to a reflective journey through the Stations of the Cross. Each episode will guide you through the stations, intertwining Jesus Christ's journey with our own paths of healing and spiritual renewal. Find the podcast on the parish website (above) or on your favorite podcast platform, including Apple Podcasts, Spotify, and Amazon Podcasts.

## PRIESTHOOD DISCERNMENT

Are you a single Catholic man who is hearing the Lord's call to the Priesthood? Consider joining others virtually who are listening and seeking to respond.

**Date:** Feb. 25, Mar. 10, Mar. 24

**Time:** 4 p.m. to 5

**Place:** On-Line

**Features:** High school age men and older are invited to join fellow discerners and Father Howard Venette to discuss this vocation.

**Contact:** You must register in order to attend, please go to [www.rcdony.org/priesthooddiscernment](http://www.rcdony.org/priesthooddiscernment)

## FRIENDSHIP GROUP MEETING

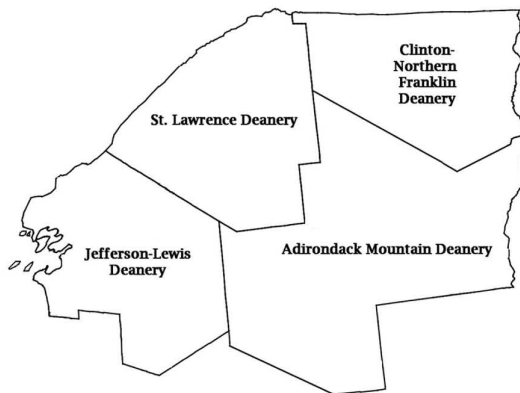
Our next Friendship Group meeting will be held, Father Craig MacMahon, OMV will talk with us about the first half (introduction - Chapter 12) of "Struggles in the Spiritual Life," by Father Tim Gallagher, OMV and answer your questions.

**Date:** Feb. 22

**Time:** 7 p.m.

**Place:** Zoom

**Features:** This book will help



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](mailto:news@northcountrycatholic.org).

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

you understand and conquer the struggles you face in your spiritual life. You'll gain confidence as you journey through desolation, and you'll learn to reject the enemy's ploys to infect you with a sense of hopelessness.

**Contact:** If you haven't signed up for the Friendship Groups, go to <https://mailchi.mp/so-phaiinstitute/friendship-groups> Once signed up, you will receive updates, including the Zoom link and discussion questions.

## ADIRONDACK MOUNTAIN

## ALPHA

Lake Placid – All are invited to Alpha.

**Date:** Wednesdays, starting Feb. 28

**Time:** 6:15 p.m. to 8:15

**Place:** St. Agnes School

**Features:** Free to all, regardless of belief and includes dinner.

**Contact:** Go to <https://stagneslakeplacid.com/alpha> for more info and to register.

## CLINTON NORTHERN FRANKLIN

## WOMEN'S LENTEN STUDY

Plattsburgh – Walking with Purpose to have a Women's Lenten Study.

**Date:** Thursdays, Feb. 15 to March 21

**Time:** 10 a.m. to 11:45 or 6:30 p.m. to 8:15

**Place:** St. John's Dwyer/McAvoy Parish Center

**Cost:** Suggested donation, \$20

**Features:** Discover God's plan for friendship, how to navigate toxic relationships, let God reshape how you see and experience relationships, and explore what it takes to have deep connections for the long haul.

**Contact:** Janice Tobin C/T 518-569-5370

## FAITH, FELLOWSHIP AND REFLECTION

Ellenburg – Join Us for "Faith, Fellowship, and Reflection." Experience the Lenten journey like never before!

**Date:** Every Thursday during Lent (Feb. 15, 22 and 29, March 7, 14 and 21)

**Time:** 5 p.m. Mass, followed by soup and salad, then a video

**Place:** St. Edmund's parish hall

**Features:** "Symbolon: The Catholic Faith Explained" offers a systematic presentation of our Catholic Faith, guiding you through its "big picture" with our Creed as the compass. Led by trusted Catholic teachers, this series delves into the breadth and richness of our faith. All are welcome.

## LENTEN SERIES

Ellenburg – Join us for a series of

Lenten Talks, Sharing and Prayer.

**Time:** 10:30 a.m. to 2 p.m.

**Place:** Adirondack House of Prayer

**Schedule:** Feb. 17, Lent, Spring Cleaning for the Soul: Join us for a talk, sharing over lunch and a Holy Hour; March 23, Discipleship in Three Stories in Mark: come and discover the process of discipleship illustrated by three stories in the Gospel of Mark followed by a simple lunch and a Holy Hour based on the discipleship of the Woman at the Well; April 23, Eucharist and the Call to Discipleship: Come and join us for a presentation on the Eucharist and the Call to Discipleship followed by a simple lunch and a Holy Hour.

**Features:** Free and open to all. A donation to help cover lunch will be gratefully accepted.

**Contact:** To register, contact Sarah at 518-534-9976 or email [olaprayrhouse@gmail.com](mailto:olaprayrhouse@gmail.com)

## FISH FRY

Plattsburgh – Holy Cross Parish to have fish fries during Lent.

**Date:** Fridays Feb. 16 to March 22

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

**Place:** Holy Cross Parish Center

**Cost:** \$14

**Menu:** Haddock, coleslaw, beverage, tartar and cocktail sauce, roll with butter, dessert and Mac & cheese on Feb. 16, Feb. 23.

**Contact:** 518-563-0730 for more information.

## BREAKFAST

Brushton – St. Mary's Church will sponsor a breakfast.

**Date:** Feb. 18

**Time:** 7:30 a.m. to 11

**Place:** St. Mary's Parish center

**Cost:** Adults, \$12; Children

6-12, \$6; under 5, Free

**Menu:** Scrambled/fried eggs, home fries, homemade corned beef hash, sausage, bacon, pancakes, French toast, toast, OJ, tomato juice, coffee, tea.

**Contact:** Take out available, call 518 529 6580

## CHICKEN AND BISCUIT DINNER

North Bangor – The communities

of St. Augustine, and St. Mary's will sponsor a Chicken and Biscuit Dinner.

**Date:** Feb. 25

**Time:** Noon to 3 p.m.

**Place:** St. Augustine's Parish Center

**Cost:** \$13

**Menu:** Chicken and Biscuits, Mashed Potatoes, Vegetable, Cranberry Sauce, and Dessert.

## BREAKFAST

Altona – At. Ann's Church to have a breakfast prepared by the Mooers Knights of Columbus.

**Date:** Feb. 25

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

**Place:** Holy Angels Hall

**Cost:** Adults, \$12; Children

5-12, \$7; 5 and under, Free

**Menu:** Juice, Coffee, Tea, Eggs, Sausage, Bacon, Pancakes, Cinnamon Rolls, Home Fries

**Contact:** For more information, please call the Parish Office 518-236-5632

## LENT, SEASON OF TRANSFORMATION

Plattsburgh – Holy Cross Parish presents, Season of Transformation.

**Schedule:** Feb. 26, March 4, 11 and 18 at 6:30 p.m. or Feb. 28, March 6, 13 and 20 at 10 a.m.

**Place:** St. Peter's Emmaus Room

**Cost:** Suggested donation is \$5 for the study guide

**Features:** During Lent, we strive to free ourselves from all kinds of clutter-material and spiritual-in order to focus on God and turn back to him with our whole hearts. If this "turning back" is genuine, it will be a reorientation, a transformation. To help us enter into this season, Amy Ekeh guides readers in exploring three key moments in the life and ministry of Jesus. The result will be a better understanding of the authentic transformation that God calls each of us to embrace as individuals and as a community and a renewed desire to live God's own outward-looking, self-emptying, laying-down-one's-life kind of



love.

**Contact:** Please register for the day or evening session to: [plattburghsec@rcdony.org](mailto:plattburghsec@rcdony.org) or call the Parish Office at 518-563-0730.

### FISH FRY

Chazy – Sacred Heart Church to have a Fish Fry.

**Date:** March 1

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

**Place:** Parish Center

**Cost:** Adults, \$14; Children 5-12, \$7; Take-outs, \$14

**Menu:** Fried fish, homemade macaroni and cheese, french fries, cole slaw, rolls, beverage and dessert.

**Contact:** For more info, contact Noreen at the rectory 518-846-7650 or email [chazypa@rcdony.org](mailto:chazypa@rcdony.org)

JEFFERSON-LEWIS

### BIBLICAL WALK THROUGH MASS

Immaculate Conception and St. Andrew's Church will have a parish Lenten Program, "A Biblical Walk Through Mass."

**Schedule:** Brownville, Immaculate Conception, Tues. starting Feb. 20 until March 19; Sackets Harbor, St. Andrew's, Wed. starting Feb. 21 until March 20

**Time:** 6 p.m.

**Cost:** \$10 for all materials

**Features:** In this video-based study A Biblical Walk Through the Mass, Dr. Edward Sri explores the roots of the words and gestures we experience at Mass and explains their profound significance. This fascinating tour of the Mass will renew your faith and deepen your love for and devotion to the Holy Eucharist. All are welcome.

**Contact:** Please register for the study at the entry of the church. For more information contact Chris Lapointe at 315-783-5147 or Sister Flavia at 315-836-5272.

### STOP HUMAN TRAFFICKING

Watertown – Take action against human trafficking, an informational presentation for parents, grandparents and parishioners.

**Date:** March 3

**Time:** 2 p.m. to 4

**Place:** Sisters of St. Joseph Motherhouse

**Features:** Brief Film "Chosen" will be shown, panelists will share information and insights about the Signs, the ins and outs of grooming, social media dangers, and kidnapping from the mind of the predator, the child, and the parent. This event is sponsored by Sisters of St. Joseph in collaboration with local Churches, community organizations and schools.

**HOLY HOUR AND DIVINE MERCY**  
Houseville – A Holy Hour of Adoration with the Divine Mercy Chaplet will be observed the first Sunday of the month.

**Date:** March 3

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

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

**Contact:** 315-348-6260

ST. LAWRENCE

### TRUST TRUTH SERIES

Canton – Join Canton Catholics for a discussion on hot-button topics in the cold of our North Country winter!

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

**Place:** Sylvia's Lounge (below Josie's Pizza).

**Schedule:** Feb. 20, THE LEADER WE NEED TO COMBAT CANCEL CULTURE, Speaker-Father Raymond De Souza, Editor, Professor, and Pastor in Kingston, ON; Feb. 27, UNFREEDOM TO WORSHIP, THE PERILS OF BEING CHRISTIAN IN NIGERIA, Speaker-Okey Ndibe, Author and Visiting Professor at SLU; March 5, IS MY BODY REALLY ME? IDENTITY, TRANSGENDERISM, AND THE MEANING OF REALITY, Speaker-Father Leagon Carlin, Parochial Vicar at St. Peter's in Massena

**Features:** Cash preferred for drinks. We hope to see you there!

**Contact:** Childcare will be offered in St. Mary's Parish Center. Please call ahead to reserve your child(ren)'s spot at 315-386-2543 or for more information.

### ROSARY WITH DEVOTIONS

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

**Date:** March 2

**Time:** 8 a.m.

**Place:** Notre Dame Church, Ogdensburg

**Features:** Rosary with devotions

### FIRST SATURDAY ROSARY

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

**Date:** March 2

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

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

### MEN'S PRAYER GROUP

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

**Date:** March 2

**Time:** 9 a.m.

**Place:** Sacred Heart Church

### CATHOLIC PARENTING

Potsdam – A series of workshops from the Franciscan University Catechetical Institute to be held on Catholic Parenting.

**Date:** First Sunday of the month from Oct. to April

**Place:** St. Mary's Rectory, second floor

**Features:** Attend all or only those that interest you. Child care can be provided. Event is free.

**Contact:** For more information contact Mike Neaton at 315-335-6302 or Liz Tarbox at [formation-stp@gmail.com](mailto:formation-stp@gmail.com)

### DIOCESAN EVENTS

#### RITE OF ELECTION

Ogdensburg – All Catechumen and Candidates who are ready to be received into the Catholic Church this Easter, are invited to attend the Rite of Election and Call to Continuing Conversion.

**Date:** Feb. 18

**Time:** 2:30 p.m.

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

#### LEAD EVENTS

The following is a list of LEAD (Leaders for Evangelization and Discipleship) events that will be

held across the diocese.

**Schedule:** March 3, Watertown, Hearthside, SSJ Motherhouse 1 p.m. to 3, "Incorporating Evangelization into Children's Faith Formation," No Cost

March 9, Norfolk, Fr. Andrew Amyot Parish Center 9:30 a.m. to 3 p.m., "Creating a Culture of Vocations in the Parish," No Cost, [www.rcdony.org/CreatingCulture](http://www.rcdony.org/CreatingCulture)

March 23, Ogdensburg, Wadhams Hall, 9:30 a.m. to 2 p.m., "What Are You Looking For? Day of Reflection," John 1:38, [www.rcdony.org/dayofreflection](http://www.rcdony.org/dayofreflection), \$25

**Features:** We are all called to know our faith and to share it with others. LEAD offers quality diocesan and regional events to support the varied work of parish ministries. These opportunities include spiritual, personal and professional development, networking and days of reflection. All involved in parish ministries are invited to attend LEAD events. If there is a cost associated with the event, parishes may receive a bill.

**Contact:** To register go to: [www.rcdony.org/certworkshops](http://www.rcdony.org/certworkshops) unless otherwise noted.

#### CREATING A CULTURE OF VOCATIONS

Norfolk – The Vocation Office in conjunction with LEAD will be presenting a conference "Creating A Culture of Vocations in the Parish"

**Date:** March 9

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

**Place:** Fr. Andrew Amyot Parish Center

**Features:** The speaker for the conference is Leticia Ramirez, from Vocation Ministry, Houston, Texas. Leticia Ramirez will share her experiences of supporting and promoting a culture of vocations in parishes and within families to the priests and parish representatives and to catechetical leaders and catechists.

**Contact:** To register: <https://www.rcdony.org/CreatingCulture>. Free book "The Harvest" to the first 30 registered.

#### 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 21

**Time:** 11 a.m.

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

**Features:** This ritual symbolizes that we are one family in Christ. The Chrism Mass may be viewed at <https://www.rcdony.org/live-mass>. The Chrism Mass program will be available at the same link shortly before the Liturgy.

#### LEAD ANNUAL DAY OF REFLECTION

Ogdensburg – Welcome Catechists, Catechetical Leaders, Commissioned Lay Ministers & Candidates and all Parish Ministers to the Lead Annual Day of Reflection.

**Date:** March 23

**Time:** 9:30 a.m. to 2 p.m.

**Place:** Wadhams Hall

**Cost:** \$25 per person

Theme: "What are you looking for?" John 1:38

**Features:** This event will be led by Bishop LaValley. Includes Mass, two talks, discussion, holy hour, benediction, and opportunity for confession.

**Contact:** Register at [www.rcdony.org/dayofreflection](http://www.rcdony.org/dayofreflection)

#### HEALING MASS

Potsdam – Bishop LaValley has scheduled a Healing Mass for those hurt by the Church on Divine Mercy Sunday.

**Date:** April 7

**Time:** 2:30 p.m.

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



## SUNDAY'S SCRIPTURE

## Giving up or giving in?

Here's a question. Do you want to give up or give in? That question hopefully forces us to think a bit about the implications of our answer. On Saturdays, I give up on the *New York Times* Crossword Puzzle because it's usually the most difficult of the week. I give up on the puzzle, but I don't give in to discouragement.

But then, there may be the hopeful musician who gives up all of her free time to practice and practice in order to gain a mastery level to perform or the hopeful wrestler who gives up food and trains extra hard in order to make a certain weight class.

On this first Sunday of Lent, we read about Jesus, who gives up food and spends 40 days fasting in the desert. The devil tempts him. Mark does not give

us the details of the temptations but clearly states that Jesus does not give in to these temptations.

When we give up something in life, we gain the power not to give into something harmful in our lives. The whole purpose of our Lenten journey is to give up part of our lives in order to gain greater power and mastery over the rest of our lives. Just as the musician and the athlete have to give up something in their lives to achieve success, so too the fasting of Jesus in the desert gives him the strength to resist the temptations of the devil.

The musician, the athlete, Jesus, all successful people give up something in their lives so that they can give in to something greater: success, prestige, mas-

February 18

## First Sunday of Lent

## READINGS

Genesis 9:8-15

1 Peter 3:18-22

Mark 1:12-15

*This homily is offered  
courtesy of a priest of  
the Diocese of Ogdensburg.*

tery,

So, during this Lenten season, as during every Lent, we are encouraged to give up something, not to give in to temptations, to give up something in order to gain something greater. We do without in order to gain. It sounds contradictory, but it's true. Our Lenten sacrifices may seem arduous while we are doing them. But they do pay off.

However, let me ask this question. At the

end of Lent are we going to start doing what we gave up? Are we going to stop praying, are we going to be stingy again? Hopefully not. If so, perhaps we have missed the deep meaning of Lent.

But let's go a little deeper. Often, what we give up for Lent is relatively easy knowing that at the end of Lent, we can resume our lives as usual. Short-term changes our relatively easy.

But what about long-term changes. Hopefully, some of the short-term changes we experience during Lent will help us make some long-term changes in our lives. Judgementalism, always having the last word, bad temper, old hatreds and resentments, withholding forgiveness are only a few of the behaviors that

can plague us throughout our lives. Saying no to Facebook during Lent may help us to say no to our nasty temper. Spending time praying over the Gospels may help us realize the deep love God has for us as well as our need for him in our lives. Helping others through donations to those needs will make us realize that our lives are not so bad. After all, gaining control of one aspect of our lives can help us master other parts of our lives. Opening our lives to the Holy Spirit will allow us to reflect more deeply on God's love for us.

The bottom line: no matter what you are giving up or what you are doing for Lent, make sure that you give in the Holy Spirit and discover the person God meant you to be.

## CALLED TO SERVE

## Happy Lent... already?

It would not take a lot for me to become a full-time procrastinator. A procrastinator is one who habitually puts off doing things.

This column, for instance, is due to the editor by the midweek prior to the publication date. I can live with that. The idea for this column has been rolling around in my head for a couple weeks, so it should only take a little motivation to start writing.

So why did I wait until the day of the editor's deadline to write? Because other important stuff came up. Like taking the knots out of a skein of yarn for my

bride.

My tendency to procrastinate might explain why there are a few boxes of Thanksgiving decorations that have not found their way to the attic yet. They are staged in an out-of-regular-view room though. And I will get the outside Christmas lights down this week. Maybe.

I would say I do not procrastinate regularly. Just some things take longer to get done.

All this leads to Lent. How did that get here so fast?

Lent is not a time to put things off. It is marked by days of fasting and abstinence. The

Catholic Church says it is a time for prayer, fasting, and almsgiving.

Amy Ekeh, writing for *Catholic Digest*, said a few years ago, "It is not a time of gloom, doom, or self-loathing. Rather, Lent is a time when we try to live and think and pray differently. It is a time when we ask God to heal us with his love."

Lent always reminds me of Mite Cannisters for the Missions from my grade school days.

Lent reminds me of a friend who loved beer but gave it up as

a sacrifice during the season. The only problem with the sacrifice is that he went around telling everyone he had gone so many days without a beer because he "gave it up for Lent."



Deacon  
Kevin Mastellon

His proclamation always sounded a little self-serving to me and not in the spirit of Jesus' admonition to the Apostles, "when you fast, anoint your head and wash your face, so that you may not appear to be fasting."

If you fast from some favorite food or drink

for Lent, good for you. Keep your self-denial between God and you.

You might want to consider doing things for others that are above and beyond too. St. Peter wrote, "be hospitable to one another without complaining. Use your gifts to serve one another as good stewards of God's varied grace."

That is good advice. I believe I will move that up to the top of my to-do list.

*Deacon Kevin Mastellon ministers in Watertown.*

*He is the Director of Permanent Deacons for the Diocese of Ogdensburg*



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

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

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

# Lent and the Lunar New Year

*The Lunar New Year, also often referred to as Chinese New Year, is celebrated by many Southeast Asian countries. The date of this holiday is determined by the lunar calendar. This year, it was celebrated on February 10, ushering in the Year of the Dragon.*

This year, as happens from time to time, the beginning of Lent coincides with the Chinese New Year, as both events are held according to the lunar calendar.

At first glance, the two events seem contradictory: Lent is a time of fasting, abstinence and penance, while New Year is a time of joyful celebration. In his pastoral letter for Lent, Bishop Joseph Gan Junqiu, head of the Archdiocese of Guangzhou, shows how the Christian vision can dissolve this apparent contradiction. "In reality," writes the bishop, "all actions motivated by the intention to love are ultimately directed toward God." Thus, "as we leave the solitude of urban life behind us, we put an end to the distance which separates us from our loved ones and we return home, where the joy of being with family reigns. At the same time, we can live the Liturgy of Ashes recognizing that it is also a call from the Eternal Father to us, a call to return home."

In his pastoral letter for Lent, Bishop Joseph shows "how we, Christians, can immerse ourselves in the love and forgiveness of God in this family holiday period." The New Year, says the bishop, is a "farewell to the past to welcome the future." In the Christian journey, the experience of forgiveness and repentance for one's sins is also a "farewell to the past" and a confident march towards the time to come.

In such an experience, "we become full of joy and hope for life, we are made new by the love of Christ, in the grace of God." Lent is "the time of preparation for the joy of Easter." And precisely, the time of the Chinese New Year, underlines the bishop, is a golden opportunity to bear witness to the Catholic faith to and with one's family. One can attend "the New Year's Eve Thanksgiving Mass with our families, where the whole family can come together to thank God for His protection and blessings during the past year, and to ask God's blessing for peace and the health of our family members and our work. By praying and receiving the sacraments with our loved ones, we can also embrace, in gratitude to Jesus, the festive and grateful mood of the Chinese New Year." Thus, "we not only cherish the uniqueness of the Catholic faith while remaining fully immersed in our traditional culture, but we can show that the Christian faith is a gift that always remains in our hearts, no matter what."

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

## OBITUARIES

**Brushton** – Arthur F. Mayville, 89; Mass of Christian Burial Feb. 8, 2024 at St. Mary's Church.

**Brushton** – Ruth A. (Greenwood) Trim, 93; Mass of Christian Burial Feb. 9, 2024 at St. Mary's Church.

**Cadyville** – Jane Elizabeth (Nelson) Favro, 90; Funeral Services in spring at St. James Church.

**Canton** – Norene (Bessette) Sheridan, 89; Mass of Christian Burial Feb. 10, 2024 at St. Mary's Church.

**Champlain** – Richard Deso Jr., 67; Mass of Christian Burial Feb. 3, 2024 at St. Mary's Church.

**Chateaugay** – Margaret Ann Mellon Curtin, 97; Mass of Christian Burial at St. Patrick's Church.

**Clayton** – Michael D. Wormuth, 73; Funeral Services Feb. 9, 2024 at T.R. Jetty Funeral Home; burial in St. Mary's Cemetery.

**Dannemora** – Jean V. (LeClair) Shatraw, 92; Mass of Christian Burial Feb. 9, 2024 at St. Joseph's Church; burial in the Town of Ellenburg Mausoleum.

**Louisville** – Daniel S. Pitts Sr., 78; Private Services held.

**Lyon Mountain** – Nancy A. (Cowles) Petrashune, 92; Mass of Christian Burial Feb. 6, 2024 at St. Bernard's Church; burial in Fairview Cemetery, AuSable Forks.

**Massena** – Alma J. (McElwain) Dumas, 93; Graveside services at Calvary Cemetery.

**Morrisonville** – Floyd Arthur

Rock, 79; Mass of Christian Burial Feb. 9, 2024 at St. Alexander's Church.

**Ogdensburg** – Douglas F. Abar, 71; Funeral Services Feb. 10, 2024 at the Fox & Murray Funeral Home.

**Ogdensburg** – Colleen (Morris) Ross, 91; Funeral Services Feb. 9, 2024 at Fox & Murray Funeral Home; burial in Oswegatchie Mausoleum.

**Ogdensburg** – Mary K. (Hutt) Fredericks Sheneman, 92; Mass of Christian Burial June 3, 2024 at St. Mary's Cathedral; burial in St. Mary's Cemetery.

**Olmstedville** – Rita M. (Trombley) Malark, 99; Mass of Christian Burial Feb. 9, 2024 at St. Joseph's Church.

**Plattsburgh** – Jaye Anjo Capone Riddle, 69; Mass of Christian Burial Feb. 10, 2024 at St. John's Church.

**Plattsburgh** – David J. Sample, Jr., 84; Mass of Christian Burial Feb. 9, 2024 at St. Peter's Church; burial in St. James Cemetery, Cadyville.

**Plattsburgh** – Edgar Charles "Chuck" Sholette, 92; Mass of Christian Burial Feb. 13, 2024 at St. John's Church.

**Plattsburgh** – Michael J. Welch, 76; Mass of Christian Burial Feb. 7, 2024 at St. John's Church.

**Plattsburgh** – Irene May Wiler, 82; Mass of Christian Burial Feb. 8, 2024 at St. Peter's Church; burial in St. Patrick's Cemetery, Rouses

Point.

**Port Leyden** – William L. Marmion, 93; Mass of Christian Burial Feb. 8, 2024 at St. Martin's Church; burial in Calvary Cemetery.

**Watertown** – Isabelle A. (Rutiigliano) Mills, 81; Graveside Services May 31, 2024 at Glenwood Cemetery.

**Watertown** – Theresa "Anne" (Edus) Elliott, 93; Mass of Christian Burial Feb. 5, 2024 at Our Lady of the Sacred Heart Church; burial in Glenwood Cemetery.

**Watertown** – Mario "Bucky" Martini, 95; Mass of Christian Burial Feb. 12, 2024 at Sacred Heart Church; burial in Glenwood Cemetery.

**Watertown** – David W. McCabe, 75; Services in spring.

**Watertown** – Edward P. McKinney, 88; Mass of Christian Burial Feb. 8, 2024 at St. Patrick's Church; burial in Glenwood Cemetery.

**Watertown** – Joseph Morris, 89; Funeral Services in spring; burial in Calvary Cemetery.

**Watertown** – Domenica Romeo Pecori, 84; Mass of Christian Burial Feb. 9, 2024 at St. Anthony's Church; burial in Glenwood Cemetery.

**Watertown** – Elizabeth I. (McCaffrey) Rolfe, 91; Mass of Christian Burial Feb. 7, 2024 at Holy Family Church; burial in Glenwood Cemetery.



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# CATHOLIC WORLD AT A GLANCE

## Canada delays assisted suicide for people with mental illness

The Canadian government will postpone until 2027 plans to expand its assisted suicide program to include those suffering from mental illness after a parliamentary report said the country's health system is "not ready." Canada first legalized assisted suicide in June 2016 for adults suffering from irreversibly deadly illnesses. In 2021, the government said it would wait an additional two years to extend those services to citizens suffering from mental illness to "study how MAID [medical assistance in dying] on the basis of a mental illness can safely be provided." The government last year extended that delay another year. Canadians suffering from mental illnesses were expected to be able to apply for assisted suicide by March 2024. On Feb. 8, the government announced that the extension would be delayed until 2027, stating that the government-run health system "is not yet ready for this expansion."

## Pope to provide at Ash Wednesday Mass, procession in Rome

Pope Francis will preside at the Mass and the traditional Ash Wednesday procession on Feb. 14 on Aventine Hill in Rome. The Office of Liturgical Celebrations announced Feb. 6 that before the Eucharist, the Holy Father will preside at the first Lenten station at St. Anselm Church, also situated on the Aventine, at 4:30 p.m. local time. Later, Pope Francis will participate in the penitential procession to St. Sabina Basilica, where he will celebrate Mass at 5 p.m. and bless the ashes that will be distributed to the faithful. The Lenten stations are one of the most deeply rooted traditions for the beginning of Lent in Rome. It is an ancient custom in which the faithful stopped at different churches to meditate on the Passion of the Lord. Every day of Lent, the Roman faithful stopped in front of one of the churches in the historic city center erected in memory of the martyrs. Subsequently, the procession took place in which the litanies were usually sung and finally Mass was celebrated.

## Dictatorship in Nicaragua uses confiscated nuns' home

Researcher and lawyer Martha Patricia Molina has reported that the dictatorship of Daniel Ortega in Nicaragua is now using a home where nuns expelled from the country used to live as an office of the Directorate of Migration and Immigration, which is part of the Ministry of the Interior. The former house of the Sisters of the Fraternity of the Poor Ones of Jesus Christ is in the city of León in Nicaragua's northwest. The walls are still the same color and inside the nuns' same furniture still remains. The logo of the Ministry of the Interior is now on the façade. "Sandinista dictatorship confiscates property of the Sisters Poor of Jesus Christ who in July 2023 were expelled by the Sandinista dictatorship. Police remained inside but now they have turned it into a state institution," Molina said Feb. 5 on X. "They didn't even change the color of the walls or the furniture used by the dear nuns."

# Study looks at success in raising Catholic kids

By Jonah McKeown  
Catholic News Agency

At or near the top of almost any Catholic parent's list of things they want for their children is for them to continue practicing their Catholic faith into adulthood. But recent statistics paint a sobering picture: In the United States today, only about 15% of children raised in Catholic households grow up to be faithful Catholic adults.

But in the face of this diminutive percentage, some researchers sought to focus on the positive with a new study aiming to study the practices of parents who successfully raise children to be practicing Catholic adults.

The study titled "Future Faithful Families Project" was done by the Center for Applied Research in the Apostolate (CARA) at Georgetown University in conjunction with the Peyton Institute for Domestic Church Life. The researchers used existing data from the General Social Survey - a widely-used and respected resource - as well as more than two dozen original half-hour interviews with Catholics with adult children who remain active in the faith.

Dr. Gregory Popcak, a widely cited Catholic counselor and co-executive director of the Peyton Institute, told CNA that the overall conclusion of the study was that children who grow up in a warm and affectionate home - spending time with their family in fun, prayer, and service to others - are more likely to remain Catholic as adults.

"Families are effective in passing on the faith to the next generation to the degree that the children felt that the faith was a source of warmth in their homes," Popcak told CNA.

Among households that were successful in fostering lasting faith, children understood their parents to be open to hearing and talking about the children's doubts and struggles when it came to faith - an environment where kids "didn't feel like they would be lectured or scolded for having questions or struggles or doubts." If a question arose that the parents didn't have the answer to, they would pursue the answer together - "authoritative without being authoritarian," Popcak noted.

Popcak, who with his wife, Lisa, led the creation of an app called CatholicOM, told CNA that the study shows that faith formation efforts such as Catholic schools, youth groups, and

other ministries - while very important - are "secondary and supportive" to a strong faith life within families.

Popcak said he hears often from parents on his EWTN radio show that their children have left the faith and they want to know what happened. He said he usually asks the parents what they did to live the faith inside the home, and many parents express confusion, saying they gave their children faith-related opportunities outside the home.

"We've sent the message to parents that it's everybody ELSE's job to evangelize their kids," he commented. "I think this study reveals something that's hidden in plain sight ... it completely challenges our entire approach to evangelization as a Church, because we invest all our time and resources into adult evangelization and youth ministry. And they're all good - I'm not knocking any of that. But unless families are [living the faith at home], the other stuff doesn't stick. Everything else the Church does to evangelize outside of the family is really secondary and remedial."

Data cited by the researchers show that the number of people who remain practicing Catholics after being raised Catholic in the United States has been steadily declining for decades.

In the 1970s, an average of 36% of those who were raised Catholic remained Catholic as adults and attended Mass weekly, peaking at 40% in 1977. By the 2010s, that figure was just 15%. (The researchers pointed out that this figure does not include those who were not raised Catholic and converted to Catholicism. In addition, Catholic immigration helps to maintain the overall Catholic population despite declining retention rates among native-born Catholics.)

Among those raised Catholic who leave the faith, about half become religiously unaffiliated and the other half adopts a new religious affiliation. The median age at which these Catholics said they made the decision to leave the faith was 13, researchers said.

Dr. Mark Gray, a researcher with CARA who worked on the study, said the research does not aim to provide parents a "checklist," and parents shouldn't treat it as such. He said that while every family is different, their study did find "patterns of association" that seem to be common to families that successfully raise Catholic children.