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NORTH COUNTRY CATHOLIC

FEB. 23, 2011

Faith gives strength

VATICAN CITY (CNS) - Believing in Jesus Christ gives people strength to face the normal challenges of life and is not another burden to carry, Pope Benedict XVI said.

"Journeying with Christ - traveling the path with Christ - isn't a burden added to the already heavy load that is our life, something that

makes our burden even heavier," the pope said Feb. 16 at his weekly general audience.

Drawing on the example of the life and writings of St. John of the Cross, a 16th-century Spanish mystic, Pope Benedict said faith in Christ "is a light, a force that helps us carry our burdens."

The pope told an estimated 4,000 people gathered for the audience: "If a man has a great love, this love almost gives him wings, and he has an easier time supporting all the challenges of life."

The audience was the third that Pope Benedict dedicated to one of the "doctors of the

church," men and women who made important contributions to Catholic theological understanding.

The pope said it's understandable that people look at St. John of the Cross, one of the greatest mystical writers in Christian history, and ask, "Does he have anything to say to us normal Christians?"

LAY MINISTRY SUNDAY

Set for March 6



Bishop LaValley has designated March 6 as Lay Ministry Sunday in parishes across the diocese. The day will serve as an opportunity to honor and acknowledge the hundreds of commissioned lay ministers in the North Country as well as those currently enrolled in the diocesan Formation for Ministry program. A second goal of Lay Ministry Sunday is to challenge people in the pews to discern their active roles in the life and mission of the church. During the coming weeks, applications for the next session of the Diocesan Formation for Ministry Program will be accepted. The programs will begin in September at the Catholic schools in Ogdensburg, Ticonderoga and Malone. Since the lay ministry program was established by Bishop Stanislaus J. Brzana in 1990, more than 800 lay ministers have completed the two-year program and been commissioned for service in parishes throughout the diocese. The current class is scheduled to be commissioned June 5 at St. Mary's Cathedral.

FULL STORY, PAGE 6

Massena, Louisville merger

Bishop Terry LaValley celebrated a Mass of Thanksgiving Jan. 11 to commemorate the merger of Sacred Heart and St. Lawrence parishes as the newly established "Church of Sacred Heart and St. Lawrence" parish.

The merger process involved many meetings of the parish councils, finance committees and members of both parishes.

Bishop LaValley gave final permission for the merger on July 1, 2010 and the Supreme Court of the State of New York issued a legal document on October 7, 2010 which established the new parish.

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Divine Mercy Conference

St. Hedwig's Parish in Houseville welcomes two seminarians of the

Marians of the Immaculate Conception
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RAPT ATTENTION TO FATHER BRYAN



PHOTO SUPPLIED

Father Bryan D. Stitt, diocesan vocation direction, speaks to third and fourth graders at Holy Family School in Malone Feb. 1 as part of the school's celebration of Catholic Schools Week.

SUMMER'S COMING: It's time to register for Guggenheim, Sports camp, p. 13

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LETTER FROM THE EDITOR

Planning, planning,
and more planning

For the third week in a row, we're featuring a story about the changes occurring and to be expected in our parishes because of the decline in the number of priests serving in the North Country.

We have reported on the plans for Plattsburgh and for Jefferson Deanery and this week for the Massena area.

As expected, the Church of the Sacred Heart in Massena and St. Lawrence Church in Louisville have merged. Bishop LaValley presided at a Jan. 11 Mass to mark the birth of the "Church of Sacred Heart and St. Lawrence."

Since the beginning of the year, planning meetings have been held in sites across the diocese to gather input from priests, deacons, religious and lay people in response to the expectation that, in 10 years, we may have as few as 40 active priests.

Just ten years ago, the figure was closer to 90.

With these statistics in mind, we all have to work to keep the Catholic faith alive and well in our diocese.

St. Joseph Sister Jennifer Votraw, diocesan director of planning, has been leading the meetings which will continue through the first week of March.

After the final gathering in Essex County, she and I will sit down to talk about the ideas that have emerged. I plan to pick her brain – and a few others – to prepare a comprehensive report about what is likely to happen by 2020.

Nothing will be written in stone, of course, but we know that the mergers and closures we've seen will continue and will eventually affect every single Catholic in the diocese. The timeline will be "fluid," Sister Jennifer said

because much depends on unknowns – the health of priests, the number of seminarians, e.g., – but preparations must be made to ease the transitions.

As many as five seminarians may begin studies this September but by the time they are ordained, 26 priests will have retired.

With a full-time vocation director and solid formation programs for deacons and lay ministers, the diocese is doing everything it can to be ready.

After that, we've got nothing but our faith... but what else to we need?

"We have to believe that the Lord is with us and we are not alone in this," Sister Jennifer said. Amen!

Mary Lou
KilianCome In From
The Cold

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CHURCH: A FAMILY OF FAITH

Trust in God's Providence

By Sister Mary Eamon Lyng, SSI

Director of Evangelization

Matthew reminds his community that Jesus calls for a "purity of heart." Where one's heart is, the treasure is!

Our hearts are always challenged to serve God or the false god of worldly possessions.

God sees what we need. He cares for the birds of the air, wild flowers, and grass of the field, and assures His disciples that He cares for them and provides for their needs.

This does not mean that we must remain passive, but what He desires is to focus our whole attention on seeking God's reign and right relationship with all of His creatures and creation.

Then those who have enough of life's necessities do not become obsessed with the quest of material possessions.

They accept the necessities of life, and resist the temptation to hoard them for fear that they might lose what they already have e.g. home, job, a friend, a spouse.

Rather, they try to cooperate with God in providing for other.

Then, those who are desperate can let go of their worry and anxiety and place their trust in God's providence.

The fretting can dehumanize us and the worry keeps us from lifting our gaze beyond material values and the cares of this world. We are of "little faith" and God asks that we "rest in God alone."

God also desires that we respond with gratitude for all the precious gifts He has given to us.

We are so ready to receive, but our hearts are not always receptive or do not recognize the unexpected gifts that He puts before us in our journey of faith. Have you ever recognized the "timing" of God's presence and/or providence in a particular situation e.g. a telephone call before leaving on a trip that a member of the family has died, or your presence with a friend in need?

The Father knows best; He provides for our needs. Are we not more important than all the worries of tomorrow?

As Church: A Family of Faith, we are called beyond self-concern, to be the hands and heart of God in the world. As a community of believers, we are Christians who look not to a fleeting "to-morrow" but to the solid future of the kingdom of heaven.

As a family of faith, we put our future into God's hands and pray for the modest needs of today. What can you do to reduce the anxieties of the people you are with everyday?

Does your faith and trust in God provide a light of strength for others? What are some of your parish concerns? How does your parish community prioritize these concerns?

Christ is our rock and it is upon Him that we build our firm foundation.

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FOLLOW ME

Are you a thermometer... or a thermostat?

(Bishop LaValley's homily for a Feb. 12 Mass for Families at St. Mary's Church in Clayton)

Jesus looks to the heart, not just to appearances; He knows our deepest motivations and desires.

It takes courage, self-knowledge and knowledge of our faith to be a Catholic Christian 'thermostat'

In the Gospels, the Pharisees thought they were in a very good and healthy relationship with God. But, in fact, they were not. They actually ended up rejecting God. They were the major players behind the crucifixion of Jesus.

How can we avoid being like the Pharisees?

How can we take a true X-ray of our hearts?

Later in St. Matthew's Gospel, Jesus gives us the secret. He explains that, "From the fullness of the heart the mouth speaks." (Mat.12:34)

If we want to know the true condition of our hearts, of our friendship with Christ, all we have to do is reflect seriously about our words and the quality of our conversations.

When we speak, are we usually building others up, or tearing them down?

Do we engage in crude and degrading humor?

Do we join in gossip sessions and unnecessarily spread criticism or even lies?

Do we use our words to encourage, enlighten, and edify or are we constantly nagging, nitpicking, and belittling?

The fuller our hearts are with God and the experience of His love, the more our words will reflect His goodness, His mercy, and His wisdom.

That's why examining our consciences at the end of



PHOTO BY GAYLE FRANK

Bishop LaValley chats with parishioners of St. Mary's in Clayton during a Feb. 12 parish dinner. The evening began as Bishop LaValley presided at a Mass for Families at St. Mary's; his homily appears on this page.

each day is such a good idea.

This discipline has been a tradition of our Church since its earliest days. It is good to spend a few minutes reviewing the conversations that I've had during the day, thinking about how I used the opportunities that I had to build up, tear down or just plain ignore another person.

Conversion is about a lifelong struggle of allowing the grace of God to fill our hearts with His love so that who we say we are is genuine, real, from the heart.

If we live our faith superficially, looking like a Catholic on the outside only, our lives will never have the meaning or the power that they are meant to have. We will end up just following the latest trends and fashions, never really having the stability or making the progress in life that Jesus wants us to.

But if we live our faith from the inside out, keeping Christ alive in our hearts, we will be able to help set the trends, not just follow them.

As one commentator observed: It's like the difference between a thermometer and a thermostat. A thermometer merely tells what the temperature is in a particular area. If your thermometer reads seventy degrees and you place that thermometer in a room that is currently eighty degrees, the thermometer will change to register whatever the room temperature is.

It won't be long before the thermometer reads eighty degrees. It always changes according to its environment.

The thermostat, however, does just the opposite. Instead of changing in accord with its environment, it actually changes the environment in accord with itself. It adjusts the room temperature.

If the thermostat is set at seventy degrees and the room is eighty degrees, the temperature of the room will gradually change to conform to whatever the thermostat is reading. The room will become seventy degrees.

Thermometers passively reflect what's around them. Thermostats actively affect what's around them.

If our hearts are truly Catholic, truly Christian, if they are filled with knowledge of God and with His grace, then we will be like thermostats.

But if our faith only goes skin deep, if we are only going through the motions of friendship with Christ, we'll just be like thermometers. It takes courage, self-knowledge and knowledge of our faith to be a Catholic Christian "thermostat."

It takes real discipline sometimes to build up another, real courage to speak the Gospel truth and not just words that go along to get along.

To warm up the world to God's ways takes energy, confidence, patience, humility, sacrifice, commitment and reliance on God's grace.

In our day, parents must be thermostats, not thermometers, when it comes to training their children in what's right and what's wrong, in helping to educate and form them in our

Catholic faith.

Boy, doesn't it seem so much easier to just follow instead of leading, of doing the right thing?

Going along in order to get along in our world seems to be an underlying philosophy, much to the detriment of our soul's health and that of our children. The way of the Cross sometimes gives us slivers that, frankly, we just get tired of enduring, particularly when it seems like everybody else around us seems to have it so much easier.

We thank God for each one of you and your loved ones who come to worship as a family of faith, to be nourished with food for your souls. We pray that our families find support in each other, particularly during those times when the temptations of the world make it so much easier to be thermometers rather than the thermostats that are leaven for our beautiful and troubled world.

We pray for our children who greet exciting, and, at times, anxious years ahead. We ask God's special blessings on married couples who are hurting, alienated from the Church or disillusioned about tomorrow.

May we all be family members who encourage one another in our journeys of faith, ever aware of the tremendous love that our God has for each one of us, inviting us to make a lifetime of sharing that love with others.

Gracious God, as you look within our hearts, you know of our struggles, our temptations, our earnest desire to do your will. May the words we speak, beginning with our family members, always build up, not tear down.

Fill us with your graces so that we may know the joy and peace that only you can bring to us and our families today and always. Amen.

Merger of Massena area parishes is celebrated

MASSENA - Bishop Terry LaValley celebrated and preached a Mass of Thanksgiving Jan. 11 to commemorate the merger of Sacred Heart and St. Lawrence parishes as the newly established "Church of Sacred Heart and St. Lawrence" parish.

This celebration concluded a two year process initiated by the Planning Office of the Diocese of Ogdensburg with the assistance of St. Joseph Sister Jennifer Votraw, Chancellor of the Diocese; Father Kevin O'Brien, Legal Advisor; Father Donald Manfred, pastor; Daughter of Charity Sister Evelyn McCarte, the Trustees and Parish Council Members of both parishes.

The process involved many meetings of the parish councils, finance committees and members of both parishes.

Bishop LaValley gave final permission for this merger on July 1, 2010 and the Supreme Court of the State of New York for the County of St. Lawrence issued a legal document on October 7, 2010 which established the new parish.

St. Lawrence Parish

Both parishes have long histories of being connected with other area parishes.

It is as one family of faith that you, parishioners of Sacred Heart and St. Lawrence, will work even more closely together to ensure that the Good News is proclaimed and celebrated for generations to come

Homily of Bishop LaValley during Mass celebrating the newly established Church of Sacred Heart and St. Lawrence parish



Concelebrants with Bishop LaValley for the Jan. 11 Mass to celebrate the merger of St. Lawrence Church in Louisville and the Church of the Sacred Heart in Massena included Father Andrew Amyot, Msgr. Harry Snow, Msgr. Robert Lawler, Father Jack Downs, Father Michael Gaffney and Father Donald Manfred. Assisting were Deacons James Hotte and Thomas Proulx.

St. Lawrence parish was originally a mission of St. Mary's Church in Waddington in the 1820's and established a reputation of being very in-

dependent as recorded in the history of the Diocese of Ogdensburg written by Sister Christine Taylor. "Under the supervision of Waddington,

Louisville's Catholics took the initiative themselves during the time of Father Florence McCarthy and erected a brick church of their own accord without much credit to the reputation for obedience".

St. Lawrence parish was also served by Visitation parish in Norfolk, St. Mary's parish in Massena and St. John's parish in Madrid until its incorporation on November 12, 1930 under the direction of Msgr. John Bellamy, pastor of St. Mary's Church, Massena.

The first pastor, Father Patrick B. Riley was appointed in 1937. St. Lawrence Church burned on Dec. 24, 1944 and was rebuilt in 1945 and until 2001

had a resident pastor. Father Donald Manfred has served as pastor since November 2001.

Church of Sacred Heart

The Church of the Sacred Heart was originally a mission of St. Patrick's Church in Hogansburg (1832-1852).

In 1837 Father Thomas Keveny, newly appointed pastor at Hogansburg, gathered some local men from Massena and built a 24 foot wooden structure church in the middle of an existing cemetery on lower Center Street (currently the site of Violi's restaurant).

This first Catholic Church in Massena was St. Peter's Catholic Church and was no longer used when the first Sacred Heart church was built in Massena Springs in 1873.

The Catholic community of Massena eventually became a mission of St. Mary's in Waddington (1860-1873) and Visitation parish in Norfolk (1873-1978).

The first pastor, Father T.J. Kelleher was appointed with the incorporation of Sacred Heart parish in 1878.

The first Sacred Heart church, built in 1875 on Main Street, currently the site of McDonald's restaurant, was replaced by the present Sacred Heart Church. The first Mass in this new church was celebrated by Msgr. Timothy P. Holland on December 25, 1924.

In his homily, Bishop LaValley said, "As we look to tomorrow with confident hope and assurance in the Lord's promise to be with us always, we thank God for the support we give each other in our common journey to the Father's house.

"I thank God for your faith that inspires me and which builds upon our local Church," Bishop LaValley said. "I pray God will bless you and your loved ones abundantly for your faithfulness. St. Lawrence, pray for us. Sacred Heart of Jesus, have mercy on us. May God be praised forever...may God be praised!"

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Divine Mercy

By Michelle Beagle
Staff writer

HOUSEVILLE - Despite a snowy North Country winter's day approximately 70 people attended The Divine Mercy conference at St. Hedwig's Catholic Church Feb. 6.

Conference participants learn about the 'A,B,C's' of Divine Mercy

Brother Chris Alar, MIC and Brother Esteban A. Ybarra, MIC from the National Shrine of Divine Mercy in Stockbridge, MA spoke on various aspects of Divine Mercy. Brothers Chris and Esteban are seminarians studying to be priests in the order of Marians of the Immaculate Conception. Brother Chris was an industrial engineer before deciding to enter the order and Brother Esteban worked in sales.

The Marians of Immaculate Conception are in charge of protecting the message of Divine Mercy and spreading its good news.

Topics discussed included:

- The "A, B, C's" of Divine Mercy
- The Feast of Divine Mercy and How to Receive the Graces of Divine Mercy Sunday
- How Divine Mercy is present in the Liturgy and the Sacraments
- How Divine Mercy is the Heart of the Gospel
- The Theological Meaning of the Image
- The Historical Background of St. Faustina

Vespers, Exposition of the Most Blessed Sacrament, Silent Adoration, Divine Mercy Chaplet, and Benediction took place led by Deacons James Chaufty and Ronald Pominville.

St. Faustina

The origin of Divine Mercy goes back to Sister Maria Faustina Kowalska who was a nun in the Congregation of Sisters of Our Lady of Mercy in Cracow, Poland during the 1930's.

It is believed that she received messages/revelations from Our Lord Jesus which were compiled in notebooks at Jesus' request. Today these notebooks are known as the Diary of Saint Maria Faustina Kowalska and God's loving message of Divine Mercy.

Pope John Paul II canonized Sister Faustina in



PHOTOS BY MICHELLE BEAGLE

Brothers Esteban Ybarra, left, and Chris Alar, seminarians studying to be priests in the order of Marians led a Divine Mercy Conference Feb. 6 at St. Hedwig's Church in Houseville.

2000 making her the first saint of the new millennium, Pope John Paul II, known as the Great Mercy Pope, wrote an encyclical on Divine Mercy. When he canonized Sister Faustina he did so in Rome instead of her native Poland to emphasize Divine Mercy is for the whole world.

Image of Divine Mercy

The image of Divine Mercy was discussed at length during the conference.

St. Faustina was given the image during a vision. Jesus' right hand is raised in blessing and His left foot is stepping towards us. His left hand is touching his heart, with two rays coming forth (red and pale/white). The rays represent blood and water. The Divine Mercy pours out upon the world during Baptism and the Eucharist.

On the bottom of the image are the words *Jesus I Trust in You*.

It was discussed that no matter how many times individuals' sin, they can turn back to God and ask for forgiveness. The confessional is the throne of Jesus' mercy. The importance of attending confession along with taking time for adoration of the



Blessed Sacrament was emphasized.

It was also stated that in this busy world people must find time for prayer and reflection. While rushing off to work saying the powerful phrase, "Jesus I Trust in You" can act as prayer.

Love in action

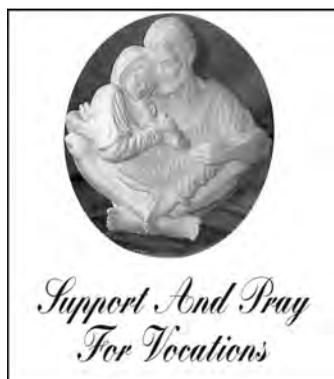
Mercy was defined as "love in action" – taking the extra step to help someone in need. Brother Esteban said one could bring their redemptive suffering to Divine Mercy and then let it go and trust. As mortals we will fall often but Jesus is unwavering in his love for us.

Pope John Paul II established that the second Sunday after Easter would be known as Divine Mercy Sunday. Years ago that Sunday was called White Sunday. Starting on Good Friday there is a novena in preparation for Divine Mercy Sunday.

In closing Brother Esteban said, "Love is the flower, nourish it and water it, it will flourish to the fruit of Mercy."

Divine Mercy devotion is held at St. Hedwig's Church first Sunday of the month at 3 p.m.

(More information: www.thedivinemercy.org)



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Lay Ministry Sunday set for March 6

Bishop LaValley has designated March 6 as Lay Ministry Sunday in parishes across the diocese.

The day will serve as an opportunity to honor and acknowledge the hundreds of commissioned lay ministers in the North Country as well as those currently enrolled in the diocesan Formation for Ministry program.

A second goal of Lay Ministry Sunday is to challenge people in the pews to discern their active roles in the life and mission of the church.

"By virtue of our baptism, each of us has the responsibility of proclaiming what our God has done for us," the bishop said in a letter to mark the observance of Lay Ministry Sunday.

"As members of a family of faith, we are embarked on a journey here on earth that



will lead us to the Kingdom of Heaven," he said. "Jesus told His disciples and He tells you and me: 'Follow Me.'"

As changes continue to be made in parishes throughout our diocese, the need for well-trained Commissioned Lay Ministers who can work in collaboration with their pastor and parish staff will continue to grow.

Bishop Stanislaus J. Brzana established the Formation for Ministry program

in 1990 to provide formation to help meet that goal.

Since that time, more than 800 have completed the two year program in sites all across the North Country.

For two years, participants attend weekly classes in church, scripture, Christology, spirituality, communications, sacraments, moral theology and social justice.

They participate in workshops designed for their specialized areas of ministry: Worship, Sick and Elderly, Family/Outreach, Youth, Adult Faith Facilitator, Catechetical Leader, and Catechist.

Participants also take part in annual weekend retreats and supervised field experience.

After all the requirements are met, the bishop presides at a Blessing and Commissioning of Pastoral Ministers at St. Mary's Cathedral.

This year's commissioning ceremony, for lay ministers completing the program in Brownville and Altona (with a webinar site in Tupper Lake),

will be held June 5.

Education sites for 2011-2013 sites have been established at the Catholic schools in Ogdensburg, Malone and Ticonderoga.

Those interested in applying for the program should consult with their pastors.

"As we prepare to begin a new class, I encourage parishioners to consider enrolling in the Formation for Ministry program," Bishop LaValley said. "This is an excellent means of gaining personal knowledge of our faith and of preparing to participate more fully in the faith life of the parish family.

"We must, no matter our age, learn more about our faith," the bishop said. "This is critically important as we continue to grow as dynamic and vibrant parishes.

"Those called to the ministerial priesthood and those called to the common priesthood of the faithful must collaborate in meaningful ways so as to build up the Body of Christ in our local Church," he said.

Bishop LaValley's Schedule

March 7-8 - New York State Public Policy Day in Albany.

Rest in Peace

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

Feb. 23 - Rev. Leo Heinrichs, O.F.M., 1908; Rev. Edward Blanchard, 1922; Rev. André Payette, O.M.I., 1976

Feb. 24 - Rev. George Belanger, V.F., 1932; Rev. William J. Murphy, C.S.C.O., 1959

Feb. 25 - Rev. William Howard, 1888; Rev. P.J. O'Connell, O.S.A., 1895; Rev. James J. Duffy, 1912; Msgr. L. Kevin Conners, J.C.D., 1971

Feb. 26 - Rev. Francis X. LaChance, 1916; Rev. John F. Wiley, 1984

Feb. 27 - Rev. Ferdinand Grenier, O.M.I., 1872

Feb. 28 - Rev. J.H. Tabaret, O.M.I., 1886

March 1 - Msgr. Alexander P. Landry, 1955; Most Rev. Stanislaus J. Brzana, 1997

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--	--

Or whatever the Lord inspires you to offer Him

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MARCH

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WORKING... PLAYING... PRAYING

OUR FAMILY OF FAITH



The first and second graders of Augustinian Academy in Carthage read the intercessory prayers at the opening of Catholic School Week Mass at St. James Church. From left to right, front, are Cooper Lawler, Jaden Thasier, Anna Scott and Katie Richards, back, Harrison Scott, Katherine Morgan, Joseph Nichole and Gabriel Rhoads.



PHOTO BY COLLEEN MINER
Second graders at St. Bernard's School in Saranac Lake enjoy outdoor fun during recess. From left are Forest Monroe, David Hunt, Simon Thill and David Warner.



Newly elected officers of Council #13127 of Our Lady of Victory Parish in Plattsburgh are, front, Father Garvin Demararis, standing, first row, Gary Fountain (Warden); Oreál Fountain Jr., (Recorder) sitting in for Oreál Fountain III who was sick; Daniel Drowne, (Chancellor); second row, Peter Guiboard (Grand Knight); John Middleton, (Lecture); Jack Lukasiewicz, (Advocate) sitting for Joseph Coulombe, Leon Darrah, (Trustee); third row, George Barota, (Financial Secretary); James Matthews, (Deputy Grand Knight), Raymond Carnehan (Inside Guard); Dale Forgette (Trustee); Richard Tucker (Outside Guard); and top row, Stanley Clark (Treasurer); Matthew Ryan, (Outside Guard), John Murphy, (Trustee)



PHOTO BY DAVID HARRINGTON
St. Mary's Parish in Indian Lake added a new Eucharistic minister Feb. 4. Pictured here is Joseph DeShaw, 13, giving communion to his mother, Michelle DeShaw. Father Sony Pulickal, pastor, encourages the young people of the parish to accept ministries after their confirmation.

This year it is more important than ever to join Archbishop Timothy Dolan and the Bishops of New York State for the annual Public Policy Day in Albany. Gather with over 1,000 Catholics from across New York State to support and give voice to the 2011 New York State Catholic Conference Legislative Agenda.

Register today at:
www.nyscatholic.org

Just click on Public Policy Day 2011 at the top of the home page. Also, you will find directions for registering to attend the Public Policy Day. After you register, a representative from Catholic Charities in Ogdensburg will contact you for additional details and information. Please feel free to contact Sr. Donna M. Franklin, D.C. at (315) 393-2255, if you need more information.

You must be registered to attend

The Official Public Policy Voice of the Catholic Church in the Empire State

Come to the New York State Catholic Conference's

2011 PUBLIC POLICY DAY

TUESDAY, MARCH 8 at the STATE CAPITAL in ALBANY



TAKE ACTION

Put Your Catholic Faith Into Action!

- Demonstrate the strength and unity of the Catholic voice to state lawmakers.
- Learn about and advocate on critical social issues impacting our state.
- Worship at Mass with Cardinal Egan and the State's Catholic Bishop's.
- Meet with Legislators, attend Senate and Assembly Committee meetings, watch your lawmakers in action.

Issues in brief...

Making Abortion Rare:

State proposals would increase abortion rates across New York.

Preserving Catholic Schools:

Accessibility to Catholic schools and equity for all school children.

Protect the Poor:

Maintain supports to enable low-income families to live in dignity.

Access to Health Care:

Maintain the health care infrastructure and health care coverage for low-and moderate-income individuals.

Juvenile Justice Reform:

The state's juvenile justice system serves neither the offender nor the society well and must be reformed.

Conscience Protection:

Religious liberty protections are urgently needed as religious organizations and individuals are increasingly being coerced into accepting standards and participating in activities which violate their deeply-held religious and moral beliefs.

Traditional Marriage:

Maintain society's traditional understanding of marriage.

JOIN THE NETWORK!

Archbishop Dolan and state's Bishops to join Catholic lobby day in Albany



Archbishop Timothy Dolan and the state's Catholic bishops will join about 1,000 New York State Catholics for the 2011 public policy day, "Catholics at the Capitol," to be held Tuesday, March 8, in Albany at the state Capitol complex.

Register online at www.nyscatholic.org or contact your diocesan coordinator Sr. Donna Franklin at 315-393-2255.

Schedule of Events

8:30 a.m. Registration Opens (Outside Convention Center)

New York State Catholic Conference staff will be at registration tables to check you in, provide materials and answer questions.

8:30 a.m. Scheduled Legislative Appointments Begin (Legislative Office Building and State Capitol)

Some participants will attend pre-scheduled meetings with elected representatives throughout the day.

10:00 a.m. Mass (Cathedral of the Immaculate Conception)

Archbishop Timothy Dolan, principal celebrant and homilist
Bishops of New York State, concelebrants

11:45 a.m. Boxed Lunch Available (Convention Center)

11:45 a.m. – 12:30 p.m.: General Workshop (Meeting Rooms 2, 3, 4): "Continuing the Conversation": How to start a parish public policy group, visit lawmakers in their local districts, build the Catholic Advocacy Network, and continue advocacy back at home.

11:45 a.m. – 12:30 p.m.: Town Hall Meeting for Youth (Meeting Room 6): A special meeting where high-school aged youth can grab a boxed lunch and join a dialogue with lawmakers and Bishops.

Visit the Capitol and Legislative Office Building

Visit the Senate and Assembly, meet your legislators, hand out flyers, take pictures, and attend committee meetings.

About Us

The New York State Catholic Conference represents the Bishops of New York State in matters of Public Policy. The role of the Conference is to seek justice, fairness and charity for all, with a particular emphasis on the poor and vulnerable.

Our positions transcend political platforms or ideologies. The Conference is neither Democrat or Republican, liberal or conservative. Our positions are based on the principles of Catholic social teaching and recognition of the innate dignity of every human person made in the image and likeness of God.

The Conference advocates for the agenda of the Bishops as it relates to state government. We seek to work in partnership with the state to fashion public policies that respect the human person from conception until natural death. Our positions and statements are made with malice toward none and charity toward all.

Mission Statement

The mission of the New York State Catholic Conference is to identify, formulate and implement the public policy objectives of the Catholic Bishops of New York State. As one body, the Conference provides a unified voice and the means for joint action through which the eight Catholic dioceses in the 58-county state can impact the development of public policies in the areas of health, education, welfare, human and civil rights.

The Conference seeks to fulfill the vision of the Vatican Council II, which called on the Church to be more involved in the world, and the call of Pope John Paul II in Centesimus Annus for Catholics to become personally involved in and committed to transforming the public policy process to better serve the needy and vulnerable.

The primary objective of the Conference is to reaffirm the sacredness of human life, demonstrating that 'the human person is central, the clearest reflection of God among us' (United States Conference of Catholic Bishops). Thus the policies pursued by the Conference seek to enhance human dignity, foster the common good, and provide for the fulfillment of individual potential from conception to natural death.

With the Gospels and the social teachings of the Church as its foundation, the New York State Catholic Conference offers a specifically Catholic contribution to state and federal public policy debates. It achieves this by:

- working with the three branches of government to fashion laws, regulations and policies which respect human life, meet human needs, and serve the common good;
- speaking officially for the Church before government bodies and private organizations;
- providing a forum for Church personnel to meet, exchange information, deliberate and recommend policies or actions to the Bishops;
- studying all aspects of pressing social and moral questions and fostering public understanding of the Church's teachings;
- highlighting the moral dimensions of critical public issues;
- encouraging Catholic citizens to communicate with their elected representatives regarding the Church's concerns;
- working in cooperation with other faith groups and advocacy organizations to ensure that the needs of all New Yorkers are met.

THIS IS IMPORTANT... You want to know about this!

You are invited to join

New York State Catholic Conference Public Policy Network

Keep informed of the current issues that are important to the Church. There is no cost for membership.

You will receive Legislative Alerts. With just a click you can make your voice heard in Albany.

It is easy to join by visiting the New York State Catholic Conference website: www.nyscatholic.org

A SPECIAL AUDIENCE



CNS PHOTO/PAUL HARING

Pope Benedict XVI meets Bishop Paul S. Loverde of Arlington, Va., during his general audience in Paul VI hall at the Vatican Feb. 16.

When preachers live the Gospel...

By Carol Glatz
Catholic News Service

VATICAN CITY (CNS) - Evangelization will be effective only when the people spreading the Gospel truly believe and live Christ's message themselves, Pope Benedict XVI said.

Evangelization works!

God needs to be at the center of every person's life, he said Feb. 18 during a meeting with bishops from the Philippines, who were making "ad limina" visits to report on the status of their dioceses.

A pastor's preaching "must be personal in its focus so that each Catholic will grasp in his or her innermost depths the life-transforming fact that God exists, that he loves us, and that in Christ he answers the deepest questions of our lives," the pope said.

The great task of evange-

lization is "to propose a personal relationship with Christ as key to complete fulfillment," he said.

"New initiatives in evangelization will only be fruitful if, by the grace of God, those proposing them are people who truly believe and live the message of the Gospel themselves," Pope Benedict said.

When lay groups and other church communities are made up of and guided by "people whose motivating force is the love of Christ," they prove to be "worthy tools of evangelization," he said.

The pope asked the bishops to "take special care in shepherding such groups so that the primacy of God may remain in the forefront."

He praised the important role faith plays in the life of young Filipinos and asked the bishops to keep reminding young people that "the glamour of this world will not satisfy their natural desire for happiness."

Discuss strategies for strengthening marriage

By Emily Lahr
Catholic News Service

WASHINGTON (CNS) - In the words of a California deacon, there is more to marriage "than putting a ring on the finger."

Deacon Jim Merle, who has been married 43 years, was among those gathered in Washington for a strategy session on how the Catholic Church can strengthen marriage and families led by Kathy Saile, director of domestic social development for the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops.

The Feb. 16 session, held on the last day of the Catholic Social Ministry Gathering, brought church workers together to discuss how at the local level they can disseminate widely the church's goals for marriage and family: to inspire, challenge and

help Catholics witness to marriage as a natural institution founded by God and as a sacrament and understand what children bring to a marriage.

The group also discussed how to work for laws and public policies that recognize marriage as a union of a man and a woman, strengthen family life and protect religious liberty.

Deacon Merle, representing the Catholic Campaign for Human Development in the Diocese of Orange, Calif., stressed that preparation and the recognition of marriage as a sacrament should be taught at a young age through the catechism. Teenagers also need exposure to role models who practice their vocation, he said.

Other topics of discussion included domestic violence;

single motherhood and the loss of fathers; and the effects of war on families.

Many of the problems facing Catholic families are considered interconnected. Deacon Al Turner from the Office of Black Catholics in the Archdiocese of Washington said, "These are all patches on the same quilt."

Many African-American girls, for example, are not getting married and yet the rate of abortion is high in the black community, said Deacon Turner.

"It's a very steep curve; we are a segment of the body of Christ that is in a crisis," he said.

There was agreement in the group that financial insecurity is a common threat to families across the nation.

Donna Grimes from the USCCB's CCHD office summed it up by saying, "No

finance, no romance."

Participants said the source of such challenges can be found in today's notion of what marriage is. In the past, marriage was considered to be for the good of the couple and for the procreation and education of children -- which was not just a Catholic idea but believed by society at large.

However, they noted, today there seems to be an alternative view that suggests marriage is only for the happiness of the individual and children are no longer connected.

"By protecting marriage, we are promoting marriage," said Andrew Lichtenwalner, program specialist with the bishops' Ad Hoc Committee for the Defense of Marriage, which falls under the USCCB's Secretariat of Evangelization and Catechesis.

The Catholic Social Ministry Gathering is co-sponsored by a dozen Catholic organizations, including various USCCB departments, Catholic Charities USA, Just-Faith, the Society of St. Vincent de Paul, the Conference of Major Superiors of Men, the Roundtable Association of Diocesan Social Action Directors, the Catholic Daughters of the Americas and Catholic Relief Services.

The agenda of the gathering was driven by five priority initiatives set by the bishops in 2008 to be carried out through 2011: respect for human life and dignity; the strengthening of marriage and family life; cultural diversity in the church with a special emphasis on Hispanic ministry; faith formation and sacramental practice; and priestly and religious vocations.

CATHOLIC WORLD AT A GLANCE

Vatican announces Pope John Paul II beatification events

VATICAN CITY (CNS) -- The Vatican released a three-day schedule of events for the beatification of Pope John Paul II, and warned against people selling counterfeit tickets to the beatification liturgy, which is free and open to all. Pope Benedict XVI will preside over the beatification Mass at 10 a.m. May 1 in St. Peter's Square, the Vatican said. Immediately after Mass, the faithful can pray before Pope John Paul's mortal remains, which will be set in front of the main altar in St. Peter's Basilica. The veneration "will continue until the flow of faithful ends," it said. Distributing the program Feb. 18, Jesuit Father Federico Lombardi, the Vatican spokesman, said the deceased pope's remains will be in the casket in which he originally was buried in 2005 and will not be visible. The casket will be reinterred in the Chapel of St. Sebastian on the main level of St. Peter's Basilica in a "private" ceremony, which will occur only after the large crowds have stopped coming to pay their respects, Father Lombardi said. The night before the beatification, a prayer vigil will be held in the grassy open space that was the ancient Circus Maximus in Rome, the Vatican said. "It will be organized by the Diocese of Rome, which had the venerable servant of God as its bishop," the note said. Cardinal Agostino Vallini, papal vicar for Rome, will lead the celebration and Pope Benedict is expected to watch through a video hookup. The morning after the beatification, Cardinal Tarcisio Bertone, the Vatican secretary of state, will celebrate a Mass of thanksgiving in St. Peter's Square, the Vatican said.

Archbishop says hard times don't justify restricting workers' rights

MILWAUKEE (CNS) -- Quoting Popes Benedict XVI and John Paul II, Milwaukee Archbishop Jerome E. ListECKI issued a statement Feb. 16 that came down squarely in favor of workers' rights in the face of efforts by Wisconsin's new governor to restrict those rights. "Hard times do not nullify the moral obligation each of us has to respect the legitimate rights of workers," Archbishop ListECKI said. "Every union, like every other economic actor, is called to work for the common good, to make sacrifices when required, and to adjust to new economic realities," he said. "However, it is equally a mistake to marginalize or dismiss unions as impediments to economic growth." Archbishop ListECKI was responding to efforts by new Wisconsin Gov. Scott Walker, a Republican, to push through measures restricting the rights of unions in a special session of the state legislature. The bill would strip most government workers -- at the state, county and local levels, including teachers -- of nearly all collective bargaining rights. The only exceptions would be for police, firefighters and the state patrol. Unions would have to gain approval in a public referendum to seek pay raises higher than the consumer price index. The legislation would also require union members to vote every year on whether they wanted to continue to be represented by their union, and would forbid unions from forcing employees to pay dues, known as "right to work." The legislation would require state employees to pay half of their pension costs and 12.6 percent of their health care coverage, moves Walker expects to save the state \$30 million in the short term and up to \$300 million over the next two years. In exchange for the savings, Walker promised no layoffs or furloughs -- but threatened to lay off 6,000 workers if the bills failed to pass. Republicans, who hold majorities in both houses of the Legislature, have said they have enough votes to pass the bills.

Cardinal Rigali outlines new actions after grand jury report

By Matthew Gambino
Catholic News Service

PHILADELPHIA (CNS) -- A new grand jury report has reopened for Catholics the raw wound of sexual abuse of children by clergy and personnel in the Archdiocese of Philadelphia.

While a similar 2005 report detailed hundreds of cases of sexual abuse of children by dozens of clergy over many decades, the new report brings criminal indictments for the first time.

In a statement Feb. 16, Cardinal Justin Rigali of Philadelphia addressed the issue of sexual abuse of children squarely, calling it a crime and "always wrong and always evil."

"Many people of faith and in the community at large think that the archdiocese does not understand the gravity of child sexual abuse," he said. "We do. The task before us now is to recognize where we have fallen short and to let our actions speak to our resolve."

His statement, outlining new actions to be taken in response to the report, follows three initiatives he announced Feb. 11, a day after Philadelphia District Attorney Seth Williams held a news conference to release the report by a grand jury investigating alleged abuse.

Charged with rape, assault and other felonies related to minors, as recommended by the grand jury, are former archdiocesan priest Edward V. Avery, 68, of Haverford; Father Charles Engelhardt, 64, of Wyndmoor and a priest Oblate of St. Francis de Sales; an archdiocesan priest, Father James J. Brennan, 47, of Linfield; and former lay teacher, Bernard Shero, 48, of Bristol.

Msgr. William J. Lynn, 60, pastor of St. Joseph Parish in Downingtown, was charged on two counts of endangering the welfare of a child. The charges stem, according to the report, from Msgr. Lynn's conduct as archdio-

san vicar for clergy from 1992 to 2004. In that role, he was responsible for recommending the assignment of priests in the Archdiocese of Philadelphia.

He is believed to be the only high ranking diocesan official indicted under a criminal statute in the United States for charges related to the sexual abuse scandal that came to light in 2002.

The new actions Cardinal Rigali outlined in his Feb. 16 statement include the immediate re-examination of cases of 37 priests said by the grand jury to have credible allegations of child sexual abuse against them.

The process will be led by a lawyer and former Philadelphia Assistant District Attorney Gina Maisto Smith. She will personally review all cases of accused priests in active ministry and recommend to Cardinal Rigali procedural changes in response to the report.

Three priests mentioned in the report, Fathers Joseph L. DiGregorio, Joseph J. Gallagher and Stephen B. Perzan, have been placed on leave and they may not exercise their priestly ministry pending the second review of their cases.

These steps follow the three new initiatives the cardinal announced Feb. 11.

First, the archdiocese has rehired Mary Achilles, former victim advocate for Pennsylvania, to advise Cardinal Rigali on how to address the needs of victims of sexual abuse and to review the observations and recommendations of the grand jury report.

Achilles served in a similar capacity for the archdiocese from 2006 to 2008.

Second, a new position has been created -- delegate for investigations. The person, when hired, will continue the practice of forwarding every allegation of abuse as soon as it is received to the appropriate civil authority.

Regardless of whether the authority investigates the

claim, the delegate will lead the archdiocese's investigation of the allegation from the time it is received until the Archdiocesan Review Board presents its recommendation on the credibility of the allegation to Cardinal Rigali.

Third, Joseph A. Cronin Jr. has been hired as the clergy support associate to help ensure priests in active ministry comply with the "Standards of Ministerial Behavior and Boundaries," a code of conduct for clergy developed in 2003.

Over the Feb. 12-13 weekend, Cardinal Rigali acknowledged in a letter to Catholics the painful, emotional fallout the report and its indictments have left in the archdiocese.

"The release of the Philadelphia grand jury report ... brings great sadness and distress to every Catholic, to every person," the cardinal said. "Once again, the issue of the sexual abuse of minors is raised, as well as the role of the church and her leaders in addressing this abuse.

As Catholics, we are hurt and confused, and perhaps even quite angry and feeling betrayed," he said.

The cardinal acknowledged the suffering of victims of abuse and their families, as well as the suffering of faithful priests. He encouraged Catholics to show victims love and compassion, plus support and prayers for priests.

He called the report's release "a moment for renewed faith."

At his Feb. 10 news conference, Williams noted that since the 2005 grand jury report, positive changes have resulted in the Philadelphia Archdiocese's procedures for handling allegations of abuse and its impact upon victims.

"Victims are receiving counseling and support, and the church is reporting some abusers to law enforcement, something that never happened in the past," he said.

SCRIPTURE REFLECTIONS

Sermon of the Mount promises coming true

Many of us have experienced times in our lives of overwhelming fear that approached panic. Perhaps it was a memory of being taken to the emergency room with a severe pain.

Maybe it was being alone in a large city, and we've lost our keys or our wallet.

Maybe it was growing depression over a loss of a job, and we didn't know how we were going to feed our family.

Those would have been good times to recall today's Gospel. A large crowd is gathered on a mountain, giving rapt attention to the words of Jesus. You're part of the crowd. A baby is crying, but the gentle wind

blows phrases your way, phrases like "...do not worry about your life, what you

will eat or drink, or about your body, what you will wear...look at the birds in the sky, they do not sow or reap...yet your Heavenly Father feeds them...

You strain to hear more, as Jesus tells you not to worry about what you are to eat or drink or wear!

"Oh you of little faith, Your Heavenly Father knows you need them all. But seek first the Kingdom of Heaven and His righteousness and all these things will be given you besides... Do not worry about tomorrow, tomorrow will take care of itself. Sufficient

for a day is its own evil." What wonderfully soothing words. But are they true for us today?

Jesus promises that they will come to those who have sufficient faith and trust in Him..Today's first reading is from a section of Isaiah called "The Book of the Consolation of Israel."

The Jews in captivity in Babylon knew that they had wandered away from the Law. and that God was punishing them..Even when they returned, they felt that God had abandoned them. So they cried out in their despair, and God answered them immediately in order to give them hope.

He said those consoling words, "Can a mother forget her infant, be without tenderness for the child of her womb? Even should she forget, I will never forget

FEB. 27

8th Sunday in Ordinary Time

READINGS

Isaiah 49:14-15
1 Corinthians 4:1-5
Matthew 6:24-34

that much of the burden is ours? Remember what St. James told us. "If a brother or sister is ill-clad and in lack of daily food, and one of you says to them, 'Go in peace, be warmed and filled', without things needed for the body, what does it profit? So faith by itself, if it has no works, is dead" (Jas 2:14-17).

Doesn't that fit with what God said in the first reading, "Can a woman forget the child of her womb? Even these may forget, yet I will not forget you"?

It was God and the early Christian Community which attended the poor and needy then.

It is still God and today's community of faith which continues to make the promises of the Sermon on the Mount come at least partially true today.

you." What a "homey" example.

To those who question Jesus' words today when we see such discouraging scenes of starvation and death in countries around the globe, Jesus did not place the whole burden on God the Father.

In our second reading today, St. Paul reminds the Corinthians that all in the community are "servants of Christ and stewards of the mysteries of God."

Doesn't that remind us

CONSIDER THIS

Changing the world needs willingness to do without

By Stephen Kent
Catholic News Service

Someone recently questioned why Christians seem to be impotent when it comes to influencing the conduct of public affairs: "One often wonders how it happens that Christians who personally are believers do not have the strength to put their faith into action in a way that is politically more effective."

Good question, especially considering the source: Pope Benedict XVI.

"We can only hope that the inner strength of the faith that is present in people will then become powerful publicly as well by leaving its imprint on public thinking," the pope continued.

The remark came in response to an unusual question-and-answer session between the pope and German journalist Peter Seewald during hourlong

sessions over six days in July.

They are published as "Light of the World: The Pope, the Church and the Signs of the Times."

The value is the relatively informality of the language, hearing the pope as a "real person" rather than the more formal theological language in his encyclicals and speeches.

Why aren't Christians as powerful as the opposition: secularism?

In reading the conversation between the pope and Seewald, one could almost make the case that we are irrelevant to what is going on in the world. So with an aggregate millions of people thinking that way, it becomes a self-fulfilling statement of a lack of self-esteem.

The problem is the inclination to dismiss the kingdom of God as unattainable.

Recent church teaching, including his encyclicals,



CNS PHOTO/L'OSSERVATORE ROMANO VIA REUTERS

Pope Benedict XVI receives his new book "Light of the World: The Pope, the Church, and the Sign of the Times" from its writer, German Catholic journalist Peter Seewald, during a meeting at the Vatican Nov. 23. In the book, the pope said that Christians haven't been able to be politically effective in putting their faith into action because of a "lack of willingness to do without."

the pope said, is a step in putting things into another perspective, "looking at them not only from the point of view of feasibility and success but from the point of view that sees love of neighbor as something normative and is oriented to God's will and not just to our desires."

Bring this thought to current issues: environment, poverty, health care, the roster of things that continue to befuddle and irritate.

Worldly view may find something not feasible with little chance of success. But if it is done for love of neighbor and aimed to God's will, might not God

have something to do with its success?

Pope Benedict does find some awareness of a global responsibility to make moral decisions.

"A certain potential for moral insight is present," he said. "But the conversion of this into political will and political actions is then rendered largely impossible by the lack of willingness to do without."

The lack of willingness to do without. Millions have a choice to do without. There are millions more who have no choice but to do without, these unwilling victims of poverty from causes largely beyond their control.

"How can the great moral will, which everybody affirms and everybody invokes, become a personal decision?" asked the pope. "For unless that happens, politics remains impotent."

Lent seems a good time to begin a willingness to do without.

AT THE MOVIES

GNOMEO & JULIET

By Joseph McAleer
Catholic News Service

William Shakespeare's classic tragedy of star-crossed lovers morphs into an animated comedy in "Gnomeo & Juliet" (Touchstone), a slightly warped but ultimately winning film that offers good clean fun for the entire family.

"This story has been told before, many times," our narrator, a garden gnome in a pointy hat, tells us, "but never like this." Indeed not: what with talking statues, a philosophical flamingo, a love-sick frog and a rock-and-roll soundtrack by Elton John and Lady Gaga, we're definitely not in Kansas, let alone fair Verona.

"Gnomeo & Juliet" takes several strands from Shakespeare's play and weaves

them into a clever morality tale wrapped around themes of good versus evil and the importance of family. In modern-day Stratford-upon-Avon, grumpy old Mr. Capulet (voice of Richard Wilson) lives next door to grumpier Miss Montague (voice of Julie Walters). He prefers the color red; she, blue. He lives at apartment number 2B (get it?), she's also at 2B, but it's crossed out (and therefore not 2B).

Their rivalry extends to their backyards, where each maintains an elaborate garden filled with -- you guessed it -- smiling gnomes of every shape in their favorite colors.

When the adults aren't around, the gnomes come to life, a la "Toy Story," and proudly tend their gardens, keeping a wary eye on each other across the fence.

Juliet Capulet (voice of Emily Blunt) stands atop a tower, pondering her Red-bound fate and longing for adventure. "I can't stay here tucked away on this pedestal all my life," she laments.

Meanwhile, Gnomeo Montague (voice of James McAvoy) is the big gnome on the Blue campus. He challenges Juliet's cousin Tybalt (voice of Jason Statham) to drag races with lawnmowers in the back alley.

Fate brings Juliet and Gnomeo together in an abandoned greenhouse, and it's love at first ceramic clink -- the result of their effort to kiss. "Will you build a garden with me?" Gnomeo asks. Family tensions and (literal) differences in color threaten to drive them apart, but a wise pink



CNS PHOTO/TOUCHSTONE

Animated characters are shown in a scene from the movie "Gnomeo & Juliet."

flamingo named Featherstone (voice of Jim Cummings) puts everything in perspective.

The voice talent in "Gnomeo & Juliet" is first-rate, and ranges from the mighty (Maggie Smith, Michael Caine) to the bizarre (Ozzy Osbourne, Dolly Parton). Patrick Stewart is a standout as the statue of "Bill" Shakespeare in the local park, who shakes his head in despair as the gnomes subvert his tragedy

with a happy ending.

Adults will enjoy the many puns and sight gags, from the "As You Like It" moving van and the "Tempest Teapots" company to Featherstone's various comic pronouncements, including: "A weed by any other name is still a weed."

The Catholic News Service classification is A-I -- general patronage. The Motion Picture Association of America rating is G -- general audiences, all ages admitted.



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Basketball Camp: July 3rd - July 7th

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Sportscamp

ADIRONDACK

FRIENDSHIP VOLUNTEER'S WANTED

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

Dates: March 1 and March 8 (both afternoons are required)

Features: Mercy Care Friendship Volunteers help to relieve isolation and loneliness of their elder neighbors. Training Program is free of charge but pre-registration is required.

Contact: To request registration information, please contact Sheila Schneck at Mercy Care by calling 518-523-5583.

Information: For more information, visit <http://www.adkmercy.org>

RUMMAGE SALE

Lake Placid – St. Agnes School is to have a rummage sale.

Date: March 19

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

Place: School Gym

Contact: Reserve a table for \$20 to sell your stuff and keep the profits. Please call 518-523-3771 for more information.

CLINTON

LENTEN DAY OF REFLECTION

Ellenburg Center – Lenten day of reflection to be held at Our Lady of the Adirondacks House of Prayer.

Date: March 19

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

Features: Is the Bible confusing? Do the readings at Mass lack meaning? Have you ever wished to be able to better appreciate the Scriptures? During this retreat, Deacon Dennis Monty will search with us the Lenten readings. We will seek to understand what is happening in each passage. By exploring the historical events and culture that frame the authors' experience, we will know better the message. Next, we will discover how the Church has understood the Scripture. Finally, we will prayerfully share our response to God's invitation to growth in faith and understanding. Bring your New American Bible and your desire to be touched by God.

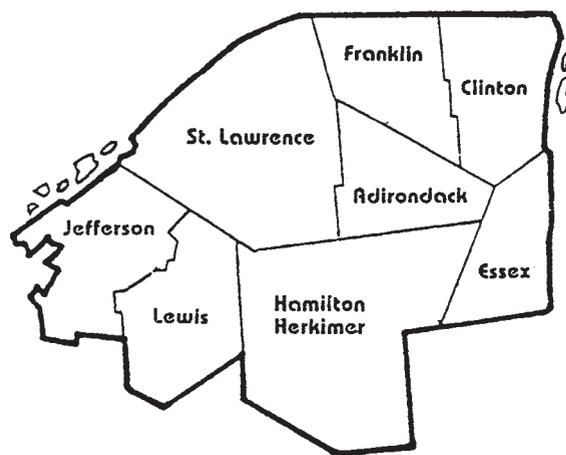
Contact: RSVP to oadiron@twcny.rr.com or 518-594-3253 by March 17.

SETON OPEN HOUSE

Plattsburgh – A Seton Catholic Open House (grades 7-12) is to be held.

Date: March 16

Time: 5 p.m. to 7



The North Country Catholic welcomes contributions to "Around the Diocese."

Parishioners are invited to send information about activities to:

North Country Catholic, PO Box 326,
Ogdensburg, NY 13669; fax, 315-394-0670;
e-mail news@northcountrycatholic.org.

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

Place: 206 New York Rd (former Air Base)

Features: Registering current and new students for the 2011-2012 school year. School tours, meet the students, staff, coaches and Seton families. Art, Science and Curriculum Fair. Light refreshments served. Games in the gym.

Contact: For more information call Cathy Russell at 518-561-4031

DINNER, STATIONS, FELLOWSHIP

Plattsburgh – A special evening of Fellowship with a simple meal and the Stations of the Cross is to be held. The program is sponsored by the Children's Ministry and Hospitality Committees of St. Peter's parish

Date: March 11

Time: 6 p.m.

Place: St. Peter's Church

Features: Bread, Soup, Salad and Macaroni and Cheese followed by Stations of the Cross for Families at 7 p.m.

Contact: Please call the Parish Office at 563-1692 to RSVP for the dinner!

LITTLE ROCK SCRIPTURE SERIES

Plattsburgh – St. Peter's Parish is presenting the Little Rock Scripture Series this Lent with "Praying the Scriptures."

Date: Beginning March 8, continuing every Tuesday through April 19

Times: 1 p.m. and 7:05 p.m.

Place: Chapel

Features: "This study explores the always relevant ways God has transformed history and invites participation through praise, thanksgiving.

Cost: A donation of \$10 is welcomed to

help with the cost of the materials.

Registration: Call the Parish Office 563-1692 or filling out a registration form in the Atrium, by March 1.

PRAYER VIGIL

Plattsburgh – A Helper's of Gods Precious Infants prayer vigil will be held the first Sunday of the winter months.

Place: St. Peter's Chapel

Time: 1 p.m. to 2:30 p.m.

40 DAYS FOR LIFE

Plattsburgh – Plattsburgh area pro-life advocates will once again join together with people of faith and conscience from many other communities for the area's third 40 Days for Life campaign.

Schedule: Kick off is set for Ash Wednesday, March 9 at 10a.m.; a Midpoint Rally - Sunday, March 20, 1p.m.; ankylosing prayer vigil: Palm Sunday, April 17, 1p.m.

Place: Plattsburgh Planned Parenthood
Features: 40 days of prayer and fasting, 40 days of peaceful vigil at abortion facilities, and 40 days of grassroots educational outreach.

Information: www.40daysforlife.com/plattsburgh

EUCCHARISTIC ADORATION

Plattsburgh – Eucharistic Adoration is held throughout the year every Wednesday, Thursday, and Friday.

Place: St John's Adoration Chapel,

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

Theme: "My sweetest joy [is] to be in the presence of Jesus in the Holy Sacrament" (St. Katharine Drexel). Pray for

vocations!

Contact: 518-561-5083 or email us at Sjohnsadoration@aol.com

ESSEX

ST. PATRICK'S DINNER

Elizabethtown – The annual St. Patrick's Dinner to be sponsored by St. Elizabeth's parish.

Date: March 13

Time: 2 p.m. to 6

Place: St. Elizabeth's Parish Hall

Prices: Adults, \$8; Children under 12, \$4

FRANKLIN

ANNUAL BREAKFAST FUNDRAISER

Burke – St. George's Church will hold its Annual Breakfast Fundraiser.

Date: March 6

Time: 8 a.m. to 1:30 p.m.

Place: Parish Center

Cost: Adults, \$6; Children 12 and under, \$3.50; Under 5, Free

Features: Raffle tickets will be available for \$5 for a book of six, or \$1 a ticket. The prizes are 1st \$150, 2nd \$100 and 3rd \$50. We will have a 50/50 available at the door. All prizes will be drawn at the end of the breakfast.

LENTEN PARISH MISSION

Brushton/North Bangor – St. Mary's and St. Augustine are to have a special Lenten parish mission with the theme "Our Lenten Journey: From Darkness to Light." The Schedule is as follows:

March 12 – 4 p.m. N. Bangor and 5:30 p.m. Brushton;

March 13 – 9 a.m. N. Bangor and 11 a.m. Brushton AND Special Program for Confirmation Youth, 6 p.m. to 9 p.m.

March 14 – Eucharistic Spirituality, Mass at 7 p.m., N. Bangor

March 15 – Cross-Stamped Spirituality, Mass at 9 a.m. N. Bangor; Penance Service at 7 p.m. Brushton

March 16 – Resurrection Spirituality, Mass at 7 p.m. N. Bangor

JEFFERSON

PRO-LIFE ORATORICAL CONTEST

Watertown – Liferight of Watertown will participate in the annual New York State Right to Life pro-life oratorical Contest

Date: Preliminary qualifying date is April 9

Time: 9:30 a.m.

Place: Flower Memorial Library

Features: The contest is open to all High School Juniors and Seniors. Participants

will give a five minute talk on the topic of abortion, euthanasia, infanticide or stem cell research. They may use our library references. Local prizes are \$100-\$50 and \$25. The winner goes to the State contest on May 7th. Winners there will receive \$100-\$500-\$200. The state winner and a companion will win an expense paid trip to the National Right to Life Convention in Jacksonville, FL. June 23, 24 \$ 25 to compete for an additional \$100.

Contact: For more information contact Bette Hartzell at 315-785-1087. Deadline to enter is March 25.

BEREAVEMENT MEETING

Watertown – An ecumenical bereavement meeting has been planned

Date: Feb. 28

Time: 7 p.m.

Place: Sisters of St. Joseph motherhouse

Speaker: Roger Ambrose, Director of Community Services for Hospice of Jefferson County., on "Gaining Acceptance after Loss."

LIFERIGHT MEETING

Watertown – Liferight of Watertown will hold its monthly meetings on the third Wednesday of the Month.

Time: 4 p.m.

Place: 312 Sherman St.

Features: Liferight is a pro-life educational organization. The office has videos, books and educational materials which may be borrowed. Topics covered: infanticide, assisted suicide, euthanasia and chastity.

Contact: Phone 315-788-8480; website: www.liferight.org

LEWIS

MARDI GRAS DINNER

Constableville – St. Mary's Church is holding its 6th Annual Mardi Gras Spaghetti Dinner.

Date: March 8

Time: 4:30 p.m. to 7

Place: Church Hall

Cost: \$7; under 5, Free; Take-outs available for \$7.50

Features: Chef: Joe Scheve

K OF C BRUNCH

Lyons Falls – South Lewis Knights of Columbus to have an all you can eat brunch.

Date: Feb. 27

Time: 8 a.m. to 12:30 p.m.

Place: St. John's Church

Cost: Adults, \$6; Children 5-12, \$3; under 5, Free

CONTINUED ON BACK PAGE



The Society For
The Propagation Of The Faith

Sr. Mary Ellen Brett, SSJ, Director
622 Washington St., Ogdensburg, NY 13669
(315) 393-2920; fax (315) 394-7401
mbrett@dioogdensburg.org

Support for the people of God

From the Director's Desk,
Sister Mary Ellen Brett, SSJ, Diocesan Mission Director

Collections taken up for World Mission Sunday, gifts from individual benefactors, and contributions that come in thanks to various missionary projects, are all sent first to the respective National Offices of the Pontifical Mission Societies in each country, to be put in a common fund, the Universal Solidarity Fund.

During the Annual General Assembly of the Pontifical Missionary Societies, normally held during the month of May, presided by the Archbishop President and the Secretary Generals of the four Societies, the members of the Assembly discuss hundreds of requests from all over the world for funding for building churches, chapels and local centers for apostolate, for aid and formation of seminarians and catechists, for educational projects and activities for children. The Assembly takes into account the available economic resources and criteria of equality and justice, decides on the distribution of the funding. Unfortunately, the Universal Solidarity Fund is never large enough to be able to respond positively to all the petitions for aid.

The Society for the Propagation of the Faith receives thousands of requests for aid from all across the missionary world, mainly concerning the formation of catechists, the construction and maintenance of churches, chapels, and convents, diocesan activities and aid for pastoral activity of religious congregations.

The Pontifical Mission Society St. Peter the Apostle funded a total of 837 seminaries: 461 minor seminaries and 376 major seminaries, some of which depend on the Congregation for the Evangelization of Peoples and others which do not. The total number of seminarians supported by the Society is 77,715: 51,592 minor seminarians and 26,123 major seminarians.

The Pontifical Society of the Holy Childhood, or the Holy Childhood Association, focuses on the role of "little ones" in announcing the Kingdom. The requests for funding regard programs for religious instruction, food and medical assistance, clothing and school material, installation of classrooms for catechetical purposes and centers for children, acquiring medicines and support for poor children.

Pope Paul VI defined the Pontifical Missionary Union (PMU) as the soul of the other Mission Aid Societies. The PMU strives to promote missionary consciousness among seminarians, priests and religious. The PMU attempts to animate all animators of the People of God for the Mission by spreading and promoting the other mission societies. It fosters Christian unity so that they may be so perfected in unity that the world will recognize that it was you who sent me.

OBITUARIES

Altona – Beulah E. (Brean) Belair, 88; Funeral Services Feb. 13, 2011 at Brown Funeral Home; burial in Holy Angels Cemetery.

Brasher Falls – Robert "Wellie" Mott, 91; Funeral Feb. 18, 2011 at St. Patrick's Church; burial in parish cemetery.

Coopersville – Jeffrey S. Syprey, 39; Funeral Services Feb. 19, 2011 at St. Joseph's Church.

Lisbon – Ronald W. Sanderson, 65; Funeral Services Feb. 19, 2011 at Sts. Philips and James Church; burial in Morley Cemetery.

Massena – Joseph G. Riley, 77; Funeral Services Feb. 16, 2011 at Phillips Memorial Home; burial in Pine Grove Cemetery.

Massena – Eva M. (Lalande) Sharlow, 91; Funeral Feb. 17, 2011 at St. Joseph's Church; burial in Calvary Cemetery.

Moira – Everett O. Flint, 84; Funeral Services Feb. 12, 2011 at Flint Funeral Home; burial in Moira Cemetery.

Mooers – Joanie (Trombley) Roberts, 70; Funeral Services Feb. 15, 2011 at St. Joseph's Church; burial in St. Edmund's Church, Ellenburg.

Norfolk – Eleanor B. (Benton) Hayes, 94; Funeral Services Feb. 17, 2011 at Church of the Visitation; burial in Visitation Cemetery.

Ogdensburg – Kim L. (Cameron) Schumann, 49; Funeral Services Feb. 18, 2011 at Frary Funeral Home; burial in Foxwood Memorial Park.



Port Henry – Alexander H. "Sonny" Pliscofsky, 86; Funeral Services Feb. 14, 2011 at St. Patrick's Church; burial in South Moriah Cemetery.

Potsdam – Elizabeth (nee Dame) Pearson, 86; Funeral Services Feb. 19, 2011 at St. Mary's Church; burial in St. Mary's Cemetery.

Watertown – Charles G. Allen, 90; Funeral Services Feb. 17, 2011 at Sacred Heart Church.

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It is easy to join by visiting the
New York State Catholic
Conference website:
www.nyscatholic.org

OUR CATHOLIC KIDS



During Catholic Schools Week, the students of St. Agnes School in Lake Placid, collected pennies all week and observed National Wear Red Day in support of the National Heart Association Feb. 4. They collected \$55 worth of pennies and sent them to the Heart Association's local chapter in Albany. From left are Grace Ericson, James Flanigan, Christopher Byrne and Rowan Norfolk.



Knights of Columbus, District #100 held its Free Throw Competition Feb. 13 at Holy Family School in Malone. Shown, front, from left are Emily Dwyer, Jaelyn Rose Martin, Danielle Cook, Brendan Marshall and Ted Childs; back, Nicholas Haas, District Deputy 100; John Gokey, Grand Knight Malone Council 308, Caitlin Miller, Nicholas Ashline, Sam Richards, Nicholas Lamica, Zachary Cowan and Douglas Monette, Grand Knight Wadhams Council 469.



Seton Academy's Handbell Choir participated in the opening Mass for Catholic School Week at St. Alexander's Church in Morrisonville Jan. 30. Members include Elizabeth Thomas, Megan Ashline, Emily Lawliss, Julia Mulligan, Tobiah Osborne, Mairead Lawless, Carolyn Spittler, Erin Lawliss, and Laura Morelock.

Events

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 14

ST. LAWRENCE

BREAKFAST BUFFET

Ogdensburg – The Knights of Columbus Ladies Auxiliary is having a breakfast buffet.

Date: Feb. 27

Time: 8:30 a.m. to Noon

Place: K of C Hall; Eat in or take-outs available.

Cost: Adults, \$6; Children 5-12, \$3; Under 5, Free

ROAST PORK DINNER

Ogdensburg – The Knights of Columbus will host a Roast Pork Dinner.

Date: Feb. 22

Time: 4 p.m. to 6:30

Place: K of C Hall

Cost: \$7 per person, desserts \$1

Dinner is open to the public and takes are available. Call 315-393-7990.

EUCCHARISTIC ADORATION

Massena – St. Joseph's Church is to have Eucharistic Adoration every Saturday.

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

SPAGHETTI DINNER

Colton – St. Patrick-St. Paul's Altar Rosary Society is sponsoring a Spaghetti Dinner.

Date: March 3

Time: 5 p.m. to 7 p.m.

Place: Colton-Pierrepoint Central School

Cost: Adults, \$6; Children under 12, \$4; under 5, Free

Features: Proceeds to benefit Carol Ford. Take-outs available.

K OF C BRUNCH

Norfolk – The Knights of Columbus is to sponsor a brunch.

Date: March 13

Time: 8:30 a.m. to Noon

Place: Visitation Parish Center; Take-outs available.

Cost: Adults, \$6; Children under 12, \$4; Under 5, Free; Family, \$16

40 DAYS FOR LIFE

Ogdensburg – Pro-lifers from the Ogdensburg area will be uniting with many others from coast to coast and internationally, for a major pro-life mobilization – The 40 Days for Life Campaign.

Dates: March 9-April 17

Features: The Mission of the campaign is to bring together the body of Christ in a spirit of unity during a 40 day cam-

paign of prayer, fasting, and peaceful vigil with the purpose of repentance, to seek God's favor to turn hearts and minds from a culture of death to a culture of life, bringing an end to abortion.

Information: An organizational meeting will be held Feb. 6 at 3 p.m. at New Life Assembly of God on Park Street; To learn more about the 40 Days for life campaign, you can visit their website at www.40daysforlife.com or our website at www.40daysforlife.com/ogdensburg. Also, our campaign Director, Kristina Bland, can be reached at 315-528-1152.

HOLY HOUR FOR VOCATIONS

Ogdensburg – St. Mary's is holding a monthly Holy Hour for Vocations.

Date: Thursday before the First Friday

Time: 8 p.m. to 9

Place: Deacon Winter Chapel

Features: Nocturnal Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament continues through the night, concluding with Benediction at 7 a.m. Friday.

FRIDAY FISH FRY

Ogdensburg – Fish Fry Buffet will be held every Friday sponsored by Knights of Columbus Council 258.

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

Place: Knights of Columbus Hall; Eat in or take out, deliveries to the Towers.

Cost: Adults, \$9; Children 5-10, \$6; under 5, Free

NOVENA FOR MILITARY

Ogdensburg – Notre Dame Church is holding a weekly novena for the safety of U.S. military personnel

Date: Tuesday evenings

Time: 6:30 p.m.

Place: Notre Dame Church

DIOCESAN EVENTS

CELEBRATE CHRIST

Massena – The Diocese of Ogdensburg is planning a diocesan-wide event called Celebrate Christ.

Dates: Sept. 16-17. The audience for the workshop Sept. 16, will be for priests, deacons, and religious. It will be held at St. Mary's Church. On Sept. 17, the presentation will be for a general audience of interested participants. It will be held at Sacred Heart Church in Massena

Program: The speaker will be Christopher West, the well-known author of *The Theology of the Body*.