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The Diocese of Ogdensburg Volume 80 Number 23

NORTH COUNTRY CATHOLIC

OCTOBER 8, 2025

Follow me: 'Jesus asks us to love anyway'

Bishop Terry R. LaValley offers his reflections on Respect Life Sunday and World Day of Migrants and Refugees.

Even when it seems so difficult, we want to respect the dignity of all human life, especially the most vulnerable! This Jubilee Year of Hope, we reflect on the hope that causes people to leave their homes and way of life to seek freedom and happiness elsewhere, to seek safer lives for themselves and their families.

FULL STORY, PAGE 3

ANNUAL BLUE MASS



PHOTO BY DARCY FARGO

Representatives of regional law enforcement and emergency response organizations served as the Color Guard for the annual Blue Mass celebrated by Bishop Terry R. LaValley at St. Bernard's Church in Saranac Lake on September 28. See additional photos from the Blue Mass on Pages 8 & 9.

NEW ROLE IS HOMECOMING



Kristin Healt, who started her educational career as a teacher at St. Peter's School in Lowville, is the new assistant superintendent of schools for the Diocese of Ogdensburg. Healt, a mom of three, brings experience in both Catholic and public schools to the role.

FULL STORY, PAGE 4

Pope: Share the joy of the Resurrection

By Darcy Fargo
Editor

In his spiritual message at the general audience on Oct. 1, Pope Leo XIV spoke about the Church's mission to communicate the joy of the Resurrection without exerting power over others.

"This is the heart of the mission of the Church: not to administer power over others but to communicate the joy of those who are loved precisely when they did not deserve it," he said.

He reminded Christians of their responsibility "to be instruments of reconciliation in

the world."

The pontiff dedicated his catechesis this week to the Resurrection and to Christ's appearance afterward to the disciples in the Upper Room.

The risen Christ's appearance, Leo said, "is not a bombastic triumph, nor is it revenge or retaliation against his enemies. It is a wonderful testimony to how love is capable of rising again after a great defeat in order to continue its unstoppable journey."

The pope described how Christ appears to the apostles with meekness, demonstrating "the joy of a love greater than any wound and stronger than

any betrayal."

Appearing in the upper room, Jesus does not force his friends, the apostles, to accept the reality of his resurrection, he said. "His only desire is to return to communion with them, helping them to overcome the sense of guilt."

Leo noted that it could be considered strange that Christ displayed his wounds to those who had disowned and abandoned him: "Why not hide those signs of pain and avoid reopening the wound of shame?"

The reason, he continued, is because Jesus is fully reconciled with what he has suf-

fered. He has no resentment, he holds no grudges. "The wounds serve not to reproach but to confirm a love stronger than any infidelity."

"They are the proof that, even in the moment of our failure, God did not retreat. He did not give up on us," he added.

He invited Catholics to follow Jesus' example and to not give in to the temptations of revenge or retaliation. "When we get up again after a trauma caused by others, often the first reaction is anger, the desire to make someone pay for what we have suffered. The Risen One does not react in this way," said.

NORTH
COUNTRY
CATHOLICPO Box 326
Ogdensburg, NY 13669
USPS 0039-3400**Bishop Terry****R. LaValley**

President

Rev. Joseph A. Morgan

Vice President

James D. Crowley

Secretary-Treasurer

Darcy L. Fargo

Editor &

Communications Director



Publish

45 issues

per year:

Weekly except

skipping every

other week be-

ginning July through August

and skipping one week in

December by the

Diocese of Ogdensburg.

622 Washington Street,

Ogdensburg, N.Y. 13669.

Editorial Office:

622 Washington Street,

Ogdensburg, N.Y. 13669.

Telephone:

(315) 608-7556

E-mail:news@northcountry
catholic.org**Entered at the
Post Office:**

Ogdensburg, NY

13669 and additional mailing

offices as

Periodical Postage.

Subscription:**For one year:**

In-Diocese Rate: \$27

Outside of Diocese Rate: \$30

Matters for publication
should be addressed to
PO Box 326

Ogdensburg, NY 13669

and should be received by

Wednesday prior to

publication. Paper is

printed each Friday;

deadline is Wednesday.

Member, Catholic
Press Association.**POSTMASTER:**

Send address changes to

North Country Catholic,

PO Box 326

Ogdensburg, NY

13669-0326

Grateful for the beauty

My roommate and I home?"

rushed into British Literature class several minutes late.

"Sorry, Professor Masterson," I said, out of breath. "We rode back together from fall break, and we were delayed by a wreck on the Thruway."

Our professor, who knew we were roommates at our college in a Western New York suburb, seemed surprised.

"You girls ride home together, too? Where is

"Small towns about five hours north of here," I said. "No one has ever heard of them."

**Darcy L.
Fargo**

"Try me," Professor Masterson responded.

"Bombay," I said.

"Louisville," my roommate added.

"Oh, up in the northern Adirondacks," our professor responded. "That's God's

Country!"

I think of Professor Masterson often as I drive

around our beautiful North Country, especially during this most colorful time of year.

It really is God's country.

Just leaving home this time of year is a beautiful and prayerful experience. I'm constantly experiencing wonder and awe at the spectacular colors shown in the leaves, at the majestic mountains that seem almost painted with red, yellow and orange, and at their reflections off the surrounding waterways.

Are my prayers the

deepest prayers I'll ever experience? No. It's usually just a quick, "thank you, God, for this beauty."

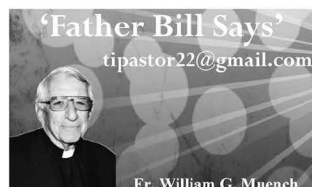
But I'm grateful for any moment that brings my heart and mind to God. I'm grateful for the contentment I experience when taking in the beauty of God's creation all around us. I'm grateful for the boost I get from the beauty this time of year, and I pray it carries me through the winter that follows.

I'm grateful we live in God's country.

Scripture and Tradition

Catholic parish sacramental programs - First Communion and Confirmation - have begun in every parish. There is one other - one that I am involved in - that is the program that prepares adults who are not Catholic or not baptized to become Catholics. This program has been called the RCIA, the Rite of Christian Initiation for Adults. This name has now been changed to OCIA, the Order of Christian Initiation for Adults. This name reflects the process's comprehensive, multi-rite, liturgical structure. The word "order" reflects the idea that the initiation process is a whole collection of various rites, not just a single ritual.

This program is a good exercise for the presenters, as it is for inquirers. A presenter must review and investigate their own faith and its meaning. Let me share with you the last class I was involved in. The subject was Revelation. We believe that God reaches out with his message, with his concern for



all - for Catholics and for all others.

We believe that Jesus came to this world of ours to bring us to the Father and to help us understand God's message for us. Jesus then commissioned his apostles to preach the Gospel of the Lord to this whole world. The apostles presented Jesus and his teachings and parables to all who would listen. This we call Sacred Tradition. Later, these apostles, at the prompting of the Holy Spirit, committed the message of salvation to writing. This is the Sacred Scriptures. This Bible is important. It is a sacred book in this Catholic Church. It reveals to us the Lord's message. Those words and teachings are also part of our worship services.

The apostles then left

bishops as their successors - bringing Jesus and the Lord's message to all throughout the centuries. They would continue Sacred Tradition. This is God's Revelation - the Sacred Tradition and the Sacred Scripture.

Jesus sent his apostles out to evangelize before the Scriptures were written. Jesus' missionary activity continues to this day through priests and deacons and religious sisters and lay Catholic men and women leaving their homes and going to every part of our world. The following of Jesus has always involved going out to others. Jesus asks us to follow him for the mission of transforming this world. The Sacred Tradition and the Sacred Scriptures are like a mirror - bringing Jesus to the world and leading others to contemplate our God.

The mission of the apostles - apostles of all time - is a spiritual one: to preach repentance and the coming of the kingdom of God. But it also brings

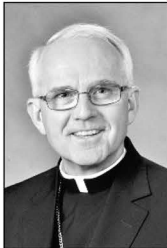
physical and mental healing. Christianity is concerned with people's spiritual well-being and with their physical well-being. In other words, it's concerned with the whole person. God is constantly reaching out to us.

So, our Catholic Church continues to bring Jesus to this world through the reading of Scripture and thought the teaching of many by their words and by other Catholics by their witness as disciples of the Lord - today's Sacred Tradition. Throughout the centuries the Popes of the Catholic Church have called Ecumenical Councils, calling together Bishops throughout the world to take a serious look at the Catholic Church's present state and how well the Church reaches the people of the world, how well the Church influences and leads the Catholics throughout the world. Recently Pope John XXIII transformed the Catholic Church and how the Church makes a difference in today's world.

'When it's tough, Jesus asks us to love anyway'

Dear Sisters and Brothers in Christ:

Jesus calls you and me to love and care for every human being, especially the most vulnerable: the hungry, the imprisoned, the homeless, the ill, the pre-born and the elderly, and the stranger. It seems pretty simple on paper, but it's a difficult call to live. For instance, there might be times when a person is imprisoned because of something she or he did to hurt us personally or a loved one.



Bishop Terry R. LaValley

There are times when the stranger is so different from us that we struggle to empathize with her or him. Even when it's tough, such as an unplanned pregnancy, or maybe especially when it's tough, Jesus asks us to love anyway.

This weekend marks Respect Life Sunday and World Day of Migrants and Refugees. Even when it seems so difficult, we want to respect the dignity of all human life, especially the most vulnerable! This Jubilee Year of Hope, we reflect on the hope that causes people to leave their homes and way of life to seek freedom and happiness elsewhere, to seek safer lives for themselves and their families.

Today's migrants may come from different places than our ancestors, but like our own ancestors, they come to the United States because they hear the song of promise. They hear songs of freedom and security. The journey of today's migrants

is not unlike our own. We are pilgrims seeking freedom from sin and eternal happiness as we follow Christ on the journey to be with Him in heaven.

Our world and our nation have been mired in unsuccessful efforts to create migration policies that are just to those who call the United States "home" and those who wish to call this land "home." The Catholic Bishops of Mexico and the United States released the Pastoral Letter,

Strangers No Longer, on January 22, 2023. The bishops offered five principles to guide Catholics when considering migration issues:

1. Persons have a right to find opportunities in their homeland.
2. Persons have the right to migrate to support themselves and their families.
3. Sovereign nations have the right to control their borders.
4. Refugees and asylum seekers should be afforded protection.
5. The human dignity and human rights of undocumented migrants should be respected.

Each of these principles can be a topic for

prayer, extensive discussion and debate. If a person cannot find opportunities in their homeland, what is our moral duty and response as an individual, nation and as Church to foster opportunity in their foreign homeland? Should they choose to migrate elsewhere what is our duty and our response?

What will we do for the least of our sisters and brothers? What will I do for them when discussions turn to border and migration policies? When we speak of laws and policies, it is easy to label a group and apply the rules. It is difficult to think of the individual person.

This Respect Life month, Pope Leo XIV encourages us to pray the Rosary each day, seeking the intercession of Our Lady, Queen of Peace. We yearn for civility and peace in our fractured and terror-stricken land. Let there be peace on earth and let it begin with me!

Faithfully yours in Christ,

Terry R. LaValley

Most Reverend
Terry R. LaValley
Bishop of Ogdensburg

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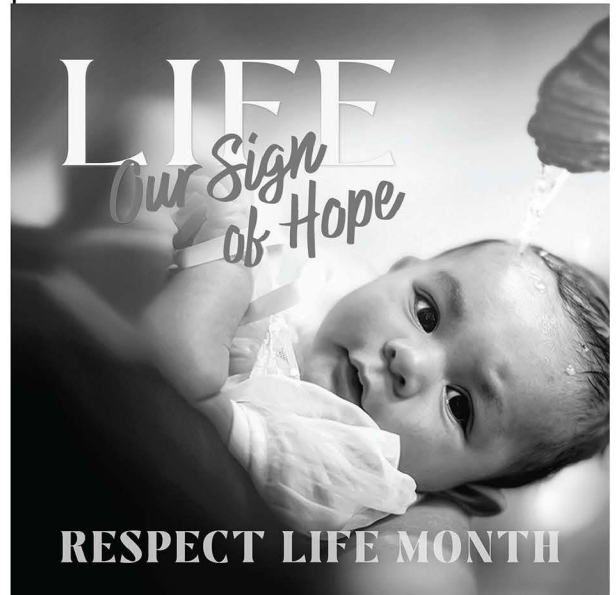
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Healt: 'I love Catholic education'

New assistant superintendent feels at home at local schools

By Darcy Fargo
Editor

"It's the Holy Spirit for sure. It's nothing I decided on my own. The Holy Spirit definitely had a hand in this - my whole career and my whole life for that matter," said Kristin Healt, new assistant superintendent of schools for the Diocese of Ogdensburg.

From her office at St. Peter's Church in Lowville, where she works when she's not visiting schools or at the diocesan offices in Ogdensburg, Healt said she finds working in her current position to be "so moving."

"I always wanted to be a teacher," she said. "But I was Protestant growing up. This is so different. Being Catholic is so consuming, so deep in my soul. I didn't feel that as a Protestant. Something was missing."

Healt said she found that missing piece when, after graduating college in the 1990s, the Boonville native struggled to find a job.

"I ended up for a while at a head start in Boonville," she said. "I liked it, but I wasn't allowed to teach there. I wanted to have my own classroom to teach. St. Peter's School in Lowville was hiring a first-grade teacher. That was the grade I always wanted to teach."

Healt said she applied for the job, and she was scheduled for an interview.

"I missed the interview," Healt said. "Sister Judy Adams was the principal, and she called me to ask if I was coming. I told her I'd be there in 15 minutes. The drive there is normally longer than that, and I still had

to get ready."

When she walked into that interview and saw a familiar face in the school's staff, Healt said she knew she wanted that job.

"I felt like I was home," she said. "I did get the job, and I loved working at St. Peter's. Sister Judy taught me so much! I was there seven years. The last year, I looped into second grade. It was wonderful! The students all knew what to expect and what the routine was."

While teaching at the school, Healt received her sacraments of initiation and became Catholic.

"My husband and I got married here," she said. "Of course, I had to promise we'd raise our kids Catholic. When our son, Jacob, was born, I wanted us all to be the same religion. My husband said, 'you're more Catholic than I am.' I really loved everything about it - the formality, the routine, the sacraments. It all means a lot to me."

It was at the end of that year that the announcement was made that would shutter St. Peter's School.

"That was the saddest decision in my life," Healt said. "I don't want anyone else to feel that. As terrible as that experience was, and I still get choked up when I think about it or talk about it, I know what I'm fighting for when it comes to our Catholic schools."

When the decision was made to close the school, Healt had already begun coursework to become a school administrator.

"I thought I would be principal at St. Peter's, and my kids would go to school there," she said.

"But then I ended up needing a job. A reading teacher position was available at Adirondack Middle School in Boonville. I knew the principal, Pat Thomas - she had been my health teacher. I went into the interview knowing I never wanted to teach middle school. I wanted first grade. I felt forced into it. I took the job as a middle school reading teacher, and I ended up loving it. The school was a great place, and I loved it there. They had a great staff, and I made a lot of great friends. Pat Thomas was a great role model."

As she completed her coursework in administration, Healt completed her internship with administration in Adirondack School District.

"They were looking for a principal for West Leyden Elementary," she said. "The old principal had left, and the new principal had to work out her notice, so they let me do the interim position. It was right down the hill from my house. I honestly thought that was where I was meant to be - a public school administrator. Mom had been a school nurse at that school, dad had been a custodian. My husband was on the school board."

When circumstances around the position changed, the district's Board of Education considered Healt for the principal positions, but her candidacy for the job didn't secure enough support from the board to pass, partly because her husband had to abstain from the vote.

"It was devastating," she said. "I thought it was the end of everything I wanted to do. I went back to teaching. After a while, our principal came to me and said, 'St. Patrick's School in Oneida is look-

ing for a principal, and I think you should apply.' I said, 'no, Pat. I'm good. I'll be a teacher the rest of my life.' I had lost confidence. I thought, 'no one wants me to be a leader.' Pat said, 'no. I want you to apply for this.' Then my mom's friend saw it in a newspaper, and she thought I should apply. I hemmed and hawed about it. I was praying about it, really just trying to discern. It was like God said, 'just apply.' It was the day the applications were due. I quickly got my cover letter together and sent them my resume."

It didn't take long for an interview to be scheduled.

"I was such a wreck over that interview," Healt said. "As I sat in the faculty room, there was a picture of Mary holding Jesus in her arms when he was a baby. In the middle of the interview, I started crying. I apologized. I just felt like I was home again. I had been missing that Catholic part of teaching. When holidays came around, we couldn't celebrate them. We couldn't talk about Jesus. I couldn't pray with the students. I remember how fun it was taking kids to Mass and preparing them with reading. I had this overwhelming sense that this was where I was supposed to be."

Healt, a mom of three, said she was at the school in Oneida for 10 years, and her daughters attended the school. When she no longer had a child attending there, she said she started to "get the itch" to move onto the next step in her career.

"The superintendent in Syracuse, Amy Sansone, emailed me about this assistant superintendent position open in Diocese of Ogdensburg. I kept

thinking, 'Ogdensburg is two hours away.' I live in my grandmother's old house next door to my parents' house. The more I talked about it with my husband, John, the more we agreed I needed to take the leap and see what happened. I applied not thinking it would ever work out. When I got called for the interview, I took my whole family up to Ogdensburg. They all loved the river and the beauty of it. (Superintendent) Sister Ellen Rose (Coughlin) recognized me from my time at St. Peter's School. I wasn't nervous at all. I felt like I was back home in a place that respected my experience."

When she was offered the job, it was determined that Healt could split her time between Ogdensburg and an office closer to home in Lowville.

New to the role, Healt said she's still "collecting data."

"The population up north is much less than I ever knew," she said. "I heard people were moving out of New York, but I wasn't seeing it. I'm seeing it now."

She also noted that she looks forward to getting to know the schools here.

"Syracuse Diocese is big, but most of the schools are relatively close together," she said. "Here, we're much more spread out. A lot of things happen virtually, which is great!"

While she's still figuring out the challenges and needs of the schools and her role, Healt said she feels call to one primary goal.

"I don't ever want to close a school," she said. "I don't want anyone to ever have to go through that again. I love Catholic education, and I know it's worth fighting for."

Conference eyes 'Hope in a Time of Peril'

By Darcy Fargo
Editor

It was a weekend of information and inspiration as representatives of St. Joseph's Outreach, Plattsburgh, attended Fordham University's 2025 Immigrant Integration Convening, themed "Supporting Migrants and Refugees: Finding Hope in a Time of Peril" from Sept. 14 to 16.

"Immediately, we experienced this sense that there was an elephant in the room," said Father Christopher J. Looby, pastor of St. James in Cadyville, the Roman Catholic Community of St. Alexander and St. Joseph in Morrisonville and St. Augustine's in Peru. "There's an immigration and refugee crisis all over the country – all over the world, too. It's nuanced here with the political situation. There are a lot of misconceptions on immigration and on who immigrants are and why they're coming to this country. (At the conference), there was a lot of discussion about why most immigrants are coming to this country and what they're looking for, and it was really interesting to see what other agencies – Catholic and non-Catholic and those that aren't faith based – to help immigrants who want what we want as Americans – to be welcomed."

In fact, "welcome" is one of four verbs conference attendees learned in relation to how they should be interacting with migrants and refugees.

"These four verbs are things we should be doing when dealing with migrants and, frankly, when dealing with anyone who is marginalized, anyone who is hurting," said Father Looby. "The four



PHOTO BY STARR BURKE

A speaker panel at the 2025 Immigration Integration Convening held Sept. 14-16 at Fordham University in New York City.

– welcome, protect, promote and integrate. It's a beautiful concept. It's welcoming them without asking any questions."

"Cardinal (Fabio) Baggio read a letter from Pope Leo, and there was discussion of integration versus assimilation," said Starr Burke, who works to help migrants and refugees as part of her work with St. Joseph's Outreach. "Integration means accepting people for who they are as they are and widening our knowledge as opposed to assimilation, which requires people to change into who we are."

"This is what Jesus tells us to do," added Father Looby. "It's what he commanded us to do. In Matthew 25, 'I was a stranger, and you welcomed me.' He says we'll be judged on how well we do that at the end of time. Strangers come into this country, and it's our job – it's our Gospel mandate – to welcome them, protect them, promote them and integrate them into our communities – not assimilate them. We want to encourage them to share with their new communities their languages, customs and foods, we want to share in their different perspectives."

Burke and Father Looby said they felt the confer-

ence reinforced their belief that our church communities should reflect Christ's call to welcome the stranger and care for those in need.

"Our parishes should be safe places where migrants – who come to this country to escape dangerous situations and poverty, and who just want a better life – can come, worship, pray and know they will be safe and celebrated for who they are," Father Looby said.

"One thing that stood out to me was that I learned there are 3.6 million asylum cases pending," added Burke. "That's 3.6 million people just waiting to hear if their applications are accepted and trying to follow the process. I'm reminded that we want to stay away from labeling people. In the Church, they're simply our brothers and sisters. We may not agree with all the decisions our brothers and sisters make, but that doesn't take away from their innate dignity and humanity and the fact that we're called to love them."

"When we label people, legal and illegal for example, we separate them from their humanity and dignity," Father Looby added.

Burke said she was also

Efforts earn award

St. Joseph's Outreach Center in Plattsburgh has been chosen to receive this year's *Community Partner Award* as part of the Legal Aid Society of Northeastern New York's 2025 Justice for All Awards.

The awards are part of the society's annual Justice for All campaign, which supports the pursuit of LASNNY's mission across the organization's six offices throughout the region. This year's awards ceremony will take place on Wednesday, October 22, 2025, at the Historic Canfield Casino in Downtown Saratoga Springs.

LASNNY's Community Partner Award recognizes an outstanding community partner (non-attorney individual or group) who exemplifies the goals and values of LASNNY through their exceptional efforts to support and promote civil legal services.

struck by the conference highlighting ways seemingly separate issues – migration and the call to be good stewards of God's creation – intersect.

"The lack of care for creation and stewardship of the earth is causing migration," she said. "Areas of the world are no longer sustainable because we haven't cared for creation. Migration is the result. There's also an intersection with the LGBTQ community. Everything is intertwined, and we need to look at the situations more holistically and at the people more holistically. Each person has a story just as we each have a story."

Another powerful part of the conference was hearing some of those stories, Burke and Father Looby said.

"We heard from a woman who was 15 years old when she found out she was undocumented," Burke recalled. "Her parents had come here when she was 3. When she was around 15, there was discussion at her school about colleges, and she was looking at some colleges. She was the only one in the room who didn't know what her social security number was. She went home and had a conversation, and she learned she was undocumented. She learned, 'college isn't for you.' Now, she holds a Green Card,

and she leads a not-for-profit organization that protects women who have been victims of violence. Even though she didn't remember the journey her family made to get here, there was trauma in learning she didn't have a certain number, so her dreams weren't available to her."

Among the presenters was Jesuit Father James Martin, a well-known author and speaker.

"I had a bit of a fan-boy moment," said Father Looby. "He wrote a book, 'Between Heaven and Mirth: Why Joy, Humor, and Laughter Are at the Heart of the Spiritual Life.' After I read that book, I wrote to (Father James Martin) thanking him for the book. He wrote back, and it was something I never forgot. He told me he remembered it. He may have just been saying that, but it was really neat to meet him and to tell him in person about the effect the book had on me."

The conference featured a large slate of speakers – Catholic and non-Catholic, religious and secular.

"As a whole, the topic fits well with what we're doing this year with our Jubilee of Hope," said Father Looby. "People come here looking for hope, and we need to do whatever we can to help them experience that hope."

Environmental Stewardship

Projecting positivity

After listening to any news broadcast, it's easy to get depressed. There are stories of war, hatred, violence and social upheaval throughout the world. Feelings of fear, anger, anxiety and hopelessness can quickly develop and linger, creating an unhealthy state of mind that radiates outward.

While most people believe plants and animals are oblivious to human emotions, research demonstrates that many non-human beings, especially pets, are sensitive to the emotional energies of the people around them. Watching the news or listening to a social media podcast may not only create a poor state of mental health, but it may also negatively impact God's other creations.

It's important to be aware that the news publicizes a small portion of events; there are many uplifting occurrences that go unreported. As followers of Jesus, we must spread peace and joy by radiating positive energy which should lead to hope.

Since trees, wildflowers and shrubs are unable to see us smile, we should convey our joy about being loved by God to a depth beyond description by singing, whistling or humming in nature. Express that uplifting inner feeling to your pets by hugging them and talking gently to them. It is easy to radiate a sense of serenity and inner peace if one already exists within your heart.

And don't forget to laugh. Laughter is truly the best medicine. Last summer, Pope Francis invited comedians from around the world to the Vatican to thank them for making people laugh.

Since everything is interconnected, one way to help nature is to help your fellow humans, and one way to do this is to remain upbeat and hopeful. By placing our fate in the hands of God, it is possible to smile, laugh and develop a deep sense of joy which can be spread to those that so desperately need something positive to feel and hold on to.

Bishop's Public Schedule

Oct. 11 – 11 a.m. – Mass for Family Camp at Camp Guggenheim in Saranac Lake

Oct. 12 – 9 a.m. – Mass at Wadhams Hall in Ogdensburg for the Women's Healing Retreat

Oct. 14 – 11 a.m. – College of Consultors, Diocesan Finance Council and Council of Priests Meeting at St. Mary's Parish Center in Waddington

Oct. 15 – 5 p.m. – Mass with the St. Lawrence, Franklin, Adirondack Commissioned Lay Ministers Association followed by Dinner at Church of the Visitation in Norfolk

Protecting God's Children

The Diocese of Ogdensburg has scheduled Protecting God's Children training sessions. This required training addresses child abuse, the methods and means by which abusers commit abuse, and the five steps to prevent abuse from occurring and stop it from continuing. Pre-registration is encouraged at www.virtus.org. Upcoming sessions:

October 15 – 3:30 p.m. – Augustine Academy, Carthage

To Report Abuse

If you have a complaint of suspected misconduct involving diocesan clergy, religious, employees or volunteers, contact Victim Assistance Coordinator, Terrianne Yanulavich, Ph.D., LMHC, 5050 Route 374, Merrill, NY 12955; terrianneyanulavich@yahoo.com; Phone: 518-569-0612; 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

CALLED TO SERVE

The Liturgy of the Hours

My heart will therefore sing in unceasing praise to you;

O Lord, my God, I will praise you forever.
Psalm 30:13

It is called the Divine Office, or Liturgy of the Hours (LOH).

The Divine Office is the official prayer of the Church. It is prayed each day by bishops, priests, deacons, some religious brothers and sisters, and some lay people.

The Office can be prayed several times during each day. There is morning prayer (Lauds), daytime prayer (this can be said mid-morning or mid-afternoon), evening prayer (Vespers) and just before bedtime, night prayer (Vigil).



Deacon
Kevin Mastellon

The ordaining bishop directs deacons to pray at least Lauds and Vespers each day. "Do you resolve to maintain and deepen a spirit of prayer appropriate to your way of life and, in keeping with what is required of you, to celebrate faithfully the Liturgy of the Hours for the Church and for the whole world?"

The deacon(s) respond, "I am."

Bishops and priests are asked the same question at ordination but the expectation is different. Priests are expected to include daytime and night prayer in their daily "praise of God."

Religious and lay people are encouraged to pray the Hours.

Clergy use a book(s) called a Breviary to pray the Hours. Each morning and evening hour consists of antiphons, psalms, canticles, intercessions and prayers. Depending on the liturgical season and the saint who is being remembered, the prayer might require a deacon to jump around the breviary. That's why we have ribbons or stick-up notes in our breviaries.

ries.

Following along in the breviary can be tetry to some. That problem was solved by services that provide apps that contain the Hour. LOH purists dislike the app. It takes the fun and challenges out of page flipping.

I know of people who start their day with morning prayers gathered from other sources. That's wonderful. "Prayer said is prayer heard!"

Some end their day with other prayers and examine their actions and thoughts of the day to see if they consistently "did all things for the Lord." More applause.

Priests and deacons are committed to the Liturgy of the Hours. We don't begrudge that. In fact, my day is incomplete without the prayer which Kathy and I pray together.

But the Office does not preclude other prayers during the day and night.

"Adoration and glory belong by right to the Lamb who was slain."

Deacon Kevin Mastellon ministers in Watertown.

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

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A KNIGHT'S REFLECTION

A look at the history of the Knights

Recently, I wrote a column on the importance of Cor, a Knights of Columbus (K of C) men's faith-based initiative that is steadily growing worldwide. Now, I want to explain the history of the organization and its strategy to infuse evangelism into its ranks.

The Knights of Columbus came from a humble origin. In 1882, the K of C was formed in New Haven, Connecticut, by Father Michael J. McGivney, assistant pastor at St. Mary's Church, to provide a mutual benefit society for Catholic men. The purpose was to offer insurance for families of deceased members (dangerous factory working conditions left many families fatherless) and to counter the anti-Catholic discrimination of the time. The newly formed Christian organization also offered Catholic men an alternative to joining secret societies. Pope Francis beatified the now Blessed Michael McGivney on October 31, 2020.

The K of C and the Catholic Church, though closely linked, are separate organizations. While the Church is a religious institution, the K of C is a distinct lay organization with its own structure, membership, and mission. The 143-year-old organization, like any long-running charitable entity, has had to adjust its mission focus. Today, the K of C supports the Church by funding educational and social programs and promoting Catholic values in public policy. In addition, the group has a wide range of programs focused on charity, civic involvement, faith, family, and participates in food drives and disaster relief. As of 2024, there

were 2.1 million K of C members worldwide and nearly 17,000 councils, including over 400 on college campuses.

Supreme Knight Patrick Kelly, in his annual report to the 141st Supreme Convention in Orlando, Fla., on Aug. 2, 2023, officially launched the K of C's Cor program to refocus Catholic men to their faith. Father Michael McGivney started the Knights of Columbus with the mission to follow Jesus Christ, said Kelly. "In this new era, forming Catholic men must be our top priority," he said.

"If we get the man right, we get everything right — the marriage, the family, the parish, the community. We need men who say 'yes' to their God-given vocation."

In March 2025, Kelly gave a video update about the Knights of Columbus' Cor program that was published on social media. He said that in less than two years, more than 650 councils have started Cor and nearly 4,000 have plans to start the initiative in the coming year. In July, the New York State Council of K of C recorded 55 of the state's 500 active councils (11%) as having started Cor. The goal, said Gary Leonardo, the K of C State Deputy and the group's highest elected position, is to double that number by June 2026. That is the end of the organization's fraternal year. "We are committed to 100 active Cor programs by that date," he said.

Statistics aside, Leonardo said Cor is critical for Catholic men, and the Church, in these

challenging times. "We are missing a generation of those that attend Mass or get involved," he said. "With the Cor program it will bring men back to the Church, which will bring families back to the Church. It will also bring them back to taking part in other aspects of our religion."

The Cor meetings are working at the local council and parish level too, said Robert Romano, Cor Director for K of C Council 1662, in Staten Island, New York. The council is associated with the Archdiocese of New York's St. Clare Parish in that New York City borough. "We actually get a decent turnout with between 25 and 30 men," he said. "We decided early on to get a consensus from everyone (on potential meeting topics)."

In May 2024 at the council's first meeting, they started "Into the

Breach," a 12-part video series produced by the K of C and inspired by Bishop Thomas J. Olmsted's Apostolic Exhortation. The aim is to provide Catholic men with a guide to developing authentic masculinity and living out their faith exploring prayer, suffering, fatherhood, and spiritual warfare through personal stories and the insights of Catholic figures.

Ramano admitted that it can be hard for men to discuss personal beliefs due to societal expectations to be stoic and self-reliant. "The Cor meetings are a great platform to allow you and your brothers to open up and discuss your faith," Ramano said. "It gives you the ability to ask those (faith) questions and to speak to people who you feel are your brothers." The informality of the meetings, often with food, drink and jovial banter, can go a long way in making for a non-threatening atmosphere, he said.

In the March 2025 video, Supreme Knight Patrick Kelly said that the Cor program aims to provide brotherhood, strengthen faith and build virtue and leadership. "The Church's work of evangelization continues in all countries, but we know that to change the world we must first be changed ourselves," he said. "Cor is meant to transform us by drawing us closer to Christ, and to each other, and as men grow together in faith and fraternity."

Mike Langlois is the grand knight of St. Augustine Knights of Columbus Council 7273 in Peru, New York. He is also the Upstate Conference coordinator for evangelization and faith formation for the New York State Knights of Columbus, which encompasses the Buffalo, Rochester, Syracuse and Ogdensburg dioceses. K of C councils interested in starting a Cor program or submitting column ideas can contact Mike Langlois at mjlang67@gmail.com.



Mike
Langlois

Father Scott Seymour & Father Matt Conger

You are a blessing!

Thank you for your priestly ministry.



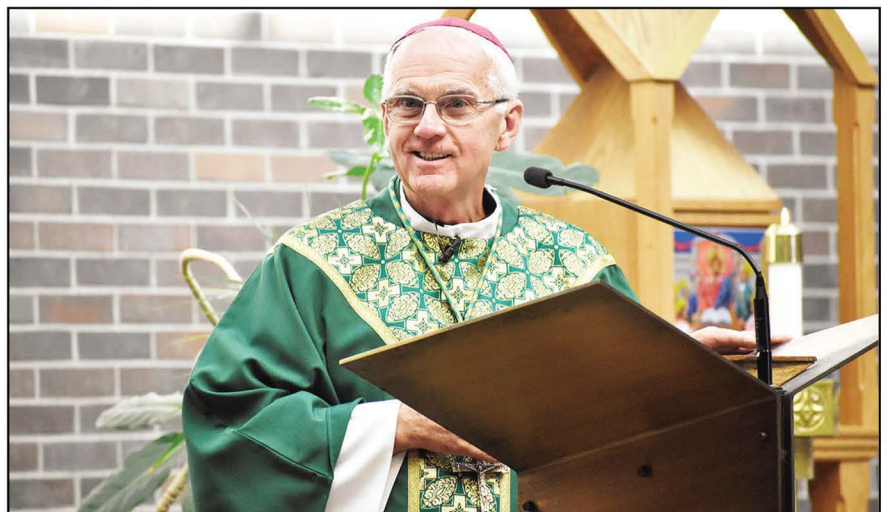
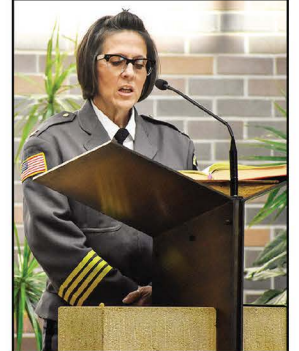
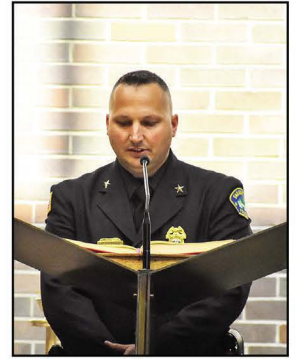
The Parishioners of St. André Bessette Parish

THE BLUE MASS

Bishop Terry R. LaValley celebrated the Blue Mass, an annual Mass honoring law enforcement and emergency responders/communicators at St. Bernard's Church in Saranac Lake on Sept. 28.

Photos by Darcy Fargo





CATHOLIC WORLD AT A GLANCE

Pope Leo XIV says Hegseth's talk of war is 'worrying'

Pope Leo XIV on Tuesday said the U.S. Department of Defense secretary's way of speaking about war is "worrying." Addressing an audience of military brass summoned to Virginia, Defense Secretary Pete Hegseth on Sept. 30 urged senior officers to lead with an eye on more "lethality." President Donald Trump this month signed an executive order changing the department's name to Department of War, although it has not been officially changed by Congress. Asked about the secretary's meeting with the generals and comments about readiness for war, Pope Leo said: "This way of speaking is worrying, because it shows each time an increase in tensions — this vocabulary, even shifting from 'Minister of Defense' to 'Minister of War.' Let's hope it is only a way of speaking. Certainly, they have a style of government where they want to show strength, to put pressure, and we hope it works, but that there will not be war. One must always work for peace."

St. Francis' feast day reinstated as national holiday in Italy

Italy's Senate Constitutional Affairs Committee, deliberating in session Wednesday, Oct. 1, approved a bill reinstating Oct. 4, the feast of St. Francis of Assisi, the patron saint of Italy, as a national holiday. The measure had been approved in first reading by the Chamber of Deputies last month, with only two votes against. Oct. 4 will therefore be a public holiday starting in 2026, after having been a public holiday until 1977. "I welcome with joy and satisfaction," Prime Minister Giorgia Meloni commented, "the news of the Senate's final approval of the parliamentary bill reintroducing, after 50 years, Oct. 4, the day on which we celebrate St. Francis, the patron saint of Italy, as a national holiday. The government has wholeheartedly supported the [legislative] process of the bill, which has taken up and made its own the appeal launched a year ago by Davide Rondoni, poet and president of the National Committee for the Celebrations of the Eighth Centenary of the Death of the Poverello [Poor Man] of Assisi."

Report: China uses torture to suppress religious leaders

China tries to exert total control over religion, and the U.S. Department of State should redesignate China as a "country of particular concern" regarding religious freedom, according to reports by the United States Commission on International Religious Freedom (USCIRF). USCIRF, a federal commission that monitors religious freedom worldwide, said China uses surveillance, fines, retribution against family members, imprisonment, enforced disappearance, torture, and other forms of abuse to control the Catholic Church and other religious communities in the nation. USCIRF issued an overview of the Chinese government's persecution of religious leaders from various religious denominations this month. In 2024, "religious freedom conditions in China remained among the worst in the world," the USCIRF's 2025 annual report said. USCIRF called for the State Department to renew its formal designation which can trigger legal action including diplomatic measures, sanctions or international pressure.

Pope promotes care for the earth at conference

By Hannah Brockhaus
Catholic News Agency

Pope Leo XIV encouraged the world to unify around care for the planet as he took the stage at a climate justice conference headlined by actor and former California governor Arnold Schwarzenegger outside of Rome on Wednesday.

"We are one family, with one Father, who makes the sun to rise and sends rain on everyone (Mt 5:45)," Leo said Oct. 1 at a conference center in Castel Gandolfo, Italy. "We inhabit the same planet and must care for it together. I therefore renew my strong appeal for unity around integral ecology and for peace!"

The pontiff and Schwarzenegger addressed the opening day of the Oct. 1-3 "Raising Hope for Climate Justice" conference, held at a center near the papal villa of Castel Gandolfo.

Speakers at the gathering, promoted by the Laudato Si' Movement in collaboration with international organizations, will include bishops, heads of international organizations, Indigenous leaders, climate and biodiversity experts, and representatives of civil society.

In remarks before the pope's speech, Schwarzenegger cited the Catholic Church's 1.4 billion members, 400,000 priests, and 200,000 churches as a "power ... involved in our movement, in our environmental movement to terminate pollution."

"And of course, I'm very honored to be here, because I am next to an action hero," he added, gesturing toward Pope Leo. "The reason I call him an action hero is because as soon as he became pope, he ordered the Vatican to put solar panels on the buildings. This will be one of the first states to be carbon neutral. Let's give him a big, big hand for this action."

The "Terminator" actor suggested more people talk about the problem of pollution over "climate change" as an easier concept for people to understand: "We have to talk to the heart so people understand it."

"I have a very clear vision that we can [terminate pollution] together," he added.

The pope, in comments before his prepared remarks, said "there is in-

deed an action hero with us today, it's all of you."

Call to conversion

In his message, Leo praised Pope Francis' environmental encyclical Laudato Si' as a source of inspiration and dialogue that has prompted action to care for our common home.

"As with every anniversary of this nature, we remember the past with gratitude, but we also ask ourselves what remains to be done," he said.

The pontiff said that in the 10 years since the publication of Laudato Si', the focus has moved from studying the encyclical to putting it into practice.

"What must be done now to ensure that caring for our common home and listening to the cry of the earth and the poor do not appear as mere passing trends or, worse still, are seen and felt as divisive issues?" he asked.

Pope Leo's speech also emphasized a need for spiritual renewal.

"The challenges identified in Laudato Si' are in fact even more relevant today than they were 10 years ago," he said. "These challenges are of a social and political nature, but first and foremost of a spiritual nature: They call for conversion."

He encouraged people to grow in relationship with God, others, nature, and themselves, because "we cannot love God, whom we cannot see, while despising his creatures. Nor can we call ourselves disciples of Jesus Christ without participating in his outlook on creation and his care for all that is fragile and wounded."

The pope expressed the hope that upcoming international summits at the United Nations, such as the 2025 Climate Change Conference (COP 30), the 53rd Plenary Session of the Committee on World Food Security, and the 2026 Water Conference, "will listen to the cry of the earth and the cry of the poor, families, Indigenous peoples, involuntary migrants, and believers throughout the world."

He encouraged everyone, from young adults and parents to politicians, to do their part to find solutions to educational, cultural, and spiritual challenges. "There is no room for indifference or resignation," he underlined.

ADIRONDACK MOUNTAIN

CAR RAFFLE

Lake Placid – St. Agnes School is having their annual Car Raffle. Win a new Subaru or \$20,000.

Features: Tickets are \$20 apiece or \$100 for six. Tickets are available at the school (week-days), after Mass (weekends), or by phone (518-523-3771). Winner need not be present to win. Drawing will take place Oct. 12 after the 10 a.m. Mass. Winner can choose a new Subaru Forester of \$20,000 cash - and 100% of raffle proceeds benefit scholarships and programs.

Contact: For more information got to www.stagneslp.org or development@stagneslp.org or (518) 523-3771

CLINTON NORTHERN FRANKLIN

SOAKING PRAYER SESSIONS

Ellenburg Center – Soaking Prayers Sessions to be held every third Thursday of the month.

Date: Oct. 16

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

Place: Our Lady of the Adirondacks House of Prayer

Features: Sessions are offered by Eve McGill, Living Waters Ministry. Soaking Prayer is surrendering yourself to the Holy Spirit in a relaxed atmosphere and being immersed in receiving an outpouring of the Holy Spirit. Includes praise and worship, soaking prayer, witness/group sharing, lunch (bring your own bagged lunch), and recitation of the Rosary.

Contact: evemcgill16@charter.net or call 518-645-2648

CRAFT SHOW

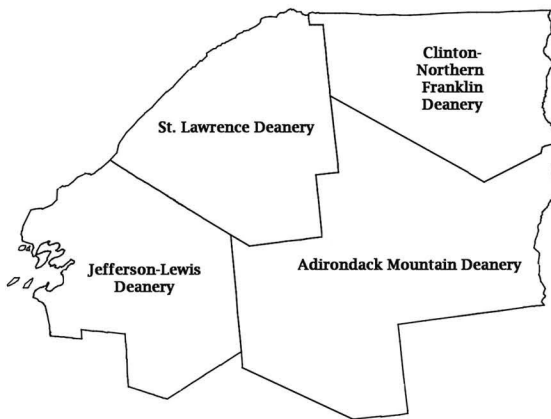
Mooers – The Ladies St. Ann Craft Annual Show to be held.

Date: Oct. 18

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

Place: Mooers Fire Station

Features: There will be craft and non-craft vendors, michigans and baked goods for sale, and a raffle to benefit the local food pantry. Nonperishable items and monetary donations for the Mooers Food Pantry are welcomed.



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

Parishioners are invited to send information about activities to:

North Country Catholic, PO Box 326,
Ogdensburg, NY 13669

e-mail news@northcountrycatholic.org.

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

HARVEST DINNER

Altona – Holy Angels and St. Ann's Parish to have a Turkey Harvest Dinner with all the trimmings.

Date: Oct. 19

Time: 11 a.m. to 4 p.m.

Place: Holy Angels Hall

Cost: Adults, \$16; Childre 6 to 12, \$9; under 5, Free

Features: There will be a Bake Sale, 50/50 Raffle and Themed Basket Raffle.

HARVEST DINNER

Au Sable Forks – The Au Sable Forks Knights to have their annual Harvest Dinner.

Date: Oct. 19

Time: 1 p.m. to 5 p.m.

Place: Holy Name Parish Center

Cost: Adults, \$15; Children under 12, \$10

Menu: Baked ham, scalloped potatoes, candied yams, vegetable, corn bread and pumpkin pie. Eat in or take-out.

HOLIDAY FAIR

Brushton – St. Mary's & St. Augustine's Altar Rosary Society to hold their fourth annual Holiday Craft Fair.

Date: Nov. 1

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

Place: St. Mary's Parish Center

Features: Over 20 vendors will be offering jewelry, pottery/ceramics, crafts, floral arrangements,

3D printed items, maple products, baked goods, holiday items and more! Adirondack BBQ food truck will be offering food for purchase. There is no cost to attend.

HARVEST DINNER

Plattsburgh – Holy Cross Parish to have a Turkey Harvest Dinner with all the trimmings.

Date: Nov. 2

Time: 11:30 a.m. to 5 p.m.

Place: Holy Cross Parish Center, Dine in or take out

Cost: \$Adults, \$16, Children 6 to 12, \$8; under 5, Free

JEFFERSON-LEWIS

ROSARY RALLY

Turin – Lewis Country Annual Rosary Rally to be held.

Date: Oct. 11

Time: Noon

Place: Fatima Garden at Spirit Walk, West Main Street

Features: Program lasts an hour. Let's raise our voices in prayer to heal a wounded world. Chapel of Peace will be open as well as Stations of the Cross walkway. Held rain or shine. Bring a chair. Light refreshments.

Contact: For more information call Michelle at (315) 272-6168

40 DAYS FOR LIFE

Watertown – Liferight to have special guest Speaker, Dr. Hay-

wood Robinson.

Date: Oct. 11

Time: 6:30 p.m.

Place: Jefferson Community College

Features: no cost to attend.

HARVEST DINNER

Constableville – St. Mary's to have their annual Harvest Dinner sponsored by the Altar and Rosary Society.

Date: Oct. 12

Time: 10:30 a.m.

Place: St. Mary's, take-out/drive thru only

Cost: \$15

Menu: Turkey, mashed potatoes, squash, stuffing and dessert.

BASKET RAFFLE

Houseville – St. Hedwig's Society will have their Annual Themed Basket Raffle.

Date: Drawing Oct. 26 at 1 p.m.

Features: Tickets will be sold starting Oct. 12 and every Sunday until the drawing after the 11 a.m. Mass. No tickets will be sold during Mass. Themed Baskets will be on display and raffle tickets may be purchased in the church hall. A bake sale and limited kielbasa luncheon will also be featured on the day of the drawing. Proceeds from the event will support church restoration and community outreach. Monetary donations and donations of themed baskets and baked goods are needed and appreciated.

Contact: Elaine 315-486-5532, Lydia 315-286-8462 or Mary Ann 315-348-6260 for information and donations.

CRAFT FAIR

Carthage – Augustinian Academy to have their Fall Craft Fair Sponsored by the Ave Maria Circle.

Date: Oct. 25

Time: 10 a.m. to 4 p.m.

Place: Augustinian Academy Gym

Features: Bake sale, Basket Raffles, home decor, watercolor painting, knitted and crocheted items, quilts wood and metal works, and more! Lunch will be available for purchase. Entry fee

\$1 for a chance to win giveaways!

RAFFLE

Constableville – Raffle to be held for youth and Faith Formation activities.

Date: Drawing Dec. 21

Time: 10 a.m.

Place: St. Mary's after Mass

Cost: Tickets are \$5 each or 5 for \$20

Features: First-place winner will receive a Virtual Reality Headset, the second-place winner will receive a 50" smart television and the third-place winner will receive a ten-inch tablet.

Contact: They can be purchased after the 10am Mass, from various St. Mary's parents, by calling the Parish office at 315-348-6104 or by going online to <https://catholicparishesofslc.weebly.com/church-offering--raffles.html>

ST. LAWRENCE

HOLIDAY BAZAAR

Star Lake – St. Hubert's Church to have their Holiday Bazaar.

Date: Nov. 1

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

Place: St. Hubert's Parish Hall

Features: Bake sale - Silent auction, Wine Tasting Booth with Thousand Island Winery Wines, Raffles - Gift Baskets - Gingerbread Decorating, Accessible to people with disabilities, Lunch served by the Knights of Columbus Council 5718 11 a.m. to 1 p.m.

FALL BAZAAR

Massena – St. Peter's Parish to have their Annual Fall Bazaar.

Date: Nov. 8

Time: 10 a.m. to 6 p.m.

Place: St. Mary's Social Hall

Features: Free admission, cost for food, raffles and fun.

Contact: For more information call 315-769-2469

PATRIOTIC ROSARY

Ogdensburg - To commemorate Veterans Day, the Legion of Mary will be praying the Patriotic Rosary.

Date: Nov. 9

CONTINUED ON PAGE 12

MAKING SENSE OF BIOETHICS

Ethical issues with 'pregnancy robots'

Reports emerged in August that the world's first "pregnancy robot" was under development in China.

The concept prototype involved a humanoid form, equipped with an artificial womb in its abdomen, prepared to carry a fetus for nine months and then give birth.

The device, as envisioned by Dr. Zhang Qifeng, founder of Kaiyiwa, a company based in China's southern Guangdong province, was not simply an incubator but a human-mimicking robot that could replicate the entire process from conception to delivery, according to Asian media outlets.

Dr. Zhang's revelations were made during an interview shared on Duoyin, the Chinese version of TikTok, in which he noted, "Some people don't want to get married but still want a 'wife'; some don't want to be pregnant but still want a child. So one function of our 'robot wife' is that it can carry a pregnancy."

As the story spread on social media, the company sought to clarify that it was not actually developing a pregnancy robot and that its founder's comments had been taken out of context. Zhang also backpedaled from his prior interview, noting the pregnancy robot was an overseas project, and that his company was only involved in manufacturing the humanoid part of the robot and not

the artificial womb.

The story, nevertheless, resulted in an avalanche of comments on social media, ranging from criticisms like, "It is cruel for a fetus to be born without connection to a mother," and, "It completely violates human ethics," to praise like, "If the price is only half of my annual salary, I would buy it immediately," "It's good that women don't have to suffer," and, "Women have finally been liberated."

Several significant ethical issues are, in fact, raised by the prospect of developing a "pregnancy robot."

These devices tend to involve female humanoid forms, raising red flags and reminding us of the lamentable tendency to pursue "substitutes" for women in their unique nurturing dimensions. We seem to be growing accustomed to sidestepping what Pope John Paul II once referred to as the "feminine genius" with its essential maternal identity and its uniquely feminine procreative nature.

Even certain radical feminist activists, like Andrea Dworkin, have sensed the importance of opposing artificial wombs, noting how they could lead to the "end of women." Dworkin once wrote: "The real question now is, will men, once the artificial womb is perfected, want to

keep women around?"

Additional moral concerns arise if robot designers try to start a pregnancy through the manual mixing of sperm and egg as occurs in IVF, followed by embryo transfer into the artificial womb of the robot. Children have the right to be brought into being exclusively within the loving marital embrace of their mother and father, and it remains profoundly unethical to generate new life in test tubes, pregnancy robots, or other devices. The body-to-body self-giving of spouses is the unique and privileged setting that safeguards the origins of the next

generation and helps assure that their human dignity is respected. It also decreases the likelihood that children will be treated as objects for manipulation, or products to be marketed for the gratification of well-heeled customers. The best interests of children must always supersede the desires of adults.

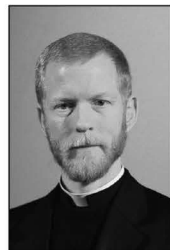
Of additional concern is the fact that a pregnancy robot involves a form of surrogacy. Just as it is always unethical to pay women to become surrogates, so we should never incentivize companies to produce and sell devices to initiate and carry pregnancies as high-tech surrogates.

This should not be miscon-

strued as casting aspersions on every potential use of artificial wombs, if this technology were to come to maturity one day in the future. Currently we use incubators to support babies who are born prematurely. When an artificial womb or other mechanical device serves strictly as an advanced incubator and allows for the continued gestation of naturally-conceived, but prematurely-delivered babies, this will generally be ethically-acceptable. Such an approach constitutes a form of medical treatment and life-saving assistance for a child who, regrettably, ends up being born too early.

On the other hand, if we take matters into our own hands and become "life-makers," manufacturing human beings in glassware and imposing a nine-month machine-based gestation upon them, we are clearly crossing a number of fundamental ethical lines, egregiously violating both the designs of our own sexuality, and the respect that is always due to human life in its origins.

Rev. Tadeusz Pacholczyk, Ph.D. earned his doctorate in neurosciences from Yale and did post-doctoral work at Harvard. He is a priest of the diocese of Fall River, MA, and serves as Senior Ethicist at The National Catholic Bioethics Center in Philadelphia. See www.ncbcenter.org and www.fathertad.com.



Father Tad Pacholczyk, Ph.D.

Around the diocese

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 11

Time: Noon

Place: St. Mary's Cathedral

Features: We cordially invite Catholics throughout the diocese to join us in praying for all our Veterans as well as for the needs of our country.

BRUNCH

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

Date: Oct. 12 (Second Sunday of each month)

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

Place: Father Amyot Parish Center

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

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

DIOCESAN EVENTS

WOMENS HEALING RETREAT

Ogdensburg – The Our Lady of the Rosary Healing Retreat Committee is offering a Women's Healing Retreat with the theme "From Eve

to Mary, A Journey of Hope and Healing."

Date: Oct. 9 – 12

Place: Wadhams Hall

Cost: \$275 includes accommodations and meals

Features: Presenters will be Father Michael Jablonski and Father Douglas Schirmer

Contact: to register and for more information go to <https://www.rcdony.org/ourlady>

CLM DINNER

Norfolk – The St. Lawrence, Franklin and Adirondack Commissioned

Lay Ministers Association present the CLM Annual Dinner.

Date: Oct. 15

Time: 5 p.m. Mass at Church of the Visitation followed by dinner at 6 p.m. at Father Amyot Parish Center

Cost: \$15

Features: You are invited to join commissioned lay ministers for mass celebrated by Bishop LaValley, a catered dinner and talks by Bishop and Patrick Looby diocesan youth director and his wife, Shannon.

Contact: Register at <https://www.rcdony.org/clm-event>

www.rcdony.org/clm-event

FALL LEAD EVENT

Norfolk – All catechists and catechetical leaders are invited to attend an event on how to implement parish family catechesis.

Date: Oct. 18

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

Place: Parish of the Visitation

Features: Please bring your own lunch.

Contact: Register at: rcdony.org/leadimplementation contact Anita Soltero 518-310-3669

Satirist shines light on Christians in Nigeria

By Kate Quiñones
Catholic News Agency

Political satirist Bill Maher, who has often been a vocal critic of Christianity, recently called attention to the persecution of Christians in Nigeria, calling the ongoing violence a “genocide attempt.”

“I’m not a Christian, but they are systematically killing the Christians in Nigeria,” he said during the Sept. 26 episode of his HBO show “Real Time with Bill Maher.”

“They’ve killed over 100,000 since 2009. They’ve burned 18,000 churches,” Maher said, referring to violent Islamists in Nigeria such as Boko Haram.

“This is so much more of a genocide attempt than what is going on in Gaza,” he continued. “They are literally attempting to wipe out the Christian population of an entire country.”

“Where are the kids protesting this?” Maher asked.

The violent persecution of Christians in Nigeria “is underreported in Western media,” Religious Freedom Institute President David Trimble told CNA.

Trimble, commending Maher for raising the issue “to his mass audience, which may otherwise have very little exposure to such weighty issues,” noted that the “atrocities committed against Nigerian Christians can rightly be labeled as genocide.”

“Nigeria is the most dangerous place in the world to be a follower of Jesus,” Trimble said. “Over the last decade, Islamist extremists have killed approximately 4,000 Christians there

annually.”

Since July 2009, more than 19,000 Christian churches have been destroyed or looted, while hundreds of clergy, including Catholic priests, have been kidnapped or attacked. Less than two weeks ago, a Catholic priest named Father Matthew Eya was murdered while returning from his ministry.

Edward Clancy, outreach director of Aid to the Church in Need USA, said that Christian persecution is at its height in Nigeria.

“It’s the area in the world where more Christians are killed for their faith than anywhere else,” Clancy told CNA.

“It’s amazing that it takes Bill Maher to become the voice of Christian persecution in the United States,” Clancy added.

Christians make up about half of Nigerians, but they live in fear of persecution.

“Shocking levels of violence have persisted for years,” Trimble said.

Christians experience frequent violent attacks, especially those living on farms in small towns on the outskirts of the north central state of Benue, which is predominantly Christian. Their farms are often burned to the ground during these attacks, destroying their livelihoods.

“They attack small towns and devastate them to the point that people need to abandon their homes, and then they’ll destroy and burn what’s remaining,” Clancy said. “It just demolishes the whole community.”

Because of the destruction, many parishes have been forced to close. In the Diocese of Mak-

urdi in Benue, at least 16 parishes have been abandoned due to the violence, according to Clancy. As each parish has multiple locations, this translates to roughly 40 churches.

The violence in Nigeria has “a lot of the elements of a genocide,” Clancy said.

The violence began in 2009 with the Boko Haram insurgency, which aimed to turn Nigeria into an Islamic state. Since then, the group has been orchestrating terrorist attacks on civilians and targeting Christians.

But militant Fulani herdsman contribute to a majority of the violence, sowing fear in Nigeria’s Middle Belt communities.

“These Fulani militants account for more attacks against Christians (and Muslims) than either of the more prominent Boko Haram and ISWAP [Islamic State West Africa Province],” Trimble said.

The violence is now growing in the south, according to Trimble.

“Violence against Christians, once confined predominantly to the north and Middle Belt, is now also spreading further south, where the majority of Nigerian Christians reside,” Trimble said.

Persecution is enshrined in Nigerian law, with blasphemy laws, sharia codes, and sharia courts in more than

a dozen provinces “that oppose equal rights and due process for religious minorities,” according to Trimble.

“Atrocities committed against Nigerian Christians can rightly be labeled as genocide in terms both of how that term is used in popular discourse as well as its more precise usage in international law,” Trimble added.

Clancy noted that declarations of genocide are often “after the fact.”

“By the time someone says it, it’s history,” Clancy said. “We’ve got to stop it beforehand.”

Though priests are being kidnapped and even killed, vocations thrive in Nigeria.

“Believe it or not, it’s inspiring vocations,” Clancy said. “You would think that Tertullian was a lunatic when he said, ‘The blood of the mar-

tyrs is the seed of the faith.’ But there’s been so many young men who’ve been emboldened.”

“The seminaries are full,” he said.

When asked how Catholics can support their fellow Christians in Nigeria, Clancy said that “we should always start with prayer because it guides us, but it also helps to strengthen us.”

But also, Clancy encouraged Christians in the U.S. to “build awareness” as the topic of Christian persecution often “becomes cloistered in the confines of worship space” but “it doesn’t break out.”

“The Church is being very faithful and serving the people around the world in the harshest places,” Clancy said. “Let people know that our brothers and sisters in places like Nigeria are suffering.”

Fr. Clement,

You have come to mean so much to us. Sharing laughter with you is one of our favorite things to do and you smile gives all of us a much needed lift. Let us not forget to mention you and your basket of assorted candies to sweeten us up at the end of Mass, it’s always a treat that we look forward to. Your gentle ways and thoughtfulness where ever you are is a comfortable place to be. We hope you realize your importance and the positive difference you make in our lives. We’re taking this opportunity to remind you of this and to let you know that we are grateful to have you not only as our priest, but our special friend. Our prayers are with you always. Stay safe and keep smiling. God Bless.

From the
Keeseville Altar Rosary Society



SUNDAY'S SCRIPTURE

Expressing gratitude

An ungrateful person is like a hog under a tree eating acorns but never looking up to see where they come from. An ungrateful person takes full advantage of what comes along but never looks to see where it comes from. Today, we call that mentality "entitlement."

That's quite an indictment, isn't it? Perhaps we see ourselves in that position every now and then – just taking things for granted. There will always be food on the table. My parents exist to give me what I want, not necessarily what I need. I am bright. Therefore, I don't have to work hard at school. My kids have always been good. So, I don't have to worry about them. We can take so much for granted in life that we forget where it all comes from.

We may sometimes believe that we have earned or deserve what we get. After all, I have worked hard. I put in my time. Therefore, I have the right to whatever. I have always been considerate of others. Therefore, others should be considerate of me.

As individuals and as a people we have been blessed in so many ways. Look at the lepers in today's readings. They ask for a cure and receive it. No questions asked. All ten are cured, but only one comes back to thank Jesus.

There are two important points about

the one who returned. First, unlike the hogs eating the acorns under a tree, this leper recognized the source of the cure. We don't know why the others did not come back, but even Jesus questioned their lack of gratitude when he asked: "Where are the other nine?" So, a sense of gratitude for our many blessings in life is essential to appreciating those gifts.

The second important point is the nationality of the one who returned. He was a Samaritan, a race despised by the Jews. Even Jesus remarks that it was the foreigner who returned to give thanks. It was the Samaritan who recognized the blessing and who thanked Jesus. Did the others believe that they were so entitled to a cure that they did not need to thank God? Perhaps they were so overjoyed at the cure that they forgot where the cure came from?

October 12

Twenty-eighth Sunday in Ordinary Time

READINGS

2 Kings 5:14-17

2 Timothy 2:8-13

Luke 17:11-19

Listen carefully to what Jesus says to the man: "Stand up and go. Your faith has saved you." Not only does Jesus cure the man, but Jesus gives him an additional gift. Jesus responds to the leper's faith by offering him salvation, another gift: "Your faith has saved you!"

There is no doubt that we need to be like Jesus and be generous with one another in whatever way we can be generous. The gifts we have received are gifts meant to be shared with others. If you are academically blessed, then help others by tutoring. If you appreciate the blessing of freedom, then work for peace. If you recognize the blessing of daily food, then share with those in need.

However, like Jesus,

even though we may be surprised that the recipients of our giving do not express gratitude, we must always give, always share, always willing to give. Also, too, we must always be grateful for our many blessings and for the many people who share their gifts with us. We can never say thank you too many times. Not expressing gratitude is like winking at someone in the dark. You know you did it, but the other person cannot experience your gratitude.

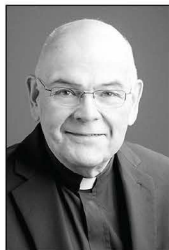
Here's something else to chew on. It comes from Mother Teresa.

"We the willing, led by the unknowing, are doing the impossible for the ungrateful," she said. "We have done so much, with so little, for so long, we are now qualified to do anything, with nothing."

Our Eucharist is God sharing his life with us. Let us make sure that we share that life with all whom we meet. Our Eucharistic celebration is a gift, a great act of thanksgiving for our many blessings.

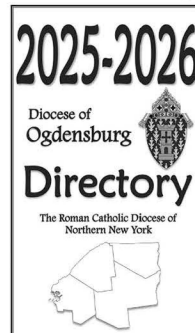
Don't take the Eucharist for granted.

Recognize our blessings and look for the true sources of all blessings.



Msgr. Robert
H. Aucoin

Diocesan Directories now available!



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Directory of the
Diocese of Ogdensburg
includes detailed
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Thank you Father Paul Kelly for all you do for
St. Therese's parish in Newcomb.



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
info@rcdony.org

The start of Mission Month

October marks the beginning of Mission Month in the Catholic Church. All this month, leading up to World Mission Sunday on October 19, the Pontifical Mission Societies invites you to join us in revitalizing our baptismal call to be missionaries.

This month leading up to the appeal, join us in praying the World Mission Sunday Rosary each day in support of the Pope's Missions!

Beginning on Friday October 10, Cardinal Luis Tagle will be leading a novena to Saint Terese of Lisieux, the patroness of the missions, on the Hallow app for the success of the World Mission Sunday Appeal.

World Mission Sunday, promoted by the Society for the Propagation of the Faith, one of four Pontifical Mission Societies, was established by Pope Pius XI in 1926 as the day of prayer and giving for missions. From the moment it began, this day has been rooted in the work of our foundress, Blessed Pauline Jaricot, who established prayer circles through which she sent thousands of pennies to the Church in the United States throughout the 19th century.

The World Mission Sunday collection supports 1,124 mission territories, places where the Church is young, growing, poor, persecuted and in need of support. This collection funds the formation of seminarians, catechists and religious sisters, builds churches and schools, and sustains healthcare and social outreach programs.

In his message for this World Mission Sunday, Pope Francis urges the community of the baptized to "participate actively in the common evangelizing mission of the Church by your witness of life and prayer, by your sacrifices and your generosity." Pope Leo XIV, echoing that call, reminds us that The Pontifical Mission Societies are "the primary means for awakening missionary responsibility among all the baptized [and for] supporting ecclesial communities in areas where the Church is young."

Find more information on our website, www.rcdony.com/mission under "Society for the Propagation of the Faith. Your prayers and support are what keep the Pope's missions going and provide physical and spiritual support to struggling Catholics worldwide!

Please remember the Pontifical Mission Societies of the Diocese of Ogdensburg INC. when writing or changing your will.

CHAPLAINS ON RETREAT



Bishop Terry R. LaValley was Retreat Leader at the New York State Catholic Prison Chaplain's Retreat held at the Notre Dame Retreat House in Canandaigua. Catholic Prison Chaplains from all over New York gathered from September 15 to 18 for training and spiritual reflection. Tuesday included meetings with Department of Corrections and a retirement dinner which honored two Diocese of Ogdensburg's chaplains, Father Alan Lamica and Deacon Bryan Bashaw, and others from around the state. On Wednesday, Bishop LaValley celebrated Mass for former Diocese of Ogdensburg Chaplain Deacon Bruce Daugherty, who passed away. During his time leading the retreat, Bishop LaValley continued his message of spreading hope among those less fortunate than yourself. Chaplains from the Diocese of Ogdensburg that attended include Aaron Akey, Deacon Mike Lieber, Deacon Bryan Dwyer, Father Howard Venette, Deacon William Johnston, Seth Conklin, & Mary Elizabeth Friot.

OBITUARIES

Fort Covington — Isabel J. (Lester) Smith, 87; Memorial Mass Oct. 4, 2025 at St. Mary's Church; burial in parish cemetery.

Hogansburg — Leanne Poirta (Bero) Armstrong, 47; Mass of Christian Burial Oct. 1, 2025 at St. Regis Church; burial in the Wheeler Family Cemetery.

Lowville — Dr. Daniel Case Ellison, 78; Mass of Christian Burial Oct. 1, 2025 at St. Peter's Church; burial in Lowville Rural Cemetery.

Massena — Bernard Joseph Bero, 96; Mass of Christian Burial Oct. 3, 2025 at Sacred Heart Church.

Mooers — Kenneth R. Peete, 89; Funeral Services Oct. 7, 2025 at the Hamilton Funeral Home; burial in St. Mary's Cemetery, Champlain.

Morrisonville — Donna M. (Gwinn) Buffett, 76; Mass of Chris-

tian Burial Oct. 20, 2025 at St. Alexander's Church; burial in St. Peter's Cemetery.

Morrisonville — Shirley Marie (Riendeau) Talbot, 85; Mass of Christian Burial Oct. 4, 2025 at St. Alexander's Church.

Ogdensburg — Michale James Brenno, 66; Graveside Services at Ogdensburg Cemetery.

Ogdensburg — Nancy Louise (Axte) Brothers, 81; Funeral Services Oct. 4, 2025 at Frary Funeral Home; burial in White Church Cemetery, Lisbon.

Ogdensburg — William Morris O'Marah, 75; Funeral Services Oct. 18, 2025 at Frary Funeral Home.

Ogdensburg — Mary Lou (Sargent) Sweeney, 77; Funeral Services Oct. 3, 2025 at the Oswegatchie Mausoleum.

Ogdensburg — Mary Ellen (LaRose) Seymour, 89; Mass of Christian Burial Oct. 2, 2025 at St. Mary's Cathedral.

Plattsburgh — Gail (Gilmore) Kemp, 89; Mass of Christian Burial Oct. 17, 2025 at Our Lady of Victory Church; burial in Gilliland Cemetery.

Redford — Clarence "Joe" Fournia, 94; Mass of Christian Burial Oct. 2, 2025 at the Church of the Assumption; burial in the parish cemetery.

Rouses Point — James Joseph Lefebvre, 92; Mass of Christian Burial Oct. 9, 2025 at St. Patrick's Church; burial in parish cemetery.

Ticonderoga — Thomas N. Provoncha, 78; Mass of Christian Burial Oct. 6, 2025 at St. Mary's Church; burial in Valley View Cemetery.

Bringing missionary discipleship to parishes

By Marika Donders

Director, Office of the New Evangelization

When I offer workshops in parishes, or when people ask me how much it costs for me to come to their parish, I use the phrase: "This is what I do. This is your Bishop Fund donations at work."

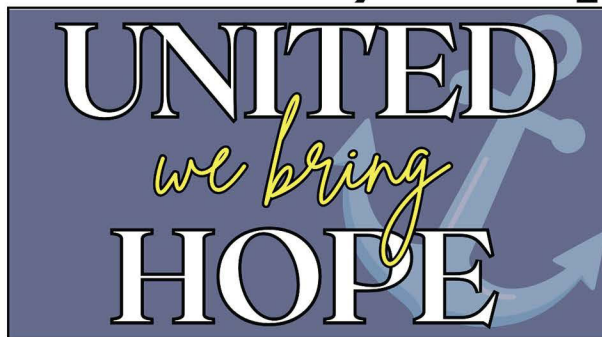
The other phrase I use is: "Have car, will travel."

THE MISSION

The core mission of the Office for the New Evangelization is to form and equip intentional missionary disciples who can then share the Gospel and form other Missionary Disciples. This requires I get out of my office and meet people face-to-face to encourage them to evangelize, share the Gospel, share their stories, meet and pray with folks, and offer hospitality. There is only so much you can do from a desk in the Chancery. Yes, there are virtual meetings, which with the distances (and winter weather) are wonderful. But virtual meetings, blogs, websites and social media cannot substitute for meeting in-person, in "real life," to sit with a group of people around a table to pray, to listen and to discuss their parishes' particular needs, or how their small group can deepen their relationship with Jesus, and then, how they can reach out to people in the pew, people in their families, people in their neighborhoods.

SO, YOU WOULD LIKE ME TO COME TO YOUR PARISH?

It is really simple, ask



your pastor and call or email me and invite to come. Sometimes I am invited by a pastor or leadership team to come meet with them first to talk about the needs of the parish. Sometimes I am invited by a prayer group or bible study group to offer a presentation or a day of reflection. Sometimes, I am invited by someone who participated in a workshop in a neighboring parish. But it all starts with the invitation.

WHAT ARE SOME OPTIONS:

I often recommend starting with a program of basic evangelization training: it can be something like Alpha or the Rescue Project or The 99 Masterclass. These are series that run for six to eleven weeks where participants deepen their understanding of the Gospel Message so that they can share the story with others.

Alternatively, I can offer stand-alone workshops or presentations such as workshops on parish hospitality (it's more than coffee and donuts) or Eucharist and Discipleship or talks on evangelization in the public square or the spirituality of leadership or how to hold synodal conversations in the Holy Spirit. And of course, we can al-

ways create a workshop or presentation to address specific needs of the parish or of a group.

The Office of Evangelization can also offer parish missions or retreats for parishes and groups on a variety of themes: how to pray, Lectio Divina, various Marian themes, reconciliation, Hope and healing or seasonal options such as Lenten days of reflection.

VIRTUAL WORKSHOPS

The office runs virtual discussions and workshops on a regular basis at lunchtime

called Brown Bag Series. Currently we are in the middle of a series called *BECOME: Eucharistic Ministry Formation*. In the past we have discussed Encyclicals such as *Joy of the Gospel* or *Laudato Si'*; books such as *Divine Renovation* by Father Mallon or the *Real Presence* by Timothy O'Malley; and video series such as *Discipleship* with Juliane Stanz or *Mystery of the Eucharist* with Bishop Cozens.

RESOURCES:

The Office of the New Evangelization can also recommend resources. I run a blog on the diocesan website which pro-

vides short recommendations. Under the more recent reviews there is always a link to an archive of past reviews. This archive can be especially useful for book clubs or for pastors to use as a resource for adult faith formation.

If you would like more information or if you would like me to come to your parish to discuss how I can assist your parish to form missionary disciples, please reach out to me: Marika Donders, mdonders@rcdony.org or 3151-393-2020 ext. 1380 or check out the office webpages at rcdony.org/evangelization.

Visit our website

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FR. CLEMENT RIMONDS, HGN

Thank you so much for your spiritual guidance, inspiring homilies, great sense of humor and LOVE of all GOD'S children. As your community multiplies- may GOD continue to bless us with your presence.

YOU are a SPECIAL BLESSING!

WE LOVE YOU!

Your parishioners and friends that you shepherd so freely
THE CATHOLICS ALONG THE AU SABLE AND BOQUET

Catholic communities of Holy Name, St. Matthew and St. Margaret



Roman Catholics of Keeseville Catholics of Willsboro and Essex

