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The Diocese of Ogdensburg Volume 80 Number 19

NORTH COUNTRY CATHOLIC

SEPTEMBER 10, 2025

Bishop's Fund Appeal: United We Bring Hope

The 2025 Bishop's Fund Appeal - United We Bring Hope - will begin in parishes across the Diocese of Ogdensburg the weekend of September 13 and 14. This year, it is our hope to reach a goal of \$1,370,000. Any gifts collected over our goal will be used as additional grants through the Bishop's Good Samaritan Fund.

The Bishop's Fund Appeal supports valuable and important ministries, including education of seminarians, Camp Gugenheim/Youth Ministry, Catholic education and more.

LEARN MORE ON PAGES 6-9

ALL IN THE SAME BOAT



Participating in a whitewater rafting trip during the convocation of the United States Association of Consecrated Virgins were (front row, from left) Mary Kelly, Diocese of Little Rock; Joani McCann, Archdiocese of Boston, (middle row) Elma Espinoza, Diocese of Fresno; Rubi Garfias, Diocese of Joliet; and (back row) Mary Beth Bracy (Diocese of Ogdensburg). Read more about the convocation on Page 5.

MINISTERING TO THE DEAF



Father Thomas Coughlin, left, shows Father Fernando Solomon Jr. around Camp Mark Seven's newest dorm building. Father Coughlin is Camp Mark Seven's founder. Father Solomon is chaplain for the Diocese of Ogdensburg's new deaf ministry.

FULL STORY, PAGE 3

Pope Leo XIV pleads for help for Sudan

Catholic News Agency

Pope Leo XIV on Sept. 3 pleaded for international assistance for the North African country of Sudan, which is experiencing violence, famine, natural disasters, and disease.

"I am closer than ever to the Sudanese population, in particular families, children and the displaced," Leo said at the end of his general audience.

"I pray for all the victims," the pontiff added. "I make a heartfelt appeal to leaders and to the international community to guarantee humanitarian corridors and implement a coordinated response to stop this humanitarian catastrophe."

The dramatic situation in Sudan, marked by months of armed clashes, mass displacement, and the threat of cholera, has prompted multiple warnings from humanitarian organizations.

In his appeal, Leo drew attention to the civilians trapped in the city of El Fasher, where they are experiencing famine and violence, and to a deadly landslide in Tarsin, which it is believed killed up to 1,000 people, with others still missing.

"And, as if that were not enough," the pontiff added, "the spread of cholera is threatening hundreds of thousands of already stricken people."

"It is time to initiate a serious,

sincere and inclusive dialogue between the parties to end the conflict and restore hope, dignity and peace to the people of Sudan," Leo urged.

After three weeks indoors, the pope's public audience returned to St. Peter's Square on Wednesday following a dip in Rome's soaring August temperatures.

In his spiritual message at the audience, Leo reflected on Jesus' final moments on the cross as narrated in the Gospel of John, where the crucified Christ utters the phrase: "I thirst."

The pope said the thirst of the Crucified One is not only the physiological need of a tortured body, but above all, the expression of a profound desire for

love, relationship, and communion.

His cry, Leo XIV asserted, is that of a God "who is not ashamed to beg for a sip, because in that gesture he tells us that love, in order to be true, must also learn to ask and not only to give."

The pontiff then stated that "Jesus does not save with a dramatic twist, but by asking for something that he cannot give himself."

This, according to the Holy Father, opens a door to true hope: "If even the Son of God chose not to be self-sufficient, then our thirst too — for love, for meaning, for justice — is a sign not of failure, but of truth."

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It's on another level

When I interviewed the young man at Camp Guggenheim, I thought he looked familiar.

Every year, when I go to camp to write a story for this newspaper, I ask the staff to pick the three to four campers I interview. They know which kids are chatty and outgoing, and those kids tend to interview well.

This year, I interviewed two young ladies and a young man. I couldn't place where, but I knew I had seen that young man before.

A couple weeks after the camp article was printed, I saw that young man's face again. This time, it was on social media. It turns out, the young man is an ac-

quaintance's son.

I sent the young man's dad a link to the story, and we chatted for a bit about Camp Guggenheim.

**Darcy L. Fargo**

"I go tomorrow to pick up my son, Jake, there," I told him. "I was a camper back in 1996."

"We love Guggenheim," the dad responded. "(His son) is the first of our family to go there. To hear his stories and those from other campers is great. Then to feel the positive energy at

drop off and pickup, especially at the closing Mass, just puts it on a level that I don't have words for."

I know exactly the feeling he struggled to put into words. To me, it's an overwhelming presence of

Christ's love, peace and joy and seeing it in my son and in so many teens adds hope to the mixed emotional bag - hope in the future of our Church, which looks so very bright every week of Camp Guggenheim, hope that these young people will hold on to their love of Christ and spend eternity with him.

We help bring that gift of hope to those campers, their families, the staff and anyone blessed to drive through those wooden gates that signify the entrance to Camp Guggenheim. All of us - parents, grandparents, aunts, uncles, neighbors, friends, priests, deacons, consecrated religious - combine our efforts through our support of the annual Bishop's Fund Appeal - both in prayer and in donations

- to make camp possible. United We Bring Hope.

If camp were the only benefit of the Bishop's Fund, I still think it would be worth supporting. But the impact of that support goes far beyond that spot on a lake in the Adirondack Park. Our Bishop's Fund Appeal supports our seminarians, Catholic education, efforts to reach men and women who are discerning their vocations, youth leadership and faith-based fun events, faith formation, evangelization and more. It funds direct help for individuals in need through the Good Samaritan Fund.

United through our Bishop's Fund Appeal, we truly give the gift of hope.

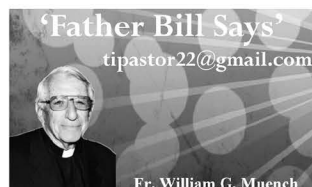
It "just puts it on a level that I don't have words for."

She had gravitas

I remember the day that I attended a funeral of a woman, Jane, a friend and member of a parish where I had formerly been pastor. I remembered Jane well. She was the leader of that parish's music ministry. She was also very active in many of the parish activities. In addition, she was involved in many of the local town activities. Jane was a well-known person. She was one of those people that got things done, and she had a certain dignity about her.

At her funeral Mass, the present pastor of the parish spoke the homily, remembering her many achievements. He then invited me to add a few words. The word that came to me was "gravitas." I had no doubt that Jane had gravitas. She lived with a certain depth and authority. She had gravitas.

So, today, I have been thinking about that unique and rather important quality of gravitas. I know



so many people who have been so much of my ministry and life, people who truly exhibited gravitas. I have learned so much from each of them. So, a little bit about gravitas.

Gravitas comes to us from those ancient Romans; they spoke of gravitas for a person with a commanding presence. It was a quality that made others take them seriously. Gravitas seems to indicate a person with a true sense of responsibility. This is a person who lives with self-control and dignity. Gravitas as a virtue characterizes someone who has courage and excellence.

I am certain that you know many such special people, people who display gravitas. They make

a difference in their communities. I think we all should strive to display some gravitas in our lives. And I am certain this is possible and good for us. We might even say that those who lack a little gravitas will be seen as immature and unreliable.

When I think of our Catholic Church, we always look for some gravitas from the Church's leaders - our pope, bishops, priests and deacons. Gravitas describes that quality in a bishop or a pastor that makes people instinctively take them seriously not because they are stern but because their words and presence carry spiritual weight.

I personally have been influenced by many bishops who truly demonstrated gravitas. Their prayerful demeanor, the way they celebrated Mass or the way they listened, they showed me a great deal about being a good priest.

One good example that

I think of is Pope Francis, even though his manner was simple and pastoral. Pope Francis displayed gravitas when he spoke of mercy, justice or peace. It was easy to sense his authenticity and moral seriousness.

Each one of us, as disciples of Jesus, must develop some gravitas as we strive to make others recognize the love of Jesus for us all. The Catholic Church has always displayed gravitas when presenting Sacred Scripture, and through the great saints, always demonstrating a dignity that flows from holiness, authenticity, truth and responsibility before God.

I have recognized in every parish where I have served, so many who witnessed in their lives the love of the Lord Jesus and the way to follow the Lord through their lives lived with gravitas. They knew Jesus and showed others how to follow him, leading their families and their parishes closer to God.



PHOTOS BY KEITH BENMAN & STACY LAWRENCE

(Left) Father Thomas Coughlin uses sign language to discuss some of the theology behind religious icon painting with deaf campers at Camp Mark Seven, in Old Forge. Father Coughlin was the first deaf person ever ordained a priest in the United States. (Right) Father Thomas Coughlin listens as a class of deaf adults discusses the theology of religious icons in the Camp Mark Seven auditorium, in Old Forge.

Old Forge camp inspires local deaf ministry

By Keith Benman
Contributing Writer

On a recent Friday morning, 15 deaf adults at Camp Mark Seven in Old Forge used sign language to discuss the theology behind the religious icons they had been writing in the camp's auditorium. It's an active conversation conducted with hand signals, facial expressions and occasional laughter. At times it can get intense. The Holy Trinity, Lucifer and God's divine light all come in for examination. The conversation is led by the camp's founder, Father Thomas Coughlin, the first deaf person ever ordained a priest in the United States.

The enthusiasm and energy of that conversation, mainly carried out in silence, was familiar to Father Fernando Solomon Jr., who visited Camp Mark Seven on that recent Friday. From 2012 to 2014, he did summer internships there. Now, he was there to renew old friendships and receive inspiration for the new deaf ministry he is helping lead in the Diocese of Ogdensburg.

"It helped me to understand especially the deaf culture, the deaf people, and understanding them and working with them," said Father Solomon of his summers at the camp. "It was a great help for me to learn, especially the sign language."

Father Solomon and others say they are now able to use the valuable lessons they learned at Camp Mark Seven to benefit deaf Catholics at parishes around the Ogdensburg Diocese.

Jessica Brooks, the diocesan deaf ministry's staff interpreter, said her own internship at Camp Mark Seven three years ago was transformational. At the time, she was finishing up her college studies in American Sign Language. Being immersed in the deaf community at the camp was completely different from classroom work.

"My experience, the very first day, it was very nerve wracking, definitely," Brooks said.

But after one week of being immersed in the deaf community there, she felt fully confirmed in her calling.

"I felt really confident ... that this was going to be my passion for a really long time," she said. "Like 'yup,' this is what I really want to do."

Over the past 40 years, Camp Mark Seven in Old Forge has achieved national prominence for its programs for deaf and hard-of-hearing children, youth and seniors and the hearing children of deaf adults. The camp located in the diocese largely through a stroke of good fortune: it's founder, Father Coughlin, is from here.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 16

Mission made possible

By Keith Benman
Contributing Writer

Father Thomas Coughlin credits his parents in Malone and the Sisters of St. Joseph with inspiring him to seek what was – for him, at the time – a seemingly impossible vocation: the priesthood.

Impossible, because Father Coughlin was born deaf. And until he was ordained a priest in Baltimore in 1977, no deaf person had ever been ordained a priest in the United States.

As a young man, several seminaries rejected him before he found a home with the Trinitarian order.

"I had to fight for it," he said recently at Camp Mark Seven, the camp he founded to serve the deaf community in 1981. "Deaf people are invisible. The Church doesn't know we're here."

Despite that, his parents, also deaf, attended daily Mass at Catholic churches in Malone. Often with them was Thomas, their three daughters, who could hear, along with members of their extended family.

Father Coughlin said it was his parents' example of persistence in the face of great odds that influenced and strengthened his own faith. The spark to then follow a vocation to the religious life was lit by a Sister of St. Joseph at St. Mary's School for the Deaf in Buffalo. There, his eighth-grade teacher gave him a book on the Cistercians, a contemplative order. The rest, as they say, is history.

Just four years after his ordination, he established Camp Mark Seven in Old Forge. In 1987 he was able to set up a training program for deaf seminarians at St. Joseph's Seminary in Yonkers, New York. That and other deaf ministries established by Father Coughlin in various dioceses planted the seeds for the formation of the Dominican Missionaries for the Deaf Apostolate in 2004. It was the first religious congregation founded for and by the deaf.

Father Fernando Solomon Jr., parochial vicar at St. Pe-

CONTINUED ON PAGE 16

A KNIGHT'S REFLECTION

Gratitude: The old man at the altar

A few months ago, I stopped by a church in a neighboring town to pray the Chaplet of Divine Mercy. It was nearly 3 p.m. – the hour of mercy. Inside, the bright sun's rays penetrated the multi-colored stained-glass windows. The brilliant images of Jesus' life displayed in symbols of hope, truth and divinity. The church's long, solid oak pews, where parishioners faithfully gather to receive "The Word," were strangely empty. These, I believe, are "graced moments" that offer quiet reflection in precious solitude.

The silence was soon broken by the sliding open of the church's side entrance door. An old man ascended the small set of stairs, dipped his finger in holy water, and made the sign of the cross. Then, with a slow, deliberate pace, he entered the main church. When he had reached the center aisle, he bowed in reverence and carefully climbed the three steps to the sanctuary. He moved with caution, one step at a time, until he reached his destination. Perhaps a sign that he'd come to trust God "one step at a time" in his spiritual life too. The old man continued to

the tabernacle, steadied himself, and knelt before God's earthly home. He recited, in succession, the "Our Father," "Hail Mary," and the "Glory Be" prayers. He remained in a prayerful position for several minutes. Rising to his feet, he turned and walked to the main altar and gently placed his hands on the consecrated wood slab. He raised his hands to heaven – a gesture witnessed countless times at Holy Mass – and confidently proclaimed aloud, "God, thank you for bringing me to this place in my life. Praise be to God."

What a powerful grace granted for me to witness the genuine devotion of this man toward his creator. An old man at the sunset of his life praising God despite his obvious frailty and physical decline. His life story of joy and sorrow, triumph and failure, and punishment and redemption, one could only speculate. I reflected on the times I failed to express proper gratitude to God in my own life. We may understand gratitude to involve ac-

knowledging the positive aspects of our lives, recognizing the kindness of others, and appreciating the gifts, benefits, or favors we have received. It is the tough times, though, for which Catholics are called to show God gratitude. The times when we suffer without deserving it, or go through any kind of hardship, and still be grateful for sharing in the afflictions ex-



Mike Langlois

perienced by Jesus' crucifixion.

It's challenging to feel and express gratitude during tough times because difficult situations can trigger discouraging feelings like anxiety or anger, making it hard to focus on positives. In his apostolic letter *Novo Millennio Ineunte*, St. John Paul II writes, "Remember the past with gratitude ... live the present with enthusiasm and ... look forward to the future with confidence." Yes, I know, it is easier said than done. Still, as we continue our lifelong spiritual journey, we can show gratitude in times of trouble through prayer and worship. We do this by attending Mass and sharing in the sacraments on a regular basis. We set aside time for God in daily prayer and Scripture focusing on His goodness and promises. St. Paul, who

was beaten, whipped, stoned, imprisoned, and shipwrecked, thanked God in bad times. "We rejoice in our sufferings, knowing that suffering produces endurance, and endurance produces character, and character produces hope, and hope does not disappoint us, because God's love has been poured into our hearts through the Holy Spirit who has been given to us," says Romans 5:3-5. To make showing gratitude a habit, we can incorporate it into your daily routine. For example, talk with other people about what we are thankful for (conversational gratitude), cultivate an interior peace by practicing daily thankfulness (interior gratitude), and offer our gratitude to God at the sacrifice of the Mass (Eucharistic gratitude).

It is not only for our spiritual benefit to seek gratitude, but to improve our physical, mental and emotional health. Psychologists at the University of California, Davis, and the University of Miami conducted a study in which three groups were asked to write sentences on personal topics each week. The first group wrote about things they were grateful for during the week; the second group wrote about daily irritations that displeased them; and the third group wrote about events that affected them but with

neither positive nor negative emphasis. The ten-week study revealed the participants who wrote about gratitude were more optimistic and felt better about their lives. In addition, their exercise patterns increased, and they had fewer visits to physicians.

A range of factors may affect individuals' ability to consistently express gratitude for both positive and negative experiences. Science has suggested that these causes may stem from our brains, genes and personalities. Catholics are fortunate to have the inspired writings of sacred Scripture to guide our steps in our spiritual growth. As for me, I hope to be like the old man praising God for, "bringing me to this place in my life."

SOURCES:

Practicing Gratitude:
Ascension: The Faith Formation Leader – <https://media.ascensionpress.com/podcast/31583/>
Harvard Health Publishing Gratitude Study – <https://www.health.harvard.edu/healthbeat/giving-thanks-can-make-you-happier>

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. Local Knights of Columbus councils interested in fortifying the faith of their memberships, or offering column topic ideas, can contact him at mjlang67@gmail.com.

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Convocation was journey into Interior Castle

By Mary Beth Bracy, consecrated virgin
Contributing Writer

The annual United States Association of Consecrated Virgins (USACV) took place from June 27 – July 1 in Gatlinburg, Tennessee. The convocation opened on the Feast of the Sacred Heart of Jesus with Holy Mass at the Cathedral of the Most Sacred Heart of Jesus in nearby Knoxville. Mass was celebrated by Bishop Mark Beckman of Knoxville and concelebrated by Bishop Earl Boyea of Lansing, moderator of the USACV.

In his homily, Bishop Beckman spoke of how the Holy Spirit pours love into our hearts and our need to receive God's tenderness in order to give it to others. Bishop Boyea later gave a talk to consecrated virgins on the Didache and Patrology. He spoke of how the prophets, Old Testament writers, and early Church leaders underscore the need for Christians to make a choice to follow the Lord's path to find rest for themselves. "Each day is the time to make the decision," Bishop Boyea emphasized, "Exemplify what you are called to live."

The theme of the convocation was "The Interior Castle with St. Teresa of Jesus," highlighting each of the seven mansions from her mystical vision in the classic work of this great doctor of the Church and Carmelite reformer. It was presented by Father David Whiteside of the Diocese of Peoria, who is also chaplain for the USACV.

Father Whiteside explained that what began as St. Teresa's vocation of logic turned into a love affair; she struggled in prayer for 18 years as a nun until she surrendered herself to the Lord. St. Teresa details the beginning of the journey of the soul to God and the steps to take to open one's heart to hear and understand God's voice. She includes practical advice on our "line of defense" and overcoming temptations. Father broke these open for us and guided us through the



Some members of the United States Association of Consecrated Virgins at the opening Mass of the convocation, pictured with their moderator Bishop Earl Boyea (Diocese of Lansing), left and Bishop Mark Beckman (Diocese of Knoxville).

stages of prayer, culminating in the mystical marriage, with several examples.

From growth in prayer and virtue, especially in setting aside time for daily mental prayer – which St. Teresa describes as giving the Lord the loving attention of our heart in secret – we grow in union with God, explained Father Whiteside. We also learned about three types of trials that St. Teresa highlights and ways to remain faithful to God and progress in prayer in the midst of each, whether through the loss of wealth and security; humiliation; or difficulties with health and physical pain.

In addition to listening to daily talks, consecrated virgins participated in Holy Mass, Eucharistic adoration, chanting the Liturgy of the Hours and a variety of community activities from dinners and a talent show to hiking in the Smoky Mountains, chasing waterfalls and encountering real-live bears.

The talent show showcased gifts of consecrated virgins, including poetry by Madeleine Troppe (a math teacher from the Diocese of Pittsburgh), a hymn composition by Claire

Halbur (a choir director in the Diocese of Phoenix), sign language by Karen Hund (retired director of religious education and youth minister, Diocese of Erie), and musical acts with singing and instruments by Mary Kelly (a professional violinist and music teacher (Diocese of Little Rock), Francesca Riddick (a retired special education Teacher, Diocese of Joliet), and Miara Cash (a youth minister, Diocese of Phoenix); trivia by Lauren Gault (the program coordinator for the Office of the Diaconate in the Diocese of Pittsburgh); a powerful story sprinkled with humor by Virginia "Ginny" Meyer (a retired dance teacher from the Archdiocese of Chicago); and an inspirational true story by Adrienne Luedeking (an aspirant from the Diocese of Nashville). One consecrated virgin, Elma Espinoza (a caregiver and speaker, Diocese of Fresno), shared her costume and jewelry designs, which she recently had the opportunity to wear on the set of season six of "The Chosen" from August 11 to 13 as a background extra.

It was a blessing to spend time with other consecrated

virgins from across the country and even one who attended from El Salvador; in addition to informally sharing our stories and ministries, we enjoyed many laughs and adventures. On the optional day trip, a group of other consecrated virgins and I took a tram up the Smoky Mountains to see the breathtaking view and then went white-water rafting. Along with the worship experiences and inspiring talks, this was one of the highlights for me.

It struck me that white-water rafting should be mandatory preparation for any vocation, whether marriage, priestly or consecrated. First, you have to remember to listen to your guide and not start paddling until you're instructed to do so, even when the water becomes wavy and you're worried about staying afloat. And everyone on the boat needs to paddle in unison, if they aren't going to go overboard. Analogously, Jesus asks us to trust in Him fully and let Him be our guide. By totally abandoning ourselves to Christ, we learn when to be still and when to fight. Additionally, He leads us in working with others in our community and helping each other on our journey to heaven.

Whether praying with consecrated virgins who were struggling with health difficulties or contemplating job changes or sharing the enthusiasm of those who are helping form other candidates preparing to be consecrated in their dioceses, there was an atmosphere of great joy in our common sisterhood and love for our Divine Bridegroom.

We were grateful for the opportunity to pray together for our bishops, priests, dioceses and all of the sick and suffering who asked for our prayers. Drawing from St. Teresa's image of the soul growing and resting like a caterpillar in the cocoon of Christ, it was a wonderful experience of being still while we await our transformation into butterflies.

UNITED

we bring

HOPE



"We have this hope as an anchor for the soul, firm and secure."
Hebrews 6:19

2025 BISHOP'S FUND APPEAL

ROMAN CATHOLIC DIOCESE OF OGDENSBURG

For more information and to view the 2025 Bishop's Fund video, please visit

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Dear Sisters and Brothers in Christ:

"We have this hope as an anchor for the soul, firm and secure." Hebrews 6:19

In St. Paul's letter to the Hebrews, he describes hope as an anchor. A symbol of a strong iron hook keeping us secure and steadfast in our faith and relationship to Christ even in the dark and rough waters ahead.

Through the ministries and programs it funds, the annual Bishop's Fund Appeal provides each of us the opportunity to work together as an anchor, bringing hope to those who are hurting and searching for solace in the storm and for those reaching for a deeper faith and connection with Christ. ***United We Bring Hope*** as we:

- Educate current and future priests, deacons and commissioned lay ministers who will minister to parishioners across the diocese.
- Provide opportunities to children, teens, adults, and families in which they can deepen their faith, develop leadership skills, and form a servant's heart through Catholic Education, Youth Ministry, Young Adult Ministry, and Family Life Ministry programs.
- Provide hope to those who are experiencing emergency difficulties due to job loss, illnesses, house fires and other tragedies through grants from the Bishop's Good Samaritan Fund.

This year, it is our hope to raise \$1,370,000 to fund the essential ministries and programs of our diocese. Monies received beyond the goal will be designated for additional grants through the Bishop's Good Samaritan Fund.

I am so grateful for your past support. I invite every family in the Diocese of Ogdensburg to prayerfully consider making a gift to this year's Bishop's Fund Appeal. It is my prayer that you will consider making a gift at whatever level of support you are able.

As we navigate life's ebbs and flows, let us together be the anchor of Christ for one another. ***United We Bring Hope!***

Faithfully yours in Christ,

Terry R. LaValley

Most Reverend Terry R. LaValley
Bishop of Ogdensburg

SEPTEMBER 10, 2025

United We Bring Hope: Bishop's Fund Appeal

By Valerie Mathews

Director, Bishop's Fund Appeal

"Today's young people are navigating a world filled with noise - constant digital distractions, social pressures, and uncertainty about the future. More than ever, they need places where they can step away, reflect, and reconnect with what truly matters. That's exactly what Camp Guggenheim and our other diocesan youth initiatives provide," shared Patrick Looby, director of Youth Ministry for the Diocese of Ogdensburg. Patrick continued, "Camp Guggenheim is more than just a summer camp - it's a sacred space where faith comes alive! It's where countless young people have discovered their callings - to the priesthood, religious life, marriage, and service in the Church. Many who now serve the Church, in ordained or lay ministry, credit their time at Camp Guggenheim as the first spark of their vocations. In partnership with parish youth ministers and catechists, the Office of Youth Ministry also organizes powerful events like the annual Youth Rally and Leadership Weekend. These gath-

erings give young people the chance to grow in faith, ask meaningful questions, and hear from inspiring speakers that will help prepare them to be faith-filled leaders in Church and in society." When we come together to support the annual Bishop's Fund Appeal, we make these life-changing opportunities available to our young people. United We Bring Hope!

Gifts to the annual Bishop's Fund Appeal support the essential ministries and programs of the Diocese of Ogdensburg. These ministries and programs bring hope to our Catholic friends and neighbors who are searching for a deeper connection with Christ, "an anchor of hope for the soul, firm and secure," according to Hebrews 6:19.

The 2025 Bishop's Fund Appeal - United We Bring Hope - will begin in parishes across the Diocese of Ogdensburg the weekend of September 13 and 14. This year, it is our hope to reach a goal of \$1,370,000 with any gifts collected over our goal to be used as additional grants through the Bishop's Good Samaritan Fund.

"In my experience as

Pastoral Associate of St. Alexander's Church, I saw how the Bishop's Good Samaritan Fund provided assistance to food pantries and helped a lot of people who had unexpected challenges from medical issues, flooding, and fires. We have always donated to the Bishop's Fund and never dreamed of being a recipient of the Bishop's Good Samaritan Fund," reflected Pam Ballantine. She continued, "One night after we had gone to bed, we awoke to find our garage fully engulfed with fire. The garage was our storage area for memorabilia and Christmas decorations and contained Dan's entire workshop where he made the toys he donated each year. The garage was a total loss. Our home was still livable with melted siding and broken windows at the back of the house. Thankfully, no one was hurt. The outpouring of community support and the support of the Bishop's Good Samaritan Fund was very humbling, heartwarming, and just so greatly appreciated. It gave us great hope. The Bishop's Fund Appeal is a worthwhile program, and the more we give, the more the Bishop's

Fund can help people who need it. The Bishop's Fund has many programs that support the mission of our diocese. With us working together, we can accomplish the mission. The size of your gift does not matter; it is that our unity continues to bring hope to those that meet unexpected challenges." Your support of the Bishop's Fund Appeal brings help and hope to those who are experiencing difficult times in their lives. United We Bring Hope!

Along with Camp Guggenheim, The Office of Youth Ministry and the Bishop's Good Samaritan Fund, your gift supports these additional essential ministries of the Diocese of Ogdensburg: Education of Seminarians, Family Life Office, Natural Family Planning Office, Respect Life Ministry, Formation for Ministry Program, Office of

the New Evangelization, Continuing Education and Formation of Priests, Priests' Graduate Studies, Vocation Office, Permanent Deacons, Deacon Formation, Tuition Assistance Program, Matching Gifts to Catholic Schools, Department of Faith Formation, Young Adult Ministry, and Department of Worship.

Please take a moment to prayerfully consider a pledge or a one-time gift to the 2025 Bishop's Fund Appeal. Every gift is important, every gift makes a difference! Donations can be mailed to: The Bishop's Fund Appeal, PO Box 150, Ogdensburg, New York 13369 or made online at www.rcdony.org/giving/donate-now-bishop-s-fund.

To learn more about the Appeal and to view the 2025 Bishop's Fund video, please visit www.rcdony.org/bfa.

2025 Bishop's Fund Appeal

"This we have as an anchor of the soul, sure and firm, which reaches into the interior behind the veil, where Jesus has entered on our behalf as forerunner, becoming high priest forever according to the order of Melchizedek."
Hebrews 6:19-20

UNITED *we bring* HOPE

Heavenly Father, our hope in You is not vague and abstract but gritty and real. It is as real as the person who lives next to us, as real as the Cross of our Lord.

In the midst of the storms of our lives, we know the sure and firm anchor that Your Son gave us in His cross, death, and resurrection, He drew back the veil between heaven and earth and invites us to live in Your Kingdom.

During this Jubilee Year of Hope, we ask Your blessing on the 2025 Bishop's Fund Appeal. May our generosity be a sign of hope and unity across the North Country and beyond. Through Christ our Lord. AMEN.

YES! I WANT TO MAKE MY GIFT TO THE 2025 BISHOP'S FUND APPEAL

NAME _____

ADDRESS _____

CITY _____ STATE _____ ZIP _____

E-MAIL _____ PARISH _____

SEND CHECK MADE PAYABLE TO: **Bishop's Fund Appeal**
OR FILL IN CREDIT CARD INFO.

☐ CHARGE MY CREDIT CARD FOR ☐  ☐  ☐  ☐ 

CARD NUMBER _____ EXP. DATE ____/____/____

SIGNATURE _____ PHONE _____

☐ SINGLE GIFT ☐ PLEDGE ☐ MATCHING GIFT TO CATHOLIC SCHOOLS

TOTAL GIFT \$ _____

NOW PAYING \$ _____

PLEDGE AMT DUE \$ _____

MAIL TO:

BISHOP'S FUND APPEAL
PO BOX 150
OGDENSBURG, NY 13669

OR PLACE IN YOUR PARISH COLLECTION



In my experience as Pastoral Associate of St. Alexander's Church, I saw how the Bishop's Good Samaritan Fund provided assistance to food pantries and helped a lot of people who had unexpected challenges from medical issues, flooding, and fires. We have always donated to the Bishop's Fund and never dreamed of being a recipient of the Bishop's Good Samaritan Fund. One night after we had gone to bed, we awoke to find our garage fully engulfed with fire. The garage was our storage area for memorabilia and Christmas decorations and contained Dan's entire workshop where he made toys he donated each year. The garage was a total loss. Our home was still livable with melted siding and broken windows at the back of the house. Thankfully, no one was hurt. The outpouring of community support and the support of the Bishop's Good Samaritan Fund was very humbling, heartwarming, and just so greatly appreciated. It gave us great hope. The Bishop's Fund Appeal is a worthwhile

program, and the more we give, the more the Bishop's Fund can help people who need it. The Bishop's Fund helps many programs that support the mission of our Diocese. With us working together, we can accomplish the mission. The size of your gift does not matter; it is that our unity continues to bring hope to those that meet unexpected challenges.

– Pam & Dan of Peru, New York

The Bishop's Fund makes a big difference for so many of our families, many of whom simply wouldn't be able to send their children to Augustinian Academy without this support. In today's world, where faith can sometimes feel like it's taking a backseat, Catholic schools are more important than ever. When you give to the Bishop's Fund, you're not just helping students get a great academic education, you're helping them grow in their faith. Our students learn much more than reading, writing, and math. They hear the stories of Jesus, come to know Him personally, and start asking themselves that timeless question we all remember: "What would Jesus do?" Catholic school students are learning to serve others, to care for God's creation, and to live their faith out loud. As they grow, they begin to carry these lessons into their homes, their neighborhoods, and beyond. Every gift to the Bishop's Fund helps shape the future of our Catholic communities. We truly couldn't do this without your support, and we're so grateful. – Sister Suanne Johnson, SSJ, Principal of Augustinian Academy



The kids have been doing great at Augustinian Academy. They love it here. My husband and I really love the school too. The relationships the kids have with the teachers and with the other students, from the biggest to the littlest, where they are all working together has been wonderful. We have the opportunity to communicate with the teachers because we all get to be involved in the school through volunteering. The older students help the younger students by sitting with them during Mass, teaching them how to act during Mass, and explaining things that they might not understand. When you give to the Bishop's Fund, it helps real people get a chance to be in a school where you can learn the faith and be around other Christians which is a benefit to your family and the community. - Ellee, Evangeline, Irene and Agnes of Carthage, New York

My parents have certainly played a role in helping form my faith and helping me grow in my faith. I have known since I was a kid that God was calling me to the priesthood. I attribute that partly to my family's openness to getting to know our pastor and welcome priests into our home for dinners. The presence of our pastor, and retired priests such as Monsignor Whitmore and Father Wiley, and the priests at Guggenheim have definitely been an inspiration to me as I learned and fell in love with our faith. Camp Guggenheim has also been especially important to my faith journey. I am currently studying at St. Vincent's Seminary in Latrobe, Pennsylvania. The support of the Bishop's Fund Appeal for the seminarians has been especially helpful. Knowing that my tuition and other expenses are covered takes away the stress of figuring out how I am going to pay for each semester. I hope to share what I have learned in the seminary with the people of our parishes. Gifts to the Bishop's Fund Appeal help so many different ministries, and we can see the fruits of these donations as the ministries continue to grow and thrive. Thank you for giving me the opportunity to study at the seminary. Thank you for whatever you are able to give to the Bishop's Fund Appeal.

- Kevin, Seminarian from Watertown, New York



Today's young people are navigating a world filled with noise - constant digital distractions, social pressures, and uncertainty about the future. More than ever, they need places where they can step away, reflect, and reconnect with what truly matters. That's exactly what Camp Guggenheim and our other diocesan youth initiatives provide.

Camp Guggenheim is more than just a summer camp - it's a sacred space where faith comes alive! It's where countless young people have discovered their callings - to the priesthood, religious life, marriage, and service in the Church. Many who now serve the Church, in ordained or lay ministry, credit their time at Camp Guggenheim as the first spark of their vocations.

In partnership with parish youth ministers and catechists, the Office of Youth Ministry also organizes powerful events like the annual Youth Rally and Leadership Weekend. These gatherings give young people the chance to grow in faith, ask meaningful questions, and hear from inspiring speakers that will help prepare them to be faith-filled leaders in Church and in society.

None of this is possible without the annual Bishop's Fund. The support we receive from the Bishop's Fund sustains all of these efforts so that we can continue forming young disciples, nurturing vocations, and building the future of the Church right here in the North Country. — **Patrick Looby, Director of Youth Ministry**

The primary influence in both of our faith journeys has been our parents. Catholic education was important to our parents and is important to both of us. Guggenheim has also been a big thing for us along with Catholic education. Both of our sons were able to go to summer camp at Guggenheim, and both went to St. Bernard's School. The Bishop's Fund supports Guggenheim and the Catholic schools with the Tuition Assistance Program.

In recent years, the needs seem to have increased so much. There has been some tough times and some tough winters. Our pastor indicated that he has reached out to Bishop LaValley several times to help people with their heating costs and other needs through the Bishop's Good Samaritan Fund. The support is always there. Bishop is very generous with sharing those funds. We are inspired by all the things that the Bishop's Fund helps in our community and parishes. We encourage everybody to give what they can. So much comes back to your own parishes through the ministries that the Bishop's Fund supports.

- Jim and Susan of Saranac Lake, New York



THE BISHOP'S FUND APPEAL

provides financial assistance to the vital ministries of the Diocese of Ogdensburg. The following ministries are supported:

- Education of Seminarians
- Family Life Office
- Natural Family Planning Office
- Respect Life Ministry
- Bishop's Good Samaritan Fund
- Formation for Ministry Program
- Office of the New Evangelization
- Continuing Education and Formation of Priests
- Priests' Graduate Studies
- Vocation Office
- Permanent Deacons
- Deacon Formation
- Tuition Assistance Program
- Campus Ministry Program
- Matching Gifts to Catholic Schools
- Department of Faith Formation
- Diocesan Center of Youth Ministry
- Young Adult Ministry
- Guggenheim Center
- Department of Worship

WAYS TO GIVE

- **Gifts of Cash:** Checks should be made payable to the "Bishop's Fund Appeal."
- **Pledge:** A gift to the Bishop's Fund Appeal may be paid in four payments - at the time of the pledge, December, February, and April.
- **Online Giving:** The Bishop's Fund Appeal offers the opportunity to make your gift and pledge payments online using a credit card. To donate online, please visit www.rcdony.org/giving/donate-now-bishop-s-fund. If making a pledge, enter your first payment in the "amount" box and in the comments section indicate the total amount you wish to pledge.
- **Automatic Pledge Payments:** To set up automatic credit or debit card pledge payments, please contact the Bishop's Fund Office at 315-393-2920.
- **Matching Gifts:** Many companies endeavor to match the charitable contributions of employees. Please contact your company's Human Resource Department to determine if your company participates in the Matching Gift Program for Catholic Schools.
- **Gifts of Securities:** Federal tax laws offer special incentives for gifts of non-cash property, especially that which has increased in value since it was acquired. Please contact the Bishop's Fund Office at 315-393-2920 for transfer instructions.
- **Qualified IRA Contributions:** For those who are 70 ½ or older, you may wish to consider a tax-free gift directly from your IRA to the Bishop's Fund Appeal. Please contact the Bishop's Fund Office at 315-393-2920 for instructions.
- **Bequests:** When considering gifts to a charity in your Will, please remember the Bishop's Fund Appeal. Gifts can be made in the following manner through your Will: Specific dollar amount; a percentage of your estate; or a particular asset such as real estate or other valuables.
- **Mailing Your Gift:** Please feel free to mail your donation to: The Bishop's Fund Appeal, PO Box 150, Ogdensburg, NY 13669.

Environmental Stewardship

Hopeful vs. wishful thinking

During this season of creation, the term "hope" is often used. In publications from the Vatican, in homilies, prayers and in conversations, the word hope is not only mentioned, but it may be the focus. While everyone is familiar with this word, its meaning is frequently misunderstood.

In our society, it is believed hope simply refers to a positive view of any event or occurrence. However, the notion that the future might yield some upbeat results while continuing a daily routine of chaos and confusion and dealing with fear, anxiety and depression is not hope but wishful thinking.

Hope is a primary spiritual virtue that goes deeper. Hope is about changing your attitudes in a positive direction so you begin to reshape your thoughts and actions to help others. We have to refocus our efforts and prayers, following the guidance of the Holy Spirit, to be more compassionate, loving and merciful in everything we do and say. This is being aligned with the will of God rather than that of a culture that favors power, wealth and prestige.

It is said that we are the hands and feet of Our Lord here on earth. A person's efforts in following the Lord's call, the way he speaks and interacts with others, enables that individual to support a better future. Caring for God's creations takes time and energy. By altering your lifestyle in a positive direction, a brighter tomorrow is more likely. We can't sit by and watch others do work while we "hope" things improve.

Picking up trash, especially plastics, composting table scraps, recycling cardboard, and returning bottles to collection bins that support charitable organizations, taking shorter showers and turning down the thermostat are actions that offer hope.

No one, except God, knows what will happen to our planet during these next decades. However, those who fight to create a better world can be far more hopeful.

Bishop's Public Schedule

Sept. 10 – 9:30 a.m. – Diocesan Department Head Meeting at Wadhams Hall in Ogdensburg

6 p.m. – Confirmation at Holy Angels Church in Altona along with St. Ann's Church in Mooers Forks

Sept. 11 – 10:30 a.m. – Investment Advisory Committee Meeting at Bishop's Residence followed by Lunch

Sept. 12 – 9:30 a.m.

Mass at Seton Catholic School in Plattsburgh followed by Lunch

Sept. 13 – 11 a.m. – Mass for Family Camp at Camp Guggenheim in Saranac Lake

Sept. 14 – 10 a.m. – Installation Mass of Reverend Nicholas Revilla as Pastor of St. Patrick's Church in Rouses Point and St. Mary's Church in Champlain at St. Patrick's Church in Rouses Point

2 p.m. – Adoration/Jubilee Year of Hope Pilgrimage at Holy Cross Parish in Plattsburgh

Sept. 15 – 9:40 a.m. – Prayer Service with the Students at Immaculate Heart Central School in Watertown followed by Classroom Visits

Sept. 16 – 6 p.m. – Missionaries of the Sacred Heart Foundation 52nd Annual Dinner at the Hilton Garden Inn in Watertown

Sept. 17-18 – New York State Prison Chaplain's Retreat in Canandaigua

Rest in Peace

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

Sept. 11 – Rev. J. A. Langlois, 1872; Rev. Hyacinth Rueberg, 1913

Sept. 12 – Rev. Abraham T. Guertin, 1933; Rev. Vincent Skiba, 1984

Sept. 13 – Deacon Edward A. Wight, 2021

Sept. 14 – Rev. Russell Charles O'Neil, 1951

Sept. 15 – Rev. George Lessard, O.M.I., 1978; Rev. Joseph V. Rossitto, 2004; Deacon William S. Raven, 2023

Sept. 16 – Rev. Henri Victor Lecompte, O.M.I., 1892; Rev. Alphonse Nolin, O.M.I., 1936; Deacon Marvin M. Connor, 2022

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:

Sept. 15 – 6 p.m. – St. James School, Gouverneur

Sept. 16 – 5:30 p.m. – Church of the Assumption, Redford

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

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The Diocese of Ogdensburg.

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Supporting the 2025 Bishop Fund Insert

Pope discusses Gaza, two-state solution with Israeli president

By Hannah Brockhaus

Catholic News Agency

Pope Leo XIV discussed the conflict in Gaza, including a two-state solution, with Israel President Isaac Herzog in a private audience at the Vatican on Thursday morning.

According to a Vatican statement after the meeting, the talks focused on the political and social situation in the Middle East and the need to guarantee “a future for the Palestinian people and peace and stability in the region, with the Holy See reiterating the two-state solution as the only way out of the ongoing war.”

The Israeli president also met with Vatican Secretary of State Cardinal Pietro Parolin and Vatican Secretary for Relations with States Archbishop Paul Gallagher.

The Sept. 4 Vatican audience was the first closed-door meeting between Leo and Herzog, 64, who has been Israel's president since 2021.

In a post on X following the encounter, Herzog thanked Leo for a “warm welcome today at the Vatican” and said he looked forward to strengthening Israel's cooperation with the Holy See “for a better future of justice and compassion.”

The Vatican communique on Leo's meeting with Herzog — a longer and much more detailed statement than those usually issued after audiences with heads of state — repeated Pope Leo's regular public pleas for a resumption of negotiations, a permanent ceasefire, the release of Israeli hostages, respect for humanitarian law, and the safe entry of aid into Gaza.

The Vatican said the hope was also expressed that the “legitimate aspirations” of both Israeli and Palestinian people can be guaranteed.

“Reference was also made to the situation in the West Bank and the important question of the city of Jerusalem” and to issues in the relations between Israeli state authorities and the local Church, the statement added.

In addition to a two-state solution for Palestine, Vatican diplomacy has

called for an international status for the city of Jerusalem, where the Latin patriarch, Cardinal Pierbattista Pizzaballa, is the Catholic leader of not only Israel but also the Palestinian Territories of Gaza and the West Bank.

During a visit to the town of Taybeh in the West Bank in July, Pizzaballa and other Church leaders said they hold Israeli authorities responsible for “facilitating and enabling” attacks on Palestinian Christians by Israeli settlers.

Thursday's conversation between Leo and Herzog also touched on the importance of ensuring the continued presence of Christian communities throughout the Middle East, the Vatican said.

After the talks, a statement from Herzog said the pope's reception of Israel's president reflected “the great significance of the relationship between the Holy See and the State of Israel, and of course with the Jewish people, and the importance of the very sensitive issues and challenges we experience today.”

There was some tension surrounding the meeting due to a Sept. 2 statement from Herzog's office stating that the president's one-day visit to the Vatican came at the invitation of Pope Leo. The Vatican contradicted that claim hours later with a statement that “it is the Holy See's practice to agree to requests for an audience with the pope from heads of state and government; it is not its practice to extend invitations to them.”

Vatican-Israel relations were marked by tension toward the end of the last pontificate owing to Pope Francis' criticism of Israel's campaign in Gaza, which was sparked by the Oct. 7, 2023, massacre of Israeli citizens and others by Hamas militants.

Pope Francis called Israel's actions in Gaza “terrorism” and on two occasions said what was happening there might qualify as genocide.

Pope Leo has taken a more restrained approach, calling for ceasefires and the release of hostages and emphasizing the need for dignified humanitarian aid and respect for law.

CATHOLIC WORLD AT A GLANCE

Police arrest man who brought body armor, weapons to abbey

Authorities in California arrested a man who brought a cache of weapons, including gun paraphernalia, to a remote California abbey late last month. Sheriff's deputies arrested 38-year-old Joshua Michael Richardson after he allegedly made criminal threats against St. Michael's Abbey, located in Silverado, about 40 miles southeast of Los Angeles in the Santa Ana Mountains. Richardson, an Alabama resident, originally sent the abbey “emails that were interpreted as threatening,” the Orange County Sheriff's Department said in a Sept. 2 press release. The suspect subsequently “visited the church in person and made additional threats,” after which a priest reported the incident to the sheriff's department. Authorities quickly located and arrested Richardson for the alleged threats, and upon searching his vehicle they found “body armor, high-capacity magazines, brass knuckles, and knives.” Richardson was booked into the Orange County Jail. Records show he is being held at a police facility in the city of Orange.

Priest in Sierra Leone murdered while preparing for move

A Catholic priest in Sierra Leone's Diocese of Kenema was murdered Aug. 30 as he was preparing to take on a new assignment in the diocese. According to the communication department of the Archdiocese of Freetown in Sierra Leone, Father Augustine Amadu, who served at Kenema's Immaculate Conception Parish, was preparing for his Sunday, Aug. 31 farewell Mass when suspected robbers ended his life. His next pastoral assignment would have been at St. John Kailahun Parish in the Kenema Diocese. “We are saddened by the shocking news reaching us this morning (Sunday, Aug. 31) about the demise of Reverend Father Augustine Amadu who was stabbed to death by armed robbers at his parish house in Kenema Diocese,” the message said. “Father Amadu was wrapping up his final days of his pastoral work at Immaculate Conception Parish, Kenema, preparing for his farewell Mass on Sunday before departing for his new assignment at St. John Parish, Kailahun after five years of devoted service.” According to the Sierra Leonean Police (SLP), Amadu was attacked at night in the parish house where he lived alone. The authorities said in a statement on Aug. 30 that parishioners at Immaculate Conception Parish raised the alarm about the murder.

Visit our website

www.northcountrycatholic.org

- Read local stories and commentaries
- Search archived papers
- View diocesan events and much more



Find us on Facebook!



VIRTUAL EVENTS

FRIENDSHIP GROUP MEETING

You are invited to our next Friendship Group Meeting, Find PEACE in this life!

Date: Sept. 26

Time: 7 p.m.

Place: Zoom

Features: A common enemy in the spiritual life is discouragement, and Venerable Bruno Lanteri masterfully assisted his directees in overcoming it through his inspired, straightforward, practical counsels. By prayerfully reflecting on these gems – which Father Timothy Gallagher, O.M.V. deftly connects to the writings of other saints in his new book “If You Want Peace in This Life” – you will gain confidence in God and a greater patience with yourself. At this meeting Father Gallagher will lead us in discussing the first half of this book.

Contact: To order “If You Want Peace in This Life,” please visit sophiainstitute.com and enter Friendship25 at the checkout to receive a 25% off discount. For more information or to sign up please contact Mary Beth Bracy at mbracy@sophiainstitute.com

ADIRONDACK MOUNTAIN

CAR RAFFLE

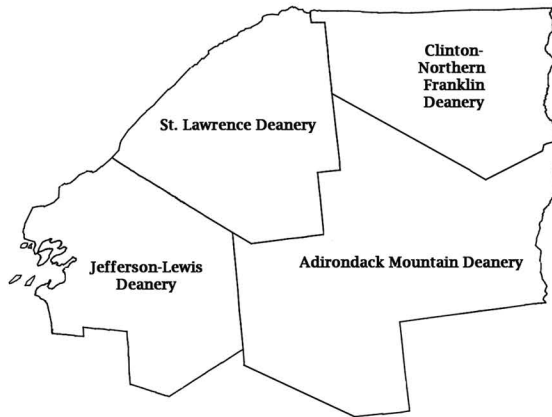
Lake Placid – St. Agnes School is having their annual Car Raffle. Win a new Subaru or \$20,000.

Features: Tickets are \$20 apiece or \$100 for six. Tickets are available at the school (weekdays), 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 proceeds benefit scholarships and programs.

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

ALPHA

Lake Placid – ALPHA to be held, all are invited no matter your background or beliefs.



The North Country Catholic welcomes contributions to “Around the Diocese.”

Parishioners are invited to send information about activities to:

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

e-mail news@northcountycatholic.org.

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

Date: Weds. Starting Sept. 17

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

Place: St. Agnes School

Features: This is a free event and includes a delicious dinner, great videos (about life, faith, and meaning), and small group discussion. All are welcome, so help spread the word to your neighbors and friends.

Contact: To register and for questions, go to <https://stag-nelslakeplacid.com/alpha>

GOLF SCRAMBLE

Saranac Lake – St. Bernard's School to have their annual St. Bernard's 4 person Golf Scramble.

Date: Sept. 20

Time: Shotgun start at 10 a.m.

Place: Saranac Lake Golf Club

Features: This fun-filled day on the greens will bring together teams of four for an exciting competition, all in support of the school's mission and programs. will feature a variety of contests and prizes for participants. Golfers of all skill levels are invited to join, with all proceeds directly benefiting the students and families of St. Bernard's School. Following the tournament, participants are invited to enjoy a post-tournament lunch provided by Blueline Brewery and Tail of the Pup.

Contact: To register your team of four or learn more about spon-

sorship opportunities, please contact Andrea Kilbourne-Hill at 518-891-2830 or principal@stbernardsschool.org. Early registration is encouraged, as space is limited.

CLINTON NORTHERN FRANKLIN

TURKEY DINNER

Lyon Mountain – Fall Turkey Dinner to be held to benefit the parish fuel fund.

Date: Sept. 14

Time: 11:30 a.m. to 4 p.m.

Place: Lyon Mountain American Legion

Cost: Adults, \$15; Children 6-12, \$7; Under 5, Free

Features: Home cooked turkey dinner with all the trimmings, coffee and dessert. 50/50 plus various raffles.

Contact: For more information call 518-594-3907 or 518-578-2638

JUBILEE PILGRIMAGE

Plattsburgh – Eastern Region Commissioned Lay Minsters are invited to celebrate with Bishop Terry LaValley a 2025 Jubilee Year of Hope Pilgrimage.

Place: St. Peter's Church

Date: Sept. 14

Time: 2 p.m.

Cost: \$12 per person

Contact: To register and for more information www.rcdony.org/plattsburghyearofhope

SOAKING PRAYER SESSIONS

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

Date: Sept. 18 and 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. 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

APPLEFEST

Peru – St. Augustine to have their 47th Annual Applefest.

Date: Sept. 20

Time: Activities begin at 10:30 a.m.

Place: St. Augustine's Parish Center

Features: Attendees can explore the grounds in search of the Grand Raffle, a massive craft fair, apple fritters, fried dough, caramelized apples, hot dogs, Michigan, sweet sausages, burgers, chicken BBQ, games, a train ride, face painting, a bounce house, and performances by the Pipes and Drums of Plattsburgh and the On Three Band. Roger's House and St. Vincent DePaul will also host sales. The community parade starts at 11 a.m.

HARVEST DINNER

Altona – St. Ann's and Holy Angels invite you to St. Ann's Harvest Dinner.

Date: Sept. 21

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

Place: Holy Angels Hall

Cost: Adults, \$16; Children 6-12, \$9; Children 5 and under, Free

Features: Turkey and all the trimmings, Apple and Pumpkin desserts. There will be a bake sale, themed basket raffles and lottery ticket raffle.

JEFFERSON-LEWIS

DANCE

Glenfield – St. John's Church in Ly-

ons Falls and St. Mary's Church will be sponsoring a dance.

Date: Sept. 19

Time: 7 p.m. to 10

Place: Glenfield Fire Hall

Features: Music will be provided by Patti Stanford and her band. There will be basket and chance raffles and a 50/50 raffle as well.

ST. LAWRENCE

ROSARY EVENT AND RALLY

Ogdensburg – You are cordially invited to commemorate the east of the Most Holy Name Mary at a Rosary Event/Rally.

Date: Sept. 12

Time: 5 p.m.

Place: St. Mary's Cathedral

Features: Sponsored by St. Mary's Parish/the Legion of Mary – Our Lady of Perpetual Help Praesidium. The Cathedral is a designated site for the Year of Hope – come make your pilgrimage. Refreshments will be served.

Contact: Angela Morley at 315-276-4588

MONTHLY BRUNCH

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

Date: Sept. 14 (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 Gonthier 315-212-5166.

DIOCESAN EVENTS

SSJ LAY ASSOCIATE PROGRAM

The Sisters of St. Joseph invite you to a meeting if you are interested in learning about our Lay Associate Program.

Schedule: Sept. 21 at the former St. Patrick's School in Watertown

Time: 2 p.m. to 4

Features: Associates meet once a month to learn about the spirituality, the charism and mis-

SUNDAY'S SCRIPTURE

Transformed by an ugly memory

Today's celebration is a bit out of the ordinary. Sundays in Ordinary Time mark each week from after Corpus Christi up until the First Sunday of Advent. However, September 14 is the Feast of the Exaltation of the Holy Cross. When the 14th occurs on a Sunday, this feast replaces that Sunday of the Year Celebration.

All three readings for this feast focus on the cross. Even the Old Testament reading about Moses standing with a pole topped with a bronze serpent saved the individuals suffering from the snakes' bites. This action alludes to the cross of Christ who would bring salvation through his own crucifixion on the cross.

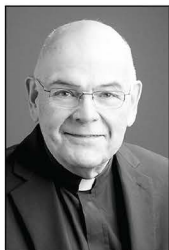
In fact, the second reading emphasizes that Christ's divinity did not dissuade him from offer-

ing his life on the cross to save humanity.

Do we sufficiently appreciate the fact that the horror of the cross leads to the beauty of the Resurrection? Do we adequately understand that the life sacrificed on the cross becomes, through the Resurrection, the springboard of eternal life for each one of us?

There have been moments in our lives that we would rather forget, so to speak, erase them from our memories because those memories make us relive the unpleasant moments in time. Shouldn't the crucifixion of Jesus be in that same category?

If there were no Resurrection, the Crucifixion would definitely be numbered among those horrific memories. However, without the Resurrection,



Msgr. Robert H. Aucoin

September 14

Feast of the Exaltation of the Holy Cross

READINGS

Numbers 21:4b-9

Philippians 2:6-11

John 3:13-17

the Crucifixion would have been just a moment in time, perhaps written about in history books, but without any impact on humanity.

Well, today's celebration reminds us that ugly memories can transform our lives. The cross coupled with the Resurrection is transformative because this action transformed history, but, more importantly, transformed the lives of humanity from that moment forward.

Looking at the image of a serpent held up by Moses saved the lives of the Israelites, transforming them from an ugly death into a productive

life. Looking upon the cross, we should remind ourselves that, like the Israelites bitten by a snake, we are bitten by sin, engrossed in our own selves rather than in others, and consumed by our pride.

All that human ugliness can be transformed into new life. Jesus' life was transformed by the Resurrection. Our lives, too, can be transformative acts of Jesus, and our willingness to incorporate ourselves into the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus.

We do not need to wallow in the ugliness of sin. Jesus has given us the gift of forgiveness, especially in the sacrament of reconciliation. Jesus provides his life very tangibly in the Eucharist, his Body and Blood. Jesus incorporates himself in us with the saving waters of Baptism. Jesus transforms two lives into one at marriage. At ordination, the deacon assumes

the responsibility to exercise a ministry of service, and the priest becomes an "other Christ" ministering to the faithful. In moments of sickness and as we approach death, the saving presence of Christ accompanies us in the Anointing of the Sick.

The cross of Jesus provides us with a reason to exalt because the cross and the resurrection have given us the fullness of life. The glory of the resurrection squelches the moments of human suffering.

Remember the verses that we pray on Good Friday: "Behold the wood of the Cross, on which hung the salvation of the world." We respond: "Come, let us adore."

Just as the cross led Jesus to the fullness of life through the resurrection, may the crosses of our lives, united to the cross of Christ, lead us to the fullness of life everlasting.

Around the diocese

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 12

sion and history of the Sisters of St. Joseph, pray together, and discuss ways to deepen one's spiritual life. This group is open to men and women.

Contact: If you are interested, please contact Sister Mary Eamon (smelyngssj@yahoo.com) or contact Sister Bethany Fitzgerald (srbethany@gmail.com).

LEADERSHIP RETREAT

Saranac Lake – The Diocese of Ogdensburg Youth Ministry is inviting all High School students (grades 9-12) are to their annual Leadership Weekend.

Date: Sept. 19-21

Place: Camp Guggenheim

Cost: \$150 (financial aid is available)

Features: Special guest speak-

er will be Penelope Rose from Students for Life. Learn to be a leader in Christ. Free T-Shirt is included.

Contact: Register at rcdony.org/leadership

DOVS LUNCHEON

Norfolk – All are invited to join the Diocese of Ogdensburg Vocation Society (DOVS) for Mass with Bishop LaValley followed by a free luncheon.

Date: Sept. 26

Time: Noon

Place: Church of the Visitation

Features: Bishop LaValley will speak on "The Role of the Laity As Disciples In Mission By Virtue of Our Baptism."

Contact: Register with Connie Randal by email (connierandal47@yahoo.com) or phone (315-783-0574)

BLUE MASS

Saranac Lake – Bishop Terry R. LaValley will celebrate the annual Diocesan Blue Mass.

Date: Sept. 28

Time: 2:30 p.m.

Place: St. Bernard's Church

Features: The Blue Mass is the Church's way to offer thanksgiving to God for the dedication and sacrifices made by the men and women of Fire, EMS, Corrections, Law Enforcement, and Dispatchers. First Responders, their families, and all the faithful are invited to attend this Sunday celebration. Uniforms are encouraged but not required.

Contact: Questions can be addressed to Father Chris Carrara, Blue Mass Committee Chair at info@rcdony.org or by phone at 315-393-2920.

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>

FAMILY GUGGENHEIM

Saranac Lake – Registration for Family Guggenheim is now open.

Date: Session 3: Oct. 10-12

Features: Family Guggenheim

welcomes families to come enjoy a special weekend in the beauty of the Adirondacks. Expect fun family workshops and activities that will have you working and laughing together. Celebrate Christ's presence in your lives through liturgy and special prayer services. Take time for great outdoor activities like paddle boat rides, beach volleyball, and hiking. You are never too young or too old to enjoy being family at Camp Guggenheim!

Contact: Registration is open now at <https://www.rcdony.org/familyguggenheim> Financial assistance is available. For more information, contact Steve Tartaglia at 315-393-2920 or startaglia@rcdony.org.

CALLED TO SERVE

The Spiritual Rebirth of Baptism

A fellow worker asked me once if I had been born again. I was in deacon formation at the time. He was a parishioner of an evangelical church.

I told him I was born again as an infant when I was baptized.

That did not satisfy him.

I recall quoting a chat Jesus had with Nicodemus from the bible, "Amen, amen, I say to you, no one can enter the kingdom of God without being born of water and Spirit." That's in John, chapter 3. Jesus was talking about being baptized and then leading a life that follows the teaching of Jesus. It all begins with baptism.

Recently I sent my daughter a congratulatory text on the date of her baptism anniversary. Baptism has always held a special place in my heart.

After assisting at Mass, nothing gives me more joy than presiding at a baptism.

As presider, I have helped claim a life for Jesus and the Church. That's special.



Deacon
Kevin Mastellon

Deacons in our parish take care of registering, scheduling and preparing parents for the baptism of their child or children.

Our location near Fort Drum gives us a wide variety of languages, cultures, situations and opportunities to tackle. We see parents who have not received all the sacraments of initiation themselves, and many of them are in civil marriages.

Couples at those sessions often express a desire to be married in the Church; to have their marriage blessed. A wish to convalidate their relationship will require a pre-nuptial investigation that might lead

to an annulment case.

But that is down the road. For now, we have a baptism to plan.

It is really an uncomplicated process in the Catholic Church. Contact a priest or deacon in your parish, or call the parish office, explain what you have in mind, and the ball is rolling.

In our parish a deacon will complete the intake information and advise you when the next baptism preparation class is to be held. Sacramental preparation time is usually required. Ours is about an hour and includes a segment of Reborn from the FORMED website.

During the preparation session parents are advised about Godparents and potential dates for a baptism. They are also introduced to parish-provided assistance during pregnancy or after childbirth.

Baptism is the key that un-

locks the gate to salvation. It is never too late to baptize a child or to be baptized. Contact a priest or deacon in your parish.

Jesus gave the apostles and us a final commissioning before his Ascension. Matthew writes that Jesus said, "Go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you."

I was baptized on my mother's birthday, October 3. I was ordained October 4. Many years separated the two sacramental events, but the timing convinced me I was born again at my baptism.

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

OBITUARIES

Champlain – Leeward C. Babbie, 87; Mass of Christian Burial Sept. 3, 2025 at St. Mary's Church; burial in parish cemetery.

Chateaugay – James Thomas McArdle, 83; Mass of Christian Burial Sept. 8, 2025 at St. Patrick's Church; burial in St. Patrick's Cemetery.

Chazy – Wilfred Charbonneau Jr., 91; Mass of Christian Burial Sept. 11, 2025 at Sacred Heart Church; burial in Sacred Heart Cemetery.

Croghan – Margaret P. (Walsh) Grunert, 89; Mass of Christian Burial Oct. 3, 2025 at St. Stephen's Church; burial in St. Stephen's Cemetery.

Fort Covington – Ian R. Mitchell, 83; Mass of Christian Burial Sept. 13, 2025 at St. Mary's Church.

Malone – Carole (Mumley) McGovern Holmes, 83; Funeral Services Sept. 9, 2025 at Frary Funeral Home; burial in Gerald B.H. Solo-

mon Saratoga National Cemetery.

Malone – Audrey A. (Beaudry) Mulverhill, 84; Graveside services Sept. 13, 2025 at St. John Bosco Cemetery.

Massena – Virginia A. Charland, 93; Mass of Christian Burial Sept. 8, 2025 at Sacred Heart Church; burial in St. Patrick's Cemetery, Brasher Falls.

Massena – Frederick J. LaRue, 89; Mass of Christian Burial Sept.

5, 2025 at St. Mary's Church; burial in St. Patrick's Cemetery, Brasher Falls.

Massena – Pauline J. (Zappia) Terminelli, 90; Mass of Christian Burial Sept. 6, 2025 at St. Mary's Church; burial in Calvary Cemetery.

Mooers Forks – Muriel A. Burdeau, 84; Mass of Christian Burial Sept. 5, 2025 at St. Ann's Church; burial in parish cemetery.

Norwood – Betty Jean (Cota) Besaw, 83; Mass of Christian Burial Sept. 6, 2025 at St. Andrew's Church; burial in Calvary Cemetery.

Plattsburgh – Lucille Daniels, 96; Mass of Christian Burial Sept. 8 at St. Peter's Church; burial in St. Peter's Cemetery.

Potsdam – Nancy Ellen (Hansen) Randall, 73; Mass of Christian Burial Sept. 5, 2025 at St. Mary's Church.

Rossie – Nancy E. (Phalen) Raymon, 82; Mass of Christian Burial Sept. 8, 2025 at St. Patrick's Church; burial in St. Patrick's Cemetery.

Ticonderoga – Frederick John Raymon, 84; Mass of Christian Burial Sept. 4, 2025 at St. Mary's Church; burial in St. Mary's Cemetery.

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On mission in Haiti

"I spent three days visiting the Chapel of St. Bernard on the occasion of the patron saint's day. A difficult and tiring journey, which, on the one hand, demonstrates how difficult it is to make progress in a country under such conditions, but, on the other, also demonstrates the strength and courage of the people who move with heavy burdens through an extremely impassable area without roads. Four hours from Pourcine-Pic Makaya to Nan Myiel, first upstream and then along a path that leads to the village," [said] Father Massimo Miraglio, Camillian missionary and parish priest in the village of Pourcine-Pic Makaya, Haiti.

"The chapel where we celebrated Mass on Saturday morning, August 30, is very modest, but the faith is full of hope, and the welcome was very warm. The community made a great effort," the missionary continues, "to celebrate their patron saint in a very makeshift setting, but one marked by warmth and piety." "Following the celebration, the obligatory soccer match took place, with one peculiarity: In the middle of the field lay two huge



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

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

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boulders that seemed to have fallen from the sky... and that could not be moved, despite the great danger they pose to the players," Father Miraglio explains.

"On the afternoon of August 31, I set out again, accompanied by a delegation of believers. Although we had changed our route, the difficulties did not diminish," the missionary recalled. "We climbed a steep mountain, along a narrow path and over huge boulders left there by the 2021 earthquake. With great difficulty, I reached the summit, a third of the way there. Amidst the low vegetation stood a single house, a family: mother, father, grandparents, a young man with a serious foot injury, and three children, one of whom was severely mentally disabled. Meeting this family freed me from all the hardships of the journey."

"I saw with my own eyes something I will

never forget: the will to persevere, to continue living even in the most difficult situations. The mother had just returned from the Mass I had celebrated, carrying a bucket of water that she had brought up from the valley on her head, and she thanked me. What a joy to celebrate with these courageous people!" Father Massimo concluded.

Article by Cosimo Graziani from FIDES missionary news service of the Pontifical Mission Societies.

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



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Camp inspires ministry

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 3

Father Coughlin, a Malone native, founded Camp Mark Seven a few years after completing seminary with the Trinitarian order and being ordained in Baltimore. He immediately began to raise funds for a deaf ministry. And when he saw the closed Mohawk Hotel on Fourth Lake was available in a bankruptcy sale in 1981, he jumped at the chance to provide the deaf community with "a place it could call its own."

The camp is one way of making the deaf "visible" to the hearing world, Father Coughlin said. Deaf ministries like the one in the Ogdensburg Diocese are another way. Expecting deaf people to come to church simply to sit in the pews at a Liturgy they can't hear just doesn't cut it anymore, Father Coughlin said.

"You need to preach

the gospel to the deaf people in sign language," he said. "You need to provide sacraments in sign language. You need to provide pastoral care in sign language. You need to help them become part of the church."

The Diocese of Ogdensburg is now starting to do just that. The deaf ministry has a sign language interpreter on the altar every week at the 4 p.m. Saturday Mass at Notre Dame Church, in Malone. About 15 deaf Catholics have been attending the Liturgy there as well as a social hour afterward. The ministry also has sign language interpreters available for weddings, baptisms, funerals and other rites when requested.

Father Solomon said he has carried forward another important lesson from his days at Camp Mark Seven when

it comes to deaf ministry.

"It's not just for the deaf," Father Solomon said. "It's for the hearing also. It's integrating and educating both. That's the important thing."

Sign language interpreters have been warmly welcomed at Masses in the diocese.

"The hearing people, they really appreciated when I started doing the signing Mass," Father Solomon said. "They are surprised and amazed and they love it."

Made possible

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 3

ter's Parish in Massena, entered the Dominicans as a vowed member in 2009, after first having attending seminary in the Philippines. He was ordained a priest in the Diocese of Ogdensburg in 2021 by Bishop Terry R. LaValley. A hearing person who is fluent in American Sign Language, Father Solomon is now the chaplain for a newly established deaf ministry in the diocese.

Today, the religious congregation called the Castello Dominican Missionaries for the Deaf and Disabled Apostolates carries on the Dominican's heritage of service to the deaf. Four of its missionaries were ordained to the priesthood in 2023-24. The congregation is now active in several dioceses around the United States and one in Haiti.

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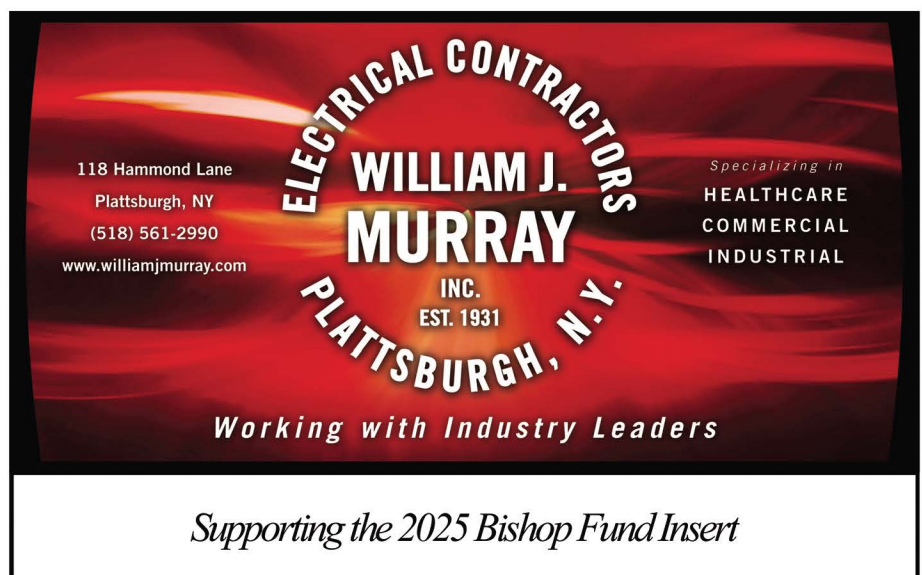
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