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The Diocese of Ogdensburg Volume 80 Number 18

NORTH COUNTRY CATHOLIC

SEPTEMBER 3, 2025

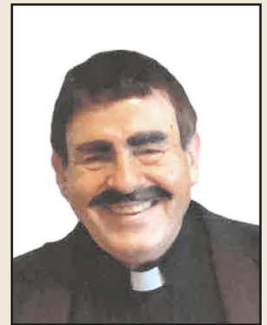
THE LOOK, FEEL & SOUND OF HOPE



PHOTO BY DARCY FARGO/NORTH COUNTRY CATHOLIC

The Diocesan Choir, made up of 35 singers from around the diocese, performs at 'The Look, Feel & Sound of Hope' Jubilee event on Aug. 24 at St. Bernard's Church in Saranac Lake. Read the story on Page 3. See additional photos on pages 8 and 9.

FATHER FISH TO RETIRE



Father Alfred H. Fish, pastor of St. Ann's Church in St. Regis Falls and Church of the Holy Cross in Hopkinton, will retire effective Sept. 3. Consistent with pastoral planning efforts, those two communities are now grouped with St. Mary's Church in Brushton and St. Augustine's Church in North Bangor under the leadership of Father Kris C. Lauzon.

FULL STORY, PAGE 4

Pope: 'Hope is not evasion, but decision'

By Hannah Brockhaus
Catholic News Agency

We find true hope when we give of ourselves freely and with love — encountering suffering, not running away from it, Pope Leo XIV said at his weekly audience with the public on Aug. 27.

Addressing pilgrims in the Vatican's Paul VI Audience Hall, the pope emphasized Jesus' embrace of suffering, when he gave himself up to be arrested in the Garden of Gethsemane before his crucifixion.

Jesus "is not the victim of an arrest but the giver of a gift," Leo said. "In this gesture, he embodies a hope of salvation for our

humanity: to know that, even in the darkest hour, one can remain free to love to the end."

The pontiff said Jesus' actions show us what it is to be free.

"In life, it is not necessary to have everything under control. It is enough to choose to love freely every day," he underlined.

Leo's general audience message centered on the scene that begins Jesus' passion: his arrest. Despite knowing what is going to happen to him, the Lord does not retreat but "gives himself up" out of love to the soldiers who have come to arrest him.

"In the middle of the night, when everything seems to be falling apart, Jesus shows that

Christian hope is not evasion, but decision," the pope said.

He recalled that Jesus prepared every day of his life for the moment of his arrest and subsequent passion and death. "For this reason, when it arrives, he has the strength not to seek a way of escape. His heart knows well that to lose life for love is not a failure."

"Jesus too is troubled when faced with a path that seems to lead only to death and to the end," Leo continued. "But he is equally persuaded that only a life lost for love, at the end, is ultimately found."

"This," the pontiff said, "is what true hope consists of: not

in trying to avoid pain but in believing that even in the heart of the most unjust suffering, the seed of new life is hidden."

He asked those listening to reflect on their lives and to think about how often they defend themselves and their own plans, without realizing that it leaves them, ultimately, alone.

"The logic of the Gospel is different: Only what is given flourishes; only the love that becomes free can restore trust even where everything seems lost," he said, adding that "this is true hope: knowing that, even in the darkness of trial, God's love sustains us and ripens the fruit of eternal life in us."

NORTH
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Something to talk about

The "gym bros" didn't talk to me much.

I've been going to the same gym four to six times per week for nearly three months. I tend to go around the same time every evening, so I tend to see the same people - mostly men - regularly.

I have a few guy friends who love lifting weights and love going to their gyms. They talk about how much they enjoy "the social aspect" of a gym.

Despite my best efforts, the gym hasn't felt very "social" to me.

Then, a couple weeks ago, I was learning to do barbell squats. In that exercise,

you squat as low as you can while holding a 45-pound bar (with weights added for people stronger and more skilled than me) on your upper back/shoulder area and with your hands. Then you simply stand back up. Repeat. It sounds easier than it is.



Darcy L. Fargo

After doing a couple sets of 10 squats without issue, I got a couple squats into my last set, and I lost my balance. I fell backwards,

clanging the bar into another piece of equipment. I'm pretty sure people in the building next door heard what happened. A gym full of "gym bros" saw it.

While the fall drove my

hairclip into my head, and that didn't feel great, my pride was hurt far more than my body was, and the fall and noise scared me.

Though I tried to stop it, I cried. I was mortified. I didn't know what to do next. So, I did the only thing I could think of: I told the guy who was helping me that I was fine, picked the bar up off the ground, put it on the squat rack, stepped underneath it, set it on my back, set my feet and squatted. I finished my set.

The next week, I kept running into people who saw my squat fail when I was working out. But now they were talking to me. A friend suggested I had earned their respect because I climbed back under the bar that day. Maybe

that's part of it, but I don't think that's it.

I think my embarrassing squat drop made me relatable. I think most people have embarrassing moments we wish we could erase from history.

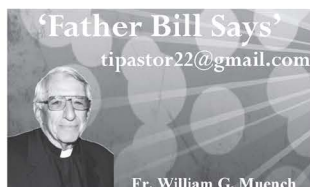
It also made me think about the fact that God tends to work most often in my life using those things about which I carry the most shame - my sinfulness, my weaknesses and my character defects. Those are the areas I need to surrender to God the most, and those are the areas through which God uses me to help others the most.

It's amazing how God uses vulnerability, our brokenness and maybe a bit of embarrassment to get people talking.

Connected by the sacraments

Today, I would like to take this opportunity to share with you an expression of my gratitude to Almighty God for the many blessings and gifts I have received personally as a Catholic priest. I want you to know how blessed God have been toward me. Our Lord has truly used me to bring the love and teachings of the Lord Jesus to many, a time of great happiness for me. I think of these blessings each time I consider the sacraments of our Catholic Church. I am truly grateful that God has chosen me to be his minister and disciple.

I have had the privilege of baptizing many infants. Each baptism has joined me to a family at this special time in their lives, as their family grows - a time of happiness at the birth of a new son or daughter. This sacrament of baptism has joined me with so many families - not just at the time of the ceremony but also through their family lives.



I have had the privilege of baptizing and bestowing confirmation on many adults, bringing them into the Catholic Church at the Easter Vigil Mass. I have helped the Catholic Church grow! It is a moment of great happiness for me, and I thank God for this blessing.

I have had the privilege of celebrating the sacrament of penance many times. I was called upon to bring God's love and forgiveness to a penitent who came seeking new life - who came seeking the love and forgiveness of our God. I truly feel blessed! I am a sinner like all who come to me in confession, yet I am called upon to lead them to our forgiving Savior, who has also forgiven me. This is

truly a happy moment for me; the Lord needs me.

I have had the privilege of celebrating the Holy Eucharist, offering the Holy Mass and bringing the Body and Blood of the Lord Jesus to so many others. I find great joy - great happiness - at this moment. I am so grateful for this happy moment to be a priest. God has chosen me to lead a parish and given me the joy of bringing the Lord - Body and Blood - to these parishioners.

I have been privileged to witness and celebrate so many wonderful marriages. This has made me a part of many families. I prayed with them on the day of their wedding. I am often reminded by a couple that I had celebrated their wedding and nuptial Mass. I have continued to be a part of their family. I am constantly grateful to God for that opportunity.

I have had the privilege of bring the support of the sacrament of the

anointing of the sick to so many who were experiencing this critical time of their life. I have also brought this sacrament to those struggling with a health problem or some other challenge in life. Helping so many, working with God to help them, I feel joyful that I can bring the strength and support of the Church.

A Prayer of Thanksgiving written by Father Edward Hays: "From the center of my being I praise You, my Lord and God, for the beautiful experiences that you have given me. They have enflamed my heart, renewed my dreams, and enabled me to see with eyes divine. As the disciples of Your Son were set afire by Your Divine Spirit, these sacred opportunities have encouraged me to greatness within the scope of my simple life. May the activities of my heart bear witness to the great grace of what has happened to me in my day-to-day life."



(Left) Flautist Maeana Cragg of St. Mary's Church in Potsdam accompanies singers during 'The Look, Feel & Sound of Hope' event on Aug. 24 in Saranac Lake. (Above) Jane Boyea of St. Mary's Parish in Brushton takes in art works created around the theme of "hope."

Celebrating the 'Look, Feel & Sound of Hope'

It was a day focused on hope and beauty as singers, instrumentalists and visual artists from around the diocese shared their talents at "The Look, Feel & Sound of Hope" art and music celebration on Aug. 24 at St. Bernard's Church in Saranac Lake, of the Jubilee Year pilgrimage destinations in the diocese.

After a welcome from St. Bernard's Pastor Father Martin E. Cline,

Bishop Terry R. LaValley greeted the crowd to the Jubilee Year of Hope event.

"What a privilege it is for me to welcome each and every one of you to beautiful St. Bernard's Church as we continue our jubilee pilgrimage with this fantastic celebration of art and music in store for us," said Bishop LaValley. "We are in for a real treat as we experience the look, the feel and the

sound of hope compliments of so many talented artists who claim the North Country as home."

Bishop LaValley thanked those responsible for planning and hosting the event, including the planning committee, jubilee committee, Father Cline, the staff at St. Bernard's and the artists before urging those assembled to "engage all our senses and en-

ter this sacred moment, Christ led, Christ fed and so hope filled."

The musical performance included a dozen pieces, some performed by a choir of 35 singers and others performed by soloists and small groups. Many

of the pieces included instrumental accompaniment, including organ, piano, oboe, flute, French horn, tuba, trombone and trumpet.

Around 20 visual artists had works on display throughout the event.



ENJOY YOUR MUCH DESERVED RETIREMENT PADRE "MAGNUM" FISH P.I. YOU HAVE SERVED FAITHFULLY.

WE WILL MISS YOUR REVERENCE FOR THE HOLY MASS AND THE EUCHARIST

AS WELL AS YOUR WITTY SENSE OF HUMOR. AD MULTOS ANNOS.

~KEVIN AND LADY HEATHER (ROBIN MASTERS ESTATE)

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Father Alfred H. Fish to retire effective Sept. 3

Bishop Terry R. LaValley recently announced that Father Alfred H. Fish, pastor in St. Regis Falls and Hopkinton since 2004, will retire effective Sept. 3.

Father Fish served as administrator of the two parishes for a year before being named pastor.

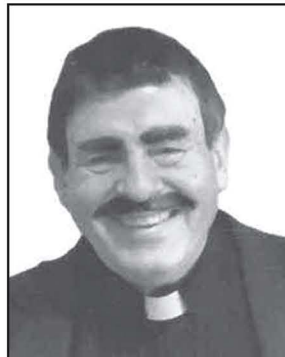
As part of the Living Stones Planning Process, St. Ann's Church in St. Regis Falls and Church of the Holy Cross in Hopkinton will be grouped with St. Augustine's Church in North Bangor and St. Mary's Church in Brushton. Father Kris C. Lauzon will serve as pastor of the four churches.

The new Mass times for the parish will be effective Sept. 3. Monday and Wednesday

Masses will be at 9 a.m. in Brushton, Tuesday will be at 9 a.m. in North Bangor, Thursday and Friday will be at 8 a.m. in St. Regis Falls, Saturday's vigil Mass will be in Brushton at 4 p.m. Sunday Masses will be at 8 a.m. in North Bangor, 9:45 a.m. in St. Regis Falls and 11:30 a.m. in Hopkinton.

**FATHER ALFRED
H. FISH**

Father Fish, 74, was born in Sidney, New York, and grew up in



Father Alfred H. Fish

Willsboro. He studied for the priesthood at Wadhams Hall Seminary College and the North American College in Rome Italy before his ordination by Bishop Stanislaus J. Brzana on Sept. 3, 1977.

Father Fish has been assistant pastor in Ticonderoga, Sacred Heart in Massena and in Champlain. He was also administrator in Willsboro, Lyon Mountain and Olmstedville.

In 1985, Father Fish was named pastor in Olmstedville until 1989, when he became pastor in West Leyden.

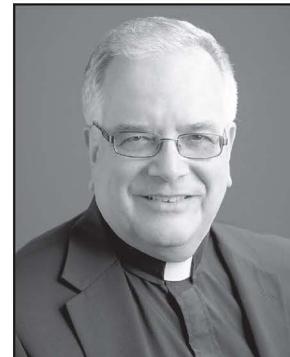
Father Fish served as pastor in Brushton from 1997 until his assignment in St. Regis Falls and Hopkinton.

**FATHER KRIS
C. LAUZON**

Father Lauzon, 67, was named pastor of St. Mary's in Brushton and St. Augustine's in North Bangor in June of 2023.

Born in Cornwall, Ontario, Canada, and raised in Massena, he graduated from Canton College and worked for six years as a draftsman for Dynapower in Watertown before entering Wadhams Hall Seminary College.

He later earned a



Father Kris C. Lauzon

theology degree from Christ the King Seminary before his ordination May 25, 1991, by Bishop Stanislaus J. Brzana.

He was previously pastor of pastor the Catholic Community of Holy Name and St. Matthew, AuSable Forks and Black Brook, as well as the Catholic Community of Keeseville. He served as administrator in AuSable Forks prior to being named pastor of those churches.

He has also served as pastor of St. Patrick's Church in Hogsburg, later having St. Mary's of the Fort in Fort Covington and St. Joseph's in Bombay added to that assignment.

He held that role at St. John's in Plattsburgh and St. Alphonsus and Holy Name parishes in Tupper Lake, in 2004.

Before becoming a pastor, Father Lauzon served as parochial vicar at Our Lady of Victory in Plattsburgh, and St. Mary's Cathedral in Ogdensburg and in Carthage and Copenhagen.

While in Ogdensburg he was also chaplain at the St. Lawrence Psychiatric Center. He also served as administrator in West Leyden.



*Support And Pray
For Vocations*

Environmental Stewardship

Season of Creation 2025

A decade ago, Pope Francis proclaimed Sept. 1 as a World Day of Prayer for the wellbeing of all of God's creations. Four years later, in 2019, he expanded this mission into a five-week period that ends Oct. 4, the feast of St. Francis of Assisi. During this time in late summer and early autumn Catholics are encouraged to join with other Christians and people of other faiths to pray and perform acts that will benefit the health of the earth.

This year, the theme of this period is "Peace with Creation." It may sound easy to be at peace with nature when you are walking, canoeing or simply sitting outside, yet this is not what this year's endeavor is about. Our society and culture is engaging in an invisible war with the earth, and we are all a party to it. Our throw-away culture, highlighted by Pope Francis in his encyclical *Laudato Si*, is responsible for supporting the exploitation of many natural resources and pollution of the air and water. In return, the planet is responding with changing climate patterns leading to extreme heat waves, floods, drought, wildfires, tornadoes, hurricanes, and rising sea levels and altered ocean currents.

To break free of this toxic lifestyle, it will take many prayers and much effort. Change never occurs without a great amount of spiritual energy and physical actions being applied to the cause.

We can accomplish peace with creation if we all do our best over the next month and become more aware of how we might overuse ordinary things around the house or at work and try to develop ways to reduce what is being consumed and thrown out. It doesn't matter if everyone performs different tasks, as we all have our own unique ideas and talents, as long as we try. Spend some time asking God for advice on how to become a better steward of His creations, and more importantly, try to follow what advice He gives you.

By Tom Kalinowski, St. Bernard's Parish, Saranac Lake

Protecting God's Children

The Diocese of Ogdensburg

is able to schedule sessions of the training, Protecting God's Children for Adults. 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. To arrange for training, call 315-393-2920 or email jjgrizzuto@rcdony.org

Bishop's Public Schedule

Sept. 3 – 5 p.m. – Installation Mass of Reverend Joseph W. Giroux as Pastor of St. Philip Neri Church in Westport, The Catholic Community of Moriah in Port Henry and St. Elizabeth Church in Elizabethtown

Sept. 4 – 9:45 a.m. – Episcopal Council Meeting at Bishop's Residence followed by Lunch

Sept. 5 – 8:15 a.m. – Opening School Year Mass at St. Catherine of Siena Academy in Canton

Noon – Diocesan Staff Picnic at Bishop's Residence

Sept. 6 – 10:30 a.m. – Diocesan Pastoral Council Meeting at St. Mary's Parish Center in Brushton followed by Lunch

Sept. 7 – 9 a.m. – Installation Mass of Reverend Sony G. Pullick as Pastor of the Catholic Community of St. Mary and St. Peter and St. Hedwig in Lowville

2:30 p.m. – A Life of Love - Celebrating Marriage Mass at St. Mary's Cathedral

Sept. 9 – 10 a.m. – Mass Celebrating the Jubilee Year of Hope at the Samaritan Keep Home in Watertown

3:30 p.m. – New York State Catholic Conference Board of Bishops Executive Committee Conference Call

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

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

Rest in Peace

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

Sept. 3 – Rev. David W. Driscoll, O.S.A., 1963; Rev. John S. Branche, 2003

Sept. 4 – Rev. Alphee Perron, 1938; Rev. Walter J. Charbonneau, 1982; Msgr. Robert J. Giroux, 2000; Rev. Patrick Mundy, 2017

Sept. 5 – Rev. Arthur Tardiff, O.M.I., 1961; Rev. John Sullivan M.S.C., 1962; Rev. Louis C. Gardner, 2000

Sept. 6 – Rev. James Connor, 1930; Rev. Joseph Stanislaus Carroll, 1952

Sept. 7 – Rev. Manuel Belleville, 1964

Sept. 8 – Rev. Michael Jacobs, S.J., 1988; Rev. William H. Coffey, 2000

Sept. 9 – Rev. Michael Olivetti, 1863; Rev. Thomas P. Fitzgerald, 1914; Rev. Antonio Audet, 1957

To Report Abuse

If you have a complaint of suspected misconduct involving diocesan clergy, religious, employees or volunteers, contact Victim Assistance Coordinator, Terrienne 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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In appreciation to our "Lowiest" priest, Father Alfred H. Fish

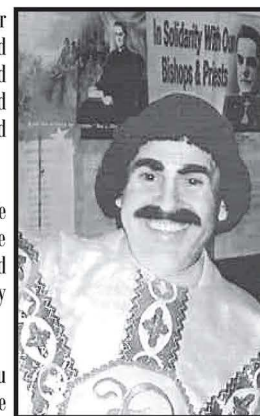
We have been blessed with a most humble, kind and charitable priest for over 20 years. He is going to be missed by many for his dedicated and spiritual guidance. His 1-minute sole savers are always informative and thought provoking. His Mass is humble and devout with a sincere love and devotion to the Eucharist, Sacred Heart of Jesus and especially Our Blessed Mother.

His jokes are funny, silly and even repetitive at times, but enjoyed by all. He is Johnny on the spot when you need him. Many nights he has gone to the hospital or sick bed to administer the sacraments, visited the sick and infirmed and has counseled those in need. He has been know to sing, play the guitar and even put on puppet show. A man of many talents.

He has been more than a priest. He has been a friend and a mentor. As you embark on your new journey as a retired priest don't forget those whose lives you have changed.

May God bless your new endeavors with love, relaxation and happiness. WE LOVE YOU AND WILL MISS YOU!

*The Parish of St. Ann's in St. Regis Falls and the Tuesday Morning Coffee Club
Arlene Bishop, Colen and Cathy Miller, Chris and Rich Deangelis, Rose and Larry White, Cheryl Crinklaw,
Linda LaRock, Dennis Ploof, Linda Dibble, Corey Haynes, Sue and Dale Richards, Mary Fullerton,
Greg and Roseanne Lordi, Peter and Elaine McGivney*





SERVERS AT CELEBRATION

St. Bernard's Church in Lyon Mountain celebrated its 150th anniversary with a Mass celebrated by Bishop Terry R. LaValley on Aug. 24. Bishop LaValley said he couldn't recall a Mass he celebrated with so many altar servers. The servers are pictured with Bishop LaValley, Deacon Kenneth Lushia, and Father Tojo Chacko, pastor of St. Bernard's and St. Edmund's Parish, Father Guy F. "Bill" Edwards, Father Francis J. "Vinny" Flynn, Father Alan J. Lamica, Msgr. Dennis J. Duprey and Father Todd E. Thibault.

CALLED TO SERVE

A life of love: Celebrating marriage

Hold the presses!

We fondly remember that phrase shouted in print newsrooms back in the day.

Broadcast news people, like me, adopted the phrase to signify an unexpected headline grabbing news story. In my day we would also react with something like "Bulletin!" These days Breaking News appears to have taken the place of Bulletin. Regardless, hold the presses, bulletin and breaking news all signified a show-stopping interruption.

There was an event in the news recently that caused turmoil in newsrooms world-wide.

It wasn't sudden peace in Gaza or Ukraine. We can pray.

It wasn't the latest tariff news.

It wasn't a natural disaster, a hurricane, flood, tornado, earthquake, or drought.

No, this was BIG news. Taylor Swift and Travis Kelce announced their engagement.

"This news will rock the world," according to one network reporter.

I don't think so. Swift is an entertainer; Kelce is a football player. They are both exceptionally good at what they do. In terms of their combined income, they do very well. I am happy for them.

As a news director, I would not think their engagement, announced on social media, warranted a Breaking News interruption, but I am old fashioned.

This was more the stuff of supermarket tabloids and gossip shows on TV and radio.

I do believe a couple can "establish a life-long partnership" but it is harder to accomplish without God's presence.

The Order of Matrimony, a ritual book of the Catholic Church, tells us in the introduction, "This sacred bond, therefore, does not depend on human choice, but rather on God, who ordained it to be endowed with its own goods and ends."

Marriage, the most common of all vocations, is honored and blessed by

the diocesan bishop each year. This year's A Life of Love: Celebrating Marriage Mass is September 7 at 2:30 p.m. in St. Mary's Cathedral in Ogdensburg.



Deacon
Kevin Mastellon

The Family Life office of the Diocese and the deacon community co-sponsor this annual event, but Family Life director Steve Tartaglia does most of the work. A registration form is available at <https://www.rcdony.org/jubilee> or you can get to it by logging into the Diocesan website.

Pre-registration is not necessary to participate and join with other couples from throughout

the diocese. A highlight of the event occurs when couples celebrating various years of marriage are asked to stand and be acknowledged. We have had couples who were married the day before the annual celebration, couples who will celebrate more than seventy years together and every celebration in between.

It is a wonderful event to acknowledge the marriage bond, and the sacrament Christ gave us to mark His presence in the union. Happy anniversary to all our married readers.

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

Catholic school to remain closed after shooting

By Daniel Payne
Catholic News Agency

The leaders of the Minneapolis Catholic school where two children were shot and killed during a mass shooting incident on Wednesday say the school will remain closed for the time being as the community continues to deal with the “unfathomable” deadly incident.

The shooting took place during the all-school Mass at Annunciation Church in Minneapolis on Aug. 27. The shooter, identified as 23-year-old Robin Westman, born Robert Westman, shot through the church’s stained-glass windows with a rifle, killing the two children and injuring nearly 20 children and adults before taking his own life.

The shooting generated global headlines and drew prayers and support from leaders including Pope Leo XIV and President Donald Trump.

In a Facebook post on Wednesday evening, Annunciation Catholic School Principal Matthew DeBoer and parish pastor Father Dennis Zehren described the crisis as an “impossible situation.”

“No words can capture what we have gone through, what we are going through, and what we will go through in the coming days and weeks,” they wrote. “But we will navigate this — together.”

The leaders indicated the school would remain closed for at least the rest of the week and possibly longer. “As we process and navigate this unfathomable time together, we will be in touch this weekend regarding when school will resume,” they said.

The statement noted that law enforcement are still carrying out “essential work” on the school’s campus, located several miles south of downtown Minneapolis.

Families in the parish will have access to support services, they said.

“In this time of darkness, let us commit to being the light to our children, each other, and our community,” the statement said. “We will rebuild our future filled with hope — together.”

Pope Leo XIV after the shooting sent his “heartfelt condolences and the assurance of spiritual closeness” to the victims of the shooting, while Catholic bishops and leaders from

Shooter mocked Christ in video

By Tyler Arnold
Catholic News Agency

The individual who killed two children and injured 17 other people in the Minneapolis Catholic church shooting posted a YouTube video before the attack, which showed an anti-Christian motivation for the murders and an affinity for mass shooters, Satanism, antisemitism, and racism.

Robin Westman — who was born “Robert” and identified as a transgender woman — died by suicide on Wednesday, Aug. 27, after shooting through the windows of Annunciation Catholic Church during a weekday Mass. Most of the worshippers were children who attend the parish elementary school next to the church.

In a video posted ahead of the attack, which YouTube has since removed from its website, the shooter showed a written apology to his friends and family but clarified “that’s the only people I’m sorry to” and then disparaged the children he planned to shoot.

Westman wrote that he has “wanted this for so long” and acknowledged: “I’m not well. I’m not right. I am a sad person, haunted by these thoughts that do not go away. I know this is wrong, but I can’t seem to stop myself.”

During the video, Westman zooms in on an image of Jesus Christ wearing the crown of thorns that he attached to the head of a human-shaped shooting target. The photo of Christ displayed the text “He came to pay a debt he didn’t owe because we owe a debt we cannot repay” below the image.

Westman laughed while pointing the camera at the shooting target, and then moved the camera to show anti-Christian messages and drawings on his guns and loaded magazines.

One message read: “Where’s your God?” and another: “Where’s your [expletive] God now?” A third read: “Do you believe in God?” while another stated “[expletive] everything you stand for.”

around the country likewise called for prayers and support for the school community

CATHOLIC WORLD AT A GLANCE

Caritas: ‘Man-made famine and assault on Gaza City’ is ‘horror’

Caritas Internationalis issued a statement on “the man-made famine and assault on Gaza City” following the Israel Defense Forces’ latest incursion into the embattled enclave, where the United Nations declared famine last week. “This is not war. It is the systematic destruction of civilian life,” the renowned international Catholic aid organization wrote in its Aug. 25 statement. “The siege of Gaza has become a machinery of annihilation, sustained by impunity and the silence, or complicity, of powerful nations.” “Famine here is not a natural disaster but the outcome of a deliberate strategy: blocking aid, bombing food convoys, destroying infrastructure, and denying basic needs,” the aid group declared. “Caritas Internationalis bears witness to this horror.” The statement continued: “Civilians, mostly children and women, are being starved, bombed, and erased. Influential governments, corporations, and multinationals have enabled this catastrophe through military support, financial aid, and diplomatic cover.” Caritas went on to condemn “hollow declarations and empty platitudes” offered by the international community in response to the plight of Gazans.

‘Let there be peace! Book of Pope Leo’s discourses published

On Aug. 27 the Vatican published compilation of Pope Leo’s discourses from the first months of his pontificate in a book signed by the pontiff titled “Let There Be Peace! Words to the Church and the World.” According to the Vatican publishing house, the 160-page volume, published in Italian, English, and Spanish, “is a valuable book: It collects the first discourses of Pope Leo XIV, through which we can better understand the pontiff through his own words.” The book’s title underscores the Holy Father’s emphasis on calling for peace, which began from the very moment of his election on May 8, when he exclaimed from St. Peter’s: “Peace be with you all! Dear brothers and sisters, these are the first words spoken by the risen Christ, the Good Shepherd who laid down his life for God’s flock. I would like this greeting of peace to resound in your hearts, in your families, among all people, wherever they may be, in every nation and throughout the world. Peace be with you! It is the peace of the risen Christ. A peace that is unarmed and disarming, humble and persevering. A peace that comes from God, the God who loves us all, unconditionally.”

Visit our website

www.northcountrycatholic.org

- Read local stories and commentaries
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- View diocesan events and much more

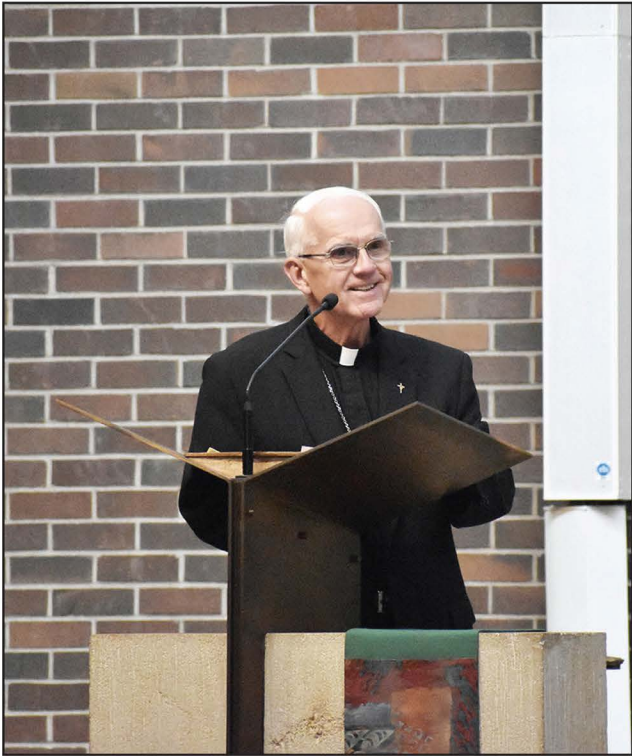
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THE LOOK, FEEL & SOUND OF HOPE

Photos by Darcy Fargo





Former papal chef opens NYC restaurant

By **Francesca Pollio Fenton**
Catholic News Agency

Known as “the papal chef,” Salvo Lo Castro spent 10 years at the Vatican cooking meals for Pope John Paul II and Pope Benedict XVI. Now, he’s opened his first restaurant in New York City’s SoHo neighborhood called Casasalvo.

The new Italian restaurant opened in July and has quickly gained popularity, particularly for Lo Castro’s mother’s meatball recipe — which was also a big hit among the two popes he served.

The 52-year-old Sicilian chef said that for those who eat at his new restaurant, it’s like eat-

ing a meal in his home.

“The restaurant is my home, and the people who dine with me aren’t clients — they’re guests who come to my home,” he said in an interview with the New York Post.

During his time cooking for the two popes, he shared that in his eyes “every pope is a normal person,” and “[w]hile John Paul was very charismatic, for me the best was Benedict.”

He added that while during the last years of John Paul II’s life he had a very light diet, Benedict was a fan of his meatballs and schnitzel.

“His eyes were magnetic, and his voice to me was God in the world,” Lo Castro said of Pope

Benedict.

Lo Castro’s experience cooking meals for notable figures doesn’t end with popes. He’s cooked for Moammar Gadhafi, the Saudi royal family, and actors Tom Cruise and Robert De Niro, among others. He will soon welcome Leonardo DiCaprio and tennis champion Roger Federer into his new restaurant for an event with the brand Rolex.

“Normally, for other people, it is not normal, but for me, it doesn’t matter if I’m cooking for a pope, president, or ordinary person,” Lo Castro said. “Every man I cook for is a king, and every woman I cook for is a queen.”

The chef also pointed out that while he typically freely invents new dishes for his menu, during Church holidays his menu has the least amount of leeway.

“Every religious period for the Catholic Church, like Christmas, is very strict when it comes to what food to serve,” he said. “On Easter, for example, I’d prepare lamb and it’s all very traditional.”

As for the future, Lo Castro said he hopes to open more restaurants around the world.

“My biggest satisfaction is that I came from a small town, and now I’m cooking for the world,” he said. “But at the same time, I’m still a very normal man.”

Coffee shop aims to be ‘outpost of evangelization’

By **Francesca Pollio Fenton**
Catholic News Agency

Step into More Coffee and you’re immediately greeted by the smell of fresh ground coffee, vintage images of the London skyline on the walls, quotes from Catholic saints on the chalkboard, and a crucifix hanging by the pickup counter.

The new coffee shop, owned and run by St. Thomas More Catholic Parish (STM) in Centennial, Colorado, hopes to become a gathering place of evangelization for those within the parish boundaries.

Tyler Duffy, director of evangelization at the parish, told CNA that the pastor of STM, Father Randy Dollins, “had this vision for an outpost of evangelization

for our parish.”

According to canon law, a pastor is responsible for the spiritual care of all those within the boundaries of his parish — Catholic and non-Catholic alike. This, Duffy explained, is a responsibility Dollins takes “very seriously.”

“So he was thinking, ‘OK, what are we doing to evangelize within our territory? What are we doing to spread the faith?’ And one of the big things was people may not feel comfortable or may not want to step into a Catholic church, but maybe there’s a place that we could find within our territory that people would be comfortable stepping into,” Duffy explained.

From there they decided to find “an outpost ... a place where we can naturally encounter people where their guard isn’t up, where they’d be happy to have a conversation, a natural place to build community.”

After hearing that the Augustine Institute — a private Catholic graduate school in theology —

was moving to Missouri and had no plans for the space, STM decided to jump on the opportunity. Since the space had previously been a coffee shop, they were able to keep some of the furniture and equipment. However, they did redecorate, rebrand, and rename the shop. Additionally, STM also became the owners of the chapel in the building and a conference room that is attached to the coffee shop that they plan to allow anyone in the community to use for free.

Duffy explained that through the coffee shop they are aiming to focus on “the transcendentals — truth, beauty, goodness.”

“We want to make the space beautiful and inviting. We want to speak the truth through our books and the conversations here and goodness — we just want to show what it is to live an upright moral life as a business, but also as individuals working the coffee shop,” he said.

However, Duffy added

that he believes “one of the best uses of the coffee shop is if we could get our parishioners to utilize the space for their own evangelization.”

He explained that while an individual might not feel comfortable asking someone to go to Mass with them, it is most likely very easy to ask someone to go grab a coffee together.

“So then you come into the space and you’re like, ‘Oh, let me tell you about this coffee shop. It’s actually owned by my church. And this is why I love my church so much.’ And that itself is like an easy way to be able to equip you to go out and evangelize.”

Duffy hopes that in time More Coffee “really becomes like a Catholic hub ... [that] this place becomes known in the archdiocese as, ‘Oh, this is the Catholic coffee shop.’ And ... that it becomes this meeting space and this gathering space just for Catholic conversation and ideation.”

Not only does Duffy

want to establish a “robust Catholic atmosphere” but he also hopes that it will become the hub for good coffee in the area for everybody. The coffee shop is currently located in what is known as “The Denver Tech Center,” or DTC, a business and economic trading center located in Colorado in the southeastern portion of the Denver metropolitan area.

“So, I would love to attract businesspeople to the area, work-from-home people to the area, people who are just looking for good coffee,” he shared. “And then if you combine the two — a robust Catholic community and atmosphere with this really beloved coffee shop in the community — then I think that naturally what you’ll find is these people who are coming just for the coffee, or just for the space, are just going to run into the beauty and the joy of the faith because they’re going to encounter a Catholic community here.”



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

www.rcdony.org/bfa



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.

VIRTUAL EVENTS

BECOME EUCHARISTIC MISSIONARY FORMATION

A Virtual workshop to be held. A Eucharistic Missionary is any Catholic who—inspired by an encounter with Christ in the Eucharist and fueled by the Bread of Life—allows God to use them as an instrument of his grace “for the life of the world.”

Schedule: 5 online sessions with 2 options to choose from. Mon. Noon to 1 p.m. Sept. 1, 8, 15, 22, 29 or Wed. 7 p.m. to 8. Sept. 3, 10, 17, 24, and Oct. 1

Place: Meet online via TEAMS

Features: Session 1: Eucharistic Revival; Session 2: Eucharistic Encounter; Session 3: Eucharistic Identity; Session 4: Eucharistic Life; Session 5: Eucharistic Mission. Each session includes a half-hour video followed by small group discussion, as well as practical ways of putting the lessons into practice during the week.

Contact: If you have any questions, please contact Marika at mdonders@rcdony.org

FRIENDSHIP GROUP MEETING

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

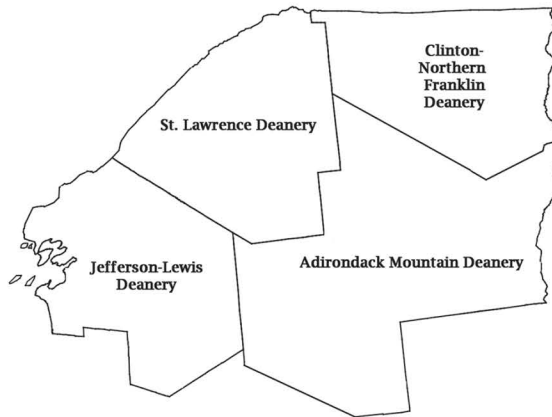
Date: Sept. 26

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



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.

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 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

PARISH MISSION

Lake Placid — St. Agnes Church to have a parish Mission over three days.

Date: Sept. 8, 9 and 10

Schedule: 1 hour sessions at 8:30 a.m. as well as evening sessions at 7 p.m. Monday evening will be followed by fellowship and refreshments; Tuesday evening with a Penance service and

Wednesday evening with Mass followed by fellowship and refreshments.

Features: See the website for more information and a video welcome from our speaker, Father Kevin MacDonald. <https://stagneslakeplacid.com/parish-mission> All are welcome!

ALPHA

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

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://stagneslakeplacid.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 sponsorship 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**FIRST FRIDAY**

Champlain — St. Mary's to have Mass, Exposition and Benediction every first Friday of the month.

Date: Sept. 5

Schedule: 9 a.m. Mass followed by Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament. 11 a.m. Benediction of the Blessed Sacrament.

SPECIAL PRESENTATIONS

Ellenburg Center — Our Lady of the Adirondacks House of Prayer to have three Special Presentations from Father Roy Tvrdik, SMM.

Date: Sept. 6

Schedule: First Sat. Devotions at 8 a.m.; First Presentation at 10 a.m.; Lunch followed by the Second and Third Presentation with a Blessing and departure at 4:30 p.m.

Features: The theme will be “Jewish Roots of Baptism, Penance and Eucharist”. Father Roy Tvrdik is a professed member of the Society of Mary of Montfort. You are warmly invited to join us for all or any part of this full day program of wisdom and joy! There is no cost but donations are much appreciated.

Contact: Please RSVP at 518-534-9976 or 518-594-3253 but if you forget, come anyway!

CARLO ACUTIS CANONIZATION DAY FOR YOUTH

Plattsburgh — Youth in grades

8-12 and Young Adults are invited to join Holy Cross as they celebrate the canonization day for Carlo Acutis.

Date: Sept. 7

Time: 11:15 a.m.

Place: St. Peter's Church

Features: Mass followed by Lunch, Guest Speaker Mary Beth Bracy, Adoration with Praise and Worship in the Chapel, Soccer Game on the Field And More!

Contact: To register for the day or sign up to play soccer email: PlattsburghSEC@rcdony.org

SOAKING PRAYERS SESSIONS

Plattsburgh — Soaking prayer Sessions to be held the first Monday of each month.

Date: Sept. 8 and Oct. 6

Time: 1 p.m. to 3 or 6 p.m. to 8

Place: Newman Center

Features: Praise and worship followed by soaking prayer. Led by Eve McGill, Living Waters Ministry. All are welcome.

Contact: evemcgill@charter.net 518-645-2648

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, Michigans, 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 throughout the day. The community parade starts at 11 a.m., proceeding down Main Street from Peru Elementary School.

JEFFERSON-LEWIS

HOLY HOUR AND DIVINE MERCY

Houseville — Exposition of the Most Blessed Sacrament and the Divine Mercy Chaplet will be observed the first Sunday of the month.

Date: Sept. 7

Time: Following 11 a.m. Mass

Place: St. Hedwig's Church

Contact: 315-348-6260

SPAGHETTI DINNER

Watertown — St. Anthony's Altar and Rosary Society is sponsoring a spaghetti dinner.

Date: Sept. 25

Time: 4 p.m. to 7

Place: Downstairs in St. Anthony's church in Msgr. Sechi Hall

Cost: Adult, \$12; Child, \$8; Meatballs, \$1 each; Sauce, \$5 a quart

Features: Take-outs available, please bring your own container.

Contact: For more information contact the Parish Center at 315-782-1190

ST. LAWRENCE

ST. JAMES SUMMER RAFFLE

Gouverneur — St. James School to have their summer raffle, grand prize \$10,000.

Date: Drawing is Sept. 7 at 12:30 p.m.

Cost: Tickets are \$100 each, only 350 will be sold.

Features: Grand Prize: \$10,000; second prize: \$5,000; third prize: \$2,500; fourth prize: \$1,500; fifth prize: \$500. Plus five Early Bird drawings for \$100 each, will be drawn June 29! All tickets will remain "in the drum" and be eligible for EVERY prize drawing!! Winner need NOT be present to win. NYS Tax documentation required.

Contact: Tickets will be available after Masses & from Gouverneur school office 315-287-0130 or St. James Parish office 315-287-0114.

COMMUNITY VOICES AGAINST HUMAN TRAFFICKING

Ogdensburg — A Human Trafficking awareness informational meeting to be held.

Date: Sept. 25

Time: 7 p.m.

Place: Ogdensburg Free Academy Auditorium

Features: You can learn to spot the signs. Victims can be any age, gender, race or nationality. Be vigilant, Be observant. Be someone's hero.

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. 6 at St. Patrick's in Colton, Sept. 7 at John XXIII Newman Center in Plattsburgh or 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 mission 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).

CELEBRATION OF LOVE AND MARRIAGE MASS

Ogdensburg — We invite all families to join us at the annual Celebration of Love and Marriage Mass.

Date: Sept. 7

Time: 2:30 p.m.

Place: St. Mary's Cathedral

Features: Bishop LaValley will be presiding. Whether you have been married for less than 1 year or over 50 years, we want to acknowledge your commitment and celebrate with you. Married couples that wish to receive a certificate signed by Bishop LaValley and have their names appear in the program should register no later than Aug. 29th at <https://www.rcdony.org/jubilee>. There will be a gathering with refreshments after the Mass.

Contact: For more information please contact Steve Tartaglia at 315-393-2920 or startaglia@rcdony.org.



YOUTH 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 speaker 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

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/fg> Financial assistance is available. For more information, contact Steve Tartaglia at 315-393-2920 or startaglia@rcdony.org.

News brief

A Pilgrimage of Hope for Creation

The Faith & Ecology Committee of the Sisters of St. Joseph will host an interfaith celebration of the beauties of God's creation, "Pilgrimage of Hope for Creation," on Sept. 28 at the Missionaries of the Sacred Heart Camp, Dablon Point (right on Lake Ontario) in Cape Vincent.

The event will include prayer, reflection on Pope Francis' book, 'Care of Our Common Home,' time with nature, youth presenters, time for sharing and simple fall snacks.

The event will run from 1 to 4 p.m., and people of all faiths are welcome. There is no cost to attend.

For more information, contact Sister Bethany Fitzgerald, SSJ, at srbethssj@gmail.com or 315-212-6592.

SUNDAY'S SCRIPTURE

Spectator, fan or disciple?

Are you a fan of the New York Yankees? Or maybe you are a spectator of the Boston Red Sox? Is it possible that you are a disciple of the Chicago Cubs? Now, as I spoke these words you may have focused on the names of baseball teams... in fact, you should have. You paid attention to those words, but I want to pay attention to three other words: spectator, fan, disciple.

Each of these words conveys in some small but distinct way our re-

lationship with a baseball team, or another person, or an organization, or in our case, here in church, Jesus Christ.

The fan will follow the team, see what's going on and check the progress. The spectator will watch the Red Sox without getting too engaged with the team but will enjoy watching what is going on. The disciple will check the sports section

of the newspaper or the team's website to check what's going on, will develop at least a one-sided relationship with the



Msgr. Robert H. Aucoin

September 7

Twenty-third Sunday in Ordinary Time

READINGS

Wisdom 9:13-18b

Philemon 9-10, 12-17

Luke 14:25-33

team and may even wear clothing that advertises the team. Jesus wants disciples - people who will follow him wherever he goes; people who will want to know more about him; people who may even wear clothing showing their dedication to him.

Being a true disciple demands dedication and devotion. But, in today's Gospel, Jesus is demanding that we be disciples, not fans, not spectators, but true disciples. The spectator can just change channels or website; the fan can get hot and cold especially when it's off season. The disciple should be in it for the long term.

Each of us has a list of important responsibilities. We have work, family, and organizations we support and people who depend on us. We try to fulfill all our duties properly. This is part of living a good

Christian life.

Undoubtedly there are times when we could give more, and maybe even sometimes when it would be best to give a little less. But we feel committed to doing what is asked of us, and, when we do these things, we feel we've done what we should - what God asks of us.

And yet, today's Gospel tells us that this is not enough. Simply fulfilling what is required as a parent, child, employee, committee chairperson or neighbor is not the essence of discipleship.

Listen again to what Jesus says: whoever does not carry his own cross and come after me cannot be my disciple.

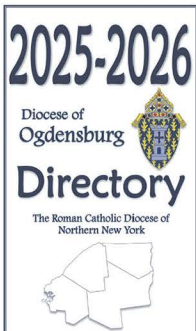
The force of a text like this reframes the ordinary world we know. Hopefully the words of Jesus shake us up. According to Jesus, what is discipleship?

Discipleship is not just one more hobby or extracurricular activity. Discipleship is why we do what we do, mindful of the costs it brings. The disciple prays, not because she thinks she should, but because

the disciple praises the object of devotion. The disciple performs good deeds not merely because it seems like a good idea, but because in doing good we are imitating what Jesus did. The disciple stands by the beloved even when things are not going well. The true disciple is not the Monday morning quarterback pretending that he could have solved all things. Rather, the disciple of Jesus is out on the field enduring hardship, the cross, because he or she knows that there is a resurrection at the other end of the cross.

We come to church not merely because we are supposed to be here. Rather, we are here because worship of our God is essential to being a faithful disciple. The fan of Jesus may wear a medal while the spectator may talk about Jesus. The true disciple sees Jesus as part of life and does not hesitate to worship. Jesus commands us to prioritize him as the source of our life and as life's ultimate end. True love for Jesus should guide all that we do. For without him, nothing else matters.

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Church destroyed, hope remains

"They destroyed the walls of the church, but not the faith. Our faith remains strong, the people of God in Falam continue to believe and hope. The faithful will rebuild the Church of Christ the King, everyone will do their part," said Msgr. Lucius Hre Kung, Bishop of Hakha, in the Burmese state of Chin, in northwestern Myanmar, during a visit to the ruins of the Church of Christ the King, which was destroyed by airstrikes by the Burmese army in April of this year.

The church was completed and consecrated in November 2023 by the Catholic community of the town of Falam, about 1,000 faithful, and then found itself in the crosshairs of the fighting between the Chinland Defense Force (CDF) militias, which had emerged in Chin State, and the Burmese army. The CDF—part of the People's Defense Forces, which opposes the military junta—took control of Falam, whereupon the army began bombing the area, which also affected the church.

Only now, months later, was the bishop able to visit the site, assess the damage, and comfort the local population. "It was a very beautiful church, and the parish was happy to take care of it. I hope it can be rebuilt soon. I look with sadness at pictures of priests of the diocese being ordained there," recalls Father Paulinus G.K. Shing, a local priest.

The Myanmar army also damaged the Catholic Church of the Sacred Heart of Jesus in Mindat, another town in Chin State, with airstrikes. The church was to become the cathedral of the newly founded Diocese of Mindat, which was established on January 25 of this year. According to the Chin Human Rights Organization, at least 107 religious buildings, including 67 churches, have been destroyed by army bombing in Chin State since 2021 during the civil war...

"In this moment of suffering and trial, we remain firmly anchored in prayer and united with the Heart of Christ and the Heart of Mary, who take upon themselves all the sufferings of humanity. Jesus and Mary give us the strength and hope to continue and hope for a future of peace," said the bishop, who regularly visits the families of the displaced and the faithful in need, bringing them, as he says, "the consolation of the Lord."

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.

Court accepts Syracuse Diocese's abuse settlement

By Daniel Payne
Catholic News Agency

A federal bankruptcy court has accepted the Diocese of Syracuse, New York's massive \$176 million abuse settlement plan, Bishop Douglas Lucia said this week.

The decision comes after a yearslong negotiation process between the diocese and victims of clergy abuse as well as between the diocese and insurers that will pay into the settlement fund.

Lucia said in an Aug. 27 letter that the diocese will contribute \$100 million to the fund, as diocesan leaders first announced in 2023.

Fifty million dollars will come from the diocese itself, with \$45 million from parishes and \$5 million from "other Catholic entities" associated with the Syracuse Diocese.

The remaining \$76 million will be contributed by diocesan insurance companies, the bishop said.

Further "nonmonetary items" in the agreement include provisions such as strengthening diocesan safe environment policies.

The diocese initiated the bankruptcy process in 2020. In his letter, Lucia thanked his fellow Catholics "who

throughout these five years have prayed for this resolution and for those whose hearts were broken by the betrayal that came at the hands of Church members."

"Together I now pray we will grow ever more as the body of Christ in this part of the world community," he said.

The Syracuse decision comes amid a wave of high-value abuse settlement payouts from U.S. dioceses, including throughout New York.

Abuse victims in New York last month agreed to a massive settlement from the Diocese of Rochester, which is set to pay \$246 million to survivors of clergy abuse there.

The Diocese of Buffalo, New York, earlier this year agreed to pay out a \$150 million sum as part of its own abuse settlement.

The largest diocesan-level bankruptcy settlement in U.S. history thus far has been from the Diocese of Rockville Centre — also in New York — which last year agreed to pay \$323 million to abuse victims.

The largest Church abuse payout total in U.S. history thus far has been at the Archdiocese of Los Angeles, which last year agreed to a near-\$1 billion payment to abuse victims.

OBITUARIES

Cape Vincent — Ida H. Radley, 92; Mass of Christian Burial Sept. 3, 2025 at St. Vincent of Paul Church; burial in St. Vincent of Paul Cemetery.

Carthage — John H. Foley, 98; Mass of Christian Burial Sept. 5, 2025 at St. James Church; burial in Glenwood Cemetery.

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

Clayton — Mary McDonald Mascott, 80; Mass of Christian Burial Aug. 28, 2025 at St. Mary's Church; burial in St. Mary's Cemetery.

Dannemora — Albert J. "Jim" LaDuke, Jr., 91; Mass of Christian Burial Aug. 28, 2025 at St. Joseph's

Church; burial in St. Bernard's Cemetery, Lyon Mountain.

Norwood — Robert J. Vice, 94; Mass of Christian Burial Aug. 0, 2025 at St. Andrew's Church; burial in Visitation Cemetery.

Ogdensburg — Suzanne Marie (Taylor) Goodman, 61; Graveside services Sept. 5, 2025 at Notre Dame Cemetery.

Olmstedville — Lois Hill Yandon, 97; Mass of Christian Burial Sept. 6, 2025 at St. Joseph's Church; burial in St. James Cemetery, North Creek.

Peru — Robert Harrison Boswell, 77; Mass of Christian Burial Sept. 12, 2025 at St. Augustine's Church; burial in parish cemetery.

Plattsburgh — Tammy Ann

(Fountain) Bayles, 62; Mass of Christian Burial Sept. 2, 2025 at Our Lady of Victory Church; burial in St. Peter's Cemetery.

Plattsburgh — Joan Roy Gillman, 89; Private services to be held.

Ticonderoga — Dayton Charles Dedrick, 51; Mass of Christian Burial Sept. 5, 2025 at St. Mary's Church; burial in Valley View Cemetery.

Ticonderoga — Patricia Trombley Trudeau, 85; Funeral Services Sept. 6, 2025 at Wilcox & Regan Funeral Home; burial in Valley View Cemetery.

West Chazy — Carrie Olive (Dunpee) Garrant, 82; Graveside services Aug. 30, 2025 at St. Joseph's Cemetery.

FACES OF FAITH



Father Amruta Kumar Pasala, pastor of the Catholic Community of Burke and Chateaugay, the Catholic Community of Constable, Westville, and Trout River, and St. Mary's of the Fort in Fort Covington, helps a student make a basket filled with loaves and fishes during Vacation Bible School held Aug. 13-15 at St. Mary's of the Fort. The vacation program was themed "It's a Miracle" and focused on Jesus' miracles.

PHOTOS BY LYDIA WOJNOWSKI AND ELAINE ROSCZKOWSKI

On Aug. 17, St. Hedwig's Church in Houseville hosted the Blessing of Flowers, Herbs and Grains, a tradition to honor our Blessed Mother, Matka Boska Zielna, Our Lady of the Greens, marked on or near the feast of the Assumption. All were welcome to participate in this custom by bringing pots or bouquets of flowers, herbs and grains and participating in a procession. The altar was decorated in local grape vines and sheaves of wheat. The blessing was done by Father Sony G. Pulickal (center), assisted by seminarian Ladouceur Flarissan (left) and Deacon Robert Uttendorfsky.



Bishop Terry R. LaValley wishes Joan Fetzko a happy 90th birthday during a luncheon celebrating the 150th anniversary of St. Bernard's Church in Lyon Mountain.