INSIDE THIS ISSUE

Bishops urge voters to put faith before politics | Page 19

Bishops, sisters lead suits against assisted suicide | Page 24

The Diocese of Ogdensburg Volume 81 Number 24

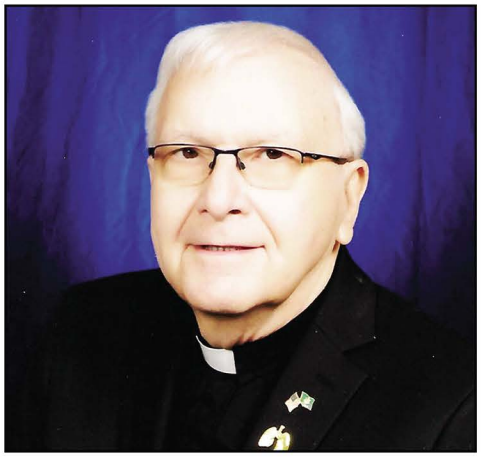
NORTH COUNTRY CATHOLIC

OCTOBER 7, 2026

WE APPRECIATE OUR PRIESTS







(Above) Father Tyler Fitzgerald, Father Michelet Boncoeur and Father Dennis Ombongi pose with Bishop Terry R. LaValley on the day of their May 30 ordination. (Right, top) Father Leagon Carlin and Dr. Louis Patrick Leroux during Father Carlin's Canon Law Commencement. (Right, bottom) Father Patrick Ratigan served in the military as both a soldier and a chaplain. Read about them in this annual Priest Appreciation Edition. Stories on pages 4, 5 and 7.

BLUE MASS



Bishop Terry R. LaValley celebrated the Blue Mass, a Mass honoring law enforcement, emergency responders and emergency communications personnel on Sept. 27 at St. Paul's Church, Black River.

STORY ON PAGE 3, PHOTOS ON PAGE 13

Pope warns of 'uncontrolled consumption'

By Victoria Cardiel
EWTN News

Pope Leo XIV warned of the urgency of the current ecological crisis during an audience at the Vatican with a delegation from the Hera Group, an Italian conglomerate specializing in environmental services, waste management, integrated water systems, and energy.

"The ecological challenge of our time is, in fact, more urgent than ever. On the one hand, we are witnessing the uncontrolled consumption of resources; on the other, the management and disposal of enormous quantities of waste are becoming increasingly problematic," he cautioned on Oct. 1.

Leo XIV also recalled that, for Christians, care for creation is part of a moral responsibility.

"As Christians, we cannot resign ourselves to accepting the throwaway culture; rather, we are called to make wise use of creation," he stressed.

"To avoid considering every used object as mere waste, it is necessary to change our behavior and commit ourselves to taking a different path. In essence, this means overcoming the consumerist model and moving toward a productive system capable of preserving the limited goods of our planet," the pontiff said.

As part of its collaboration on environmental sustainability and the circular economy, the Hera Group donated to Vatican City State in April a fully electric truck with a range of 60 kilometers (about 37 miles), which is used to collect waste within Vatican territory.

"The work you carry out, including here in the Vatican, bears witness to the fact that the culture of waste can be successfully opposed by a culture of care. This culture is not limited simply to objects and products but extends from them to human labor, and from labor to persons. For it is we who inhabit the world and who, through our decisions and behavior, live in it as a gift from God," he said from the Apostolic Palace.

The pope also cited Francis' encyclical Laudato Si', which states that "the model of recycling and circular production is a good path for ensuring a sustainable environment for future generations."

"It is important to set an example of consistency: The Church must be the first to put into practice what she herself proclaims," he added.

NORTH COUNTRY CATHOLIC
PO Box 326
Ogdensburg, NY 13669
USPS 0039-3400
Bishop Terry R. LaValley
President
Rev. Joseph A. Morgan
Vice President
James D. Crowley
Secretary-Treasurer
Darcy L. Fargo
Editor & Communications Director

Publish 45 issues per year: Weekly except skipping every other week beginning July through August and skipping one week in December by the Diocese of Ogdensburg. 622 Washington Street, Ogdensburg, N.Y. 13669.

Editorial Office:
622 Washington Street, Ogdensburg, N.Y. 13669.

Telephone:
(315) 608-7556

E-mail:
news@northcountrycatholic.org

Entered at the Post Office:
Ogdensburg, NY 13669 and additional mailing offices as Periodical Postage.

Subscription:
For one year:
In-Diocese Rate: $27
Outside of Diocese Rate: $30

Matters for publication should be addressed to PO Box 326 Ogdensburg, NY 13669 and should be received by Wednesday prior to publication. Paper is printed each Friday; dateline is Wednesday. Member, Catholic Press Association.

POSTMASTER:
Send address changes to North Country Catholic, PO Box 326 Ogdensburg, NY 13669-0326

We share a lot



Darcy L. Fargo

"You did not send that to a priest!"

The "that" in question was a video of Sesame Street characters – puppets – singing a lively song with the repeated line, "L is the letter of the day."

In sports, it's common to hear people talk about a team "taking the L" or "getting the W" – taking the loss or getting the win. When I sent that video to the priest, my favorite football team, the Pittsburgh Steelers, had just defeated the priest's favorite team, the Steelers' bitter rivals.

The video clip I sent the priest was basically me taunting/trash talking the priest.

My friend couldn't believe I was trash talking to a priest.

"Shouldn't you be kinder and more reverent around a priest?"

"He already knows I'm a jerk," was my response. "Father has heard me list all the sins I've committed. I think he can handle a little trash talk. Plus, he's talked trash to me before, too. He's still a person, you know?"

I'm very grateful for our priests for their role in serving in the person of Christ – administering sacraments and praying the words required to consecrate the Eucharist. If we had no priests, we'd have no Eucharist, and the Eucharist is the source and summit of our faith.

In addition to providing our spiritual food at the altar of the Lord and celebrating the sacraments, our priests share the Lord with us in the words they deliver when they preach and teach. They share the Lord with us in their service to various ministries. They share the Lord with us in their witness – giving their lives to the Lord.

But in addition to sharing the Lord with us, they share themselves and their humanity with us. They share meals with us. They share their humor and insights with us in conversations. They share their love of particular shows, movies, hobbies, activities and events with us. At least a few of them even share sports trash talk. They share both good days and bad days. They share the full range of human emotions. They share it all with us.

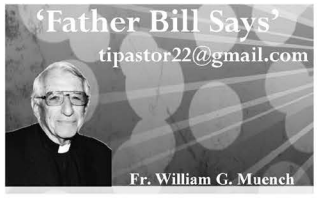
We are truly grateful for our priests. We're grateful for their humanity as they work to bring us the divine.

While many of our priests are mentioned personally in the pages of this edition, some aren't. Deadlines get missed. Emails get overlooked. Despite our best intentions, people forget. All our priests, named or otherwise, are appreciated and loved.

Even the ones who have bad taste in football teams.

Instead of a video, please join me in sending them thanks and prayers.

A priest with a profound impact



This is the Priest's Appreciation Issue – always a favorite column for me. Let me start today by declaring to you my appreciation for Bishop LaValley – I am grateful to him for all he is doing for us all – and my appreciation for all the priests of our Diocese of Ogdensburg. We have been blessed! The Holy Spirit has given us such wonderful and dedicated priests, for this we should be grateful. Our North Country parishes have great pastors and priests. So, please join me as we pray for them all; and let us pray that God continues to send many more priests to minister in our diocese.

Each year in this Priest Appreciation issue, I tell the same story of a priest who touched my life at an important moment in my life. I am so grateful for this priest's support when I really needed it. I am certain that there are many other priests who have had a profound influence on my life and my priesthood. I thank God for them all and for their support. However, here is today's story:

Recently, I was invited by a friend, a parishioner here, to join him for a ride to visit Lourdes Camp. Lourdes Camp is the summer youth camp of the Diocese of Syracuse located on Skaneateles Lake. As a young person I attended this camp many summers. Lourdes Camp was an important place for me in those days. So, I did enjoy this visit to camp now.

This story is about when I was eleven years old. On a particular day, after breakfast, one of the priests, I remember it was Father Shields Dwyer, invited me to take a walk with him. It was then that he was to tell me that my mother had died that day. Father Dwyer then spent time with me that day. I really can't remember exactly what he said to me at that time, but his presence was so very important to me that day. I know that his presence with me was truly important; I still remember it.

So, this recent visit to camp – after all these years – was a powerful gift to me. It was a God given opportunity to remember that walk with Father Dwyer so long ago. I haven't really thought about day often. I wish I had. That priest's presence was a sacred moment for me – a necessary moment.

I have had many other opportunities to experience the presence of other priests in my life – times that truly enriched my own prayer life, times that made me a better person and showed me the way, times that I have always appreciated, times that made a difference.

Today, I would like to encourage you all to remember the priests who have brought you closer to the Lord Jesus by their words and even more by their presence in your parish at Mass or around the streets of your community – just as Jesus did in his time. I am certain that his actual presence was transformative. I believe that when a priest makes Jesus present to us, each of us will discover a true moment of appreciation.

FOLLOW ME

‘Repentance takes us beyond good intentions’

Editor’s note: The following is Bishop Terry R. LaValley’s homily from the Blue Mass, a Mass honoring and praying for those in law enforcement, emergency response and emergency communications. The Mass was celebrated Sept. 27 at St. Paul’s Church in Black River.



PHOTO BY DARCY FARGO/NORTH COUNTRY CATHOLIC

Bishop Terry R. LaValley delivers his homily at the Blue Mass on Sept. 27 at St. Paul’s Church, Black River. Additional photos are on Page 13.

In our second reading, St. Paul tells the people of Philippi: “humbly regard others as more important than yourselves, each looking out not for his own interests, but also for those of others.” Boy, that’s not always easy, is it? I suspect if more of us had that really heroic Christian philosophy of life, the jobs of those charged with public safety and law enforcement would be a whole lot easier and safer.

But, because the world we live in finds evil lurking in too many places; because sometimes we find it easier to use and take advantage of our neighbor than humbly consider their interests; because, too often, we just plain can’t seem to get along, we place you, the women and men in blue who we honor today, in stress-filled, often dangerous situations. In our fractured society, too many times, we need you to protect us from ourselves.

We need you because sometimes the way we treat our neighbor indicates that we have fallen from the path of Jesus. We need you because, by and large, we mean well, but our actions don’t always reflect such good intentions, like that one son in today’s Gospel. We need you because things happen: hurricanes, floods, earthquakes, fires and we are not self-sufficient. We need you because too many people are overtaken by evil and we are scared and fearful for ourselves and for our loved ones.

As you place yourself, time and again, in harm’s way, you place the welfare of others over your own. Unless one were to walk in your shoes, we can’t pretend to know the great stress you must endure because of that. As I was reading an inspiring reflection of a 30-year retired veteran of one of our police departments, I was reminded that as you meet trauma and crisis on a regular basis, as you confront a wide spectrum of evil behaviors in our prisons and jails, on our streets, schools, homes and workplaces, there is a personal cost that you and your families pay.

Too often, we forget the physical, emotional, and psychological toll on you and your loved ones. You are on the front lines, often in crisis situations, as you face the consequences of what society is unable or unwilling to address. Sometimes we expect you to accomplish super-human feats in the face of our less-than-human behavior.

Our Gospel story today presents us with another reason why we rely on your sacrifice and bravery. And then they asked, “Which of the two did the father’s will?” They answered correctly, “The first son.” Jesus doesn’t put on this little quiz to see how clever his listeners are.

He is making a crucial point about their relationship with God. By means of His little parable, He is telling them that in the matter of obedience to God’s will, it is better by far to move from bad intentions to good positive action than to remain locked into good intentions and no action. I wonder how many of you, in your law enforcement roles have heard “I didn’t mean to do this or that.” We claim that our intentions are always noble. Maybe, though what we really intended was not to get caught.

I think it’s safe to say that we all stumble, we slip, we waffle, we fail… But our loving Father is always there, ready to pick us up if we only make an honest effort to repent—to change and live in harmony with His rule. Repentance takes us beyond good intentions. Repentance is the process of actually becoming the kind of person God wills us to be. God doesn’t write anybody off when it comes to the possibility of changing, of moving from the good intention mode to the good behavior. That’s why it’s so important that we never, never give up on anyone.

On behalf of the Church of Ogdensburg, extending from Clinton, Essex, Franklin, Hamilton, Herkimer, Lewis, St. Lawrence, to here in Jefferson County, I want to thank you for accepting the awesome responsibility of providing protection and safety for all who call our North Country, ‘home.’ It is with much personal sacrifice, as well as that of your loved ones, that you accept this charge. Please know of our ongoing strong support for you as we implore God to keep you safe from harm. You have our trust and respect.

We commend you as peacemakers and sisters and brothers in Christ. We ask God to bless all of you who wear the uniform in service to your community. I also want to ask a special blessing upon your families today, because it’s your spouses, children, and parents who daily pray for your safety while you are at work, and who love and support you at the end of the day when your duty is done. Finally let us remember all those who have fallen in the line of duty, who never failed in their generous service, even when it meant the giving of their very lives. Let us give thanks to God for the witness they left us, a witness of sacrifice, and a witness to the dignity and honor of their vocation of service. God bless you and your families for your selfless service.



Father Shane M. Lynch

Thank you!

Father Shane and
Father Al
for your spiritual
leadership.

The Parishioners of
Immaculate Conception
and St. Andrews



Father Albert J. Hauser

Father Carlin: 'A lot of newness all at once'

By Darcy Fargo
Editor



Bishop Terry R. LaValley and Father Leagon J. Carlin at Father Carlin's installation as new pastor of Our Lady of Grace Parish in Morristown, Hammond and Rossie.

Having completed his studies in Canon Law at St. Paul University in Ottawa, Father Leagon J. Carlin, now pastor of Our Lady of Grace Parish in Morristown, Hammond and Rossie and vice chancellor and adjutant judicial vicar for the Diocese of Ogdensburg, says he is settling into his new roles and this new part of his ministry.

"It's an honor to be asked to serve in various capacities, and I look forward to whatever the Lord wants me doing here," said Father Carlin. "It's exciting to be given good diversity of work. It says in scripture, 'behold, I make all things new.' I've certainly experienced a lot of newness in my vocational discernment and living my vocation. Right now, it's a lot of newness all at once, and that's a gift if I let it be a gift. God is doing something here, and Jesus makes all things new and ancient at the same time. I'm excited for this adventure – for both the newness and the bit of stability."

While he enjoys the diversity of the role, Father Carlin said the stability of his parish and his new role as pastor are his priority.

"My primary responsibility is to the people of the parish and to be their pastor," he said. "Fatherhood is first. It's been said to me by various people (in the diocesan offices) that, for example, if there's a funeral or some other need in the parish that makes it so I can't be in the office, that's understandable."

Father Carlin said he looks forward to growing as a pastor.

"It's often said being a parochial vicar is like being a fun uncle," he said. "You get to do all the cool stuff – be with people, love people, bring Jesus to them and be present to them, but you don't have to make the hard choices, get the roof fixed and sign the checks. To be the father of a parish, to be the one shepherding this slice of the diocese, is new and exciting but also daunting."

In his role as vice chancellor, Father Carlin supports diocesan administration and the various offices and departments of the diocese.

"I'm working in the areas of administration, both internal curial administration – working with the people who work here and the offices here – and external administration, working on the broader administrative needs of the diocese," he said. "I'm working alongside people who have done these jobs, and I'm doing my best to assist. I'm answering questions I'm qualified to answer and directing questions I'm not qualified to answer to the right individuals or offices."

Father Carlin serves the Tribunal primarily on Wednesdays.

"That's the day I spend reading cases and writing briefs and documents," he said. "There's flexibility in that, and I'm still working on the order of things. I'm very much a believer that we need to have a plan but be flexible."

Father Carlin said his work in the Tribunal, overseen by Judicial Vicar Father Garry B. Giroux, can include a variety of topics related to Canon Law, but it tends to be focused on the Marriage Tribunal.

"We're looking at cases of pretty painful or difficult moments of peoples' lives through the lens of Church law and with the mercy and justice of the Father," he said. "It's about finding the truth of the case, and that involves a lot of paperwork. The paperwork ensures people's rights are being respected, and procedures are being done well and with justice and order, themselves acts of charity. It's asking questions of people at interviews, gathering evidence, looking at the facts of each case, reading documents and determining what is present and not present."

Father Carlin said he enjoyed learning about Canon Law and how to apply it. In addition to marriage law, Canon Law includes rules and procedures for the administration of temporal goods – "stuff the Church owns," Father Carlin explained. It also defines and regulates how rules are made and applied, the hierarchy, laity and consecrated life, ministries, schools, communications, sacraments, worship, sacred places, crimes and penalties and processes.

"A lot of people aren't familiar with Canon Law or know it only as a red book full of rules," he said. "It is a red book full of rules, but good people have good rules. It helps us to treat each other well and know where we stand. The laws of the Church, like God's law, are not designed as some kind of oppression; it's for the protection of rights and to help us live together in harmony – like all good laws. Canon Law isn't something to be afraid of. The Law of the Lord is to love, and as it says in the final Canon in the code, salvation of souls is the supreme law of the Church."

He said studying Canon Law suited him well given his natural interest in law, systems and procedures.

"I find the law very interesting," Father Carlin said. "I've had a disposition for that kind of thinking since I was a kid. I'm oriented toward and motivated by justice and fair treatment. The idea of the law being for the protection of rights and integration of responsibilities comes naturally to me."

Father Carlin said his seminary, Mount St. Mary's Seminary in Maryland, also gave him a strong early formation in Canon Law.

"At the Mount, we learned what I discovered later was a remarkable amount about Canon Law compared with what other seminaries offer," he said. "I left with a grasp of the fundamentals of marriage law, at least, and Canon Law of the sacraments – what makes Mass valid, Confession valid, what's required for the celebration of the sacraments, what words can be changed and what words can't."

While he acknowledged his new roles are complex, Father Carlin said he sees opportunities to grow through the complexities.

"I'm excited to learn how to trust the Lord better – the process of a lifetime," he said. "And I'm excited to see what God is doing. Studying the law of the Church and in my small amount of exercising the law, it's become so much clearer how Canon Law is a ministry of mercy. The three words that are on my heart – just, clear and healing. I don't know if there are three things more necessary in the world today than justice, clarity and healing. To do law well in an ecclesiastical context is to bring about those three great virtues."

BARSTOW
AN AMERICAN REVOLUTION BUICK GMC SUBARU
For More Information, Visit Our Web Page at: www.barstowmotors.com
MARKET ST., POTSDAM, NY ✆ (315) 265-8800
Your NNY Regional GM & Subaru SuperCenter

Fr. Ombongi: 'It's a wonderful experience to be a priest'

By Darcy Fargo
Editor

"So far, I can say it's good to be a priest," said Father Dennis Ombongi, parochial vicar at St. André Bessette Parish in Malone and one of the newest priests of the diocese. "It's a wonderful experience to be a priest. Being a priest is one of the deepest joys I experience day to day in life. Every day, I am reminded that this vocation is not simply a role, it's a relationship – one lived with God and his people."

Father Ombongi was ordained by Bishop Terry R. LaValley on May 30 at St. Mary's Cathedral in Ogdensburg.

"I'm really enjoying it; it is wonderful," he said, describing his priesthood. "I an say celebrating the sacraments has been the heart of my ministry. And in the Holy Sacrament of the Mass, I feel the weight and beauty of what it means standing in persona Christi (in the person of Christ)."

His experiences in ministry early in his priesthood have been impactful, Father Ombongi said.

"The Eucharist gathers us in community, and it gives me the strength to keep working," he said. "I experienced a baptism – I never had an opportunity as a deacon. Welcoming children as new members into the Body of Christ gives me hope. It touches me a lot. Everything I've been doing, Mass, baptism, graveside services, last rites in hospitals, being there with people when they have a moment of joy, a moment of sorrow, a moment of wondering – it encourages me and gives me the purpose of priesthood – being there, bringing Christ to the people. The priesthood brings me closer to the people of God in their vulnerable moments. When I go for last rites, I find the families there crying. Staying with them, being with the people losing a loved one, it gives me purpose why I am a priest."

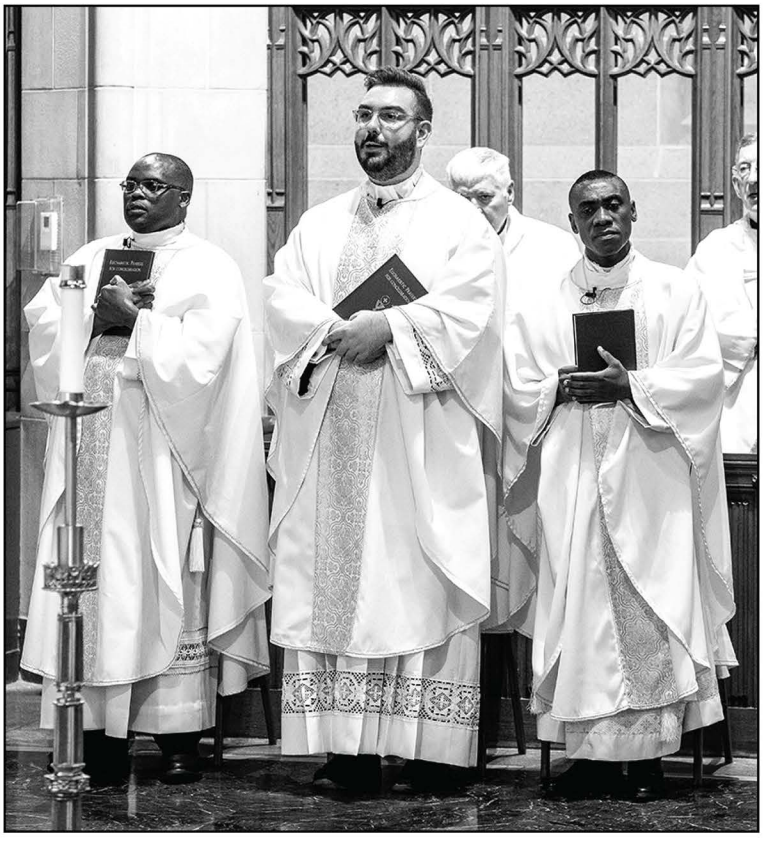


PHOTO BY JESSE SOVIE/NORTH COUNTRY CATHOLIC
Father Dennis Ombongi, Father Tyler Fitzgerald and Father Michelet Boncoeur at their ordination to the priesthood on May 30.

Father Michelet Boncoeur

Father Michelet Boncoeur, currently in residence at Blessed Sacrament Parish in Watertown, is currently unable to serve in ministerial roles due to issues with his immigration status. We'll follow up with Father Boncoeur at a later date.

Please keep him in your prayers through these challenging times.

Being in Malone, Father Ombongi has also had an opportunity to serve at the parish's outreach, which includes a food pantry, community meal offerings, a thrift store and other services.

"It's a wonderful place to meet people and serve people," he said. "Serving people lunch and eating with them – really amazing! Coming here and serving where there is need touches me a lot. It's a wonderful place, working with the people here."

Father Ombongi said he's also found working with the volunteers at the outreach to be inspiring.

"People come together, celebrate together, help one another," he said. "A lot of people come to volunteer. It touches me a lot. All of us are given responsibilities as Christians – how can we

CONTINUED ON PAGE 11

Father Fitzgerald: 'The life I was created for'

By Darcy Fargo
Editor

"There are long days, tiring days but every night so far being in a parish, being a priest, I'm satisfied as I'm putting my head on my pillow that I did my best to bring people to Christ," said Father Tyler M. Fitzgerald, parochial vicar at Holy Cross Parish in Plattsburgh and the youngest priest of the diocese. "It's a nourishing feeling. I'm only 26, and I know I haven't lived that much, but four months in, this is the happiest I've been in my entire life."

Father Fitzgerald was ordained by Bishop Terry R. LaValley on May 30 at St. Mary's Cathedral, Ogdensburg.

"It's going very well," Father Fitzgerald said of his priesthood so far. "I can't believe this week will be four months ordained, and I'm wrapping up three full months in the parish. I've gone through a baptism of fire of sorts already. I've done a lot, seen a lot, heard a lot. I'm not sure there are any sins I haven't heard in the confessional – though no murder."

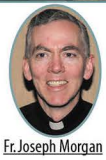
Being in the confessional and administering the sacraments has been one of the greatest joys of his priesthood so far, he said.

"Being the youngest priest in the diocese, the spread of ages of people who come to confession and open their hearts and look to me as father and ask for help and advice crying, it's humbling,"

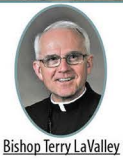
CONTINUED ON PAGE 11

We appreciate our priests




Fr. Joseph Morgan

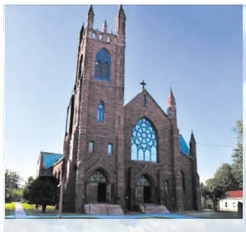

Fr. Leo Wiley


Bishop Terry LaValley

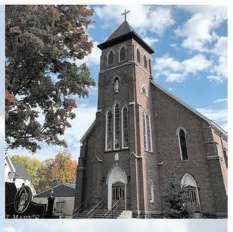

Fr. Daniel Chapin


Fr. Donald Manfred

The St. Stephen's Knights of Columbus Council wishes to continue our year of Thanksgiving Celebration by honoring our Five Diocesan Priests.
Thank you, our Good and Worthy Shepherds.







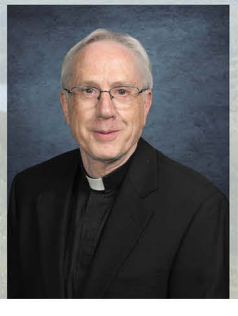
IN GRATITUDE FOR YOUR PRIESTHOOD

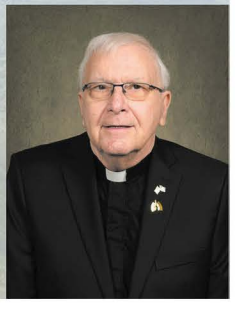
Thank you to our Pastor, Fr. Bryan Stitt, Parochial Vicar, Fr. Scott Belina, and retired priests, Fr. Stephen Rocker, & Fr. Patrick Ratigan.
Thank you for your continued "yes" to Our Lord's call and for all you do in shepherding the souls entrusted to your care.

from your parishioners at St. Mary's in Potsdam, St. Patrick's in Colton, & St. Mary's in Canton

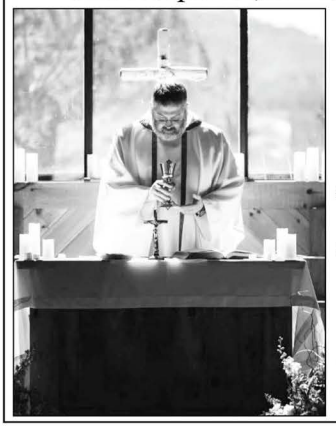








We extend our deepest gratitude to our beloved pastor, Father Martin Cline.



Your dedication, compassion, and faithful service are a true blessing to our parish and community.
Thank you for all you do and for the many ways you guide and care for us. We are grateful to God for you and your priestly ministry!

Catholic Daughters
Court 787 St. Bernard's
Saranac Lake

In abundance of appreciation to



Father Alan Shnob

A man of deep faith and a friend of our family for many years.

Thank you for your spiritual guidance.

Scott & Doreen Wilson
Louisville, NY

HERITAGE AND HEROES

A ministry of presence: A call within a call

By Mary Beth Bracy, consecrated virgin
North Country Catholic

This is our third story in the "Heritage and Heroes," a series featuring the stained-glass windows at St. Mary's Cathedral in Ogdensburg depicting American history and interviews with faithful veterans or active-duty military who serve God and country.

Father Patrick A. Ratigan may be retired, but he spent a long time on "active duty" and comes from a long line of those who have selflessly served.

"There is a strong family tradition of military service," Father Ratigan, who currently resides in Hannawa Falls, shared. "My mother's two brothers served in World War II. One of them, my Uncle Warren, served in the Philippines and was captured by the Japanese. He survived the Bataan Death March and died of malaria a few months later. I have visited his grave in the Manila Military Cemetery. My mother's other brother, Uncle Bill, was a navigator on the B-26 bomber and he was shot down over Italy. They were able to limp back and crash landed in friendly territory."

"My Father and his two brothers also served in World War II. Three of my brothers also served: Jimmy in the Navy, Mike in the Army, and Tommy, who was severely wounded in Vietnam. So I had a lot of examples that inspired me to serve. In fact, I had to get my parents' permission to join the Army right out of high school at the age of 17. I found myself barely 18 years old serving on the DMZ (demilitarized zone) in Korea."

'A constant inspiration to me'



Father Patrick Ratigan offers a memorial service for the three men who died on the Thunder Run into Baghdad.

Father Patrick A. Ratigan reflected on his service as a military chaplain.

"My time with the military certainly impacted my priesthood in many positive ways. To see the faith and dedication of some of our young soldiers is inspiring. A major dimension of military chaplaincy is that you are 100% part of your parishioners' life. There's nothing like being connected to your parishioners when you are right alongside them during Operation Desert Storm in 1990, Operation Uphold Democracy to Haiti in 1994, assisting with humanitarian missions to Central and South America while assigned to the Special Forces, or Operation Iraqi freedom in 2003 to Baghdad and then to Fallujah. And nothing can replace the ministry connection of jumping out of airplanes with your parishioners, which I did as a jump master serving at Fort Bragg. It is a unique ministry when you are living side-by-side and doing everything together, especially on deployment. Sometimes you hear people say that your ministry meant a lot to them, but in my case, it was just the opposite. Their faith and dedication were such a constant inspiration to me."

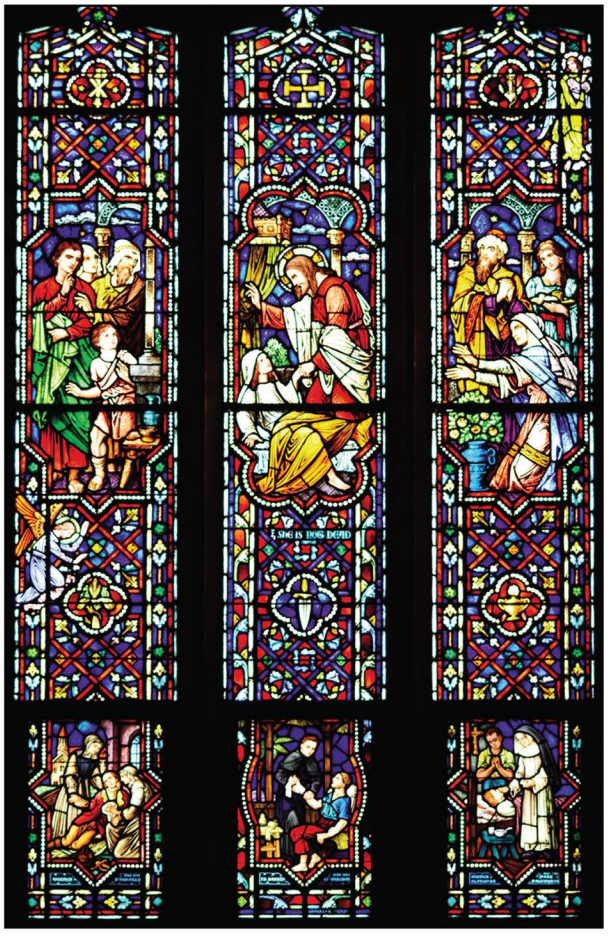
Suscipe prayer

"Take, Lord, and receive all my liberty, my memory, my understanding, and my entire will,
All I have and call my own.
You have given all to me.
To you, Lord, I return it.
Everything is yours; do with it what you will.
Give me only your love and your grace, that is enough for me.
Amen."

Then, one calling opened the door for another.

"Towards the end of my three-year enlistment, I discerned a possible priestly vocation and entered the seminary," he said. "I was serving very happily in the diocese (of Ogdensburg) after my 1983 ordination, but I guess there was still an itch to return to military service, this time as a chaplain. Bishop (Stanislaus J.) Brzana, who himself served as a chaplain in World War II, granted permission in 1988 for me to serve as an Army Chaplain, and so my service began anew."

Father Ratigan said his time as a chaplain had a profound impact on him.



Top: Jesus healing Jairus's daughter. Bottom, from left, Saint Marguerite d'Youville, a widow who founded the Sisters of Charity of Montreal, known as the Grey Nuns. She was the first native Canadian saint and 'mother of the poor'; St. Damien of Molokai, a Belgian Catholic priest who belonged to the Congregation of the Sacred Hearts of Jesus and Mary and volunteered to minister to the leprosy patients in Molokai, Hawaii; Mother Mary Alphonsa (Rose Hawthorne Lathrop), daughter of American novelist Nathaniel Hawthorne and foundress of the Dominican Sisters of Hawthorne who care for the dying.

"People have described a military chaplaincy as being two vocations: one to the priesthood and then a second vocation to the military," he said. "That seems to be an accurate description. As I was organizing my thoughts for this interview, it struck me that my most impactful moments were while deployed. I guess while stateside in garrison things are pretty normal, in a lot of ways similar to parish life, except that you wear the uniform and have broad access to everyone everywhere. Deployments and field maneuvers are where chaplains are most impactful. We are unique in their ministry of presence. We accompany soldiers everywhere and endure all the same hardships. I kind of guesstimated that I have slept on a cot, either under the sky or in a tent, for a combined total of more than four years during my service. I also guesstimated

CONTINUED ON PAGE 20

Environmental Stewardship

Dealing with drafts

Heating your home this winter could be a challenge. Along with high fuel prices, a Super El Nino weather pattern may bring wild swings in temperatures along with prolonged high winds.

While bitter cold is the primary factor in maintaining a suitable indoor temperature, drafts also cause heat loss. Moving air changes the pressure on a structure's surface which allows outside air to be sucked inward more readily. As the strength of wind increases, so does the amount of cold air pulled into your home.

This is why heating experts stress the need to seal the small cracks, crevices and holes that exist in your house. The areas around windows, doors, dryer and kitchen vents, outside faucets & electrical outlets and chimneys are all places air can enter the home if not properly sealed. Fireplaces should be checked, as dampers must close properly to prevent cold air from pouring down the chimney when not in use. Cracks in masonry can be a source of drafts but could also allow sparks and heat from fires to come into contact with dry wood and ignite a structure fire.

It is wise when checking dryer and kitchen vents for drafts to clean them properly and make sure that they shut fully when not in use. Lint from clothes and grease from frying can clog the flaps on these devices and prevent them from closing tightly when idle.

It is nearly impossible to eliminate all drafts into a home, however reducing the number and size can do a lot to help a home retain its warmth.

Setting the thermostats at lower temperatures also helps. If your home has numerous heating zones, it is best to heat only those rooms that are in use to a comfortable level and lower temperatures to 55 when rooms are not in use.

Addressing drafts is major in helping reduce your heating costs this winter.

Bishop's Public Schedule

Oct. 7 – noon – Mass at the Riverview Correctional Facility in Ogdensburg
Oct. 9 – noon – Mass at St. Mary's Cathedral
4 p.m. – Mass at Wadhams Hall in Ogdensburg for the Women's Healing Retreat
Oct. 10 – 11 a.m. – Mass for Family Camp at Camp Guggenheim in Saranac Lake
4 p.m. – Mass at St. Mary's Cathedral
Oct. 11 – 8 a.m. – Mass at St. Mary's Cathedral
Oct. 13 – 8:30 a.m. – Mass at the Franklin Correctional Facility in Malone
noon – Mass at the Upstate Correctional Facility in Malone

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:
Oct. 7 – 6 p.m. – St. James School, Gouverneur
Oct. 21– 5:30 p.m. – St. Anthony's School, Watertown

Rest in Peace

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

Oct. 7 – Rev. Jean N. Laverlocher, O.M.I., 1884
Oct. 8 – Rev. Edward Letourneau, 1898
Oct. 9 – Rev. William Joseph Normandeau, 1892; Rev. Francis Xavior Chagnon, 1911; Most Rev. Leo R. Smith, 1963
Oct. 10 – Robert Duford, 1949; Rev. J. A. Sirois, O.M.I., 1950
Oct. 11 – Rev. William Burns, 1837
Oct. 12 – Rev. Francis Xavior Pelletier, 1881; Rev. P. Joseph Mullins, O.S.A, 1960; Rev. John P. Kennehan, 2025
Oct. 13 – Rev. Francis X. Campbell, O.S.A., 1984

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

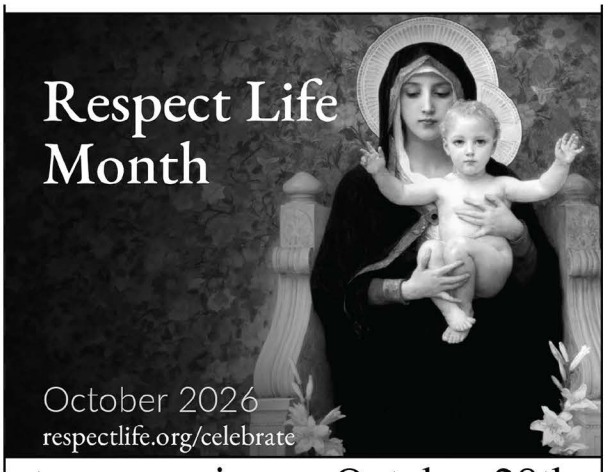
Visit our website
www.northcountrycatholic.org
- Read local stories and commentaries
- Search archived papers
- View diocesan events and much more

Find us on Facebook!



October is Respect Life Month

We are inviting you to consider sponsorship of an advertisement with the USCCB theme:



to appear in our October 28th issue of the

The Diocese of Ogdensburg
NORTH COUNTRY CATHOLIC

For $25 your name will appear as a supporter of human life from conception through natural death. Your donation helps to support the material printed in the NCC.

Must be returned to the NCC by Oct. 21, 2026
Please return entire ad with payment

Call our office at 315-608-7556 to donate with your Credit Card or fill out the form below:

YES! I/We would like to support a Respect Life Page in the *North Country Catholic.*

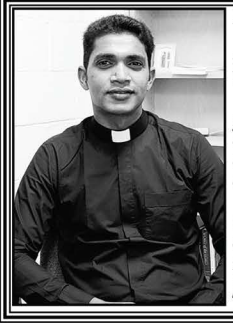
Name_____
Address_____
City_____
State_____ Zip_____
Phone_____
Name as it will appear in the ad (please print):
_____
_____

Mail Checks payable to: *North Country Catholic*
PO Box 106, Canajoharie, NY 13317

We appreciate our priests

Thank you,
Father Carlin,
for your ministry to us.

The Parishioners of
Our Lady of Grace in
Morristown, Hammond and
Rossie



Fr. Clement:
Thank you for all that you have done and still do for our parishes, not only here but for everything you are doing in India.
All of us appreciate your kind and generous heart. We imagine you are entertaining everyone with your wit and charm. When here you humor brightens our day.
Wishing you well, keep smiling and stay safe. Our Blessed Mother is watching over you and we are praying for your return.
God Bless You,
The Keeseville Altar Rosary Society

Thank you
for answering God's call.

Bishop Terry R. LaValley
Rev. John M. Demo
Rev. Lukas H. Gruber
Rev. Donald J. ManFred
Rev. Kevin J. O'Brien
Rev. F. James Shurtleff

From the Vocations Committee
of Ogdensburg, Heuvelton and
Lisbon

Father Arthur J. LaBaff , Father Douglas G. Comstock & Father Donald Robinson

The Catholic Community of Alexandria & St. Mary's in Clayton are so blessed in having you as our priests!

Deacon Neil & Dee Fuller, Deacon Gary & Gayle Frank, Deacon James & Wanda Kavanaugh,
Deacon Bernie Slate, Deacon Joel & Dawn Walentuk,
and your parishioners,
St. Cyril's Church, Alexandria Bay
St. Francis Xavier Church, Redwood
St. Mary's Church, Clayton







Father To Jo,

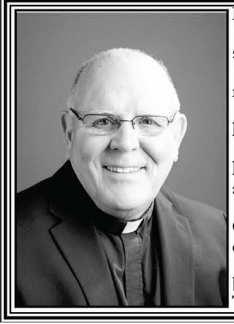
We love you at
St. Bernard's and St. Edmund's Parish
~Frances Polletta

Fr. Kevin O'Brien

Your parishioners from
St. Raphael's, Heuvelton and
Ss. Philip and James, Lisbon
appreciate all you do for us.

Fr. Kevin
Fr. Doug
Fr. Fitz

Blessings here at Holy Cross Parish

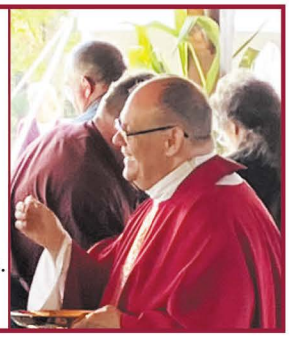


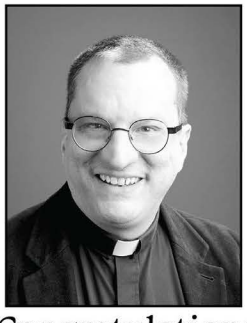
Msgr. Duprey:
It's been a joy getting to know you and we're sure you feel the same way about us. 😊
We want you to know you have made us feel relaxed and very comfortable.
Your sermons are very informative and humorous. Thank you very much.
Fr. Clement will be happy to know your handing out of candy after Mass has been a job well done.
Thank you for agreeing to fill in for Fr. Clement until his return, we are the lucky ones.
Please don't be a stranger, may our Lord bless you and keep you safe, keep smiling.
The Keeseville Altar Rosary Society.

Fr. Scott Seymour
Fr. Dennis Ombongi

Thank you for everything you do for our parish and community.
We are blessed by your joyful ministry and very grateful for your leadership.

St. André Bessette Parish





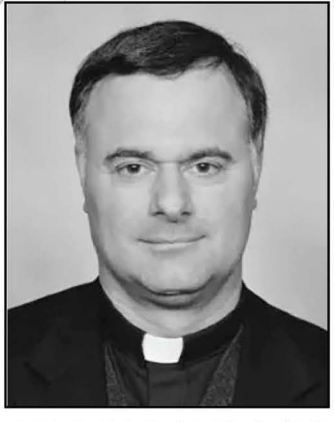
Congratulations

Fr. Christopher J. Looby
on the 25th anniversary of your ordination!

God Bless,
Deacon Bernie Slate

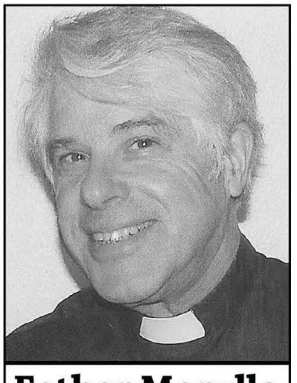


We are deeply grateful for **Father Jaya Francis,** whose gentle leadership, prayerful guidance, and unwavering commitment to St. James and St. Mary's Parishes enrich our community every day.



REV. JAMES TETI

The parishioners of
St. James Major, Lake Pleasant
and St. Ann's, Wells
appreciate your leadership.
We pray that God will continue
to bless you in your priestly
ministry.



Father Marullo

You always will be the best!

- Deacon Jim and Christine Chaufty

OCTOBER 7, 2026

‘A wonderful experience’

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 5

preach and reach the people of God? To see people coming and volunteering, serving one another and serving community, I reflect on love – the love they have helping one another. They see a need, come forward and help. Love and the ministry of God – our brother’s keeper.”

While he’s taken easily to the direct ministry portion of the priesthood, Father Ombongi said he’s grateful his assignment in Malone is allowing him to grow in other areas, as well.

“As a new priest, there are so many areas I need to learn,” he said. “Especially administration. I’m always talking to the pastor, Father Scott Seymour. He’s very, very good whenever I ask a question. It’s a lot to learn. I thank the staff in Malone for being always ready to help me.”

Father Ombongi said he’s found St. André Bessette Parish to be a “wonderful community.”

“People are so welcoming,” he said. “Being 3,000 miles from my family and almost six years without seeing family, being with the people here – I consider all the people my family.”

Father Ombongi said he prays for his parish family.

“I pray for the people the Lord has given me,” he said. “My hope is one day God calls us home, all of us find ourselves in heaven. I ask the Lord for the grace to follow him always.”

‘Life I was created for’

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 5

he said. “I’m reminded every time it happens that they’re not coming for me. They may seek me out for my natural gifts – being easy going and quiet – but they’re coming for Jesus, and that’s the most perfect thing I can offer them.”

Father Fitzgerald said it’s been exciting to see how his “personality interacts with the sacraments.”

“I’ve had others comment that I’ve been comfortable celebrating Mass from my first Mass onward,” he said. “It’s a great consolation I received before ordination. I knew this was the life I was created for.”

Father Fitzgerald recalled taking a call and going to a person who was at home dying, anointing the person and giving an apostolic pardon for the first time.

“That person died the next day,” he said. “I was talking to a priest friend, and he asked, ‘how did it feel helping to get a soul to heaven?’”

Originally from Madrid in St. Lawrence County, Father Fitzgerald says he’s grateful to be serving in Plattsburgh, since he had only one previous experience serving on the eastern side of the diocese.

“It really is a whole new world out here,” he said. “Before last summer, when I was in Champlain and Rouses Point, I had been to Plattsburgh maybe four or five times. Now I’m ministering to people who’ve never heard of Madrid…It’s amazing what two hours in the North Country can give you, like exploring Vermont. I went to Burlington for the first time, and it was my first time taking the ferry. And there are so many towns I’ve never been to and parishes I’ve never seen. It’s nice exploring the Champlain Valley in fall colors.”

Being in the new area has afforded Father Fitzgerald opportunities for growth.

“I’ve enjoyed soaking up the history here,” he said. “I’ve had opportunities to use both Spanish and French a number of times. I celebrated Mass in Spanish. They needed coverage for the monthly Spanish Mass. I don’t speak Spanish well, but I attempted it. It was alright. People appreciated the effort. I’ve heard confessions in French and did a funeral service in French.”



PHOTO BY JESSE SOVIE/NORTH COUNTRY CATHOLIC

Father Dennis Ombongi, Father Tyler Fitzgerald and Father Michelet Boncoeur during their May 30 ordination.

After spending nearly his entire life to this point on academic schedule, Father Fitzgerald said he is enjoying living in a parish and getting to know the people there.

“There are wonderful, wonderful people here,” he said. “They’re so gracious. You can tell they love their priests. I love alliteration, so after daily Mass, I’ll tell people to have a magnificent Monday, a terrific Tuesday or a wonderful Wednesday. I had a parishioner approach me after Mass and give me a packet of alliterations. People bring tomatoes and cucumbers from their gardens. A family had me over for dinner and a cup of coffee. It’s wonderful to be loved as a priest and be received by your people.”

He’s also looking forward to experiencing aspects of parish life for the first time as a priest.

“For the past eight years, I’ve been in seminary during Advent and Lent,” Father Fitzgerald said. “In the seminary, you don’t have things like penance services. There aren’t extra Masses on the schedule. I’m excited to see how we do things in the four worship sites here – the customs of each place. I’m looking forward to just living a liturgical year in a parish.”

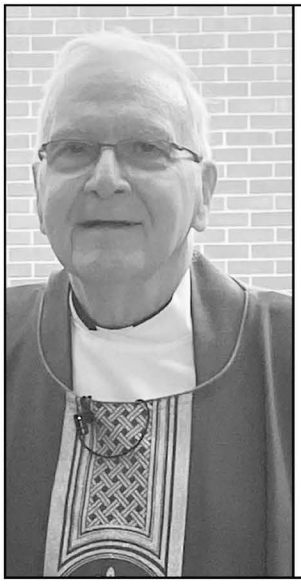
He’s also grateful to his pastor, Father Kevin D. McEwan, who has been a helpful teacher.

“Father Kevin has taught me a lot so far,” Father Fitzgerald said. “For example, writing a contract for something to get fixed. When something comes across his desk, he calls Father Doug (Schirmer, another parochial vicar at Holy Cross Parish) and me in, and we have a teaching moment. Everyone in the office is helpful.”

And he looks forward to continuing to serve the people of God here in the diocese.

“People are looking for Christ, and I get to try my best to show him to them,” he said.

We appreciate our priests



Thank you Fr. Patrick Ratigan!

You are a first rate shepherd, spiritual director, mentor and friend. Thank you for always showing up for us.

Jimmy and Robin

We are so blessed to have you to guide us on our journey of faith!

Fr. Kevin McEwan, Pastor
Fr. Doug Schirmer
&
Fr. Tyler Fitzgerald, Parochial Vicars

May the peace of Christ shine upon you.

The parishioners of Holy Cross Parish
Plattsburgh, New York





In honor of
Fr. Shane Lynch
and
Fr. Albert Hauser,

we offer our sincere gratitude for your selfless and dedicated service to the parishioners of both St. Cecilia's in Adams and Queen of Heaven in Henderson. May God Bless you both.



Fr. Jose Kaniyankunnel John, HGN

The Parishes of St. Agnes and St. Brendan and St. Agnes School welcome you!
We are grateful to have you as our pastor.
May God bless you in your ministry.

AT THE BLUE MASS

Bishop Terry R. LaValley celebrated the Blue Mass, honoring and praying for those serving in law enforcement, corrections, emergency response and emergency communications, on Sept. 27 at St. Paul's Church in Black River.

Photos by Darcy Fargo

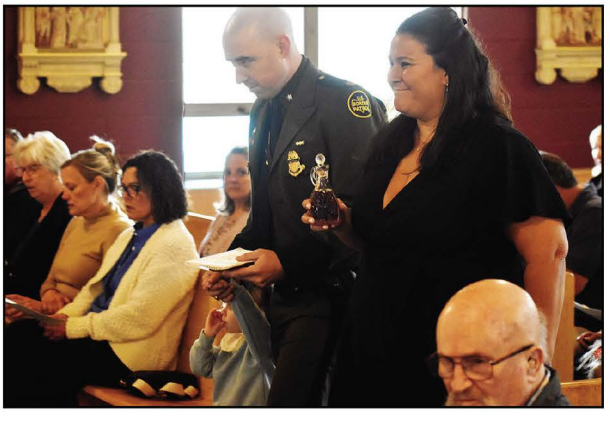


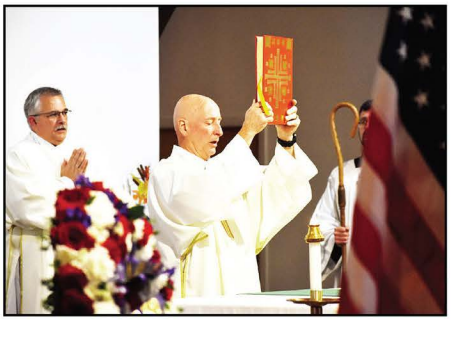














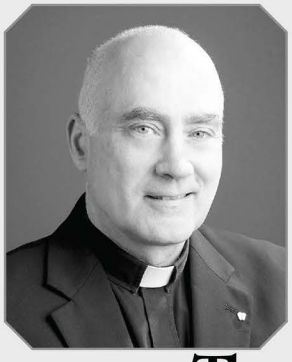
Father Art LaBaff
&
Father Don Robinson

Our shepherds.
Thank you, we are blessed.

~Jack and Jennifer Lucia

Thank you
Bishop LaValley
and all of the priests of our diocese for their leadership and dedication.

Deacon Jimmy and Robin Law

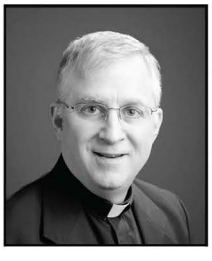


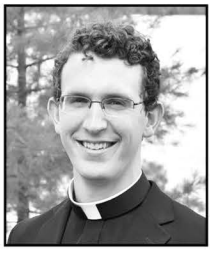


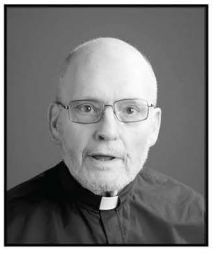
Thank you
Father Mark and Father Matt

for the support you give to St. Peter's Outreach Ministry and the parish community.

Thank you,
Fr. Chris Carrara, Fr. Carter Pierce, & Fr. J. Michael Gaffney
for all you do for us!



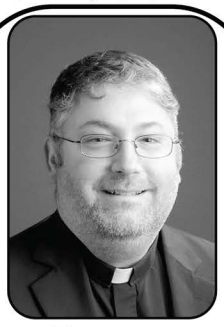




We are truly blessed by your joyful ministry and so very grateful for your leadership.

From the People of
Blessed Sacrament Parish
St. Patrick's, St. Anthony's & Holy Family, Watertown

We appreciate our priests



FATHER MARTIN CLINE

Thank you for all you do for our parish.

St. Bernard's Church, Saranac Lake

Fr. Nick & Fr. Alan

Thank you for all you do for St. Patrick's, Rouses Point & St. Mary's, Champlain parishoners

Fr. Mark Reilly
Fr. Patrick Ratigan
Fr. Martin Cline
Thank you for all of your guidance on my spiritual journey.

~Claudia Fennell

We are so blessed to have you as priests at St. Peter's Parish in Massena. We appreciate all that you do for our parish and our community!

Thank you for your vocations and all you do for our Catholic community!
God bless you,
Fr. Mark Reilly and Fr. Matthew Conger

ST. PETER'S Parish

Thank you to all our priests for bringing us Jesus in the Eucharist. I'm grateful for you dedication, your long days, and your willingness to serve where needed. You are always in my prayers for God's protection.
With love, Carolyn Pierce

Father Jay Seymour and Monsignor John Murphy
We appreciate you and your services.

St. Hubert's Church
Knights of Columbus Council 5718

With gratitude for the years we have shared and joy for the years ahead, we thank Father Philip Allen for his devoted service and welcome Father Jude Nnadibuagha to St. Joseph's parish family.



CALLED TO SERVE

What will you be?

If you asked me at my Confirmation what I would become when I grew up, I would return a stare and a shrug. In my parish, Confirmation was conferred at seventh grade, so I was 12.

Sister Reparata, OP, my seventh-grade teacher, said I was a newly confirmed Soldier for Christ in Queens, New York. Permanent deacon was not an option then. The career track I eventually followed, broadcast reporter, news director and TV general manager in Watertown, New York, were not even on my screen.

Policeman or fireman were the customary answers. I did not aspire to either of them.

Maybe a priest. That answer would have gained me points with the parish priests and religious. It made sense since I was very serious about my altar boy responsibilities and had memorized all the Latin responses and prayers for Mass.



Deacon Kevin Mastellon

If priest were my response, my parents would have been beaming.

I think I would have said second baseman for the Brooklyn Dodgers. When I look back, I was an OK infielder – just OK. That was the dreamer in me responding.

Priest made a lot of sense.

The sacristy was behind the sanctuary in our parish church. Altar boys donned cassock and surplice on one end and walked behind the Tabernacle to the priest side. I recall one time getting ready for Mass and walking to the other side to get final instructions for the daily Mass from the celebrant. This day, the celebrant happened to be our pastor. Msgr. Daniel Hanrahan was his name – just a prince of a man as I recollect.

As I appeared at the priest's end of the sacristy, Msgr. Hanrahan was kneeling and praying before a crucifix on the wall. He silently prayed for a good five minutes. I just stood watching him thinking "this is the holiest man I've ever been with."

When he was finished praying, Monsignor blessed himself with the Sign of the Cross and stood. I was holding the processional cross. He took hold of the covered chalice, turned to me and said, "Ready, Kevin?"

Neither Monsignor Hanrahan nor I had any idea that one question would guide my journey ever since.

Pray for all priests, living or dead.

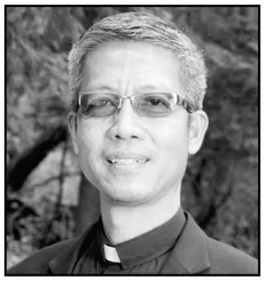
Deacon Kevin Mastellon ministers in Watertown. He is the director of Permanent Deacons for the Diocese of Ogdensburg.

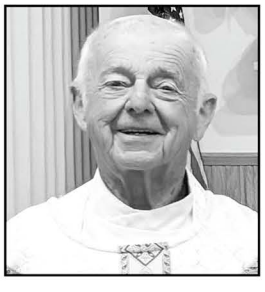


Fr. Martin Cline

Thank you for your service and dedication.

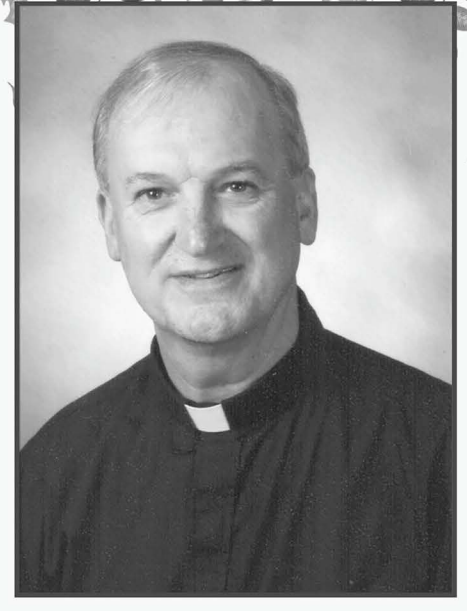
~Jimmy and Robin





Thank you to the Priests of the Southern Adirondack Catholics of St. Mary's of Ticonderoga, Our Lady of Lourdes of Schroon Lake, and Sacred Heart of Crown Point.

Fr. Fernando Solomon, Administrator, Fr. Medenel Angrand, Pastor, and Fr. Philip Allen, Retired Priest in Residence.



Father Dan Chapin

Thanks for being a priest.

St. John's, Lyons Falls,
St. Martin's, Port Leyden,
St. Mary's, Constableville and
St. Mary's Nativity in West Leyden.

ADIRONDACK MOUNTAIN

HUNTERS MASS

Newcomb – All are invited to the 2026 annual Hunters Mass.

Date: Nov. 7

Time: 7 p.m.

Place: St. Therese Church

Features: This Mass continues in the spirit of Father Peter Berg who worked to include everyone in the fullness of Catholic spiritual life. Since many may come directly from hunting, we welcome and encourage camouflage, well-behaved hunting dogs will have a place to warm up, and we ask that participants be sure to practice gun safety.

CLINTON NORTHERN FRANKLIN

PURGATORY PRAYER DEVOTION

Ellenburg – The House of Prayer welcomes a new house sitter, Gary Phifer will be teaching the Purgatory Prayer devotion.

Date: Oct. 13, 20 and 27 (Please note there is no event on Sept. 22)

Time: 10 a.m. to noon

Place: Our Lady of the Adirondack House of Prayer

Features: Drop by and learn this beautiful prayer from Gary Phifer, a Commissioned Lay Minister from Plattsburgh, made even more awesome by praying together with your brothers and sisters in Christ.

Contact: Please call 518-534-9976 (Sarah) for more information.

CRAFT SHOW

Mooers Forks – The Ladies of St. Ann will be having their Annual Craft Show.

Date: Oct. 17

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

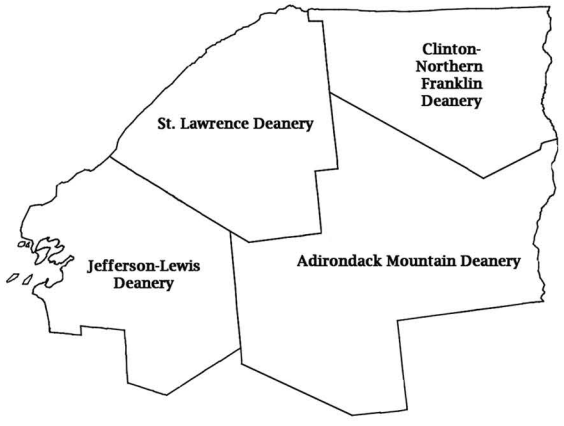
Place: Mooers Fire Station

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

HARVEST DINNER

Altona – St. Ann's and Holy Angel's to have a Turkey Harvest Dinner.

Date: Oct. 18



The North County 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.

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

Place: Holy Angels Hall

Cost: Adults, $18; Children 6-12, $10; Children 5 and under, Free

Features: Bake sale, themed basket raffle, lottery ticket raffle, and apple and pumpkin desserts.

CHARISTMATIC MASS

Malone – St. André's Parish to have Charismatic Masses and Healing services.

Date: Oct. 18, Nov. 15

Place: Notre Dame Church

Time: Worship to prepare for Mass starts at 1:45 p.m., Mass starts at 2 p.m.

Features: Following Mass, prayer teams will be available for individual prayer.

Contact: For more information call 518-483-1300 or sseymour@rcdony.org

JEFFERSON-LEWIS

40 DAYS FOR LIFE

Watertown – Gather in prayer in front of Planned Parenthood for 40 days.

Date: Now to Nov. 1

Time: 7 a.m. to 7 p.m.

SPAGHETTI & MEATBALL DINNER

Evans Mills – The Indian River Council 7471 Knights of Columbus will be having a spaghetti & meatball dinner.

Date: Oct. 10

Time: 4 p.m. to 7

Place: St. Mary's Parish Center

Cost: Adults, $12; Seniors, $10; Children 12 and under, $5; under 5, Free; Sauce or meatballs available for $6 per quart

Contact: For more information call 315-629-4678

HARVEST DINNER

Constableville – St. Mary's Altar and Rosary Society to have their annual drive thru take out Turkey Harvest Dinner.

Date: Oct. 11

Time: 10:30 a.m. until gone

Place: St. Mary's Church

Cost: $15

ROSARY RALLY

Turin – The 15th Annual Rosary Rallv to be held.

Date: Oct. 10

Time: Noon

Place: Spirit Walk Fatima Garden, West Main Street

Features: The rosary will be recited with one decade in Polish, one in Spanish, and completed in English. The event is held regardless of weather conditions. Dress appropriately and bring a lawn chair. A social will follow with light snacks. The Chapel of Peace will be open for reflection, and the Stations of the Cross walkway will be open.

PANCAKE BREAKFAST

Carthage – Pancake Breakfast to be held in support of Augustinian Academy, sponsored by the Carthage K of C Father John Cosmic #291 and Ave Maria Circle.

Date: Oct. 11

Time: 8 a.m. to noon

Place: St. James Community Room

Cost: Adults, $10; Seniors, $8; Children under 10, $5; Family of 4, $30

Menu: Scrambled Eggs, Pancakes, French Toast, Ham, Sausage, Baked Goods, Juice, and Coffee

Contact: For more information call 315-493-3224

HUMAN TRAFFICKING AWARENESS

Watertown - : The Commissioned Lay Ministry Association of the Jefferson-Lewis Deanery Presents "The Role of The Church in Human Trafficking". Mass, dinner and presentation to be held.

Date: Oct. 15

Time: 5:15 p.m. Welcoming remarks, 5:30 p.m. Mass, followed by dinner and presentation

Place: Our Lady of the Sacred Heart Church

Cost: $15 per person if attending dinner, no charge if registering for the program only

Features: Presentation led by Sr. Bethany Fitzgerald, SSJ

Contact: Register for the dinner and the program ($15) or program only there is no charge, at: www.rcdony.org/clm-event

BASKET RAFFLE

Houseville - St. Hedwig's Society will hold its Annual Themed Basket Raffles to benefit church outreach and repairs at St. Hedwig's Church.

Schedule: The raffles will be held on the following Sundays: Oct. 11,18 and 25 after the celebration of the 11 a.m. Mass. No tickets will be sold during Mass. Themed Baskets and a handmade quilt will be on display, and raffle tickets may be purchased in the church hall from noon to 1 p.m. on the above Sundays. The final drawings for the baskets will be on Oct. 25, at approximately 1 p.m. A bake sale and a kielbasa sandwich luncheon will be held on October 25. The drawing for the handmade quilt will take place during the church Christmas party.

ST. LAWRENCE

MONTHLY BRUNCH

Norfolk – Parish of the Visitation and St. Raymond's will have their

CONTINUED ON PAGE 18



Catholic news from around the world and the Diocese of Ogdensburg delivered to your home with a subscription to the *North Country Catholic*

Visit our website at www.northcountrycatholic.org to pay by Credit Card for immediate delivery.

OR Send this coupon with payment to:
North Country Catholic
PO Box 106, Canajoharie, New York, 13317
Please allow 3-4 weeks for delivery when mailing in your renewa.

❑ Inside Diocese $27
❑ Outside Diocese $30
❑ New Subscription
❑ Renewal
[want to be a Patron:
☐ $35 ☐ $50
☐ $100 ☐ $250

Name_____
Address_____
City_____ State___ Zip_____
Parish_____
☐ Please send my subscription to my e-mail address:
_____

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 17

monthly Knights of Columbus Brunch.

Date: Oct. 11

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.

FALL BAZAAR

Massena – St. Mary's to have their annual Fall Bazaar.

Date: Nov. 14

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

Place: St. Mary's Social Hall

Features: Win $2500 in Big Money Raffle. Come enjoy delicious fried bread dough as well as other great food from the concession! Ticket central, Turkey raffles, pull tabs, 50/50, Skilo, quilt raffle, country store, cake walk, children's games and activities, religious items.

TRIVIA NIGHT

Ogdensburg – The Vocations Committee for the Catholic Churches of Ogdensburg (St. Mary's Cathedral and Notre Dame), Heuvelton (St. Raphael's) and Lisbon (Ss. Philip and James) is planning a Trivia Night.

Date: Jan. 8

Time: Arrive by 6:45 p.m., trivia starts at 7 p.m.

Place: Martin Fieldhouse

Cost: $20 per person

Features: Teams of up to 6 will compete for the bragging rights and Grand Prize. All funds raised will be donated to the Diocese of Ogdensburg to help offset the miscellaneous college costs for the seminarians. Join us for a night of fun and friendly competition in a contest of general knowledge across a variety of topics!

Contact: More rules and registration at www.ogdensburgcatholics.net/trivia or email vocationsarenottrivial@rcdony.org

DIOCESAN EVENTS

RACHELS VINEYARD

Saranac Lake - Are you or a friend suffering after abortion? You aren't alone. Join others for a weekend of hope and healing.

Date: Oct. 9 -11

Place: Guggenheim Lodge

Cost: $150 includes lodging, food and all retreat materials. Scholarships available.

Contact: Confidential online registration at www.rcdony.org/pro-life/rv-retreat For more information: Colleen Miner Email: cminer@rcdony.org Phone Number: 518-524-0774

HEALING RETREAT

Ogdensburg – This year's Annual Our Lady of the Rosary Healing Retreat will have the theme of Love Heals.

Date: Oct. 8 – 11

Place: Wadhams Hall

Features: The presenter will be Sonja Corbitt. Do not waste another day. Stop the pain. Love heals. Sonja Corbitt has been teaching people how to acknowledge and open their woundedness to God's love for over 17 years as a leader in the Catholic Church and Scripture teaching space.

Contact: Register today: https://www.rcdony.org/ourlady. For more information, contact Kathleen Nichols kmsnichols1163@gmail.com

JOURNEY WITH CHRIST

Norfolk - All catechists and parish leaders are invited to join us for Journey with Christ, a Fall LEAD event.

Date: Oct. 17

Time: 9:15 a.m. to 2:45 p.m.

Features: Journey with Christ to learn how parishes can nurture faith across every stage of life while building stronger family and ministry connections among the wider parish community. No fee. Speaker: Dr. Steven Serafin, of Faith and Family Life Catholic Ministries. Please bring a bagged lunch.

Contact: Register at www.rcdony.org/journey For more information contact Anita Soltero, asoltero@rcdony.org; 518-310-3669

DISCERNMENT GROUPS

Discover your vocation. Strengthen your faith. Walk with brothers.

Date: Oct. 24

Time: 9 a.m.

Place: Holy Family Church, Watertown

Features: Gather with men ages 18 and above who are seeking to understand God's call in their lives and explore the possibility of a vocation to the priesthood. Father Carter Pierce will lead the group. Sponsored by the Diocese of Ogdensburg Office of Vocations.

Contact: For more information, call 315-782-1190.

Pre Plan
Service Available
D.L. CALARCO
Funeral Home, Inc.
135 Keyes Avenue
Watertown • 782-4910

Father Philip Allen,

Congrats on your retirement!
You are the best!

Deacon Jim & Chris

WELCOME

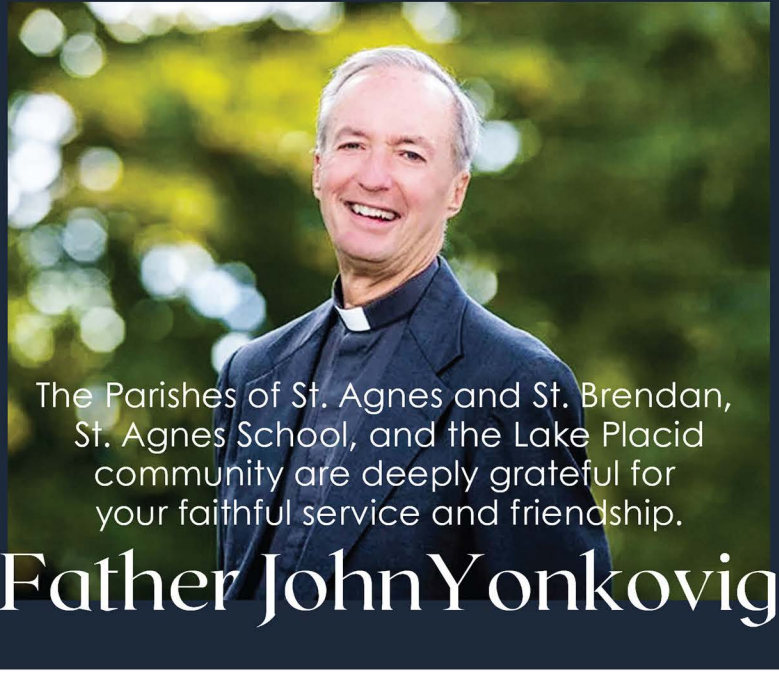
Fr. Chris Carrara
Fr. Carter Pierce
Fr. Michelet Boncoeur

From St. Anthony's Morning Prayer Group

Fr. Mark Reilly and
Fr. Matt Conger

Thank you for all that you do for our parishes, parishioners and deacons.
We greatly appreciate you.

Your Deacons,
Nick, Randy and Tom



U.S. Bishops urge Catholic voters to put faith before politics

By Kathleen Murphy
EWTN News

Louisville, Kentucky, Archbishop Shelton Fabre says Catholics must form their consciences through Church teaching and place faith ahead of political identity in two videos released Oct. 1.

Fabre reminded Catholics of their "responsibility to vote" and to "form our consciences according to the Gospel and Church teaching" in the video messages produced by the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB). The bishops released the videos as U.S. voters prepare for the 2026 midterm elections Nov. 3 that will decide control of Congress, dozens of governorships, and hundreds of state-level offices nationwide.

"Our identity in Christ must come before any political identity," said Fabre, chair of the USCCB's Committee on Domestic Justice and Human Development.

Fabre said voting is a moral act rooted in the dignity of human life, charity toward others, and the pursuit of the common good.

"We discern and we pray, and we participate in public life by voting, but also in many other ways, by advocating for the human dignity of each and every person, and also always reminding political structures and political groups that our concern is for the common good," Fabre said in the video "Forming Our Consciences and Voting."

"At the center of my decision is my desire to be the best disciple of Jesus Christ that I can be," Fabre said in the video "The Call to Put Faith Before Politics."

Another USCCB video titled "Preaching Faithful Citizenship and the Call to Put Faith Before Politics," released last month, features Bishop Daniel E. Flores of Brownsville, Texas; Archbishop William E. Lori of Baltimore; and Archbishop Alexander K. Sample of Portland, Oregon. Catholics must witness to Christ's love in how they speak, act, and engage politically — not only in what positions they hold, the prelates say in the 16-minute video.

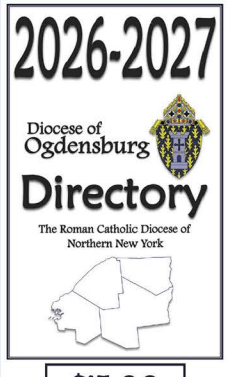
"We need to be agents that promote unity among people, dialogue among people, meaningful conversations among people, respecting the dignity of each and every person who is my neighbor," Sample said in the video. "This is the whole surrounding question around the story of the good Samaritan. And Jesus teaches us in that parable, and we can instruct our people to look there, because that whole parable of the good Samaritan begins with the question, 'And who is my neighbor?'"

Lori said: "I think that that is one of the things that we have to learn to do continually in the life of the Church is to encounter one another, not because we agree on everything, but precisely in those things where we might disagree, but looking at the other person, not as a position to be disagreed with, but a person made in God's image and likeness and called to eternal life."

A written guide for clergy offers a structured training plan to help them teach Catholics how to engage in political life with a well-formed conscience rooted in Church teaching.

The videos are available on USCCB's YouTube channel.

2026-2027 Diocesan Directories now available!



$15.00 each

The Official 2026-2027 Directory of the Diocese of Ogdensburg includes detailed information about parishes, schools and other Catholic organizations.

Order online at www.northcountrycatholic.org or call our office at 315-608-7556 to order yours today!

CATHOLIC WORLD AT A GLANCE

Vatican official: Finances need more scrutiny despite progress
A Vatican official called for greater scrutiny of Vatican finances after roughly 15 years of reforms. Msgr. Anthony Ekpo, assessor for general affairs of the Secretariat of State and president of the Financial Security Committee, spoke at a conference at Rome's Luiss University on Sept. 29. According to Vatican News, the event marked 15 years since Pope Benedict XVI introduced anti-money-laundering legislation at the Vatican in late 2010. Ekpo, in his remarks, stressed that ongoing financial reform at the Vatican is necessary to confront new technologies used in financial crime that may threaten it. "The next 15 years will bring risks that would have been difficult to imagine in 2010: increasingly complex financial technologies, instantaneous cross-border transactions, activities involving virtual assets, artificial intelligence, and new forms of financial crime," Ekpo said.

Convention center to host 'Georgia Martyrs' beatification
The beatification of the 16th-century Franciscan missionaries known as the " Georgia Martyrs" will be held at the convention center in Savannah, Georgia, on Oct. 31. The Order of Friars Minor announced the venue in a Sept. 26 statement. About 12,000 people are expected to attend the event. The beatification Mass is set for 11 a.m., and no ticket is necessary, organizers said. Registration is required by Oct. 15. Bishop Stephen D. Parkes of Savannah said the beatification will be "a date of great significance for the faithful within the Diocese of Savannah and the Archdiocese of Atlanta." Cardinal Frank Leo, metropolitan archbishop of Toronto, will serve as papal legate and preside over the beatification liturgy on All Hallows Eve. The beatification will be livestreamed on EWTN.

March for Life reveals 2027 theme; Kershaw to give keynote
The March for Life announced the theme for next year's rally in Washington, D.C.: "The Truth Is Pro-Life." In a Sept. 29 teleconference, the group also revealed that recently retired Los Angeles Dodgers pitcher Clayton Kershaw will give the keynote address at the march, taking place on Jan. 22, 2027. "The truth cannot be denied and that's why we have kept our message so simple and bold this year," said Hayden Sledge, chief of staff for the March for Life. "Truth doesn't shout. It's just there, waiting to be seen," she said. "Truth has a way of bringing people together. That's why for more than 50 years we've kept showing up to defend that truth. Some things remain true no matter the culture, politics, or the year. The truth is pro-life." The national march occurs every year near the anniversary of the legalization of abortion nationwide in the 1973 Supreme Court decision Roe v. Wade. The event continues despite Roe's reversal by the court in 2022 as abortion remains legal in dozens of U.S. states. In all, some 63 million babies have been aborted since the Roe decision, according to pro-life groups. Last year's theme was "Life Is a Gift."

Father Ratigan: A ministry of presence

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 7

that I used my field Mass kit to celebrate Mass over 2,000 times. They call it 'ministry of presence' and you sure are present with your soldiers as you go with them everywhere and as you share their life and endure the same difficulties."

Over the years, Father Ratigan has traveled to many unforgettable places.

"It is interesting that this month's article is featuring the cathedral window that depicts Saint Damien," he said. "While I was serving with the 25th Infantry Division, I had an opportunity to organize a pilgrimage to Molokai where Saint Damien ministered. We walked in his footsteps and I celebrated Mass in his original chapel. We were also fortunate to spend time with some of the remaining residents there. Since they had a modern treatment for Hansen's disease, no new residents enter the colony, but those who were already there were given a choice to leave or remain. That trip certainly had an impact on me because I got an unforgettable sense of what it must have been like for Father Damien to exile himself to the island so that he could minister to the residents there."

He also had unforgettable encounters with faith and the soldiers.

"While I was stationed for a year in Egypt, I had an opportunity to lead a monthly overnight pilgrimage to Mount Sinai," Father Ratigan said. "We hiked to the top and spent the night under the stars so we could wake up early to experience the sunrise, and then journey down to visit Saint Catherine's Monastery, where Moses encountered the burning bush. I was inspired as I watched the soldiers have this experience. During that time, I also served as a spiritual director on brief monthly trips to the Holy Land where I was encouraged by the soldiers' faith, and yearning to learn more about their faith and live it, and sometimes watch their spiritual lives be rekindled."

In April 2003, Father Ratigan had another remarkable experience.

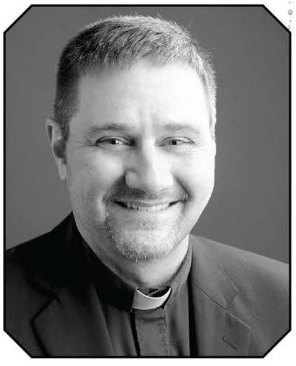
"I celebrated Easter Mass in one of Saddam's bombed palaces in Baghdad, quite literally on the shore of the of the Tigris and Euphrates rivers, often referenced in the Old Testament," he said. "We renewed our baptismal promises with water taken right out of the river. That moment didn't really strike me as that meaningful until later reflection, and it has now become a strong memory."

The faith of the soldiers was uplifting despite difficult circumstances.

"Another memorable thought is how much trouble some of the soldiers would go to in order to get to Mass and receive Holy Communion while deployed. For example, I remember while we were in Baghdad and Fallujah that an armored unit would drive their M1 Abrams tanks across the terrain to where I was for Mass. They didn't just hop in their car and go down the street. They truly hungered for the Eucharist and really put their lives on the line to receive it. I have a strong memory of regularly blessing soldiers as they went out on mission, and then having the unhappy honor of conducting their memorial service. In April 2003 I did that for three of my friends and unit members who died during the Thunder Run into Baghdad."

Father Ratigan also took inspiration from a particular saint.

"Saint Ignatius of Loyola has been a particular model for me and his Suscipe prayer was on my ordination prayer card. Saint Ignatius was both a soldier and a priest so I had that connection and felt an additional connection because he founded the Jesuits who taught my theology in the seminary. I always felt a strong connection with Saint Ignatius. A fun fact is that I name my dogs Ignatius (and they go by Iggy), so I am reminded constantly about my patron saint!"



Welcome, Father Todd, to St. Joseph's.
You are much appreciated!
Thank you for all you do
for our parish.



Father Jay and Father Murphy

Thanks for all you do to make our parishes the encouraging and faith-building places they are.

St. James Church, Gouverneur
Sacred Heart Church, Edwards
St. Hubert's Church, Star Lake

Film about St. Carlo Acutis premieres

By Ishmael Adibuah
EWTN News

Roughly a year after the canonization of Carlo Acutis — the first millennial saint — an authorized documentary about him is set to premiere worldwide.

"Carlo Acutis: The Young Saint" premiered at the Vatican Film Library on Sept. 29. The documentary, featuring never-before-seen footage of Acutis' life and family, also marks the 20th anniversary of his death from leukemia in 2006.

From home videos to photos of his pilgrimages to sites such as Rome, Milan, and Fátima, the film, according to a press release, will convey the impact of Carlo's message and his relatable holiness.

The documentary will be shown in Italian theaters from Oct. 15–21 before premiering in Europe and then in North America in February 2027.

Among those present at the Vatican for the screening was Carlo's mother, Antonia Salzano Acutis. Speaking to EWTN News on the sidelines after the screening, she reflected on the impact of Carlo's 2025 canonization. Antonia described his legacy as proving that God exists in a world where he is often forgotten.

"In today's world, it almost seems as if faith has become something obsolete: People are distant, technology is idolized to the extreme, as though people no longer care about God," she told EWTN News. "Carlo, on the other hand, calls us back to eternal life and reminds us of the truth that God exists."

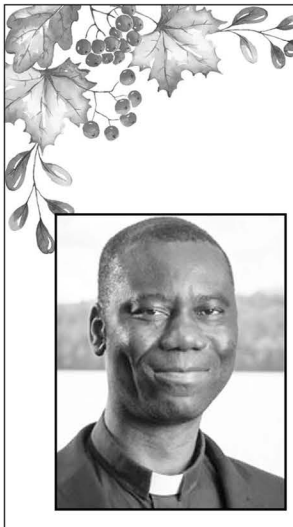
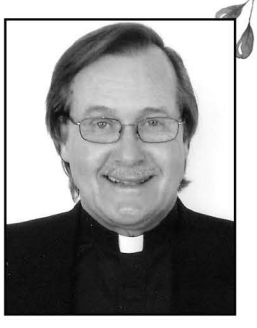
She also spoke on the comfort of seeing the impact of her son's intercession worldwide, particularly after his death 20 years ago.

"Carlo used to say, 'We will all climb Golgotha sooner or later, won't we?' But he also said that a good life isn't necessarily a long life; it is a life where one truly manages to put God first," she recounted.

"Many parents unfortunately lose their children, because some go earlier and some go later. But seeing everything happening now is certainly a powerful witness to my own faith, because I can genuinely see how the Lord works through Carlo."

Pope Leo XIV canonized Carlo Acutis together with Pier Giorgio Frassati on Sept. 7, 2025.

"I Am With You," an EWTN special documentary about Carlo's life, is available to watch online.

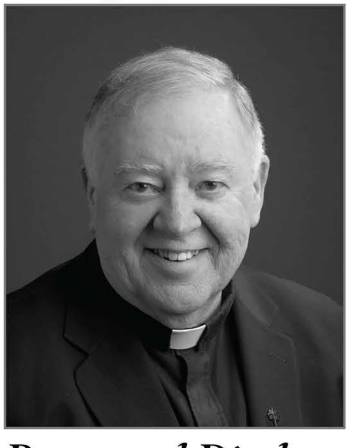



Fr. Severinus Torwoe
and
Fr. Paul Kelly

We are blessed to have your ministry among us.

St. Alphonsus - Holy Name Church, Tupper Lake
St. Henry's Church, Long Lake
St. Therese Church, Newcomb

Our Gratitude



Fr. Raymond Diesbourg, MSC

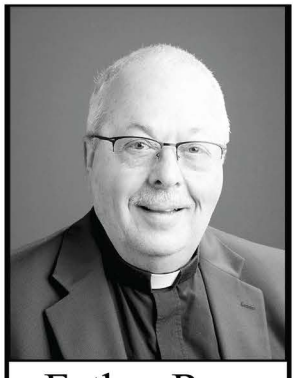
The Lord has blessed us with you. We are deeply grateful for all that you do for our parishes and community. May God bless you always.

The Catholic Community of Cape Vincent, Rosiere and Chaumont

Father Stitt and Father Belina

We are grateful to have you both as our shepherds.

~St. Patrick's Church, Colton



Father Ray,
Thank you for your dedication, promotion of unity and your amazing homilies!

St. Patrick's Church,
Brasher Falls



SUNDAY'S SCRIPTURE

You're invited

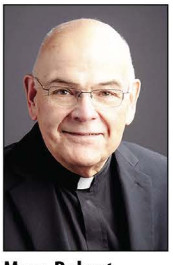
October 11

Twenty-eighth Sunday in Ordinary Time

READINGS
Isaiah 25:6-10a
Philippians 4:12-14, 19-20
Matthew 22:1-14

How rude is that? You're being awfully rude! Are you just naturally rude or have you been working at it?

Rude is an interesting word. No one likes to be called rude, especially if we are not trying to be rude. Nevertheless, we are sometimes very rude to one another...often without knowing it.



Msgr. Robert H. Aucoin

This Sunday, we have a story personifying rudeness. A king announces a wedding party, but the invited guests do not show up. Isn't that rude, especially when a king invites?

After a second invitation, the guests had, so to speak, more important things to do: go to the farm, go to one's home or business. Some just ignored the invitation. Even some of the servants were killed.

Jesus tells this story to illustrate a point. The king invites the people to a rich banquet – a banquet filled with all that we could possibly want. In the story, the king is God inviting us to his heavenly kingdom, a kingdom that will provide all that we could ever hope for.

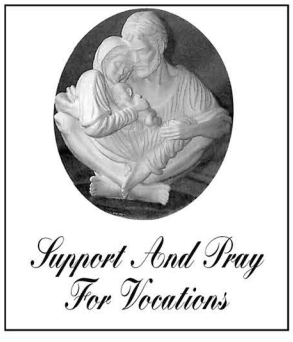
God's kingdom begins here on earth. It's called the People of God, the Church, God's people joined together in that kingdom begun here on earth reaching its fulfillment in heaven.

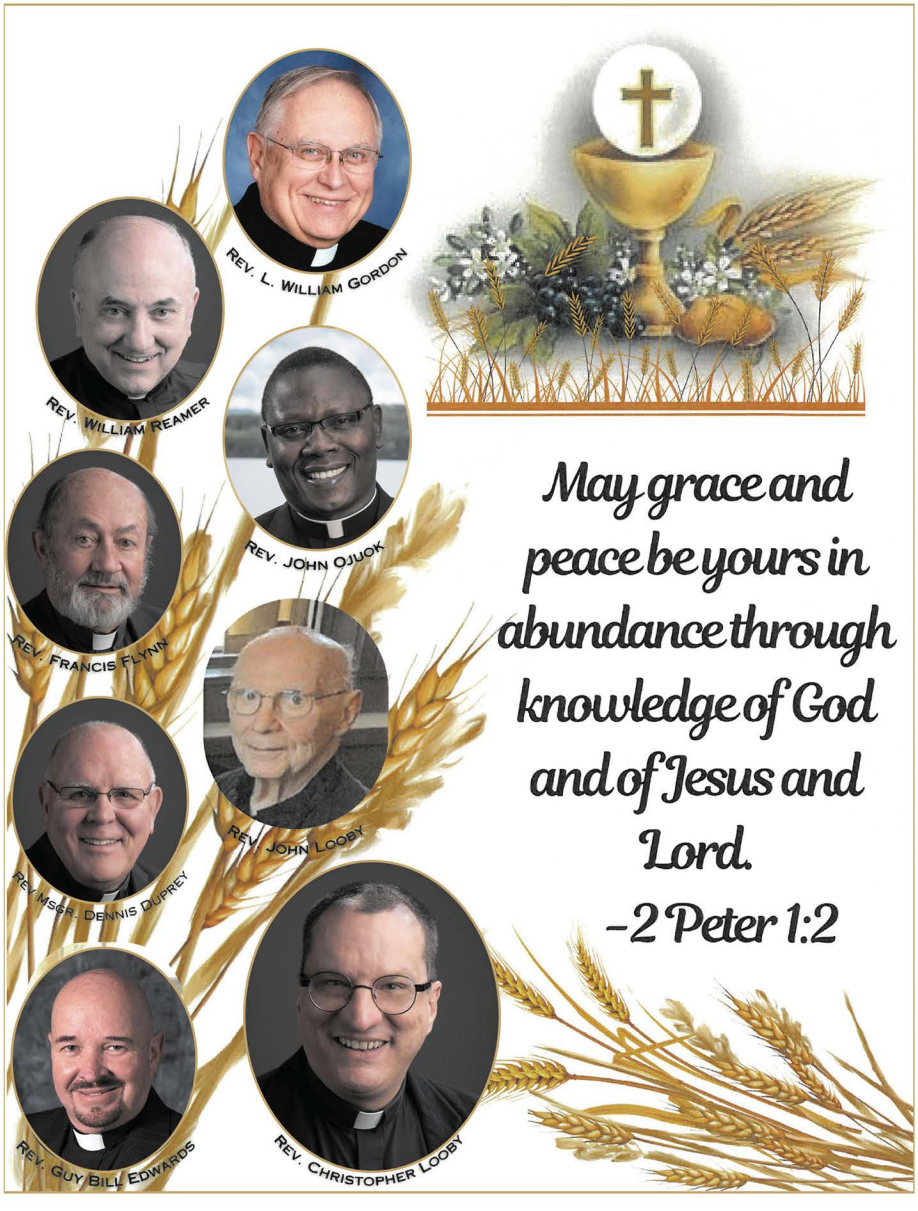
The erosion of participation in Church life that we have witnessed over the past 40 years replicates very well what we heard about in today's Gospel. God gives us a weekly invitation to come to his feast, but so many are living in a parallel universe laden with excuses for not showing up.

We, meaning you, need to keep inviting people to come and worship together. After all, our religion is not a private affair. Even going back into the Old Testament, we see that worship was meant to be public and communal in addition to private worship.

Don't say something like: "I don't want to hound them because it might turn them off." God does not stop hounding us even when we turn him off. Your voice expresses your faith and your concern for others. Do the advertising executives at McDonald's say: "We had better stop advertising because we don't want to turn off our customers." No, they clearly state why we should go to McDonald's. Do you ever say to your child: "Well, I think you should stop studying. After all, I don't want you to wear out your brain."

Accepting God's invitation is not a matter of saying yes once and then forgetting all about it. Accepting God's invitation resembles the "I do" of marriage. The "I do" does not end the process, rather it begins the process. Saying yes to God is not graduating from school. After all, graduation does not end one's learning but should be the first step towards further learning.





DOVS raffle winners

The Diocese of Ogdensburg Vocations Society (DOVS) recently held its 2026 raffle drawing.

Winners are:

- First prize – $500.00 – Father Tyler Fitzgerald
- Second prize – 2–27" bronze painted LED Candle lanterns – Maxine Rist
- Third prize – Framed painting by local artist Steven C. Cobb – Father Kevin McEwan
- Fourth prize – 6'5" pre–lit Christmas tree – Bryan Murphy

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

The Society for the Propagation of the Faith

Sister Mary Ellen Brett, SSJ, Director

622 Washington St., Ogdensburg, NY 13669

(315) 393-2920; fax 1-866-314-7296

info@rcdony.org

'The fate of the flock is my fate'

The following is part 1 of an five-part series.

On September 29, Cardinal Giorgio Marengo will lay his hands on the head of Father Anthony Corcoran, an American-born Jesuit, who will become a bishop that day. He will be confirmed in what he has been for nearly a decade: the shepherd of a few hundred Catholics scattered across a Muslim-majority country in Central Asia, Kyrgyzstan.

Ask him how he got there, and he smiles before he answers. "I love the question: how did a boy from Texas end up as bishop of Kyrgyzstan? It can only be the mystery of the Providence of God. I think every step we take has something to do with a larger plan for our lives. When we try to say yes to Him and surrender, He leads us to the next step," he tells Fides, while attending the training for new bishops.

The boy from Texas was born, in fact, in Arizona, on April 19, 1963, in Tucson. As highlighted in profiles published by the Diocese of Tucson, both his parents came from Bisbee, in Cochise County, and two of his grandparents were themselves children of southern Arizona. He was baptized at Saint Andrew's, in Sierra Vista, before the family moved to Texas during his childhood.

In the family memory, as described in a previous interview with the diocese, faith belonged to the texture of ordinary life, inseparable from a community formed by many origins and confessions. His father's closest friend, a practicing Polish-American Catholic, became one early and concrete witness of that faith. Corcoran also recalls his parents' admiration for their Mexican Catholic neighbors: not as an abstract lesson in coexistence, but as a recognition of the seriousness, generosity and dignity with which those neighbors lived their beliefs.

That early experience of a plural and welcoming borderland would remain with him.

Nevertheless, the priesthood was not the plan. Not at first. "When I was discerning a vocation to the priesthood, I had gone to study something totally unrelated to the priesthood," he remembers for Fides. "I went to a university where the Jesuits taught, and I met the Jesuits. I didn't think of myself as a Jesuit until the very end of my studies, when they invited us to do the Spiritual Exercises. I fell in love with Ignatius, with the Exercises, with the idea of being a missionary."

Article by Marie-Lucile Kubacki of FIDES missionary news service of the Pontifical Mission Societies.

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

OBITUARIES

AuSable Forks – Dorothy Rosamond (Hebert) Trombley, 92; Mass of Christian Burial Oct. 2, 2026 at Holy Name Church; burial in St. Matthew's Cemetery, Black Brook.

Brushton – Lawrence William Perry, 90; Graveside Services Oct. 1, 2026 at St. Mary's Cemetery.

Chateaugay – Dominic Albert Padula, 75; Funeral Services Oct. 2, 2026 at Chateaugay Funeral Home.

Clayton – Michael A. Colello, 90; Mass of Christian Burial Oct. 5, 2026 at St. Mary's Church; burial in Grove Cemetery, LaFargeville.

Constable – Helen Joyce (Rubadeau) Barney, 89; Private services to be held.

Ellenburg – Thelma L. (Rock) LaBombard, 93; Mass of Christian Burial Sept. 29, 2026 at St. Edmund's Church; burial in parish cemetery.

Ellenburg – Shirley A. Williamson, 83; Mass of Christian Burial Sept. 25, 2026 at St. Edmund's Church; burial in St. Edmund's Cemetery.

Hogansburg – Robert L. Lazore, 85; Mass of Christian Burial Oct. 1, 2026 at St. Regis Church; burial in St. Lawrence Cemetery, St. Regis.

Lake Placid – Judith A. (DeLoria) Strack, 86; Mass of Christian Burial Oct. 16, 2026 at St. Agnes Church; burial in St. Agnes Cemetery.

Lisbon – Ann Elizabeth (Andress) Lalonde, 89; Mass of Christian Burial Sept. 30, 2026 at Ss. Philip and James Church; burial in Martin Cemetery.

Lowville – Michael Z. Rogers, 65; Funeral Services Oct. 3, 2026 at Iseneker Funeral Home, Inc.; burial in Brantingham Cemetery.

Lyon Mountain – Cynthia Lumina LeClaitr, 67; Services to be held at a later date.

Malone – Annette (Richey) Dame, 81; Mass of Christian Burial Oct. 3, 2026 at Notre Dame Church.

Malone – Francine Ann-Marie (Carriere) LaCroix, 74; Mass of Christian Burial Sept. 30, 2026 at Notre Dame Church.

Malone – Blaine Thomas Supernault, 69; Funeral Services Oct. 6, 2026 at Frary Funeral Home.

Morrisonville – Michael F. Roth, 74; Mass of Christian Burial Oct. 2, 2026 at St. Alexander's Church; burial in parish cemetery.

Ogdensburg – Gerald Carr, 91; Mass of Christian Burial Oct. 1, 2026 at St. Mary's Cathedral.

Ogdensburg – Bernice (Ramsey) Montroy, 86; Mass of Christian Burial Sept. 30, 2026 at St. Mary's Cathedral; burial in Oswegatchie Mausoleum.

Peru – Ricky Lee Nolan, 68; Funeral Services Sept. 27, 2026 at the Hamilton Funeral Home; burial in Holy Name Cemetery, AuSable Forks.

Plattsburgh – Bonnie C. (Rogeau) Gonya, 75; Graveside Services Sept. 28, 2026 at St. Peter's Cemetery.

Plattsburgh – Mary Benjamin Krakowski, 81; Mass of Christian Burial Sept. 30, 2026 at St. Peter's Church; burial in parish cemetery.

Ticonderoga – Doris (Bush) Keegan, 78; Graveside Services Oct. 24, 2026 at St. Mary's Cemetery.

Waddington – Gary E. Bush, 83; Mass of Christian Burial Oct. 2, 2026 at St. Mary's Church; burial in St. Mary's Cemetery.

Watertown – Lisa Ann Eagles Balough, 60; Mass of Christian Burial Oct. 2, 2026 at Holy Family Church; burial in Brookside Cemetery.

Watertown – Joseph M. Butler, Sr., 89; Mass of Christian Burial Oct. 1, 2026 at St. Patrick's Church; burial in Glenwood Cemetery.

Watertown – Toni R. (Catania) Leone, 77; Mass of Christian Burial Oct. 3, 2026 at St. Anthony's Church; burial in Glenwood Cemetery.

Willsboro – Ann Elizabeth (Lindsey) Marcotte, 87; Memorial Services Oct. 3, 2026 at St. Philip's Church.

Rev. Rocker and Rev. Ratigan. Thank you for sharing your retirement with us.

~St. Patrick's Church, Colton

Thanks for all that you do,

Fr. Lauzon.

All of your hard work is very much appreciated.



The Catholic Parishes of St. Mary's, St. Augustine's, St. Ann's and Holy Cross

Bishops, sisters lead assisted suicide lawsuits

By Daniel Payne
EWTN News

Catholic bishops and religious sisters in multiple states are leading efforts to roll back assisted suicide laws, launching lawsuits to help protect religious objectors who do not want to participate in the killing of medical patients.

Church leaders in New York and Illinois have won multiple victories in recent weeks in federal district court after bringing suits against the newly launched suicide regimes in those states.

In New York, Rockville Centre Bishop John Barres and a coalition of four communities of religious sisters won a victory in July when U.S. District Judge Anne Nardacci said the state would be barred from enforcing its new suicide law against the plaintiffs while their federal suit played out.

Two lawsuits in Illinois, meanwhile, have also brought relief to Catholic objectors. U.S. District Judge Franklin Valderrama said in August that Springfield Bishop Thomas Paprocki and other plaintiffs, including Christian doctors and a Lutheran care home, would not have to abide by the state's suicide law.

In September, meanwhile, Valderrama ruled again in favor of a coalition of religious plaintiffs, including the Archdiocese of Chicago and the Carmelite Sisters for the Aged and Infirm as well as the Little Sisters of the Poor, all of whom had brought suit against the Illinois law.

In all three cases, the plaintiffs only won temporary reprieves meant to forestall enforcement of the law while the lawsuits continue through the federal court system.

And though advocates hailed the rulings, Chicago archbishop Cardinal Blase Cupich on Sept. 11 argued that the Illinois law should be struck down "permanently."

"[T]he Church's objection to this statute is not an attempt to impose Catholic teaching on non-Catholics," the archbishop said at the time. Rather, "it is an effort to stop the State from compelling Catholic health care providers to violate their conscience."

The Catholic Church has been at the forefront of efforts to roll back assisted suicide around the world. The controversial practice, growing in popularity around the world, allows doctors to prescribe lethal doses of medication to patients who wish to end their lives.

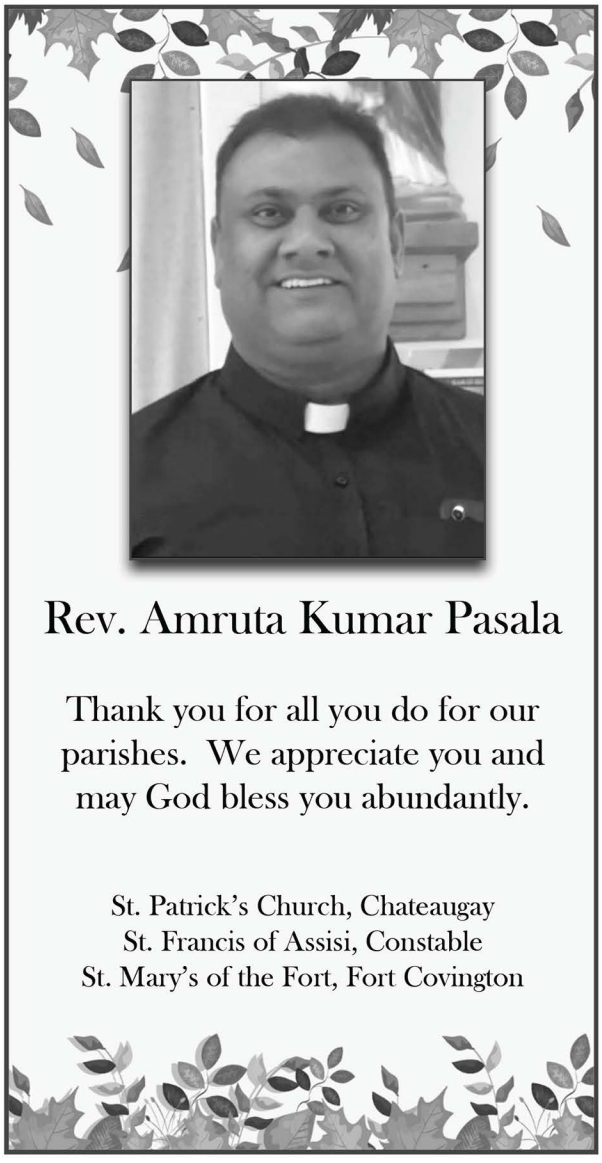
Advocates of assisted suicide usually argue the laws allow doctors to help kill only adult patients who are terminally ill and likely to die in the very near future. But in many cases where the practice has been introduced it has expanded to include broader classes of patients.

In Canada, meanwhile, about 100,000 people have taken their own lives since the country legalized assisted suicide in 2016. Thousands of those individuals reportedly did not have a "reasonably foreseeable death," but doctors were allowed to help kill them anyway.

Numerous U.S. states have legalized the practice in recent years. New York's and Illinois' respective suicide laws went into effect this year.

In both cases the religious objectors were suing to stop the state from forcing them to promote assisted suicide. While narrow opt-out laws mean the Catholic care providers are not obligated to actively facilitate the specific act of suicide, the state laws require them to participate in the suicide regime in various other ways, including touting the alleged benefits of taking one's own life.

The Becket Fund for Religious Liberty, which is representing both the Springfield and Rockville Centre lawsuits, says that refusing to participate in such rules "invites significant fines, license revocation, or even time behind bars."



SOCIETY OF THE SISTERS OF SAINT JOSEPH
CHARITY
HUMILITY
UNTO THE GLORY OF THE TRINITY
TO SERVE CHRIST
WATERTOWN 1881 NEW YORK

The Sisters of St. Joseph are grateful to the priests of the Diocese for their support and friendship through the years.

We especially thank:
Fr. Chris Carrara, Fr. Carter Pierce,
Fr.Michelet Boncoeur, Fr. Frank Natalie,
The *Diocesan Priests of Jefferson Deanery*
and the
Missionaries of the Sacred Heart,
for their priestly presence among us.