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The Diocese of Ogdensburg Volume 81 Number 14

# NORTH COUNTRY CATHOLIC

JULY 15, 2026

## Follow me: SSPX bishop consecration

It is with great sadness that I must share with you that the Society of St. Pius X (SSPX) is in formal schism with the Roman Catholic Church due to (the July 1) unauthorized episcopal ordinations of four bishops without papal mandate (see Canon 1013).

Those bishops ordained (July 1), and the bishops who consecrated them, have incurred an automatic excommunication whose lifting is reserved solely to the Pope. Such disobedience to Pope Leo XIV as the Successor of St. Peter, the first Pope to whom Christ entrusted his Church, is considered a schismatic act, and gravely harms the unity of the Church.

FULL STORY, PAGE 3

## PROVINCIAL VISIT



Father Roy George Kappumkal, provincial superior of the Heralds of the Good News, visited Bishop Terry R. LaValley on June 22. Pictured are, from left, Father Jose Kaniyankunnel John, HGN, Father Roy George Kappumkal, HGN, Bishop LaValley, Father Tojo Chacko, HGN and Father Binesh Joseph Kanjirakattu, HGN.

## PASTOR CAN'T CELEBRATE MASS



Because of immigration issues, Father Medenel Angrand, pastor of St. Mary's Church, in Ticonderoga; the Church of the Sacred Heart of Jesus, in Crown Point; and Our Lady of Lourdes Church, in Schroon Lake, is not allowed to celebrate Mass. Father Angrand is one of three priests with immigration issues.

FULL STORY, PAGE 4

# Pope: Christ is hope amid scourge of war

By Antonio Tarallo  
EWTN News

Pope Leo XIV said Christ remains the Church's hope amid war, slavery, sin, and the wounds of history, urging Christians to learn from Jesus a "school of freedom" rooted in the cross.

Speaking at the July 5 Angelus in a sunny and hot St. Peter's Square, the pope reflected on the day's Gospel, Matthew 11:25-30, in which Jesus praises the Father, "Lord of heaven and earth."

"The Son of God made man reveals his love by including all

creatures in this act of thanksgiving," Pope Leo XIV said.

The pope said the Gospel reveals God's preference for the humble and the small.

"The simplicity of such a spontaneous and joyful gesture reflects God's way of acting: He delights in revealing himself 'to infants,' while remaining hidden 'from the wise and the intelligent,'" he said.

Those who are "filled" with their own ideas, the pope said, fail to recognize Christ.

"Human wisdom thus becomes arrogance, and doctrine degenerates into pride," he said.

"By contrast, God's true wisdom is revealed in the humility of the Incarnation, and his teaching is addressed above all to those who struggle: 'Come to me, all you that are weary and are carrying heavy burdens,' says the Lord."

Pope Leo XIV said going to Jesus "means responding to his love and sharing in his life, even to the cross."

"How can the weight of the cross be 'easy' and 'light'?" the pope asked. "For one reason alone: because the Lord himself carries it with us, never leaving us alone in what burdens us."

The pope said Christ takes upon himself "humanity wounded by evil in order to heal and care for it."

"For this reason, our journey of following Christ is not an asceticism that mortifies," he continued. "Rather, it is a school of freedom that takes seriously the drama of history and continually sheds light on its meaning, especially in its darkest moments."

"Indeed, only in the cross of Jesus is evil overcome; only in his passion does our mortal weariness find consolation and redemption," he said.

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Publish

45 issues

per year:

Weekly except  
skipping every  
other week be-ginning July through August  
and skipping one week in  
December by theDiocese of Ogdensburg.  
622 Washington Street,  
Ogdensburg, N.Y. 13669.**Editorial Office:**622 Washington Street,  
Ogdensburg, N.Y. 13669.**Telephone:**

(315) 608-7556

**E-mail:**news@northcountry  
catholic.org**Entered at the  
Post Office:**Ogdensburg, NY  
13669 and additional mailing  
offices as  
Periodical Postage.**Subscription:****For one year:**In-Diocese Rate: \$27  
Outside of Diocese Rate: \$30Matters for publication  
should be addressed to  
PO Box 326Ogdensburg, 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

# Getting rid of the garbage

I referred to it as "The Purge of 2026."

Inspired by the realization that I had copious amounts of really, really old food in my chest freezer and pantry, I considered renting a dumpster to do a clean-out. Mentioning this idea to my father, he offered an even better solution: his very large dump trailer.

With more capacity available, the job got much bigger, and I decided to do a whole-home purge. I've lived in my house for 20 years now. In 20 years, a lot of "stuff" accumulates. I saw the arrival of a dump trailer in my front yard as an opportunity to address the accumulation.

I had boxes stored in my bedroom that have been following me around since college. I had remnants of craft projects and home improvement projects long-since finished (or never finished). I had clothes in my closet ranging in sizes from 6 to 16. Jake, my son, had toys kicking around from when he was a young child. And that's just the beginning.

It was a lot of work, and I mean that both physically and emotionally. "The Purge" involved lots and lots of moving and carrying things around, and lots and lots of bending in awkward positions to sort through cupboards and storage areas. It also

involved revisiting a lot of memories of different times in my life, including some painful times.

While my body was a bit sore at the end (I joked that "my everything hurt"), "The Purge of 2026" felt amazing in a lot of ways. It felt like a fresh start.

I suddenly have lots of empty space in my house - empty shelves, empty drawers, empty cupboards, empty corners. While I'm consciously avoiding the urge to fill the empty, I currently see all the space I have as potential. Getting rid of the garbage gives me room for things that add value to my life, things that bring me joy (I've started a mini home gym, for example).

It occurred to me that my house isn't unlike my life. I happen to be super

efficient at sinning. I accumulate garbage internally. When I'm carrying around piles of that sin, that garbage, it can easily dominate my life, and it leaves less room for God and for good.

We're so incredibly blessed as Catholics to have the opportunity to access God's forgiveness in a concrete way through the sacrament of reconciliation - confession. Like "The Purge of 2026," truly and honestly examining our lives can be hard work. But in addition to accessing God's love and forgiveness and helping us get to eternal life with him, offloading our sins can be freeing and cathartic, and it can make room for more goodness in our lives.

Because we all need a good purge every now and then.

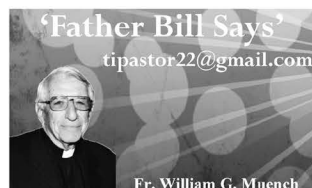
**Darcy L.  
Fargo**

## Find time for silence this summer

Happy Summertime! I hope your list of summer stuff is as long as mine - visits, get togethers, outdoor activities like ball games, concerts, fairs. I want you to know I am still getting invited out to play golf. Oh, yes, one more thing today: how about time for summer prayers.

I hope you can find a good place to visit from time to time for a place to pray. Near where I live, there are many shrines, churches and special places near the lake - perfect places for a brief stop to spend some time with the Lord. There are also many walking trails near here also. They're also perfect for a little praying. Or Mass at Church some summer days.

You probably have favorite prayers as I do - like the rosary - that lead me closer to the Lord and His Blessed Mother. Today,

**Fr. William G. Muench**

I would like to mention and encourage you to find some silence this summer. This is my favorite way to make some room in my heart for the Lord. Silence is one of God's quiet gifts. Our noisy world needs some time of silence, time when we may hear not only our own thoughts but also the gentle voice of the Lord.

Let me tell you about one of my ideas in recent years. I decided to use as a "penance" for the Sacrament of Penance - for confession - a time of silence with the Lord. I ask each person who comes to me in confession to go up front in the Church - here in our parish the Blessed

Sacrament is placed in exposition in the monstrance on the altar - and I ask them to spend some time there in silence, no special prayers, just silence there in the presence of the Lord.

Silence is not the absence of God. As a person takes the time to be silent, they begin by praying to place themselves in the presence of God; God is invited to join them as they step away from the noise of the world - from the television - off by themselves for a brief time. When we intentionally step away from the noise of life, we will discover that the Lord has been speaking to our hearts all along. And when we return, it is with greater wisdom, peace and love.

Our Lord does not speak in dramatic ways, but in the quiet of the heart. Do you remember the Elijah story in the Old Testament? When the proph-

et goes to a mountain to pray, Elijah encountered God not in the wind, not in the earthquake, not in the fire, but in a still small voice. (1 Kings 19)

Silence helps us to know ourselves. When distractions are removed, we become more aware of our blessings, our weaknesses and our deepest desires. During the participation at Mass, there are many times of silence - special times in the great prayer of the Mass when we should recognize in a special way the presence of God and the Lord's coming into our hearts.

So, don't leave God out of your summer plans. Find some good way; they may seem small and all too brief, and they don't have to be long, but it will be a holy time - a time for Our Savior to have the opportunity to be part of your day. Summer is a perfect time for God to find you.

## FOLLOW ME

# SSPX and the consecration of bishops

**Dear Diocesan Family,**

It is with great sadness that I must share with you that the Society of St. Pius X (SSPX) is in formal schism with the Roman Catholic Church due to (the July 1) unauthorized episcopal ordinations of four bishops without papal mandate (see Canon 1013).

Those bishops ordained (July 1), and the bishops who consecrated them, have incurred an automatic excommunication whose lifting is reserved solely to the Pope. Such disobedience to Pope Leo XIV as the Successor of St. Peter, the first Pope to whom Christ entrusted his Church, is considered a schismatic act, and gravely harms the unity of the Church for which Christ so fervently prayed the night before he died.

This action by the SSPX constitutes a formal separation from the Church's communion and as such makes it illicit and forbidden for Roman Catholics to participate in and receive the Sacraments from bishops and priests associated with the Society of St. Pius X, including Baptism, Confirmation, the Holy Eucharist, Penance, Marriage, and Holy Orders. The only exception provided for in Canon Law is the Sacrament of Penance when there is a danger of death (see Canons 976 and 1752).

It is of great importance to realize that the division between the Society of St. Pius X and the Roman Catholic Church is not simply about the celebration of the Mass and the Sacrament. The SSPX repudiates and denounces the teaching of the Second Vatican Council, in par-

ticular, ecumenism, religious liberty, collegiality of the bishops with the pope, and the Church's understanding of, and relationship with Judaism.

Out of care for souls, I must instruct the faithful of the Diocese of Ogdensburg to avoid participating in the activities of the Society of St. Pius X at St. Therese Chapel in Nicholville, NY as well as their schools. I invite those who have been assisting at Mass or the Sacraments administered by the priests of the Society of St. Pius X to now look for spiritual counsel and nourishment at the traditional Latin Mass and Sacraments celebrated at St. Mary's Church in Potsdam, NY or St. Mary's Church in Evans Mills, NY.

To our brother priests in the Society of St. Pius X who may not wish to be part of this break with the See of Peter, I am always open to receiving you, and assisting you in remaining within the one, holy, catholic, and apostolic Church.

At this time, we pray fervently for Church unity, and ask Mary, Mother of the Church, to intercede for the Church and her members in this moment of sad division.

With care and concern, I ask God's blessing upon all who dwell within the boundaries of the Diocese of Ogdensburg. "Father, may we be one."

**Faithfully yours in Christ,**

*+ Terry R. LaValley*

Most Reverend  
Terry R. LaValley  
Bishop of Ogdensburg

## Frequently asked questions

### Q: What is the Society of St. Pius X [SSPX]?

A: The Society of St. Pius X [SSPX] was founded in 1970 by the French Archbishop Marcel Lefebvre, who was a severe critic of the changes brought about in the Roman Catholic Church by the Second Vatican Council [1962-65]. In addition to the reforms of the Mass and Sacraments, Lefebvre also opposed Vatican II's teachings on ecumenism, religious liberty, collegiality among bishops with the pope, and the Church's understanding of, and relationship to Judaism. The SSPX is present in 30 countries with an estimated 800,000 adherents; it operates priories, chapels, schools, and missions as well as seminaries. The SSPX has approximately 700 priests, and several hundred seminarians.

### Q: What has occurred between the SSPX and the Pope to cause this disunity within the Church?

A: The Society of St. Pius X [SSPX] consecrated four bishops on July 1, 2026, in Écône, Switzerland. Both Pope Leo XIV and Vatican officials pleaded with the SSPX, on several occasions, not to take this action. Without a papal mandate, the consecration of bishops leads to automatic excommunications of those who were consecrated bishops as well as those bishops who officiated at that ceremony on July 1, 2026 [canon 1382]. The SSPX were officially warned that this consecration of bishops, would lead to formal schism.

### Q: What is Schism in the Roman Catholic Church?

A: Schism is a formal action by which, with full knowledge and intention, a group or individual breaks away from essential unity with the pope, bishops and all the members of the Roman Catholic Church. This essential unity is called Full Communion.

### Q: What constitutes Full Communion with the Roman Catholic Church?

A: To be in Full Communion with the Roman Catholic Church one who is baptized is joined to its visible structure "...by bonds of the profession of faith, the sacraments and ecclesiastical governance." [canon 205] Thus, Full Communion includes obedience to the pope and the college of bishops united to the pope. [cf. canons 750-752]

### Q: What is the Vatican's official stance?

A: Prior to the SSPX's July 1, 2026, consecration of bishops, the Dicastery for the Doctrine of the Faith, led by Cardinal Víctor Manuel Fernández, stated that conducting episcopal ordinations without a pontifical mandate would be an illicit and "schismatic act." On June 29, 2026, Pope Leo XIV expressed sorrow over this situation stating, "I urge you to consider carefully the spiritual good of the faithful, because the schismatic act you are about to undertake would deprive them of the licit and, in some cases, even valid reception of the Sacraments.... I pray for you, because to tear the seamless garment of Christ [the Church's unity] is a sin of extreme gravity."

### Q: Can there be a reconciliation between the SSPX and the Roman Catholic Church?

A: Yes. For a reconciliation between the Society of St. Pius X and the Roman Catholic Church to take place, the SSPX will have to declare an unequivocal acceptance of the principal teachings and statements of the Second Vatican Council, recognize the validity of the Novus Ordo Mass and Sacraments, and fully submit to the authority of the pope.



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# Pastor barred from celebrating Mass

## Immigration issues impact priests, parishes

By Keith Benman  
North Country Catholic

Two parishes in the eastern region of the Diocese of Ogdensburg have been deprived of their pastors and another parish at the other end of the diocese may be deprived of a parochial vicar this year because of policy changes and delays at United States Immigration and Customs Services.

This follows the stranding of a diocesan priest in Kenya last year over immigration issues and another priest being forced into an extended stay in the Philippines the year before because of an immigration processing backlog.

Although the details of each case are different, overall the actions of immigration authorities are creating a crisis for the diocese, which already suffers from a severe priest shortage.

"It's a heavy burden for these parishes, for the diocese, and in a very real way for these faithful servant priests who come from their homelands to serve the people of Northern New York," said Father Christopher C. Carrara, diocesan vicar for clergy and director of seminarians.

The latest priests to fall victim to increased scrutiny of visa applications, immigration backlogs and other federal actions are as follows.

Father Medenel Angrand was barred by immigration authorities from publicly saying Mass or taking part in any other public priestly duties as of May 23. He has worked in the diocese for years on a religious worker visa, most

recently as pastor for St. Mary's Church, in Ticonderoga; the Church of the Sacred Heart of Jesus, in Crown Point; and Our Lady of Lourdes Church, in Schroon Lake. His title was changed as of May 23 from "pastor" to "pastor in residence" because he is barred by federal regulations from performing any public priestly duties. Father Fernando V. Solomon has been appointed administrator so parishioners can continue to receive priestly services.

Father Angrand's case is particularly galling for diocesan officials because he has valid authority to stay in the United States. But his work authorization has not been renewed by immigration authorities. That's despite having applied for a renewal of his work authorization more than a year ago. In addition, he has sought to upgrade the religious worker visa he has been utilizing in his years here by applying for permanent residency ("Green Card").

The result of all this is that Father Angrand can remain in his parish as a "pastor in residence," but he cannot even say Mass for his parishioners.

"Just think of the heart and mind of the priest who the government won't let function as a priest," said Father Carrara.

Father Clement Rimonds, a Herald of the Good News priest who was serving in the Ogdensburg diocese as a pastor for a grouping of churches in the eastern region is currently stuck in India until U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services acts to renew his R-1 (religious worker) visa. He was pastor for the Catholic Community of Holy Name and St. Mathew, in Au Sable Forks; The Roman Catholic Community of Keeseville and St. Margaret's Church, in Wilmington; and the Catholic Community of St. Philip of Jesus and St. Joseph, in Willsboro.



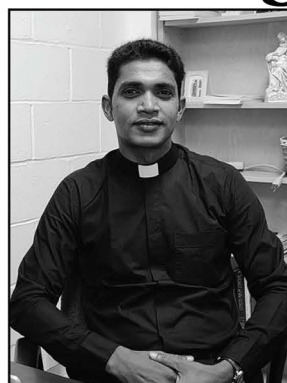
Father Medenel Angrand

The diocese already paid for premium, supposedly faster, processing for Father Rimond's visa renewal but immigration services has requested more information. That's even after receiving a one-and-a-half inch thick immigration application vetted by diocesan lawyers.

"This all for a man who has already been here serving faithfully," Father Carrara said.

Father Rimond's responsibilities are being covered by a retired priest, Monsignor Dennis J. Duprey.

Father Michelet Boncoeur, just ordained a priest May 30, is now facing a possible delay in his July assignment as parochial vicar to Blessed Sacrament parish, in Watertown. That parish is made up of the churches of the Holy Family, St. Anthony's Church, and St. Patrick's Church - all in Watertown. Long waits for processing visas have



Father Clement Rimonds, HGN

resulted in a long delay in the approval of his religious worker visa request. He needs to change his student visa used to study in seminary to a religious worker visa so he can undertake his priestly duties.

"This brand-new, newly ordained young man, excited to serve the people of God after his ordination and first Mass, (may) not be able to do anything," said Father Carrara.

Fortunately for Boncoeur, a change in regulations means he doesn't have to return to his home country of Haiti to renew his visa as was required previously. Haiti is one of 19 nations whose citizens are barred entry to the United States. His service is very much needed at Blessed Sacrament Parish, one of the diocese's larger parishes.

The increased difficulties with immigrant priests' visas seems to have begun under a Biden Administration policy where those applying for religious worker visas were put into a much larger application pool that included other types of visas. That greatly extended their visa wait times. In the past couple of years, difficulties and waiting periods for obtaining visas have generally increased under new policies initiated by the Trump administration.



Father Michelet Boncoeur

The United States Conference of Catholic Bishops did score a victory this year when its lobbying efforts resulted in the Trump Administration doing away with the required one-year overseas waiting period for religious worker visa renewals. Those seeking renewal can now stay in the United States.

However, as this article was being prepared, U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services announced it will require those people applying for permanent residency here to return to their home countries while awaiting processing of their applications. That could possibly affect Father Angrand and some other priests in the diocese.

Some previous cases causing difficulties for priests in the diocese have been resolved.

Father "Jay" de la Rosa, pastor at Holy Angels Church, in Altona, and St. Ann's Church, in Mooers Forks was the priest who two years ago was forced to stay in the Philippines for a year while awaiting renewal of his religious worker visa. He was eventually granted a visa renewal and has been able to return to his duties in the diocese.

In a different type of case last year, Father John K. Ojuok was stranded in Kenya when

CONTINUED ON PAGE 7

## FOLLOW ME

# Missionary Projects of the Diocese of Ogdensburg

## Dear Friends in Christ,

Missionary zeal has always been a telling sign of the vitality of the Catholic Church in the Diocese of Ogdensburg. The annual collection for the Missionary Projects of the Diocese of Ogdensburg (MPDO) offers us the opportunity to further our own zeal in supporting the ministry of our missionaries who faithfully serve in often forgotten places in our world.

The parishioners of Clinton-Northern Franklin and Adirondack Mountain Deaneries will be given an opportunity to support our missionaries during the week-end Masses of July 25th and 26th. This year, our focus continues to be the Diocese of Latakia in Syria where our outreach continues. Located on the shores of the Mediterranean Sea, Latakia is home to the oldest Christian settlements on earth. Our "Solidar-

ity in Faith" endeavor provides concrete ways for the faithful of our diocese to learn about Latakia while supporting their relief programs. Due to a large influx of refugees, relief efforts have had to expand, increasing the need for donations. Your sacrifices will help fund their marriage preparation and faith formation programs and help assist with humanitarian efforts and rebuilding after the devastating earthquake earlier last year.

The MPDO collection will also continue to be used to provide financial support of our former mission Saint Martin de Porres, in Molendo, Peru, support the United States Bishops' annual Latin American appeal and assist with other missionary projects throughout the world, such as Ukraine, as part of our evangelization efforts.

I am very grateful for your gift to this year's MPDO collection. God bless you for your generous support of the Church's missionary efforts.

Gratefully yours in Christ,

*+ Terry R. LaValley*

Most Reverend  
Terry R. LaValley  
Bishop of Ogdensburg



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## Protecting God's Children

### The Diocese of Ogdensburg

is able to schedule sessions of the training, Protecting God's Children for Adults. This required training addresses child abuse, the methods and means by which abusers commit abuse, and the five steps to prevent abuse from occurring and stop it from continuing. To arrange for training, call 315-393-2920 or email lshoen@rcdony.org

## To Report Abuse

**If you have a complaint** of suspected misconduct involving diocesan clergy, religious, employees or volunteers, contact Victim Assistance Coordinator, Terrienne Yanulavich, Ph.D., LMHC, 5050 Route 374, Merrill, NY 12955; terriannayanulavich@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

## Rest in Peace

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

**July 15** – Rev. John Conlon, 1881; Rev. Charles D. Thomas, 1895; Msgr. Armand Dussault, 1963; Rev. Joseph F. Quinn, 1970; Rev. Joseph F. Dowd, 1983

**July 16** – Rev. Eugene Carroll, 1882; Rev. H. T. Regan, O.S.A., 1937; Rev. James Torsney, 1958

**July 18** – Msgr. Joseph Domina Brault, 1966

**July 19** – Rev. Thomas M. Carroll, 1884; Rev. Francis E. Gilbert, 1939; Rev. James Karlton Dewey, 1963; Rev. Arthur J. Trudel, 1967; Msgr. Donald M. Kelly, 1969; Rev. Thomas A. Moody, 2010

**July 20** – Francis Leo Desrosiers, 1956; Gerald F. McGrath, 2016

**July 21** – Msgr. John H. O'Neill, 1938

**July 23** – Rev. Pierre Casenave, O.M.I., 1884; Rev. Francis J. Casey, O.S.A., 1958

**July 24** – Rev. George Burque, 1897; Rev. James Joseph Gainor, 1946; Rev. Bartholemew Aloysius O'Connell, 1963; Rev. Henry Wilcott, 1965; Rev. Francis Edic, O.F.M. Conv., 1975

**July 25** – Rev. Simon Wallace, M.S.C., 1941

**July 26** – Rev. Zenon B. Decary, 1940; Rev. J. Owen Barry, O.S.A., 1978

**July 27** – Rev. John B. Chappel, M.S.C., 1884; Rev. Matthew J. Sweeney, 1935; Rev. Daniel A. Harron, O.S.A., 1942; Rev. Harold J. P. McCabe, 1976; Rev. Daniel F. Lyddy, 2002

## Environmental Stewardship

### Milkweed

Among the wildflowers that grow in this region, few give off as pleasant an aroma as milkweed. In mid-July, these inhabitants of meadows and roadsides open their pink flowers that saturate the air with a sweet smell.

Milkweed is a critical part of our ecology as it is vital to monarch butterflies. Monarch must lay eggs on milkweed as its leaves and stems are the only food source that allow its larvae to develop properly. The white sap within milkweed contains cardenolides, neurotoxins that negatively impact the heart of any creature that ingests them. Rather than being adversely affected, the monarch's larvae sequester these compounds within their bodies making the caterpillars toxic as well.

Even after the larvae transition into adult, these poisonous substances still abound in their system so that birds and predators leave them alone.

Like any weed, milkweed will eventually sprout in favorable settings over time. Places exposed to the sun and left undisturbed are where it thrives. Because it is sensitive to herbicides and pesticides, milkweed's development can be seriously affected by run-off of these compounds from farms, gardens and large lawns.

Milkweed doesn't require large plots of land and may appear in places only the size of a patio or deck. It can be transplanted; however care must be taken when handling, as getting its sap on your hands can cause skin irritation and lead to far more serious problems, especially if you happen to rub your eyes or sensitive spots.

The monarch is an attractive insect and has a mind-boggling life story as it migrates to Mexico. The monarch population has been decreasing and is considered threatened in many locations. Our best way to help is to ensure a favorable food supply by improving the availability of milkweed. This helps the monarch's survival and make for a fragrant mid-July.

## Bishop's Public Schedule

**July 15** – 10 a.m. – Diocesan Prison Chaplain Meeting at Bishop's Residence followed by Lunch

**July 16** – noon – Mass at St. Mary's Cathedral

**July 17** – noon – Mass at St. Mary's Cathedral

**July 18** – noon – Diocesan Youth Volunteer's Appreciation Picnic at Camp Guggenheim in Saranac Lake

**July 19** – 8 a.m. – Mass Celebrating the 125th Anniversary of St. Mary's Church in Copenhagen followed by Brunch

**July 20** – noon – Mass at St. Mary's Cathedral

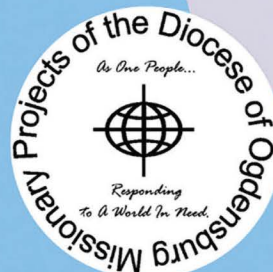
**July 21** – 4:15 p.m. – Mass for Youth Camp at Camp Guggenheim in Saranac Lake

**July 25** – 4 p.m. – Installation Mass of Reverend Jaya Kumar Francis, MSC as Pastor of St. James Minor Church in Carthage and St. Mary's Church in Copenhagen

**July 26** – 10:30 a.m. – Mass Celebrating the 25th Anniversary of Ordination to the Priesthood for Reverend Christopher J. Looby, 60th Anniversary of Ordination to the Priesthood for Reverend John J. Looby and Celebration of Reverend I. William Gordon's 87th Birthday at the Mother Cabrini Shrine in West Peru followed by a Picnic

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July 25-26,  
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- **Evangelization efforts**

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# Celebrating 150 years in Watertown

By Deacon Kevin Mastellon  
North Country Catholic

Missionaries from Quebec first came to this country across the St. Lawrence River to Watertown, NY in 1876. They came to minister to a small French speaking Catholic community and to establish a school in the Watertown community.

A celebration of the Missionaries of the Sacred Heart 150th Anniversary in the United States will be held August 2, 2026 at Our Lady of the Sacred Heart Church in Watertown. An 11 a.m. Mass is planned followed by a luncheon.

Rev. Michael Miller, MSC, is the current Provincial of the Missionaries of the Sacred Heart in the United States. On a visit to Watertown in 2024, Father Miller told the North Country Catholic "When our seminary closed in 1972 in Geneva, Illinois, the MSC looked around at various seminaries to continue the formation of the men. One location was in Watertown because the Missionaries had a prep school here. We were all disappointed when they said you're going to Watertown. For us it was like going to the end of the world. We would be buried in snow.

That disappointment really turned out good for me," the Provincial said, "because I got



to attend Immaculate Heart Academy and got to know my classmates. It was a good year."

Father Miller has returned to Watertown several times over the years, but now as the leader of Missionaries of the Sacred Heart in the United States and in Columbia, South America.

Father Miller succeeded Rev. Richard Kennedy, MSC as provincial. Father Kennedy had been pastor of Our Lady of the Sacred Heart prior to his election. Father Kennedy is now living in Pennsylvania.

The priests, deacons and brothers, with many lay ministers, continue their pastoral work throughout this country and in Columbia. In this Diocese, Rev. Frank Natale, MSC serves as Pastor of Our Lady of the Sacred Heart in Watertown, St. Paul's in Black River and St. Mary's in Evans Mills. Rev. Raymond Diesbourg, MSC is Pastor of the Roman Catholic Community of Cape Vincent, Rosiere, and Chaumont. Father Diesbourg also served as Provincial

## 'Making the Sacred Heart of Jesus known everywhere'

In 2004 the Society of the MSC celebrated its 150th year of becoming a religious Order.

A little over 20 years after its establishment, in Issoudun, France in 1854 the dream of its founder, Father Jules Chevalier, making the Sacred Heart of Jesus known everywhere, became a reality. In 1875 the MSC's branched out into the New World exploring and visiting a French community in Watertown, New York.

This year marks 150 years of the first settlement for the MSC in Watertown. By 1876, the MSC Order had made its first mark establishing the parish of Our Lady of the Sacred Heart in that city.

As of today the MSC's are established in over 50 countries Worldwide, living up to the mission of "Making the Sacred Heart of Jesus Known Everywhere."



**Missionaries**  
*of the*  
**Sacred Heart**  
**MSC MISSIONS**

of the Missionaries in the US. Rev. Jaya Kumar Francis, MSC was named Pastor of St. James Minor Parish in Carthage and St. Mary's in Copenhagen.

The Missionaries, principally through the efforts of the late Rev. Pierre Aubin, MSC, founded the Sacred Heart Foundation. The Foundation continues to fund the education of seminarians internationally. Father Aubin served the Diocese of Ogdensburg in numerous par-

ishes, retiring as Pastor of the Cape Vincent area parishes. He died in December 2025.

The motto of the Missionaries of the Sacred Heart is: May the Sacred Heart of Jesus be loved everywhere. This phrase emphasizes their commitment to spreading the love of Jesus as revealed through His Sacred Heart. The motto was established by Father Jules Chevalier, who founded the Society in France in 1854.

## Barred from celebrating Mass

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 4

immigration officials informed him he had failed his interview at the U.S. embassy there. He had traveled to Kenya to renew a visa stamp needed for re-entry to the United States. He had been serving as parochial vicar at St. Peter, in Lowville; St. Mary, in Glenfield; and St. Hedwig, in Houseville. He also has since been able to return to his posts once the difficulties were resolved.

Father Carrara says the diocese recognizes the importance of the vetting process but says unreasonable, bureaucratic delays in that process are causing a host of problems for priest applicants and the people they serve.

"It's frustrating when some information has already been provided and they ask again for the info they already have," he said. "And it's frustrating when the process is taking so long

that it affects the life of the people of the Diocese of Ogdensburg and of the North Country."

In addition, priests who immigrated from Haiti seem to have been singled out for especially prolonged screening, even though many have been serving faithfully here in the United States or attending school here.

The Diocese has requested help from U.S. Rep. Elise Stefanik's office in the case of get-

ting Father Angrand's work authorization processed. Father Carrara said the Congresswoman

has been of help to the diocese in other priest-immigration cases.

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## A KNIGHT'S REFLECTION

# Goodbye, old friend

Recently, we made the heartbreaking decision to put Cooper, our long-time family dog, to sleep after severe arthritis left him unable to function on his own. Though he was "just a pet," 14 years of unconditional love through every season of our lives had made him something much more – a true member of the family.



Mike  
Langlois

In 2012, we moved from the city to a small rural town in hopes of giving our children a simpler life. Our old Victorian house felt perfect, but it was missing one thing: a dog. Wanting to adopt a rescue, we visited the local SPCA. Unsure of exactly what we were looking for, we did our best to describe it. Then, our six-year-old daughter spotted Cooper, a solid black Boxer-Labrador mix pacing excitedly in his cage. A staff member explained that his previous owner had kept him confined for days at a time, leaving him anxious. She warned that his size and boundless energy might make him a poor fit for a young family and noted that several families had already returned him. At her suggestion, we took him behind the facility to observe him more closely. He was full of wild enthusiasm yet gentle with our daughter, and in that moment, the two instantly clicked.

Throughout the years, the bond between family and dog would evolve and grow stronger. We

quickly realized that Cooper was an extraordinary animal. He possessed a remarkable combination of the muscular,

explosive power of a Boxer and the fluid, tireless endurance of a Labrador Retriever. We witnessed many displays of his strength and skill, from jumping effortlessly a four-foot picket fence to retrieve a tennis ball, to leaping grace-

fully to catch a frisbee mid-air. With his wagging tail, playful spirit, and protective devotion to children and family, he became a neighborhood favorite. Cooper demonstrated incredible loyalty to my wife and me, remaining close throughout our daily routines, including long walks and hours spent working in the yard. When I traveled for business for weeks at a time, my wife would assure him on arrival day, "Mike's coming home!" Cooper would patiently wait, unflinching on the front porch, gazing down the street until he spotted my truck. There came loud barks, jumps, and an enthusiastic display of affection, as I would say to him, "Good boy! You're a good Coop!"

The loss of a pet can bring a surprising depth of grief. That was certainly true for me, and it led me to ask a question I had never seriously considered: Do dogs – especially those we love so deeply – go to heaven? The Catholic Church has no



Goodbye, old friend, your work is done,  
No more to chase the morning sun.  
You ran your race, you fought your fight,  
Now rest in peace within the light.

official teaching that they do, since animals do not have rational, immortal souls and therefore cannot freely choose God. Still, there are a few things to consider before assuming our relationship ends with them forever. In Genesis, God's care appears to extend to all creation, including the animals He made. The very fact that God created the earth, along with the plants and animals, would suggest that He will not suddenly stop loving or caring for them in death. In the Book of Psalms, we find a call for animals to praise God alongside human beings, suggesting that all creatures have a place in the order of His glory. "Praise the Lord from the heavens... You wild beasts and all tame animals... Let the kings of the earth and all peoples... young men too, and

Your dish is still, the leash is slack,  
But love remains and holds nothing back.  
Though paws have gone where shadows blend,  
I will always love you. Goodbye, old friend. - Anonymous

maidens, old men and boys, praise the name of the Lord" (Psalm 148). And Pope Francis, in his encyclical *Laudato Si'*, has offered this comforting reflection: "Eternal life will be a shared experience of awe, in which each creature, resplendently transfigured, will take its rightful place." It is clear we have a loving God, and if the presence of our deceased pets brings us joy at our own death, then I'd like to believe He will have no objections.

In the months leading to Cooper's passing, we prayed for the wisdom to give him the quality of life that he deserved. I believe the Holy Spirit answered that prayer by guiding us to a veterinarian who provided end-of-life care for Cooper in the comfort of our home. The night before he passed, my wife and daughter spent

the night with him on the living room floor next to the warmth of the fireplace, which was Cooper's favorite spot. The next morning dawned a beautiful, warm and sunny spring day. Throughout the morning, each of us spent time with him saying goodbye in our own way. In the afternoon, we sat with Cooper under the shade of a maple tree petting him and offering words of praise. We treated him to vanilla ice cream, one of his favorite treats, which he eagerly devoured. When the time came, through our hugs and tears, we watched him drift into a peaceful sleep.

We are grateful for the quiet lessons that Cooper taught our family about devotion, joy, companionship, and unconditional love. Perhaps one day in the future, after we have passed from this world, he will excitedly greet us as we say, "Good boy! You're a good Coop!"

*Mike Langlois is the Faith Formation Director for St. Augustine Knights of Columbus Council 7273 in Peru, New York. He is also the Upstate Conference Coordinator for Evangelization and Faith Formation for the New York State Knights of Columbus, which encompasses the Buffalo, Rochester, Syracuse, and Ogdensburg dioceses. Local Knights of Columbus councils interested in fortifying the faith of their memberships, or offering column topic ideas, can contact him at [mjlang67@gmail.com](mailto:mjlang67@gmail.com)*

## MAKING SENSE OF BIOETHICS

# Genetically modifying human embryos

A recent set of experiments at Columbia University seeking genetically to modify human embryos has rightly generated shock waves.

Led by geneticist Dieter Egli, the research relied on a newer technology for modifying genes known as "base editing." In contrast to earlier methods like CRISPR that typically cut and replace longer stretches of DNA, base editing, as summarized in news reports, "allows scientists to replace individual genetic letters more carefully. In simple terms, it works less like cutting a page out of a book and more like correcting a typo."

Attempting to make genetic modifications in a more efficient manner than had been previously achieved is precisely the kind of experiment that could and should have been carried out in animal embryos, not human embryos. The same basic biological information reported in these studies could readily have been obtained that way.

Moreover, the human embryos produced in these experiments were often intentionally sacrificed to obtain their embryonic stem cells, which were used for additional research. Creating humans for the purpose of destroying them is invariably unethical and should be illegal.

The experiments at Columbia University were unethical from the outset: researchers sought out eggs from women for the purpose of fertilizing those eggs to create embryonic humans in glassware, so they could then serve as raw materials

for research and experimentation. Researchers also obtained embryos directly from "patients who decided that their treatment in the fertility center was complete and that the embryos were no longer needed for the purpose of reproduction," to borrow the phrasing included in the original paper. In other words, parents were asked to hand over their "leftover" tiny children from fertility clinics so scientists could carry out experiments on them.

The fact that the Columbia University Human Embryonic and Human Pluripotent Stem Cell Research Committee as well as the University's Institutional Review Board granted their approval for these procedures and experiments reminds us of the moral bankruptcy surrounding so many of these review entities at our renowned universities. Too often such committees and boards end up rubberstamping offensively unethical experiments if they can find even the thinnest shred of a rationale or justification for doing so.

This research quintessentially involves a basic moral mistake that is becoming ever more widely accepted in the biosciences: The youngest humans beings, whether abandoned in fertility clinics or created de novo in petri dishes and test tubes, are treated not as ends, but as research fodder to help scientists achieve particular investigative goals.

Informed consent is always important when dealing with humans who are very vulnerable, particularly when they are

being used as research subjects. The parents of the children created in vitro for these experiments could not give valid consent because ethical consent by definition focuses on improving health. It excludes directly causing their death or otherwise using them merely as a means to an end.

It is important to note that the Catholic Church is open, in principle, to gene editing to fix genetic abnormalities, as long as the risks are very low for the embryonic patient and heritable changes to the DNA of our species are not made. Such repair is simply a form of direct medical therapy for the afflicted individual. If such therapy on embryos were technically feasible, it should occur in the womb of the mother following a natural conception, not through procedures reliant on the immoral practice of IVF. The experiments reported by the Columbia University researchers were clearly nontherapeutic, as the plan always involved destroying the embryos.

Human embryos are among the most vulnerable of God's creatures. They constitute a unique class of individuals deserving of special protections. The complex science of genetic modification at this time still involves enormous risks to the embryo. Those who encourage such practices suggest that parents should have the right to make changes to their children to help them and future generations. The science, however, including the unintended effects, remains only dimly understood. For example when the tp53 gene was genetically modified in mice to offer them protection from

cancer, it unexpectedly also contributed to the mice's premature aging.

Catholics need to be concerned about the prospects of genetically modifying future generations.

In the past, many Catholics seem to have missed the boat in recognizing and articulating the moral unacceptability of creating children in test tubes via IVF, and now participate in such technologies at rates that don't differ significantly from the general population.

As genetic enhancement of embryonic children becomes more commonplace, it is important to learn from that failure. Now is the time to rem-

edy the widespread lack of understanding and serious reflection on the moral and ethical issues involved in genetic modification of human embryos, lest Catholics and others be swayed by the technological temptation to do further harm to the youngest and most vulnerable human beings.

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



Father Tad Pacholczyk, Ph.D.



## Chicken BBQ

### St. Mary's Church Indian Lake

**\$15.00 per person**

**Half a chicken,  
corn on the cob, roll, and  
coleslaw, lemonade or iced tea**

**Sunday, July 19,  
2026**

**Noon until 5:00PM  
(or sold out)**

**Sponsored by the Knights  
of Columbus**

## ADIRONDACK MOUNTAIN

## CHICKEN BBQ

Indian Lake — The Knights of Columbus will be having a Chicken BBQ.

**Date:** July 19

**Time:** Noon to 5 p.m. or until all are sold

**Place:** St. Mary's Church

**Cost:** \$15, half a chicken, corn on the cob, roll, and coleslaw, lemonade or iced tea.

## RETREAT DAY

Saranac Lake — The Sisters of St. Joseph Justice Promoter/Faith and Ecology Committee are inviting you to a retreat day.

**Date:** July 25

**Time:** 10 a.m. to 4 p.m.; registration begins at 9:30

**Place:** Guggenheim Lodge

**Cost:** \$25 as a suggested offering

**Features:** An invitation to come aside amid the beauty of the Adirondack Mts. and Saranac Lake to ponder the mystery of God's creation and our role in His Plan. Facilitator: Aileen O'Donoghue, Astronomer and SLU Professor and Sister Bethany Fitzgerald, SSJ

**Contact:** Wanda Kavanaugh sewmom59@gmail.com, 315-489-6733 Space is limited; Deadline to register is July 21. For more information, Sister Bethany Fitzgerald, srbethssj@gmail.com

## CLINTON NORTHERN FRANKLIN

## YARD AND BAKE SALE

Ellenburg — St. Bernard's and St. Edmund's will be having a Parish Yard and Bake Sale.

**Date:** July 15 and 18

**Time:** 9 a.m. to 4 p.m.

**Place:** St. Edmund's Church

## GARAGE SALE

Brushton — St. Mary's Church will host a huge garage sale.

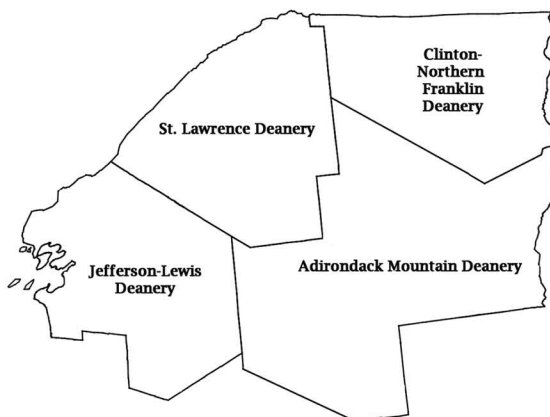
**Date:** July 16-18

**Time:** 8 a.m. to 4 p.m.

**Place:** Parish Center

**Features:** Hot Dogs and nachos will also be available for purchase

**Contact:** For more information call Anne Boyea 937-546-0055



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

Parishioners are invited to send information about activities to:

North Country Catholic, PO Box 326,

Ogdensburg, NY 13669

e-mail news@northcountrycatholic.org.

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

## GOLF TOURNAMENT

Malone — Chip in for charity at St. André's Parish Golf Tournament.

**Date:** July 24

**Time:** 12 p.m.

**Place:** 79 Golf Course Road

**Cost:** MGC Members \$65 / Non-Members \$100; Includes: green fees, Cart, Dinner & Prizes

**Features:** Fundraiser for St. André's Outreach Center. Men, Women, Mixed Divisions

**Contact:** Call Sue at St. André's Church Office at 518-483-1300 or malonemb@rcdony.org.

## BLUEBERRY BREAKFAST BUFFET

Altona — St. Ann's and Holy Angels Parishes to have a Blueberry Breakfast Buffet.

**Date:** July 26

**Time:** 8 a.m. to noon

**Place:** Holy Angels Hall

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

**Features:** Blueberry pancakes, regular pancakes, French toast, eggs, bacon, sausage, biscuits with sausage and gravy, home fries, sweets, and beverages. Take-outs available. 50/50 raffle, bake sale and a lottery tree.

**Contact:** For more information call 518-236-5632

## SOAKING PRAYERS SESSIONS

Come enjoy a relaxing prayer opportunity at two different loca-

tions.

**Plattsburgh:** Newman Center, 1:30 p.m. to 3:30; Aug. 3 Sept. 14, Oct. 5, Nov. 2 and Dec. 7

**Ellenburg Center:** Our Lady of the Adirondacks House of Prayer, 10:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. (please bring a bag lunch); July 9, Aug. 13, Sept. 10, Oct. 8; session includes recitation of the rosary.

**Features:** Soaking Prayer is done in a relaxed spiritual atmosphere wherein you surrender yourself to receive an outpouring and infilling of the Holy Spirit enabling you to be immersed in God's love, mercy, healing, compassion and peace. Each session begins with a short introduction followed by praise, worship and soaking prayer for an extended period of time as guided by the Holy Spirit. Remainder of time is spent listening to scripture readings and remaining receptive to receive healing at any level: emotional, psychological, mental, physical, spiritual or generational.

**Contact:** All sessions are facilitated by Eve McGill, Living Waters Healing Ministry 518-645-2648, evemcgill16@charter.net

## FIRST FRIDAY

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

**Date:** Aug. 7

**Schedule:** 9 a.m. Mass fol-

lowed by Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament. 11 a.m. Benediction of the Blessed Sacrament.

## BUS TRIP TO "SIGHTS AND SOUNDS"

Lancaster, Pa — St. Mary's and St. Augustine's Altar and Rosary Society of North Bangor and Brushton are doing a trip to see Sights and Sounds "Joshua."

**Date:** Sept. 14 — 16

**Cost:** \$605 Double, \$575 Triple, \$804 single. All rates are per person.

**Features:** Package includes: lodging, two breakfasts, two dinners, performance of Joshua at Sight and Sound Theatre, Chalk Talk, Bird in Hand Farmers Market, Bass Pro Shop and Outlets, Souvenir gift, Motorcoach Transportation, taxes and gratuities. Pickups in Brushton, Potsdam, Canton, Watertown

**Contact:** Gayla LePage 518-569-3612 or email luer913@hotmail.com

## JEFFERSON-LEWIS

## GOLF TOURNAMENT

Lowville — The Catholic Community of St. Peter, St. Mary, St. Hedwig are sponsoring their First Annual Golf Tournament "Winter Heat."

**Date:** July 18

**Time:** Registration 8 a.m. to 9; Shotgun Start at 9 a.m.

**Place:** Cedars Golf Course

**Cost:** \$400/Team — Includes green fees and cart

**Features:** All proceeds will go towards assisting families in Lewis County with Winter heating expenses. Beyond having fun on the greens, our tournament serves a higher purpose: assisting families in keeping warm this Winter. We are committed to making an impact and invite you to get a four person team together and join us. Together, we can make a difference for our fellow brothers and sisters, and create a memorable and successful "Winter Heat Charity Golf Classic" Please let us know if you have any questions. You may reach out to us by contacting any of the following people.

**Contact:** For more information

call the parish office 315-376-6662.

## HOLY HOUR AND DIVINE MERCY

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

**Date:** Aug. 2

**Time:** Following 11 a.m. Mass

**Place:** St. Hedwig's Church

**Contact:** 315-348-6260

## ST. MARY'S GALA

Clayton — St. Mary's Gala and Raffle to be held.

**Date:** Aug. 4

**Time:** 5:30 p.m. to 10

**Place:** Cerow Arena at the Town of Clayton Recreation Park.

**Cost:** \$100. Each ticket includes dinner for two, hors d'oeuvres, two coupons for one drink each, coffee, and dessert. (Sorry, no take-outs.)

**Features:** Grand Prize: \$10,000; four \$500 prizes. Winner need not be present to win. All winning tickets will be returned to drum and be eligible for all 6 prizes!

**Contact:** Tickets Available At: St. Mary's Parish Office (521 James Street, Clayton) or by phone at 315-686-3398.

## HEALING WORKSHOP

Cape Vincent — Save the date for a breakthrough healing workshop.

**Schedule:** Aug. 6-7, 5:30 p.m. to 9; Aug. 8, 10 a.m. to 3 p.m.

**Place:** St. Vincent of Paul

**Features:** Are you longing for deeper healing, freedom, and peace in your life? Join Patrick and Joy Campbell, Benedictine Oblates, from the Cross of St. Benedict Society and Joyful Hope. The Breakthrough Healing Workshop is a powerful time of testimony, teaching, and prayer ministry to help you overcome spiritual obstacles. Heals past wounds and encounter God's restoring love. Feel free to invite a friend and seek healing and hope.

**Contact:** For more information contact bhwjhdioogd@gmail.com 315-486-7967

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 10

**SACRED MUSIC CONCERT**

Clayton - Join St. Mary's music ministry and youth choir for an evening of sacred choral music, scripture readings, and solo performances.

**Date:** Aug. 9

**Time:** 4 p.m.

**Place:** St. Mary's Church

**Features:** This concert is a free event, but a goodwill offering to support our music ministry will be available at the door.

**Contact:** For more information 315 686 3398 or email corrinefwil-lis@gmail.com

**BLESSING OF FLOWERS**

Houseville - St. Hedwig's will observe the Polish custom of blessing flowers, herbs and grains.

**Date:** Aug. 16

**Time:** 11 a.m. Mass to honor our Blessed Mother, Matka Boska Zielna, Our Lady of the Greens.

**Place:** St. Hedwig's

**Features:** All are welcome to participate by bringing pots and or bouquets of flowers, herbs, and grains and join in a procession if desired. The blessed items can decorate the home, be taken to the cemetery or given as gifts. There is no limit to the items you can bring. A free ice cream social will follow in the church hall.

**Contact:** Call 315-348-6260 for more information.

**ST. LAWRENCE****ROSARY WITH DEVOTIONS**

Ogdensburg - The Legion of Mary will pray the rosary with devotions for First Saturday.

**Date:** Aug. 1

**Time:** 8 a.m.

**Place:** Notre Dame Church, Ogdensburg

**Features:** Rosary with devotions

**FIRST SATURDAY ROSARY**

Massena - Sacred Heart Church to have first Saturday Rosary Devotion.

**Date:** Aug. 1

**Time:** 3:15 p.m.

**Features:** First Saturday Rosary Devotion to OUR Lady of Fat-

ma. Confessions will be available. Saturday Vigil Mass at 4 p.m.

**MENS GROUP**

Massena - Men's group to meet the first Saturday of every month.

**Date:** Aug. 1

**Time:** 9 a.m. Mass with meeting to follow

**Place:** Sacred Heart Church

**MONTHLY BRUNCH**

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

**Date:** Aug. 9 (Second Sunday of each month)

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

**Place:** Father Amyot Parish Center

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

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

**DIOCESAN EVENTS****GUGGENHEIM REGISTRATION**

Camp Guggenheim registration and new staff application season is now open.

**Dates:** July 19 - July 24 for 12-15 year olds; July 26 - July 31 for 12-15 year olds; Aug 2 - Aug 7 for 16-18 year olds

**Cost:** \$450 per week

**Contact:** Register for camp at <https://www.rcdony.org/youth/camp/registration>

**YOUTH SERVICE PICNIC**

Saranac Lake - The Diocesan Youth Service Picnic to be held for all youth in parish ministry.

**Date:** July 18

**Time:** Noon to 5 p.m.

**Place:** Camp Guggenheim

**Features:** Join us for a diocesan wide celebration of the young people who serve our parishes as altar servers, musicians, lectors, greeters, and more. Enjoy an afternoon at Camp Guggenheim with great food, high energy activities, music, time with peers from across the Diocese, and Mass with Bishop LaValley. A joyful summer gathering to honor the youth who help

lead our parish communities.

**Contact:** Register at <https://rcdony.org/ya>

**DYING WITH CHRIST, LIVING WITH HOPE**

Plattsburgh - When we make a commitment to die with Christ, we can truly live with hope. Learn about the new Physician Assisted Suicide law and how MAID has progressed throughout Canada.

**Date:** Sept. 29

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

**Place:** St. Peter's Emmaus Room

**Cost:** \$10 donation, includes lunch

**Features:** Discussions feature theologians and healthcare professionals giving perspectives on suffering, grief, dying and our Christian duty to care. The day will include guest speaker Jessica Rodgers, coalition director of Patients Rights Action Fund.

**Contact:** Registration online at: <https://www.rcdony.org.living-withhope> For more information contact [cminer@rcdony.org](mailto:cminer@rcdony.org)

**CATECHIST WORKSHOP**

All parish catechists are invited to attend our Annual Summer Workshop Bonanza with 2 locations and dates to choose from.

**Schedule:** Aug. 8 at Immaculate Conception, Brownville or Aug. 15 at St. Mary's Social Hall, Massena.

**Time:** 8:45 a.m. to 3:30 p.m.

**Features:** Continue working toward certification and deepen your faith life. Travel money available for early registration.

**Contact:** For more information and to register please go to [www.rcdony.org/certworkshops](http://www.rcdony.org/certworkshops). Anita Soltero 518-310-3669 [asoltero@rcdony.org](mailto:asoltero@rcdony.org)

**RACHELS VINEYARD**

Saranac Lake - Are you or a friend suffering after abortion? You aren't alone. Join others for a week-end 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](http://www.rcdony.org/pro-life/rv-retreat) For more information: Colleen Miner Email: [cminer@rcdony.org](mailto: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. John Paul the Great said, "Suffering

unleashes love," because we only ever find Jesus and His love in our wounds. 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. You may know her as the Catholic Evangelista through her speaking, writing, and podcasting.

**Contact:** Space is limited and Register today: <https://www.rcdony.org/ourlady>. For more information contact Kathleen Nichols [kmsnichols1163@gmail.com](mailto:kmsnichols1163@gmail.com)

Visit our website

[www.northcountrycatholic.org](http://www.northcountrycatholic.org)

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



Find us on Facebook!



## DIOCESAN YOUTH SERVICE PICNIC

**Saturday, July 18 • Noon to 5:00 pm**  
**Camp Guggenheim**

All youth who serve from across the Diocese for an afternoon of faith, friendship, and fun! Whether you're an altar server, musician, lector, greeter, or parish helper of any kind, this day is for you

- Cookout lunch begins at noon
  - Games, music & classic camp activities
  - Vocation Q&A with young adults & clergy
- Parents and siblings are welcome!**

**4:00 PM Mass with Bishop LaValley**  
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# CATHOLIC WORLD AT A GLANCE

## Notre Dame enters last stage of restoration after 2019 fire

A symbol of Christian heritage and one of the finest examples of Gothic architecture, Notre-Dame Cathedral in Paris, attracts millions of tourists and pilgrims from around the world each year. The devastating fire that significantly damaged the iconic cathedral on April 15, 2019, led to an unprecedented wave of international solidarity to ensure its restoration. Although the cathedral reopened for worship in December 2024, restoration work is not yet complete. French authorities recently unveiled a final phase of work to be carried out from 2027 to 2033, which will require a new fundraising campaign aiming to raise 130 million euros (\$148.5 million). The planned investment amounts to 150 million euros (\$171.3 million). Of that sum, nearly 20 million euros (\$22.8 million) has already been secured, while the remainder is to come from donations from individuals, companies, and partner organizations, following the funding model used to rebuild the monument after the fire.

## Planned Parenthood regains federal funding after year pause

Planned Parenthood has regained access to federal funding after a yearlong pause. As of July 5, Planned Parenthood clinics can bill Medicaid for reimbursement for contraception, STD screenings, and other non-abortion services. The Trump administration defunded Planned Parenthood via the One Big Beautiful Bill Act, but the defunding was scheduled for one year rather than the permanent or 10-year defunding hoped for by activists. Advocates for unborn children criticized the administration for failing to maintain the defunding of the abortion giant. "As we celebrated the 250th anniversary of our nation founded on the right to life, funding resumed to the Big Abortion businesses that profit from stripping that right away from a record number of Americans and increasing our top cause of death year after year," Kelsey Pritchard, communications director at SBA Pro-Life America, told EWTN News.

## Vatican October meeting to focus on divorce, family issues

A Vatican meeting of bishops in October will focus on divorce and separation, among other family-related issues, according to the preparatory document published Monday. The gathering of presidents of the world's bishops' conferences will be a forum to discuss the application today of *Amoris Laetitia*, Pope Francis' controversial 2016 apostolic exhortation on marriage and the family. The Vatican announced July 6 that the Oct. 7–14 meeting will center on five themes, including accompanying and supporting families "in the difficulties of life." The gathering will include a discussion about "walking with families in complex situations," such as "abandonment, separation, and divorce," so that they can feel listened to and involved in the Church, according to a press release from the Secretariat General of the Synod and the Dicastery for the Laity, the Family, and Life. It will also discuss cohabiting couples, openness to welcoming children, the decline in marriage among young people, and the transmission of the faith to new generations.

# Report projects U.S. population decline

By Katherine Matt  
EWTN News

A report from the Institute for Family Studies warns that the United States is approaching a demographic turning point, with fertility rates continuing to fall well below replacement levels and population declines increasingly likely in the coming decades unless current trends change.

The report, titled "The Demographic Dead End: 2026 State of Fertility Report," presents estimates of fertility trends for every state dating back to 1917. As part of the nation's 250th anniversary, researchers also reconstructed birth rates in Massachusetts dating to 1660, offering one of the longest historical views of American fertility ever compiled.

According to the report, the U.S. fertility rate has fallen to about 1.6 children per woman, well below the replacement level of about 2.1 needed to maintain a stable population without immigration. Researchers said the decline is no longer a temporary consequence of delayed childbearing but reflects a sustained demographic shift.

The authors projected that if trends continue, the U.S. population will likely peak during the 2050s before entering a prolonged period of decline. They contend that many mainstream demographic forecasts underestimate the pace of falling fertility and assume a rebound that has yet to materialize.

The report notes fertility has declined in nearly every state over the past two decades, though the pace varies geographically. States with higher levels of religious participation, marriage, and family stability generally continue to post comparatively higher birth rates than states with lower rates of marriage and family formation.

Although Americans' desired family size has remained relatively stable, the gap between how many children they want and how many they ultimately have continues to widen. Surveys consistently show Americans expect to have about two children and ideally would like to have an average of 2.4.

Catherine Pakaluk, professor at The Catholic University of America and author of "Hannah's Children: The Women Quietly Defying the Birth Dearth," cautioned against interpreting that gap as entirely unmet demand.

"I'd be careful treating that gap as pure unmet demand — people fall

short of almost everything they say they want, and stated desires are aspirations measured before the real tradeoffs arrive," Pakaluk told EWTN News. "What 'I want 2.4' mostly reflects is a preference stated in the abstract, which softens once a child is weighed against everything else a life can hold."

## HAVING FEWER CHILDREN

Pakaluk said economic pressures and delayed marriage play a role but are not the primary cause of declining birth rates.

"Cost and later marriage matter at the margin, but they aren't the engine," she said. "The driver is a shift in the relative value placed on children."

She added that prolonged low fertility could reshape American society, leading to "an older population, a thinner worker-to-retiree ratio that strains Social Security and Medicare" as well as "thinner kin networks and more people aging without family nearby."

## LIMITS OF GOVERNMENT POLICY

Researchers argue reversing the trend will require more than financial incentives for parents. Pakaluk agreed that public policy has limits.

"The most honest thing I can say is that the levers government actually controls aren't the ones that move completed family size," she said. "Policy can clear obstacles at the margin, but the decisive factors live in culture, faith, and community, where government has a light touch."

She said measures such as expanding housing supply, strengthening the child tax credit, and removing marriage penalties may help families but cautioned that "no wealthy country has policy-engineered its way back to replacement."

## GLOBAL CHALLENGE

The findings come as concerns over declining birth rates are growing worldwide. More than two-thirds of countries have fertility rates below replacement, prompting governments across Europe, Asia, and North America to examine ways to encourage family formation.

For the Catholic Church, concern over declining birth rates has long been connected to its teaching on marriage, openness to life, and support for families. Recent popes have repeatedly warned that demographic decline carries not only economic consequences but also cultural and social implications for future generations.

# Free Christian internet icon site launches

By Nicolás de Cárdenas  
EWTN News

Catholic digital entrepreneur Dimitri Conejo launched Christicons.com, a free library offering over 60 icons featuring “professional and consistent iconography” for use by Christian faith-based initiatives.

The available icons include fundamental Christian elements such as the cross and the Bible as well as liturgical references such as a chalice, a host, and an altar.

The library also includes imagery related to Jesus’ parables: wheat, fishing nets, and fish. It also has sacramental or devotional symbols such as a rosary and the Sacred Heart, and items linked to the sacraments or liturgical vestments, including a stole, a confessional, a clerical collar, and a mitre, among others.

As stated in a press release: “Christicons fills a gap that any designer or developer who has worked for a parish, a devotional app, or a publisher of religious books knows firsthand: There is a lack of high-quality, consistent, and free-to-use SVG [scalable vector graphics] icons that speak the visual language of the Christian world.”

The graphics scale to any size without losing quality and can be colored, resized, or modified with a single line of

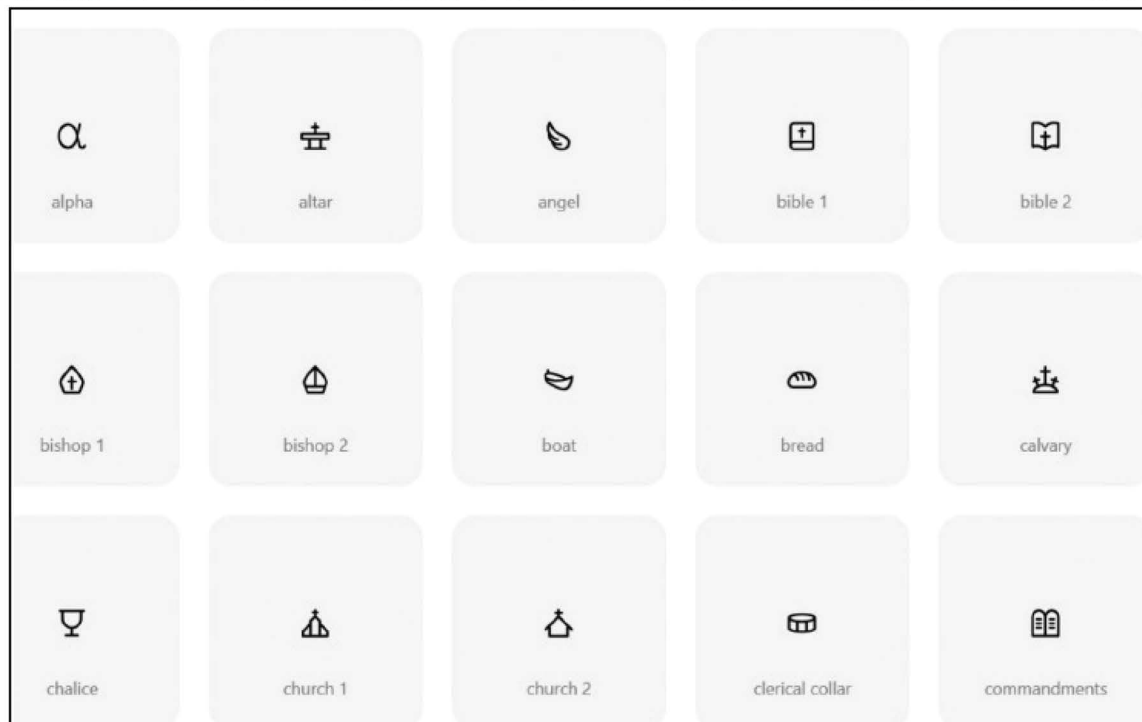


PHOTO BY CHRISTICONS.COM/EWTN NEWS

**Some Christian icons by Christicons.com that are free to use on the internet.**

code.

Their use “is completely free for personal and commercial projects. No attribution is required ... The only restriction, a clear and reasonable one, is that they cannot be redistributed as a standalone collection or used to train artificial intelligence models,” the statement specifies.

This Christian iconographic

library is part of an ecosystem of digital ventures by Dimconex Media, which aims to “equip Catholicism — and Christianity in a broad sense — with the digital resources that the secular world takes for granted.”

Christicons.com joins the Catholic image library Catholic; the online learning platform Holydemia; the digital tool supporting consecration

to the Virgin Mary, Mater Coeli; and the digital Catholic magazine dedicated to culture, thought, and spirituality, Tolkian.

*This story was first published by ACI Prensa, the Spanish-language sister service of EWTN News. It has been translated and adapted by EWTN News English.*

## Pope Leo XIV to UN: Confront AI misuse

By Ishmael Adibuah  
EWTN News

Pope Leo XIV, drawing on his recent encyclical Magnifica Humanitas, has again called for dialogue on artificial intelligence (AI) while acknowledging the serious concerns that remain.

His remarks were delivered in a July 8 message sent through Vatican Secretary of State Cardinal Pietro Parolin

to the participants in the AI for Good Global Summit in Geneva, Switzerland. The annual summit is the primary platform for AI at the United Nations (U.N.), taking place this year from July 7-10.

In the message, the pontiff assured participants of the Holy See’s continued openness to dialogue with secular organizations on AI.

The letter, in explaining the aims of Magni-

fica Humanitas, stated that the pope had written this document as a result of conversations on AI with scientists, political leaders, and parents.

The letter also explained that the encyclical was born out of persistent concerns over AI misuse.

Magnifica Humanitas “was also impelled by troubling accounts of the potential misuses of algorithms and by

the loss of human agency in critical areas,” the message stated.

The AI for Good Global Summit is an annual U.N. conference on artificial intelligence gathering academics, civil leaders, and industry leaders to discuss how to safely govern AI systems while maximizing its positive impact on humanity.

The Permanent Observer Mission of the Holy See to the U.N. in

Geneva has also participated in the summit, publishing a statement on the need to increase human oversight over AI autonomous systems.



## SUNDAY'S SCRIPTURE

## Good seed and bad seed

July 19

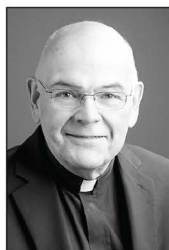
Sixteenth Sunday  
in Ordinary Time

READINGS

Wisdom 12:13, 16-19

Romans 8:26-27

Matthew 13:24-43

Msgr. Robert  
H. Aucoin

The whole operation went as smooth as silk. He drove like a bolt of lightning. It was like being in heaven. He is dumb as rocks. All these expressions are similes, comparisons made between two different things joined by "like" or "as." We use them to make a point, using something familiar to help us understand something less familiar. The Gospel parables resemble extended similes. They take what is known, in this case sewing seed, to help us understand something unknown, in this case the kingdom of God: "The kingdom of heaven may be likened to a man who sowed good seed in his field."

We may lack detailed knowledge about farm-

ing, but we know enough to realize that sowing good seed should produce good results. However, in the parable, an enemy sows bad seed amid the good resulting in weeds growing with the good wheat.

Our natural inclination might be to get rid of the weeds because we do not want the weeds to overtake what is good. The owner says no. Let everything continue to grow and mature. Harvest time will reveal the difference more clearly, and at that time the weeds will be thrown away and burned.

What lessons can we learn from this parable?

The good and the bad exist side by side in the world. You know that,

and I know that. Bad people and bad situations exist, and they exist right alongside good people and good situations.

Some people have a hard time admitting that there are bad people in the world. But look at the reality. Someone starts a computer virus. Hackers steal identities in order to make money for themselves. Various forms of abuse exist. People lie. People steal. People commit all kinds of atrocities. The newspapers, cable news, blogs and news sources daily tell the stories.

Some believe that there are no bad people, only bad actions. But the Gospels clearly tell us that what we do to ourselves and to others will be the foundation of how we are judged.

Remember in the parable the weeds are carted off to be burned.

In real life, distinguishing the weeds from the good plants can sometimes be difficult. In fact, there are some weeds that look pretty good. The inability to distinguish one from the other forces us to caution and to heighten our awareness of a wolf in sheep's clothing.

We also know that bad people can change. They are not condemned to destruction before harvest time but can always seek forgiveness. Remember, too, Jesus' admonition to love our enemies. We do not have

to like them, but we do have to hope for their conversion, hope that they turn away from doing evil. Forgiveness can be difficult and can tear us apart. However, forgiveness is not an event, but rather forgiveness is a process taking time and energy. One author has put it this way: "To forgive is to set a prisoner free, and then discover that the prisoner was you."

On Sunday, we will pray in the responsorial psalm: "Lord, you are good and forgiving." Shouldn't we act the same?

Never give in to evil, always strive for the good. Our path to greatness is to remain solid in our faith, committed to goodness, ready to forgive, prompt to reject the weeds, and never to be overtaken by the weeds of life.

## CALLED TO SERVE

## Change is inevitable

Matthew's Gospel for next Sunday concludes with the passage, "whoever has ears ought to hear."

Jesus, like his Father, was admonishing us to pay attention. Listen to what he, Jesus, is teaching. Listen as the Father tells us the way it should be. He used words and signs. Pay attention when the Holy Spirit puts things in front of us to help us. Like which direction to take at the fork in the road or where to go next on our journey.

I was thinking about that passage as I considered the task of the dozen or so priests of our diocese who have

started new parish assignments recently.

Those priests were obliged to say goodbye to the people who have trusted Father's presence for the past few years. Most of the people hated to see Father go. They have become relaxed around him. He has become almost predictable. His mannerisms and tendencies are well known. His dry wit or bellicose humor is now legend. He has become like that old sweater you hate to get rid of because it is so damn comfortable.

You consider protesting but that will get you nowhere. The Church doesn't function like

that. The bishop has decided. This priest's talents are needed elsewhere. Hopefully the folks in that new parish will find him as kind as you did.

In his new assignment, each priest prays he will be welcomed as he was in the last parish he served. That will be tough because he was fond of the people and the facilities he left. But this new assignment from his bishop is welcomed in a way. He is reinvigorated.

This parish will thrive under his leadership. The people will latch

onto this new pastor's ways, the new priest's style, and will embrace them. His home and work area will be different. It will take a little reconfiguring, but the new residence can soon be his own, at least for now.

He will become acquainted with the new constituents. Slowly at first, but he will get to know them all. That flock, his new parishioners, can be friendly or cold, helpful or adverse. His job is to lead them all to heaven.

At ordination, the bishop said in these

words or ones like them, "For your part you will exercise the sacred duty of teaching in the name of Christ the Teacher. Impart to everyone the word of God which you have received with great joy. Meditating on the law of the Lord, see that you believe what you read, that you teach what you believe, and that you practice what you teach."

That is what the priest heard at his ordination and "whoever has ears ought to hear."

Deacon  
Kevin Mastellon

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



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

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Sister Mary Ellen Brett, SSJ, Director

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# Building bridges

"Our mission today is to disarm hearts," said Father Peter Piyachart Makornkhanp, national director of the Pontifical Mission Societies (TPMS) in Thailand and parish priest of Holy Rosary Church in Bangkok. "In communion with the Holy Father and our bishops, we pray to sow seeds of peace and reconciliation and eradicate hostility toward our Cambodian neighbors from Thai society. During Sunday Masses in Bangkok and throughout the country, special prayer intentions are read out to 'disarm hearts.' We do not want to give in to hatred; rather, we want to build bridges of reconciliation between Thailand and Cambodia. A ceasefire is now in effect in the border conflict with Cambodia, and it can represent a first step toward lasting and definitive peace. As Thai Catholics, we are called to be apostles of peace, and the faithful are working for reconciliation at all levels and in all parishes."

Father Peter Piyachart explained: "We preach, recalling the words of Pope Leo XIV: we long for a peace that is both unarmed and disarming. His words resound in our churches, together with his constant appeals for peace. We encourage the faithful to follow our Shepherd, the Holy Father, who shows us the way in the footsteps of Christ, who said: 'Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called children of God.'"

This desire, he noted, is echoed and shared by Catholic communities across the country, which are observing a special "Year of Synodality" at the pastoral level in 2026. Throughout the year, the local Church is engaged in a series of gatherings based on the method of "conversations in the spirit."

Father Piyachart explained the path of the Thai Catholic community, a small minority in a predominantly Buddhist country: "The Year of Synodality is built around three key priorities, each carrying a powerful message of fraternity and peace. The first is 'walking together,' which means overcoming clericalism and recognizing the equal dignity and shared responsibility of the laity, especially women and young people."

The second objective, he said, is "to live as Christians as leaven within the nation—that is, to embrace our status as a numerical minority (0.46 percent of Thailand's population) and to be active in society through charitable work and education, proclaiming the Gospel."

The third priority focuses on ecumenism and dialogue. "In Thailand," he concluded, "leaders and all the baptized work together to build harmonious relationships with Buddhist monks and individuals, as well as with Muslim citizens, in order to promote peace, safeguard human dignity, support the development of the poor, and protect the environment."

Article from 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

**Alexandria Bay** — Martha H. (Hedge) O'Donnell, 80; Mass of Christian Burial Aug. 6, 2026 at St. Cyril's Church.

**Cape Vincent** — Patricia (Wiley) Gilmore, 77; Mass of Christian Burial July 3, 2026 at St. Vincent of Paul Church; burial in parish cemetery.

**Cape Vincent** — Charles E. Jury, 82; Funeral Services June 27, 2026 at Cleveland Funeral Home; burial in Sand Bay Cemetery.

**Hogansburg** — Elizabeth R. (Jackson) Sunday, 83; Mass of Christian Burial July 8, 2026 at St. Regis Church; burial in St. Lawrence Cemetery.

**Lyon Mountain** — Francis C. Siskavich, Jr., 66; Mass of Christian Burial July 6, 2026 at St. Bernard's Church; burial in parish cemetery.

**Malone** — Linda J. (Jessie) Rizzo, 71; Graveside services June 29, 2026 at Notre Dame Cemetery.

**Massena** — Rita M. (Singleton) Eggleston, 94; Mass of Christian Burial July 7, 2026 at St. Mary's Church; burial in Calvary Cemetery.

**Ogdensburg** — Irmgard (Hill) Degone, 93; Funeral Services June 24, 2026 at the Oswegatchie Mausoleum.

**Plattsburgh** — Diane L. (Hart) Bushey, 67; Mass of Christian Burial July 8, 2026 at St. Peter's Church; burial in parish cemetery.

**Plattsburgh** — Genevieve M. (Latour) Corrow, 92; Mass of Christian Burial July 8, 2026 at St. Peter's Church; burial in parish cemetery.

ter's Church; burial in Plattsburgh Community Mausoleum.

**Plattsburgh** — Thomas M. Douglas, 77; Funeral Services June 29, 2026 at Brown Funeral Home.

**Plattsburgh** — Richard T. Heckard, 88; Mass of Christian Burial June 26, 2026 at St. Peter's Church; burial in St. Peter's Cemetery.

**Plattsburgh** — Jean (Kovacic) Moore, 75; Mass of Christian Burial July 6, 2026 at St. John's Church; burial in St. Alexander's Cemetery, Morrisville.

**Plattsburgh** — Maynard Duane Rascoe, 82; Mass of Christian Burial June 25, 2026 at St. Peter's Church.

**Plattsburgh** — Shirley Janet (Spoonier) Reome, 90; Mass of Christian Burial July 2, 2026 at St. Peter's Church; burial in Plattsburgh Community Mausoleum.

**Redford** — Todd Michael Perry, 62; Mass of Christian Burial July 9, 2026 at Church of the Assumption; burial in parish cemetery.

**Saranac Lake** — Barbara A. (Wallace) Stunzi, 85; Mass of Christian Burial July 6, 2026 at St. Bernard's Church.

**Saranac Lake** — Patrick Leigh Vaughn, 57; Funeral Services July 14, 2026 at Fortune-Keough Funeral Home; burial in St. Bernard Cemetery.

**Saranac Lake** — Jobeth Williams, 39; Funeral Services July 1, 2026 at Fortune-Keough Funeral Home.

**Star Lake** — Elinor J. (Kerr) Lefert, 96; Mass of Christian Burial July 16, 2026 at St. Hubert's Church; burial in St. Mary's Cemetery, Rome.

**Ticonderoga** — Luis Roman, 70; Funeral Services June 27, 2026 at Wilcox & Regan Funeral Home.

**Tupper Lake** — Richard E. Bujold, 83; Graveside services June 5, 2026 at St. Alphonsus Cemetery.

**Watertown** — Richard A. Cean, Jr., 57; Mass of Christian Burial June 30, 2026 at Holy Family Church; burial in Dexter Cemetery.

**Watertown** — Theresa A. (Weber) Clement, 86; Graveside services at Glenwood Cemetery.

**Watertown** — Anna M. (Miller) Guyette, 92; Mass of Christian Burial July 10, 2027 at Our Lady of the Sacred Heart; burial in Glenwood Cemetery.

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# Meet the Camp Guggenheim Staff

It's almost time for the start of the Camp Guggenheim season!

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The following is the fourth installment of our annual "Meet the Camp Guggenheim Staff" series.



**MaryCatherine**  
**"MC" Izzo**  
Nurse



**Beth Bergman**  
Nurse

**Hometown:** Peru, NY (now Canton)

**Bio/Welcome:** I started as a camper here a loooong time ago- a really long time ago, like the 1990s! Then I was on staff for a few years, a cook a few years later, a nurse 20 years after that, and happily I'm visiting again as the nurse for a couple weeks. In between I have lived a lot of life and seen a lot of the world. Camp Guggenheim is still one of the most beautiful places I have been blessed to experience!



**Rafaella Bird**  
**Matarazzo**  
Counselor

**Hometown:** Charlotte, VT

**Bio/Welcome:** I am so excited to meet you all at my favorite place ever this summer! This will be my first year on staff and my sixth summer coming to camp! I just finished my first year at Providence College where I am studying Theology, Neuroscience and Philosophy. I love being outside, making treats, spending time with family and friends, and fluffy clouds. I think camp is the closest you can get to heaven on earth so be prepared to encounter God and his unfailing love for you, His precious sons and daughters! Can't wait to see you!

**Hometown:** Lake Placid

**Bio/Welcome:** Hello! My name is MC Izzo, and I can't believe I'm blessed enough to be back at Camp this summer!

My first year as a camper was in 2003, and I served on staff from 2010 to 2014 in a multitude of roles - lifeguard, Teen Vision director, assistant director, and this summer, as one of your nurses.

I even met and served with my husband, Joey, during my time on staff; we have been married almost eight years and now have three (almost four) little "campers" of our own - MaryElizabeth ("Emmy", 7), Joseph (4), John Paul (3), and Baby Boy #3 due in May! When I am not at Camp, I am a labor and delivery nurse at our local hospital, and our family loves camping, monster trucks, and music.

My favorite parts of Camp are liturgy, song practice, and the reconciliation service. Camp has been the most fruitful and joyful part of my faith journey, and I can't wait to see who the Holy Spirit brings to our home on the water this summer. I know that Christ has GREAT THINGS in store for us all! God is Good!



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