



## DIOCESE OF OGDENSBURG

### *Diocesan Administrator*

604 WASHINGTON STREET • P.O. BOX 369 • OGDENSBURG, NEW YORK 13669  
TELEPHONE: 315-393-2920 • FAX: 315-393-2150 • E-mail: [tvalley@dioogdensburg.org](mailto:tvalley@dioogdensburg.org)

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Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

“Every high priest is taken from among men and made their representative before God, to offer gifts and sacrifices for sins” (Hebrews 5:1). The gift of every priest before God and His people is a grace of service.

Marking the 150<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the death of St. John Marie Vianney, the patron of parish priests, Pope Benedict XVI has declared this year as a “Year for Priests” in an effort to encourage “spiritual perfection” in the lives of priests. The pope will open the special year with Solemn Vespers at the Vatican on June 19, 2009, the Solemnity of the Sacred Heart of Jesus, and the day for the sanctification of priests. He will close the celebrations during a World Meeting of Priests at St. Peter’s Square on June 19, 2010. The theme for the priestly year is “Faithfulness of Christ, Faithfulness of Priests”.

I encourage the faithful of the Diocese of Ogdensburg to pray before the Blessed Sacrament on the Solemnity of the Sacred Heart for the holiness of all priests, especially our Diocesan priests. Those who pray the Liturgy of the Hours are encouraged to pray Vespers of the Solemnity of the Sacred Heart for our priests, for more vocations to the priesthood in our Diocese, and for our deceased priests whose faithfulness to the priesthood continues to inspire us.

Let us begin this “Year for Priests” with the words from the Letter to the Hebrews: “Therefore, since we have a great high priest who has passed through the heavens, Jesus, the Son of God, let us hold fast our confession. For we do not have a high priest who is unable to sympathize with our weaknesses, but one who has similarly been tested in every way, yet without sin. So let us confidently approach the throne of grace to receive mercy and to find grace for timely help” (Hebrews 4:14-16).

May Jesus Christ, the faithful High Priest, keep us ever close to Him.

Sincerely yours in Christ,

Reverend Terry R. LaValley, J.C.L.  
Diocesan Administrator