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The Diocese of Ogdensburg Volume 68, Number 33

NORTH COUNTRY CATHOLIC

JAN. 8, 2014

For the new year...

VATICAN CITY (CNS) — The new year will be brighter only if everyone steps outside of their safe havens, gets involved and works together to solve local problems with generosity and love, Pope Francis said.

As 2013 comes to a close, let everyone ask God for forgiveness and thank him for his patience and love, the

pope said as he presided over a Dec. 31 evening prayer service in St. Peter's Basilica.

May Mary "teach us to welcome God made man so that every year, every month, every day be overflowing with his eternal love," the pope said on the eve of the feast honoring her as Mother of God.

Leading the annual "Te Deum" prayer service to thank God for his blessings in 2013 and the gift of salvation in Christ, the pope asked people to reflect on how they have spent the past year — the precious days, weeks and months the Lord has given as a gift to everyone.

"Have we used it mostly for ourselves, for our own inter-

ests or did we know to spend it for others, too? How much time did we set aside for being with God, in prayer, in silence, in adoration?"

People should also reflect on how they used their time to contribute to their communities," he said.

"The quality of life in a community — depends on everyone," he said.

Nine Days of Prayer, Penance and Pilgrimage

Bishop LaValley has encouraged parishes of the Diocese of Ogdensburg to participate in "Nine Days of Prayer, Penance and Pilgrimage" Jan. 18-26.

This is a new initiative by the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB) in conjunction with the 41st anniversary of Roe v. Wade and the annual March for Life in Washington, DC.

The bishops note that, since 1973, "more than 55 million children's lives have been lost and the lives of millions of their parents have been shattered."

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Ecumenical prayer service

Bishop LaValley will preside at the annual diocesan Ecumenical Service Sunday, Jan. 12 at 2 p.m. at St. Bernard's Church in Saranac Lake

YOUTH MINISTRY COFFEE HOUSE



PHOTO BY DAYNA LEADER

The youth ministry office of the Diocese of Ogdensburg sponsored a coffee house Dec. 1 at the Oswegatchie Coffee House in Gouverneur. At left is Deacon Brian T. Dwyer of Chateaugay, diocesan director of youth ministry; and right, Ryan Grant, Adams, featured musician for the night. The program also included testimonials from a priest, Father Scott Belina of Ogdensburg, an engaged couple, Zack Leader of Gouverneur and Erin Miner of Watertown; and married couple Seth and Amanda Conklin of Gouverneur, about the need for young people to lead their lives well according to their state in life.

POPE WITH THE JESUITS

Mass honors new saint



CNS PHOTO/ PAUL HARING
Pope Francis celebrates Mass with 300 of his Jesuit confreres at the Church of the Gesu in Rome Jan. 3. The Mass was celebrated on the feast of the Most Holy Name of Jesus in thanksgiving for the recent canonization of Jesuit St. Peter Faber. True faith is marked by the daring desire to change the world with the loving heart of Jesus, Pope Francis said.

FULL STORY, PAGE 7

ON EAGLES WINGS: An interview with the 'humbled' composer... p.12

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EDITOR'S NOTE

Embracing the 'time' of wintertime

Well it looks like it's going to one of those "good old-fashioned" winters with one snow storm after another.

With heavy snow for Thanksgiving and an icy mess for Christmas, we've already had to brace ourselves for all that's to come in the next few months.

I'm doing my best to accept it all with joy... or at least a bit of patience.

So far, January has offered us perfect days for eating homemade soup and watching movie marathons

while all wrapped up in our afghans.

Every day, I'm grateful for a warm and cozy house and a car that starts against all odds.

Our family's biggest challenge: getting a puppy out four times a day when the temperature is stuck below zero and "daddy" has been more than heroic with that.

This helps me to be grateful for a season that's so sharply different from what we'll see in April and July.

The short, cold days of win-



Mary Lou Kilian

tertime offers us time just to be, to pray, to think.

With brand new resolutions, many of us are striving to be the best kind of person, the best kind of Catholic we can be.

This week's *North Country Catholic* is also different from what we'll publish in a few months when every week will be filled with parish and diocesan activities.

In this issue, three of our writers share personal reflections as they strive to grow in faith and share their faith with others.

The Year of Faith may be over but the call to live *lives of*

faith will never end.

This week's *NCC* also provides information about two important prayer opportunities planned for the month.

As usual, Jan. 18-25 is the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity. At the same time, the bishops have asked for Nine Days of Prayer, Penance and Pilgrimage, Jan. 18-26, to mark the 41st anniversary of the Roe vs. Wade decision. These are two critical 'causes' worthy of our attention.

And so with prayer, reflection, soup - and a cup or two of hot chocolate - we will surely survive, and perhaps find joy, in our snowy gift of January.

A PASTOR'S PERSPECTIVE

New Year's resolution: be a peacemaker

I was asked recently, what I was reading these days. It didn't take me long to answer - it seems like every day Pope Francis gives me something to read: a homily he gave that very day, an interview that he made with some reporter or journalist or something he has written or something that is written about him. He never fails to catch my attention.

Today, I would like to share with you a little of his Christmas message - this is the "Urbi et Orbi" message that each Pope makes each year on Christmas Day.

This year's message by Pope Francis fits into an important New Year's theme of peace - peace in the world - peace for all people.

In this Christmas message Pope Francis makes a strong and challenging call for peace in our world. He begins by speaking of the Birth of Christ, the Prince of Peace, and then asks us to pray for peace.

New Years is that time for resolutions - this year there should be a resolution from all of us to make our lives more peaceful in the spirit of our Holy Father, Pope Francis.

In his Christmas message, Pope Francis begins by saying this, "Peace calls for daily commitment, starting from God's

'Father Bill Says'
tipastor22@gmail.com

Fr. William G. Muench

gift, from the grace which he has given us in Jesus Christ." By making Jesus our guide and our friend, we begin to bring peace to our part of the world.

Pope Francis prays in his Christmas message for those who suffer most: "Looking at the Child in the manger, the Child of peace, our thoughts turn to those children who are most vulnerable victims of wars, but we think too of the elderly, to battered women, to the sick...Wars shatter and hurt so many lives."

Pope Francis calls attention to the sad conflicts in Syria, the Central African Republic, South Sudan, Nigeria, the Israeli-Palestinian conflict - he made it clear he knows of the many conflicts happening in our world.

Pope Francis' prayers for peace are passionate, "You, Prince of Peace, in every place turn hearts aside from violence and inspire them to lay down arms and undertake the path

of dialogue. So what am I supposed to do?

Pope Francis urges us to pray for peace in the world and I will. Pope Francis asks me to stand up for peace, to speak out that my country may be a force for peace in this world and I will.

Yet, what must I do myself to make this world a more peaceful place? I must make this New Year a more peaceful time. I must do what I can to make the world a better place by making my own life a life that spreads peace, by living in the spirit of the Prince of Peace.



Warm up with a subscription to the *North Country Catholic* and find out what is happening with the Diocese of Ogdensburg.

Please send my subscription to my e-mail address: _____

When I bring happiness to another I have made the world more peaceful.

Each time, I help the poor or the needy personally; I have made the world better and more peaceful.

Pope Francis adds this prayer to his Christmas talk, "God is full of love: to him be praise and glory forever! God is peace: let us ask him to help us to be peacemakers each day, in our life, in our families, in our cities and nations, in the whole world. Let us allow ourselves to be moved by God's goodness."

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Nine days for life

Bishop Terry R. LaValley has encouraged parishes of the Diocese of Ogdensburg to participate in a new initiative by the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB) in conjunction with the 41st anniversary of Roe v. Wade and the annual March for Life in Washington, DC.

"Nine Days of Prayer, Penance and Pilgrimage" will take place Jan. 18-26 across the United States.

A message on the bishops' website reads:

On January 22, 2014 our nation will remember the 41st anniversary of Roe v. Wade. Since that tragic decision, more than 55 million children's lives have been lost to abortion, and the lives of millions of their parents have been shattered. In prayerful recognition, "Nine Days of Prayer, Penance and Pilgrimage" will take place January 18-26.

Suggestions and resources for this time period can be found at www.9daysforlife.com.

They include:

- A nine-day novena for life in parishes between January 18 and 26
- One night of prayer, penance and pilgrimage in a parish or deanery
- A Holy Hour for Reparation and Healing on Sunday, January 26th (or other appropriate day...such as, January 22nd which is observed as a Day of Prayer and Penance for sins against Human Life)

A number of prayer resources are listed on the website.

GIFT FOR TRINITY



Massena's Pomainville's Collision gave Trinity Catholic School an early Christmas gift this year. Mike and Keely Pomainville donated \$1000 to the school's cafeteria. Pictured above are head chef, Joanne Lawrence; cafeteria manager, Michele Chartand; school principal, Kathy Behrens; Keely and Mike Pomainville and their daughter, TCS sixth-grader, Jessey Pomainville.

PROMOTING VOCATIONS



Michael Jablonski and Alex Pacelli, two of the seminarians of the diocese, show off a newly donated resource to help promote vocations of the priesthood - Father Brett Brannen's *To Save A Thousand Souls*. The Knights of Columbus Fourth Degree Assembly 0756 of Ticonderoga gave the Vocations Office a donation to purchase 25 of these books.

HOLY BUCKET



The students at Seton Academy in Plattsburgh are participating in the Holy Bucket program of the Missionary Childhood Association. A kindergarten student is making a contribution as a fourth grader, Alex Siouffi, holds the bucket. The program helps the students to be more aware of their responsibility to help children who are not as fortunate as they are.

ON RETREAT



Amanda Conklin, campus minister for St. Mary's Church in Canton, joined ten college students for the Canton Newman Club's Fall Womens Retreat held in Morristown on the St. Lawrence River. Pictured, back, from left are Paige Henson; St Lawrence University; Stephanie Mergen, SLU; Devin Gosselin, SUNY Canton; Anna Padovani, SLU; Morgan Lesser, SLU; Alice Antoniou, SLU; and Katherine Kolber, SLU; front, Morgan Jackson, SLU, Stephanie Kustos, SLU, Mrs. Conklin and Sylvie Choiniere, SLU. Father Doug Lucia was the priest for the weekend and Father Jay Seymour joined the group to hear confessions.

Week of Prayer



For Christian Unity

"HAS CHRIST BEEN DIVIDED?"
1 Corinthians 1:1-17

Ecumenical Service
St. Bernard's Church
Saranac Lake
Sunday, January 12, 2014
2:00 p.m.

ECUMENISM
from ancient Greek OIKOUMENIKOS:
"the people of the whole earth who live in a common house"

A VOICE OF FAITH

Women of Grace: instrument of peace

By Tracy Leonard
Contributing writer

Each Wednesday evening, as I gather with the other Women of Grace at St. Anthony's in Watertown, I am quickly reminded of what it means to live a happy, healthy and whole life.

Sitting around the table are women from various walks of life who long to be spiritual, full of grace and live life abundantly.

Unique to each in the group, is their awareness of and love for the Lord.

Through my weekly interactions with these women, I have become more aware that God has placed great

WOG RETREAT

Johnnette Benkovic, founder of Women of Grace, is returning to the Diocese of Ogdensburg for a June 27-29 retreat at Wadhams Hall in Ogdensburg. The registration form is printed below.

value, significance, and importance in every one of us. We must remind ourselves every day that we are not here by accident, rather we are created in the image of God and our lives are full of purpose.

Not only does our purpose involve our own accomplishments and destiny, but it also involves bringing good and adding value to the people around us.

As Johnnette Benkovic (founder of Women of Grace) states, "our gifts and talents, our personality traits and temperament, our energies and inclinations, even the timing of our birth—all of these have been ordained by God so that we might be a vessel of His love in the world today."

The Women of Grace discussion and prayer group has helped me to grow in relationship with God by ultimately growing in relationship with the women He created.

By openly sharing our sto-

ries and supporting one another in prayer, God has transformed me by increasing my awareness of, and receptivity to the Holy Spirit.

I thank God for using these women as an instrument of peace in my life. Similar to tossing a stone into a pond and seeing the ripples across the water, the spiritual and devout lives of these women has rippled out and influenced me in subtle, yet profound ways.

They have produced an effect without apparent exertion.

In other words, just by living a life of prayer and holiness, they are producing an effect- POWERFUL!

Acknowledging God's hand in this and honoring Him, has in turn, reflected into the lives of others the value He has placed in me.

Simply put, our lives are being used as a billboard for the world to see...the way we live our life matters.

How are you living yours?



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To Jesus Through Mary... "For Such A Time As This" (Esther 4:14)

Weekend Retreat June 27 through June 29, 2014

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Name _____

Parish _____

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When _____

Where _____

Facilitator's Name _____

The prices are per person and include all meals and lodging from Friday evening through early Sunday afternoon.

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Please advise if you need a room downstairs or have other health concerns.

Some sacrificial offerings have been made for those who might need financial assistance.

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Mary Dillenback, Regional Coordinator WOG

Mail registrations to Mary Dillenback PO Box 4 Fishers Landing, NY 13641

Email: marydillenback@tweny.rr.com Phone: 315-771-1377

A VOICE OF FAITH

Mother of three makes life-changing decision

By Kristina Dean
Staff Writer

One could say that I've changed drastically this past year. And, one could say I have stayed the same. Eighteen months ago, on June 26, after lots of prayers to our Lord, I underwent weight loss surgery. Today, I am down 128 pounds and a lot healthier. Praise God!

Having weight loss surgery is an extremely personal decision; one that I would not push on anyone. I spent about 18 months debating over it

Commonly known as gastric bypass surgery, I had the "golden standard" type known as "roux en y" surgery. During this procedure, most of my stomach was cut away, a smaller "pouch" created and stapled while a section of my small intestines was removed and the remaining part attached to my smaller pouch stomach. Sounds hideous, doesn't it?

It took me a very long time to come to the decision to rearrange my digestive system. And I did a lot of praying.

In 2008, after the birth of my third child, a "delicate" 10 pound 5 ounce child, my doctor informed me I should not have more children. He also said I would become diabetic within the next ten years.

He based this advice on my medical history because during all three pregnancies I was diabetic, a condition they call gestational diabetes which can cause complications to the baby if not controlled.

After unsuccessfully trying to control it through diet, so much so that I lost weight during my first pregnancy and gaining only six pounds total, I was forced to inject insulin twice a day



PHOTO SUPPLIED

After much prayer, Kristina Dean of Antwerp made the decision to undergo gastric bypass surgery 18 months ago. Today, she says, "I'm down 128 pounds and a lot healthier."

and check my sugar by pricking my finger four times per day. This I did for all three pregnancies.

Three years after having my youngest son Gabriel, my fasting numbers (blood sugar numbers checked through a blood test before eating) were considered diabetic, and I knew it was just a matter of time. The doctor was correct in his prediction. Diabetes was a certainty in my future.

Having weight loss surgery is an extremely personal decision; one that I would not push on anyone. I spent about 18 months debating over it. And I prayed. I prayed for God to lead me in the right direction.

I asked Him to make sure I was doing it for the right reasons. I examined my reasons to make sure I wasn't doing it to fit into a certain size or be a certain weight. I wanted to be sure that it

was to be healthy.

I asked God for guidance. At one point when I was more certain, I told Him that I was going to go ahead with it. If this wasn't His will for me, I asked for Him to show me that.

No, I didn't hear any giant voice or feel a strong wind, but in my heart knew it was right.

The way I figured – I could either face consequences or complications of major surgery and the healing period afterward, or I could wait and face complications down the road of diabetes, of which I was certain it would in some way cause my life to be shortened. And I need to be around. I have three very energetic boys. They need their mom with them, and not just a couch potato mom. They need one who can keep up with them, take them hiking, biking, to the

beach. They need a healthy me.

I had a lot of fears. Mostly, I worried that I would change who I was, or worse, people would assume that I was different. One I could control, one I couldn't.

I gave my worries over to God. I knew that He would always recognize me in my soul, no matter how I changed. And those who love me would do the same.

The day of surgery, I was so blessed. I had an amazing "prayer team" that included a priest, a nun and two Carmelites, all four of whom are wonderful friends. As I went into surgery they began the Rosary, and concluded it just as I came out.

My first memory coming out of surgery is having my Rosary pressed into my hand. I gripped it tightly. I was in pain, and understandably groggy and confused. As I was wheeled into my room, I thought they put me in a closet. I clearly "saw" cardboard boxes stacked in the corners. My husband and I laughed about that the next day, when he asked me why I repeatedly questioned him about boxes in the room. (There were no boxes).

My journey has been interesting. Most people have been wonderful, very supportive and encouraging. My husband has been the biggest supporter. He has always said that he loved me no matter what I weighed.

After my surgery, he seemed to understand when I needed encouragement, and when I needed reassurance. Recently, he told me he thought I was beautiful – this must be love, as I am not!

There have been a few strange reactions. I have lost a couple friends. Sometimes it is a little overwhelming, and I become a little bit embarrassed by all the attention. But I am the same me inside; I am just a little smaller.

I have discovered that we keep a picture of what we think we look like in our heads.

And I prayed.

I prayed for God to lead me in the right direction

There have been several times I have caught a glimpse of myself, in the rearview mirror for instance and have stared, trying to match up the picture I see with the picture in my head.

After years of being overweight, sometimes I forget that I've lost weight, and when I remember, it's wonderful, if a bit strange. There are times I still go into the plus sized section of the store and when the clothes are too big, I laugh at myself.

I have had some minor side effects, the worst of which was losing a lot of hair. My hair became very thin. It is growing back now and actually looks kind of funny, all these wisps sticking out over my head. But this is a small price to pay for becoming healthy.

My weight loss journey is not complete: I have about 20 more pounds to lose before I meet my goal. I have become more active, exercising regularly, and trying to do more outdoor activities with my boys. Last summer, my family hiked Baker Mountain in Saranac Lake and Mount Arab near Tupper Lake. I even did a 5K run/walk in August! My fasting numbers are normal, my blood pressure is down, and all my test results have been fantastic. With God's help, I will stay active, keeping the weight off and staying healthy.

Every day I thank God. I give all the credit to my successful surgery and recovery to the prayers said for me. God is wonderful, and listening.

All we need to do is ask him for help.

A VOICE OF FAITH

High school teacher finds the ‘act and art of teaching’ works well to pass on faith

By David Dufrane
Contributing writer

Although I am in my first year as a catechist at Malone Catholic Parishes, I am a 16 year high school English teaching veteran. Yet, when my pastor asked me to teach seventh grade religious education, I was initially dubious. And, as I pondered whether to do it, I reflected on the fact that I had not taught a middle class in almost ten years.

While I am new to catechesis and have much to learn, I enjoy sharing the Catholic faith with youngsters.

Nonetheless, the idea of teaching the faith was something that appealed to me. As I sought to have some sort of ministry within the Church, I knew that teaching would be the natural fit, for I love nothing more than the act and art of teaching.

And, in looking back over the past few months, I am glad that I took the challenge. I have found my seventh grade students highly energetic and motivated AND very curious.

When I did a lesson on the origins of the Bible, they were shocked, almost amazed that the Church had such a nuanced and textured approach to biblical interpretation.

Recently, I did a brief lesson on why God exists and how students can handle the challenge from the “new atheists” who assume that we believe in a “sky-god” and read every word of scripture literally. Again, the kids had questions. I am not sure that I answered them all, but at least the questions came!

The more questions they ask, the better! That means that they are interested!

Because of this, I thought that my lesson Dec. 8 should focus on the most essential of the Sacraments—the Holy Eucharist. Yes, the Eucharist in which Jesus comes to us, “Body, Blood, Soul, and Divinity.”

Many Catholics do not understand the depth of the Church’s teachings in the Real Presence and Transubstantiation. And, while many of our Protestant brethren accept the Real Presence in some form, their understandings of it differ from Catholic teaching.

Furthermore, many Evangelical and Fundamentalist denominations treat the Lord’s Supper as a symbol only.

So, my plan was to make the kids understand the Eucharist and the tremendous

power that it brings to our spiritual lives.

In consultation with Samantha Fazioli, our director of Christian formation, and with approval (and some much needed instruction) from our pastor, Father Joe Giroux, I turned the Gospel of John, 6 into a dramatic script.

I did not change the text; rather, I just manipulated it so that it looked like a script.

Samantha brought in some great costumes to create a realistic effect of the times; all of the students had speaking parts.

Through this, they saw and experienced how Jesus was mocked, even rejected because of the “hard saying”; clearly, Jesus said what He meant and meant what He said! We must eat His flesh and drink His blood which comes to us in the outward form of bread and wine.

To supplement this, I brought in some saltine crackers and red grape juice. I did this because it added a touch of realism and helped to make the activity more memorable, but I was careful to remind the kids that what we were doing was merely an instructional activity and that the Church has specific norms for the Eucharist which is celebrated in the context of Mass.

We were not celebrating the Eucharist; we were simply acting out a part of the process to give the kids a better appreciation of what happens in this climactic part of the Mass.

Accepting the Eucharist means that we accept not magic but a miracle. I wanted my kids to know that when Father places his hands over the bread and wine, a miracle takes place. If Jesus had meant that the bread and wine were merely symbols, the biblical writers would have recorded that as such. Jesus was never averse to clarifying as He did to Nicodemus in John 3 in the “born-again” discourse.

All in all, I think my students walked away with a good understanding of the Eucharist. I pray that they will think very carefully about it as they walk in the communion aisle and hear the priest say, “The Body of Christ.”

I want them to see this as a serious spiritual responsibility.

While I am new to catechesis and have much to learn, I enjoy sharing the Catholic faith with youngsters. We must also make them understand why they are Catholic and what the Catholic faith means.

If we convey to them the teachings of the Church and challenge them, they will take their faith seriously.

Bishop's Schedule

Jan. 9 – New York State Catholic Conference Board Meeting in New York

Jan. 11 – 4 p.m., 100th Anniversary Mass at St. Rita’s Church in Deferiet

Jan. 12 – 8 a.m., Mass at St. Mary’s Cathedral

2 p.m., Ecumenical Service at St. Bernard’s Church in Saranac Lake

Jan. 14 – 10:50 a.m., Mass at St. Joseph’s Home in Ogdensburg

Environmental Stewardship

Pope Francis’s address on Jan. 1 on World Day for Peace states that “...we are called to exercise a responsible stewardship over it. (Nature). Yet so often we are driven by greed and by the arrogance of dominion, possession, manipulation and exploitation; we do not preserve nature; nor do we respect it or consider it a gracious gift which we must care for and set at the service of our brothers and sisters, including future generations.”

When G.K. Chesterton was asked to write an essay about what is wrong with the world?, he simply wrote “I am.” In answer to what is right with the world? Each of us can also say “I am.” Our daily choices regarding the consumption and use of natural resources make up our ecological footprint that impact the health of the planet and health of our brothers and sisters.

Ways to reduce our footprint:

*Weatherproof your home; eliminate drafts with caulking, weather strips, along windows and outside doors

*Unplug your electronics when not in use. Use a power strip. Even when turned off, items like computer, toaster, coffee pots sip power.

Rest in Peace

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

Jan. 8 – Rev. Michael Moris, 1893; Rev. Frederick C. Hatch, 1961; Msgr. Robert John Arquette, 1969; Rev. Leo McCarthy, O.S.A., 1975; Rev. Roland Gaulin, O.M.I., 1984; Rev. Anthony F. Pease, 1997; Msgr. Morris L. Dwyer, 2004

Jan. 9 – Rev. Joseph Edward Doyle, 1958; Rev. Jeremiah A. O’Brien, 1974

Jan. 10 – Rev. Christopher C. Poulin, 1904; Msgr. James O’Driscoll, 1913; Msgr. Frederick P. Diviney, 1961

Jan. 11 – Msgr. John Andrew Cotter, 1964; Msgr. Anthime D. Charbonneau, 1976; Most Rev. Walter P. Kellenberg, 1986

Jan. 12 – Msgr. Francis Joseph Maguire, 1978

Jan. 14 – Rev. Benedict Scharff, O.F.M.Conv., 1964; Deacon Francis Bradley, 2000

Protecting God's Children

The Diocese of Ogdensburg has scheduled sessions for Protecting God’s Children for Adults.

Pre-registration online is required in order to participate. Participants may preregister at www.virtus.org by selecting the registration button and following the directions.

All employees and volunteers who participate in church sponsored activities with minor are required to participate in this training.

Further information is available from Atonement Sister Ellen Donahue, 315-393-2920, ext. 1440. Upcoming programs:

Jan. 30 – 8 p.m., Wakefield Recital Hall/SUNY Potsdam, Room C-224.

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CATHOLIC WORLD AT A GLANCE

Courts give some last-minute relief from HHS contraceptive mandate

WEST PALM BEACH, Fla. (CNS) -- In the midst of their New Year's Eve celebration with low-income elderly residents, the Baltimore-based Little Sisters of the Poor learned that the Supreme Court issued an injunction temporarily protecting them from the Affordable Care Act's contraceptive mandate. The order by Justice Sonia Sotomayor, issued within hours of the mandate taking effect at midnight Jan. 1, applies to the Colorado-based Little Sisters of the Poor and their co-plaintiffs - Christian Brothers Services and Christian Brothers Employee Benefits Trust - in a lawsuit against the federal government. The same evening, a three-judge panel of the U.S. Court of Appeals for the District of Columbia Circuit issued an emergency stay for Catholic organizations in a lawsuit filed by the Archdiocese of Washington, including The Catholic University of America, Archbishop Carroll High School in Washington; Don Bosco Cristo Rey High School in Takoma Park, Md.; and Mary of Nazareth Catholic Elementary School in Darnestown, Md.

More than 6.6 million attended Vatican events with pope in 2013

VATICAN CITY (CNS) -- In the first nine and a half months of Pope Francis' pontificate, more than 6.6 million people participated in papal events at the Vatican, including weekly general audiences, group audiences, liturgies and recitations of the Angelus and "Regina Coeli" on Sundays and holy days. The statistics, compiled by the Prefecture of the Pontifical Household and released Jan. 2, do not include figures from Pope Francis' trip to Brazil for World Youth Day in July 2013, or his visits to Italian locations outside the Vatican. From his election March 13 until the end of 2013, at least 1.5 million people attended Pope Francis' 30 general audiences; more than 87,000 participated in group audiences; almost 2.3 million participated in papal liturgies in St. Peter's Basilica or St. Peter's Square; and more than 2.7 million joined the pope for the Angelus or the "Regina Coeli" in the square. The numbers are approximate, based on tickets issued or estimates of crowd size, depending on the event.

USCCB president asks for exemption from fines over ACA compliance

WASHINGTON (CNS) -- The president of the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops asked President Barack Obama to exempt religious institutions from fines related to health insurance requirements while legal challenges work their way through the courts. "The administration's flexibility in implementing the (Affordable Care Act) has not yet reached those who want only to exercise what has rightly been called our 'first freedom' under the Constitution," wrote Archbishop Joseph E. Kurtz of Louisville, Ky. In a Dec. 31 letter, he asked Obama to extend the same kind of temporary exemption from penalties for noncompliance with the ACA that the administration has allowed for small employers and individuals whose current insurance plans will be canceled. The letter described those allowances as "actions to advance the ACA's goal of maximizing health coverage, while minimizing hardships to Americans as the act is implemented." Archbishop Kurtz said a whole category of Americans "has been left out in the cold: those who, due to moral and religious conviction, cannot in good conscience comply with the (Health and Human Services) regulation requiring coverage of sterilization and contraceptives. This mandate includes drugs and devices that can interfere with the survival of a human being in the earliest stage of development, burdening religious convictions on abortion as well as contraception," the letter said.

True faith is driven by zeal to change world with God's love, pope says

By Carol Glatz
Catholic News Service

VATICAN CITY (CNS) - True faith is marked by the daring desire to change the world with the loving heart of Jesus, Pope Francis said.

The zealous proclamation of the Gospel must never be coupled with "inquisitional clobbering, with condemnation. No, the Gospel is proclaimed with kindness, fraternity and love," he told more than 300 of his fellow Jesuits Jan. 3.

The pope celebrated the feast of the Most Holy Name of Jesus at the Church of the Gesu, the Jesuits' main church in Rome. It was the first Jesuit pope's third visit as pontiff to the church where St. Ignatius of Loyola and other Jesuit leaders are buried.

The Mass was also a celebration of thanksgiving for the recent canonization of St. Peter Faber, who, with St. Ignatius and St. Francis Xavier, was a founding member of the Society of Jesus and the first of the Jesuits to be ordained a priest.

In his homily, Pope Francis said that one of things that stood out with St. Faber was his desire to "empty himself" and let Christ fill his heart and life.

The 16th-century priest possessed a restlessness for God, an understanding of his dreams and desires, and the ability to act with determination, the pope said.

"An authentic faith always entails a deep desire to change the world. This is the question we must ask our-

selves: Do we, too, have a great vision and impulse? Are we audacious? Does our dream soar high? Does our zeal consume us?" the pope asked.

In a message to 300 of his fellow Jesuits

"Or are we mediocre and we content ourselves with our laboratory of apostolic programs?"

Instead, people need to remember "the strength of the church does not reside in itself and its organizational abilities, but hides in the deep waters of God," the pope said.

These "deep waters stir up our desires and these yearnings widen the heart," he said, citing St. Augustine, who saw prayer as a way to fuel the desire to widen one's heart to God.

St. "Faber was consumed by the intense desire to convey the Lord" to others and "if we don't have the same yearning, then we need to stop and pray and, with silent fervor, ask the Lord for the intercession of our brother Peter (the apostle) to return to fascinate us -- that appeal of the Lord that led Peter to all that apostolic madness."

Only with Christ at the center of one's life can people go to the ends of the earth for God, he said.

The Jesuits must be willing to empty themselves and feel, think, love, see and walk like Christ, the pope said.

"This means doing what he did with the same feelings of his heart," he said.

The Society of Jesus must be centered on Christ and his church and on always being open and searching the horizon for "God who always surprises us."

"If the God of surprises is not at the heart, the Society gets disoriented."

Though he did not mention it in his homily, 2014 marks the 200th anniversary of the restoration of the Society of Jesus by Pope Pius VII after it had been suppressed for 41 years starting in 1773 by Pope Clement XIV.

To avoid losing his way, the pope said, a Jesuit must be "a person whose thinking is incomplete, whose thinking is open, so that he always thinks looking at the horizon that is the always greater glory of God who endlessly surprises us," he said.

At the end of the Mass, Father Adolfo Nicolas, superior general of the Jesuits worldwide, thanked the pope for celebrating Mass with them and for the canonization of St. Faber, saying "each time a Jesuit becomes a saint is an opportunity for all of us to deepen our vocation."

Father Nicolas also recalled the joy he felt when Pope Francis called him immediately to say "I just signed the decree" declaring Faber a saint.

The decree, signed on the pope's birthday, Dec. 17, was an "equivalent canonization," in which the pope inserts the name of the new saint in the universal calendar of saints without verifying a miracle performed through his intercession and without holding a formal canonization ceremony.



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SCRIPTURE REFLECTIONS

'This is my beloved son; listen to him'

Today's feast of the Baptism of the Lord marks the end of the Christmas season. For those who have carefully prepared through Advent for a joyful celebration of Christmas and Epiphany, it's with a sense of sadness that we let go of the childhood of Jesus. Mary and Joseph must have seen all of this coming as they hear Jesus' excuse after their three-day search for him in the Temple. "Did you not know that I must be in my Father's House?"

And now, some years later, Joseph is dead, and Mary's soul a sword has

pierced as she bids goodbye to her Son.

The first reading today from Isaiah foretells the coming of a messiah who will bring forth justice for the nations, firmly leading them from darkness to light: "A bruised reed he shall not break, and a smoldering wick he shall not quench, until he establishes justice on the earth".

As Jesus leaves home, he must have been aware of this prophecy of Isaiah. He must, too, have been excited and a little fearful at beginning his great mission.

His steps have taken him to the banks of the Jordan where a crowd surrounds a

man in strange attire.

Jesus beholds his own cousin with whom he had played as a child. They meet in solemn moment as all see John stare, then greet Jesus warmly. And Jesus asks John for baptism! What? "That's for sinners!"

John protests, and Jesus, seeking full solidarity with sinful humanity, urges John, "Give in for now". And John does! As the water is poured over him, the Spirit descends from the sky.

From the sky comes the same words as Isaiah had proclaimed hundreds of years before: "This is my beloved Son. Listen to him!"

And Jesus, rising up from the waters, assumes the role of Prophet of justice, truth, and love. He begins to gather other men and

Jan. 12

Feast of the Baptism of the Lord

READINGS

Isaiah 42:1-4,6-7

Acts 10:34-38

Matthew 3:13-17

child Jesus, and we ourselves with Jesus must take up the burdens of the Man with a Mission-- to free all captives from sin, to bring joy and hope to the downhearted, to bring salvation to ourselves by helping others toward theirs.

This is the message of Pope Francis in his Apostolic Exhortation, *The Joy of the Gospel*. The time is now, the world is heading towards a deeper darkness unless we all become aware of our own Baptismal promises, and heed the voice of Jesus commanding us to do as He Himself did, (and as Peter did for the house of Cornelius).

Jesus' mission is not accomplished until all people hear the Good News and accept it.

women who can share His mission.

And, in turn, he urges on them His own baptism, in water and the Holy Spirit.

The second reading today is from the Acts of the Apostles, Peter is preaching to the house of Cornelius, the Good News, and, as the Spirit descends on them, baptizes the whole household in the waters of salvation. Reluctantly this Sunday, we let go the gentle

OUR READERS WRITE

Clarification on CDA Mass

In early fall a picture of the July 20, 2013, Diocese of Ogdensburg Catholic Daughters of the Americas Past Regents Chapter annual Memorial Mass for Deceased Members was published, but was incorrectly identified

as being held in Ogdensburg.

The Mass was held at St. Bernard's Church, Saranac Lake and the luncheon was held at the Red Fox restaurant. The event was hosted by Regent Carey Sayles and CDA Court St. Bernard #787, Saranac Lake.

Thank-you for allowing me this clarification.

SINCERELY,
ANNA E. LUCIA
PRESIDENT PAST REGENTS CHAPTER
DANNEMORA

Letters to the Editor

We welcome letters from readers of the *North Country Catholic*.

- Due to space limitations, we ask that the number of words be limited to 300.
- We cannot accept letters which support ideas which are contrary to the teachings of the Catholic Church.
- Send letters to North Country Catholic, PO Box 326, Ogdensburg, NY, 13669 or e-mail to news@northcountrycatholic.org
- Join the conversation!

ANGELUS ON THE FEAST OF THE HOLY FAMILY

Pope: Don't forget people abandoned by own families

slave labor," he said before praying the Angelus with visitors gathered in St. Peter's Square.

"But let us also think about the other 'exiled,' I would call them the 'hidden exiles,' those exiled by their own family: the elderly, for example, who sometimes are treated as a burden," he said.

The pope said today's families should be inspired by the Holy Family's simplicity and way of life, so they, too, can become "communities of love and reconciliation where one experiences tenderness, helping one another and mutual forgiveness."

God wanted to be born in a human family and "wanted to have a mother and father, like we have," the pope said.

Jesus also wanted to belong to a family that had to go through many hardships "so that no one would feel excluded from God's loving

closeness."

The Holy Family's forced exile shows that "God is where people are in danger, where they suffer, where they flee, where they experience rejection and abandonment," he said.

But God is also where there is hope -- hope in returning to one's homeland, in being free and being able to build a life of dignity for oneself and one's family, he said.

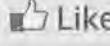
The pope reminded people that the key phrases for cultivating peace and joy in one's family are "May I; thank you; and I'm sorry," so that everyone treats each other with respect and generosity.

Families must also recognize how important they are for the church and society, he said. "The proclamation of the Gospel, in fact, is promoted above all by families so that it then reaches the different areas of daily life."

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AT THE MOVIES

THE SECRET LIFE OF WALTER MITTY

By John Mulderig
Catholic News Service

"The Secret Life of Walter Mitty" (Fox) receives its title, the name of its main character and his principal attribute -- a tendency to engage in extravagant daydreams -- from a classic 1939 short story by humorist James Thurber. But there the similarities pretty much end.

Helmed by and starring Ben Stiller, this strange blend of comedy, drama and travelogue is, by turns, claustrophobic and sprawling, puerile and sweetly emotional.

Early scenes showcase humor about awkward workplace situations and executive bullies; later ones present a serious study in self-realization.

At least the outline of the plot is fairly easily sketched: Soft-spoken, office-bound

photo editor Walter Mitty (Stiller) takes great pride in his work for a fictionalized version of *Life* magazine, a publication whose credo, inscribed on a lobby wall, he has learned by heart.

But otherwise his existence is so mundane that he frequently escapes into fantasies. These often revolve around his imaginary romance with Cheryl Melhoff (Kristen Wiig), the fetching co-worker for whom he secretly pines.

When a crucial negative sent in from the field by *Life's* leading photographer -- and Walter's idol -- Sean O'Connell (Sean Penn) goes missing, Walter is facing unemployment unless he can recover it.

Thus begins a series of globetrotting expeditions that will transform Walter's delusions of grand adventure into reality.

One of the movie's most



CNS PHOTO/FOX

Ben Stiller and Sean Penn star in a scene from the movie "The Secret Life of Walter Mitty."

enjoyable subplots charts Walter's interaction with recent divorcee Cheryl's teen son, Rich (Marcus Antturi). A former skateboarding whiz, Walter gains Rich's attention and respect by giving him skating tips, and later brings him back an appropriate memento from one of his far-flung journeys.

When circumstances suggest a possible reconciliation between Cheryl and her ex, moreover, Walter respectfully steps back from his timid wooing of her.

To the degree that the unstable proceedings have a moral core, it can be found in Sean. Mellow, weather-beaten, appreciative of nature and of Walter's steady, self-effacing work behind the scenes, Sean is part New Age guru, part dispenser of social commentary on behalf of the unsung 99 percent.

Indeed, the satisfaction viewers derive from this shape-shifting movie -- which, although not suitable for teens, involves relatively

little that would be problematic for adults -- will depend in large part on how much they share Walter's admiration for Sean.

The film contains brief but harsh violence, at least one use of profanity and a few crude and crass terms. The Catholic News Service classification is A-III -- adults. The Motion Picture Association of America rating is PG -- parental guidance suggested. Some material may not be suitable for children.

ALSO PLAYING



(CNS PHOTO/PARAMOUNT

Andrew Jacobs stars in a scene from the movie "Paranormal Activity: The Marked Ones." The Catholic News Service classification is L -- limited adult audience, films whose problematic content many adults would find troubling. The Motion Picture Association of America rating is R -- restricted. Under 17 requires accompanying parent or adult guardian.



CNS PHOTO/OPEN ROAD FILMS

Ryan Good and Justin Bieber star in a scene from the movie "Justin Bieber's Believe," chronicling the star's second World tour. The Catholic News Service classification is A-II -- adults and adolescents. The Motion Picture Association of America rating is PG -- parental guidance suggested.

ADIRONDACK**FRIENDSHIP VOLUNTEERS**

Lake Placid - Mercy Care for the Adirondacks is recruiting new volunteers and has scheduled a Friendship Volunteer Training Program.

Date: Feb. 4 & 11, Lake Placid; Feb. 18 & 25, Tupper Lake

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

Features: New volunteers will join Mercy Care's 90+ Friendship Volunteers from Tupper Lake, Saranac Lake, and Lake Placid who are helping elders stay connected to their communities. If you are able to give some of your time to make elders' lives a little easier, helping for them to live independently, please consider becoming a Mercy Care Friendship Volunteer.

Contact: Sheila Schneck at 518-523-5583

CLINTON**MARCH FOR LIFE**

Plattsburgh - Champlain Valley Right to life has made final plans for its 2014 March for life.

Date: Jan. 12

Time: 1:30 p.m.

Place: March starts at The Newman Center and ends at St. John's Church (Signs will be provided.)

Features: The march will be followed by a prayer service with Kathleen Gallagher as our Guest Speaker. She is the director of pro-life activities for the New York State Catholic Conference and the co-founder of the non-denominational group, New Yorkers for Life.

Attention all: Finger foods and desserts are needed for the reception at St. John's Church following m. To donate food, please call Kathleen at 563-2943.

CVRTL MEETING

Plattsburgh - Everyone is invited to the Champlain Valley Right to Life Meeting.

Date: Jan. 9

Time: after 8 a.m. Mass at Our Lady of Victory Church

Place: OLV Basement

Program: Share coffee and donuts while making final plans for the March for Life Jan. 12.

PANCAKE BREAKFAST

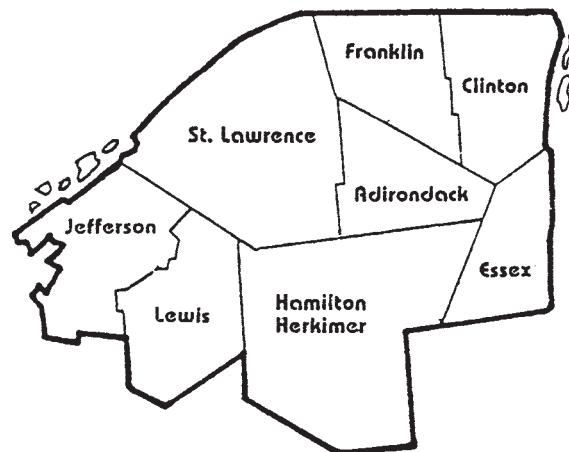
Treadwell Mills - St. Alexander & St. Joseph's Church will hold a Pancake Breakfast.

Date: Feb. 2

Time: 8:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m.

Place: St. Joseph's Church Parish Hall

Cost: Adults, \$6; Children 12 and under, \$3; under 5, Free



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; fax, 1-866-314-7296;
e-mail news@northcountrycatholic.org.

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

Menu: All you can eat pancake, real maple syrup, sausage, scrambled eggs, home fries, coffee, orange juice or milk.

CHARITY FUND RAISING DINNER

Peru - St. Augustine's Knights of Columbus Council 7273 will host an all you can eat spaghetti dinner.

Date: Jan. 11

Time: 4:30 p.m. to 6:30

Place: St. Augustine's Parish Center

Cost: Adults, \$7.50; Children 6-12, \$2.50; under 5, free; families, \$20; take-outs

HEALING MINISTRY

Morrisonville - The Catholic Community of St. Alexander's and St. Joseph's announces the addition of Living Waters Healing Ministry to the Parish.

Date: First Thursday each month

Time: 6:30 p.m.

Place: St. Alexander's Church

Features: Healing Mass, Sacrament of the Anointing of the Sick, Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament, and an opportunity to receive individual prayer.

QUILT SHOP OPEN

Ellenburg Center - Lost Sheep Quilt and Fabric Shop is now open!

Place: Our Lady of the Adirondacks

House of Prayer,

Hours: Tues. - Sat, 10 a.m.-4 p.m.

Evenings and other times by appointment.

Phone 594-3253 or email olaprayerhouse@gmail.com to come at other times

EUCARISTIC ADORATION

Plattsburgh - Eucharistic Adoration is

held throughout the year every Wednesday, Thursday, and Friday.

Place: St. John's "Holy Family" Adoration Chapel, downstairs

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

Contact: call 518-561-5083 or email Sjohnsadoration@aol.com

Features: May be pre-ordered starting on Nov. 4 by calling 518-529-6580.

JEFFERSON**SPAGHETTI & MEATBALL DINNER**

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

Date: Jan. 18

Time: 4 p.m.

Place: St. Mary's Parish Center

Cost: Adults, \$7; Senior Citizens, \$6; Children under 12, \$5; under 5, Free

SPAGHETTI SUPPER

Watertown - St. Anthony's Altar Rosary Church will be having Spaghetti Supper.

Date: Jan. 30

Time: 4:30 p.m. to 7

Place: Msgr. Sechi Hall

Cost: Adults, \$8; children \$4.50; under 3, free; sauce, \$5 per quart meatballs are \$.75

Features: Take-out orders begin at 4 p.m. Please bring your own containers

EUCARISTIC ADORATION

Watertown - Holy Family Church is holding holy hours of Eucharistic Adoration for Vocations

Schedule: Monday through Friday following the 9 a.m. Mass at Holy Family

Church (9:30 - 10:30 a.m.),

LIFERIGHT MEETING

Watertown - Liferight of Watertown meets third Wednesday of the Month.

Time: 4 p.m.

Place: 312 Sherman St.

Features: The office has materials on infanticide, assisted suicide, euthanasia and chastity.

Contact: Phone 315-788-8480; website: www.liferight.org.

LEWIS**BUS TO WASHINGTON MARCH**

The Lewis County Right to Life and Knights of Columbus would like to invite you to participate in their annual Right to Life Bus Trip to Washington DC.

Schedule: The bus will be leaving the evening of the January 21st and traveling through the night to Washington DC for the Right to Life March on January 22nd. The bus will be returning mid-morning on January 23rd.

Cost: Adults, \$50; Youth, Free

Contact: For more information please contact Paul Campeau at (315) 346-6575 or (315) 486-7928.

ST. LAWRENCE**BEREAVEMENT SUPPORT GROUP**

Massena - Sacred Heart/St. Lawrence holds a Bereavement Support Group last Tuesday of each month.

Time: 2 p.m.

Place: Sacred Heart Convent

Features: A gathering of those who have had a recent loss of a loved one.

Contact: 315-769-3137

NOVENA FOR MILITARY

Ogdensburg - Notre Dame Church is holding a Weekly novena for the safety of U.S. military personnel at a new time.

Date: Tuesday afternoons

Time: 1:30 p.m.

LATIN MASS

Potsdam - A Tridentine (Latin) Mass is celebrated each Sunday with Msgr. Robert H. Aucoin as the celebrant

Time: 12:30 p.m.

Place: St. Mary's Church

COMMUNITY FREE LUNCH

Ogdensburg - The Knights of Columbus Council 258 is starting its community free lunch program again.

Date: Every Wednesday

Time: Noon

Features: Free hot lunch

EUCARISTIC ADORATION

Massena - St. Mary's & St. Joseph's hold Benediction and Adoration every Friday morning.

Time: 9 a.m. to Noon

Place: St. Mary's Family Room

HOLY HOUR FOR VOCATIONS

Ogdensburg - St. Mary's is holding a monthly Holy Hour for Vocations.

Date: Thursday before the First Friday

Time: 7 p.m. concluding with Benediction at 8 p.m.

Place: Deacon Winter Chapel

DIOCESAN EVENTS**DIOCESAN ECUMENICAL SERVICE**

Saranac Lake - The annual Diocesan Ecumenical Service is set.

Date: Jan. 12

Time: 2 p.m.

Place: St. Bernard's Church

Features: The service is held in advance of the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity, Jan. 18-25

PILGRIMAGE TO SPAIN

Father Donald Robinson, pastor of St. Anthony's and St. Patrick's in Watertown, will be leading a pilgrimage "Best of Spain and Portugal".

Dates: Feb. 18-28, 2014

Cost: \$2899 per person from NYC

Included: Roundtrip Air from NY, First Class/Select Hotels, Most Meals, Comprehensive Sightseeing and much more.

Features: Madrid, Salamanca, Lisbon, Seville, Granada & Toledo

Contact: Fr. Robinson at 315-782-1190 or e-mail donrob4@twcnr.rr.com

2014 BUS FOR LIFE

Plattsburgh - The Lake Champlain 2014 bus to Washington D.C. for the national March for Life is set

Date: Jan. 21-22

Schedule: Meet at St. Peter's Church in Plattsburgh on Tues. Jan. 21 at 7:30 p.m. Arrive in Washington, D.C. early morning Jan. 22; Free Time in the morning to attend Mass, sightsee, lobby representatives, etc; Rally and March start at noon on The National Mall; Meet at St. Peter's Church in Washington at 4:45 p.m. for the trip home

Cost: Reserve a seat on the bus is \$30

Contact: To reserve a seat or to obtain more information, please contact Karen Smith at 518-566-6229. To sign up for a seat on the bus or to make a donation—please mail your check to St. Peter's Church 114 Cornelia Street Plattsburgh, New York 12901. Make a note on the memo line: "Bus for Life."



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

The Society for the Propagation of the Faith
Sr. Mary Ellen Brett, SSJ, Director
622 Washington St., Ogdensburg, NY 13669
(315) 393-2920; fax 1-866-314-7296
mbrett@rcdony.org

Your help really does help!

From Director's Desk
Sister Mary Ellen Brett, SSJ
Diocesan Mission Director

As we begin a new year, the Mission Office also begins its preparations for our ongoing efforts to benefit the developing lands. I thought I should take an opportunity to tell you a little bit about where your prayers and gifts go.

The Pontifical Mission Societies is the umbrella organization for the Society of Propagation of the Faith, Missionary Childhood Association, the Society of St. Peter the Apostle and the Missionary Union of Priests and Religious. All baptized Catholics have the opportunity to participate in the worldwide mission of the Church by offering their prayers, personal sacrifices or financial contributions to the Society for the Propagation of the Faith, the Missionary Childhood Association or the Society for St. Peter Apostle.

The Missionary Union of Priests and Religious is a spiritual apostolate for Priests, Religious men and women, catechists and lay people.

Each year, the celebration of World Mission Sunday provides an opportunity, within the context of the Eucharist, for Catholics to express their prayerful and financial support of the Church's worldwide missionary work and the Society for the Propagation of the Faith in particular.

Your sacrifices make a difference overseas in helping to increase vocations, provide food, medical care and shelter for those who cannot provide for themselves. Funds raised also go to support Parishes in developing lands and to children where they provide mission education materials, school and care for basic needs.

Another way that the Missions are introduced to you each year is through the Missionary Coop Program where "real-life" Missionaries visit our diocese and share their stories in hopes to raise awareness and much needed funds. Here are just a few ways real life Missionaries have told us where your sacrifices have gone; The Sisters of Notre Dame de Namur wrote me thanking for their 2013 Coop donations and stated the funds would be used "for our Sisters in Africa and Latin America to continue their Gospel work in clinics and schools....". The Franciscan Sisters of the Atonement sent word that your donations will be used "for assistance in Parishes in Brazil and in the Philippines to assist the poor".... The Little Sisters of the poor stated that "the funds will be used to purchase food and help with the needs of the elderly poor...".

As you can see, your help makes a difference and the difference is often made immediately. So when you drop a donation in the basket or one in the mail to our office, know that it really is going to a much needed destination where there are people who need our help. Thank you for all your support, prayers and sacrifices. God Bless.

OBITUARIES

Brasher Falls - Lillian M. (Plaskon) Walker, 80; Funeral Services Jan. 3, 2014 at St. Patrick's Church; burial in St. Patrick's Cemetery.

Brushton - Lawrence H. Mayville, 76; Funeral Services Jan. 4, 2014 at St. Mary's Church; burial in St. Mary's Cemetery.

Champlain - Alfred "Sonny" Babbie Jr., 86; Funeral Services Jan. 2, 2014 at St. Mary's Church; burial in St. Mary's Cemetery.

Constable - Diana C. (Blair) Lamica, 59; Funeral Services Jan. 3, 2014 at St. Francis of Assisi Church; burial in parish cemetery.

Deferiet - Mervin P. Pierre, 93; Funeral Services Jan. 2, 2014 at St. Rita's Church; burial in Black River Cemetery.

Elizabethtown - Mary T. (Sheehan) Jerdo, 83; Funeral Services Dec. 31, 2013 at W.M. Marvins Sons Funeral Home; burial in spring.

Madrid - Loris D. French, 84; Funeral Services Jan. 4, 2014 at St. John the Baptist Church; burial in St. John the Baptist Cemetery.

Massena - Edith I. McHugh, 90; Funeral Services Dec. 31, 2013 at Church of the Sacred Heart; burial in Calvary Cemetery.

Massena - Heinz P. Seipel, 91; Funeral

Services Jan. 5, 2014 at Donaldson Funeral Home.

Mooers - Flora M. (Dauphinais) Gauthier, 89; Funeral Services Dec. 28, 2013 at St. Joseph's Church; burial in St. Romain Cemetery, Hemmingford, Quebec.

Mooers Forks - John P. Surprenant, 67; Funeral Services Jan. 4, 2014 at St. Ann's Church; burial in Mooers Riverside Cemetery.

Morrisonville - Leonard H. "Cheese" Rock, 87; Funeral Services Jan. 3, 2014 at St. Alexander's Church; burial in parish cemetery.

Newcomb - Raymond Louis Donohue, 98; Funeral Services at St. Therese Church; burial in parish cemetery.

Norfolk - John J. Plonka, 93; Funeral Services Dec. 30, 2013 at Church of the Visitation; burial in Visitation Cemetery.

Ogdensburg - Hilda M. (Cross) Brassard-Marion, 90; Funeral Services Jan. 2, 2014 at Foxwood Memorial Park.

Ogdensburg - Jean W. Sullivan Hayes, 78; Funeral Services Dec. 30, 2013 at Notre Dame Church; burial in Calvary Cemetery, Norwood.

Ogdensburg - Ronald R. "Ronnie" Mashaw, 66; Funeral Services Jan. 4, 2014 at St. Mary's Cathedral.

Ogdensburg - Terry "Mash" Mashaw, 70; Funeral Services Jan. 4, 2014 at St. Mary's Cathedral.

Ogdensburg - Robert P. "RP" McDonald Jr., 67; Funeral Services Jan. 3, 2014 at the Fox & Murray Funeral Home; burial in St. Mary's Cemetery.

Plattsburgh - Gerald F. Dupree, 84; Funeral Services Dec. 30, 2013 at St. Peter's Church; burial in Whispering Maples Mausoleum.

Plattsburgh - Leonard L. "Lenny" Macey, 69; Funeral Services Dec. 28, 2013 at Brown Funeral Home.

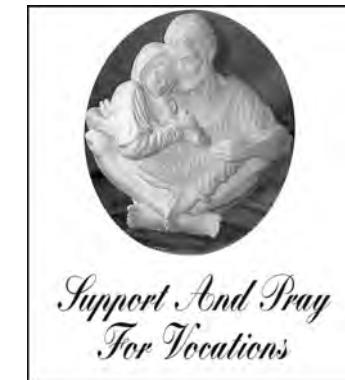
Plattsburgh - Donald Peter Senecal, 86; Funeral Services Dec. 31, 2013 at St. Peter's Church; burial in St. Alexander's Cemetery, Morrisonville.

Plattsburgh - Helen M. (Plummer) Tusa, 89; Funeral Services Jan. 1, 2014 at R.W. Walker Funeral Home; burial in Whispering Maples Memorial Gardens.

Star Lake - Karol J. Daniels; Funeral Services Dec. 30, 2013 at the Hawley Funeral Home; burial in Oswegatchie Cemetery.

Tupper Lake - Helen "Skipper" (LaFountain) Reandeau, 83, Funeral Services Dec. 26, 2013 at Stuart-Fortune-Keough Funeral Home; burial in St. Alphonsus Cemetery.

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Response to popular liturgical hymn over the years humbling for composer

On Eagle's Wings

By Darlene J.M. Dela Cruz
Catholic News Service

HONOLULU (CNS) — Father Jan Michael Joncas has composed more than 300 liturgical songs, but his name is widely known for the one that tops a list of favorites: "On Eagle's Wings."

The hymn by Father Joncas, 62, a priest of the Archdiocese of St. Paul and Minneapolis, was named by hundreds of voters as their No. 1 liturgical hymn in a 2006 poll sponsored by the National Association of Pastoral Musicians.

Since "On Eagle's Wings" was written in 1979, it has become a staple at Sunday Masses, funerals and memorial events as a reminder of God's uplifting presence in times of sorrow.

"Most people associate me with this single piece," Father Joncas told the Hawaii Catholic Herald via email.

Father Joncas said the song came about when he was visiting a friend at the major seminary in Washington.

One evening, Father Joncas' friend got word that his father had suffered a fatal heart attack. Father Joncas wrote "On Eagle's Wings" in the days that followed and it was sung for the first time publicly at the friend's father's wake service.

The song is based on Psalm 91, its lyrics drawing from the Scripture's descriptions of God's protection and providence. Lyrics include the lines "You need not fear the terror of the night, nor the arrow that flies by day," and "For to his angels he has given a command to guard you in all of your ways."

Although there are no mentions of eagles in Psalm 91, the song's chorus uses the metaphor to depict God's high, secure places the verse describes. "And he will raise you up on eagle's wings, bear you on the breath of dawn, make you to shine like the sun, and hold you in the palm of his hand."

"I have been humbled by the number of times people have spoken or written to me about how God has used the song to bring them comfort and peace," Father Joncas said.

The song's colorful imagery is woven together by a melody with airy highs and a crescendo refrain. Father Joncas said the verses were meant to be sung by a cantor capable of handling the wide range of notes. Congregants would join in singing



CNS PHOTO/DIANNE TOWALSKI, THE CATHOLIC SPIRIT
Father Jan Michael Joncas, a priest of the Archdiocese of St. Paul and Minneapolis, has composed more than 300 liturgical songs, but he is widely known for the one that tops a list of favorites: "On Eagle's Wings." Father Joncas is pictured in a 2009 photo.

the simpler chorus.

"I have been amazed to find congregations singing the entire thing, because I think the verses are somewhat difficult," said Father Joncas, who, with fellow composer Marty Haugen, participated in a liturgical arts conference in Honolulu in the fall.

The priest has been composing new material recently, after his recovery from Guillain-Barre syndrome. The illness paralyzed him in 2003, but he has recuperated well.

Haugen, 63, wrote "Shepherd Me, O God" in the

mid-1980s. It is cherished by many Catholics for its treatment of Psalm 23, which begins, "The Lord is my shepherd, I shall not want."

Speaking by phone from his home in Minnesota, he explained that depicting "shepherd" as an action instead of a noun brought forth the now famous song.

"I have never met a shepherd," Haugen said. "My wife was finally the one who suggested ... make it a verb. That sort of was a breakthrough."

Haugen, who is not Catholic but has worked in Catholic parishes, was living at an ecumenical retreat center in Washington state with his family when he was commissioned to do a version of Psalm 23. Haugen said he knew it would be a challenge.

"It's hard to write something that everybody knows the text to," he said.

The retreat center community held vespers every night. Haugen said they would regularly integrate his new music into prayer time. That winter, with little else to do on snowed-in evenings, the community helped critique his work. "Shepherd Me, O God," Haugen joked, is the one of several versions he wrote that received the least amount of criticism.

"That piece, like everything I wrote up there, went through the grill of the community," he said. "I think that's really valuable."

"You don't really know if a piece is going to be helpful or not until a congregation has sung it a number of times and they'll tell you," he added.

"Shepherd Me, O God" stays close to the words of the psalm, with verses such as "Surely your kindness and mercy follow me all the days of my life; I will dwell in the house of my God forevermore." Haugen's tight lyrical adherence to Scripture comes from a pastoral studies degree he earned at the University of St. Thomas in Minnesota.

"If you're writing liturgical music, your two main sources are the rite and the Scripture," he said. "The more you can know about both, the more you feel you have something to offer when you start to write."

In a song such as "Shepherd Me, O God," where the words are already familiar to many, Haugen said "the melody is at the service of the text."

"You want people to remember the music because if they remember it, then they're remembering the words," he said.

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