The grace of ‘it’... p. 16
It’s been a good news-bad news type of week at the diocesan offices. A year ago was actually a very good news-had it been a year of actual good news, this Diocese would have been the talk of the town. As Bishop LaValley said in his Sunday morning message, “If you take the bad news away, what do you have left? There’s the good news!”

It’s with this in mind that those of us who work for the Diocese of Ogdensburg will have the resources necessary to continue to fulfill the many missions of the Church.

Thank you, Bishop. Thank you, God. Thank God, Msgr. Murphy can add a little sanity to his life with a subscription to trips to Ogdensburg and diocesan headquarters.

And, thank God we have an apostle with the talent and willingness to begin to fill his shoes.

Bishop LaValley followed up his announcement about Msgr. Murphy’s departure with the word that he believes Father Kevin O’Brien would be a great addition to the diocesan staff.

There is only one true salvation: the Lord Jesus that the apostles proclaimed from the beginning and throughout all the ages. (Acts 2:28)

At the beginning of the day, we will have our first budget meeting.

As the Prophet Isaiah says, “I will give you the treasures hidden in the dark places and the riches of dark阴 Filippo

The good news is a reason to be enthusiastic about the upcoming year. As Bishop LaValley followed up his announcement about Msgr. Murphy’s departure with the word that he believes Father Kevin O’Brien would be a great addition to the diocesan staff.

There is only one true salvation: the Lord Jesus that the apostles proclaimed from the beginning and throughout all the ages. (Acts 2:28)
**Bishop announces changes in staff**

Bishop Terry R. Laliberte has announced that Msgr. John Murphy, who has served as Moderator of the Diocese and Episcopal Vicar for Pastoral Services since 1994, will be retiring. Bishop Laliberte has named Father Kevin O’Brien, curate at St. John’s Central Church, Lawrence Deanery, to the order of the priestly ministry at St. John’s Central Church, Lawrence Deanery. Father Kevin O’Brien will be the first person to fill the position of Moderator of the Diocese and Episcopal Vicar for Pastoral Services since 1994.

Bishop Laliberte said, “This is a challenging time for our Church and for the Diocese of Ogdensburg. I am proud to serve with Msgr. Murphy and his team of dedicated and committed staff members, and I am confident that Father Kevin O’Brien will be an excellent successor.”

Msgr. Murphy has served as Moderator of the Diocese and Episcopal Vicar for Pastoral Services since 1994, and has been instrumental in the development of the diocesan life. He has served as a spiritual director for numerous diocesan events and has provided guidance and support to parishes across the Diocese.

Father Kevin O’Brien has served as a curate at St. John’s Central Church, Lawrence Deanery, since 2003, and has been involved in numerous diocesan events and initiatives. He has served as a spiritual director for numerous diocesan events and has provided guidance and support to parishes across the Diocese.

“We are grateful to Msgr. Murphy for his many years of service to the Diocese of Ogdensburg,” said Bishop Laliberte. “He has been a true leader and has contributed significantly to the growth and development of our diocese.”

Father Kevin O’Brien will be formally installed as Moderator of the Diocese and Episcopal Vicar for Pastoral Services on May 18, 2023. He will begin his duties immediately.

“Father Kevin O’Brien will bring a wealth of experience and knowledge to his new role,” said Bishop Laliberte. “He has a strong commitment to the Church and to our diocese, and we are confident that he will continue to serve our diocese with distinction.”

Bishop Laliberte thanked Msgr. Murphy for his many years of service to the Diocese and expressed his confidence in Father Kevin O’Brien’s ability to continue to lead the Diocese of Ogdensburg into the future. He encouraged everyone to join him in prayer for a successful transition and a fruitful new chapter in the life of the Diocese.

**Bishop’s Fund reaches goal**

The Bishop’s Fund, which supports the diocese’s annual appeal, has surpassed its goal of $1,262,285. Included in this total are the many gifts that have been received from parishes, schools, and individuals throughout the Diocese.

“Thank you,” the bishop said. “This is a wonderful achievement, and I am grateful to everyone who has contributed to the success of this year’s Bishop’s Fund. I am confident that this support will help us to continue to serve our diocese in a variety of ways.”

The Bishop’s Fund is used to support a wide range of programs and initiatives, including outreach to those in need, support for parishes, schools, and diocesan programs, and the funding of the diocesan staff.

“I am humbled by this remarkable sign of support,” the bishop said. “This is a true sign of the vitality and spirit of our diocese, and I am grateful to everyone who has contributed to the success of this year’s Bishop’s Fund.”

Bishop Laliberte encouraged everyone to continue to support the diocese, and to pray for its continued success and growth.

“Thank you,” the bishop said. “I am grateful to everyone who has contributed to the success of this year’s Bishop’s Fund, and I am confident that this support will help us to continue to serve our diocese in a variety of ways.”

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*Thank you.*
What is our role as care-taker of God’s Creation of the planet upon which all life depends? This present challenge.

The Catholic Diocese of Ogdensburg has gathered in a small enthusiastic group from various parts of the Diocese in an effort to explore how our Catholic faith, as in the bulletins of a few other interested Catholic communities, can be used to further the destruction of God’s earth.

The next meeting is scheduled for Friday, May 11 at 6 p.m. at the Old Church in Tupper Lake, NY 12986. If anyone/parish would like to receive these items, email: stbernardbulletin@cit-tele.com.

Sr. Bethany, SSJ, encourages all parishes to be present if possible, or would like more information, call Sister Bethany at 315-324-0090.

PHOTO BY SR. BETHANY FITZGERALD, SSJ

Caring for God’s creation

Catholic News Service classification is A-III -- adults. The Motion Picture Association of America rating is PG-13 -- parents are cautioned. Some material may be inappropriate for children under 13.
The Good Shepherd: a model for our own lives

Who will be able to get into heaven?

Spirituality for Today

The Good Shepherd: a model for our own lives

A retired woman is called to the phone by a caseworker from Catholic Charities. Through her gift of time and talent, she has the ability to respond, support and help individuals and families build bridges to healthier, more content lives. If it were not for those in need of Catholic Charities, the woman would be called on to spend time and talent at a new daycare for infants, or a new homeless shelter for the elderly, or a new center for battered women. It would be possible for the entire community to be at the mercy of overwhelmed service providers. Instead, Catholic Charities in the North Country makes sure that their dignity and their hope are preserved.

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St. Cyril's Alexandria Bay and St. Frances Xavier Cabrini Our Lady of the Sacred Heart, Ogdensburg; 7 p.m., Confirmation April 28 – Diocesan Youth Rally at Maryhill Museum, Plattsburgh May 1 – 7 p.m., Confirmation for St. Cyril's, Alexandria Bay, Sacred Heart, Ogdensburg; St. Frances Xavier Cabrini, Ogdensburg; 7 p.m., Confirmation for Our Lady of the Sacred Heart Church April 28 – Diocesan Youth Rally at Maryhill Museum, Plattsburgh

Clergy Rev, James Seymour at 315-393-2202, ext. 304. Please register at our diocesan website, www.northycatholic.org. Clergy and lay volunteers who participate in sponsored events and activities are required to participate in this training. Further information is available from Msgr. Sister Dolores Kline, 315-393-3042, ext 304 and www.northycatholic.org.

Report Abuse

You have a complaint of suspected or known abuse involving a priest, religious, employees or volunteers, contact the Episcopal Vicar for Clergy Rev, James Seymour at 315-393-2202, ext. 304. Visit www.abbeyofdesmoines.org.

April 11 – 7 p.m., Confirmation for St. Cyril's, Alexandria Bay, Sacred Heart, Ogdensburg; St. Frances Xavier Cabrini, Ogdensburg; 7 p.m., Confirmation for Our Lady of the Sacred Heart Church

April 28 – Diocesan Youth Rally at Maryhill Museum, Plattsburgh

The Disease of Ogdensburg has scheduled sessions for Protecting God's Children for our clergy and lay volunteers. The registration for this event is mandatory and required to participate in any event. Register at www.northycatholic.org. Clergy and lay volunteers who participate in sponsored events and activities are required to participate in this training. Further information is available from Msgr. Sister Dolores Kline, 315-393-3042, ext 304 and www.northycatholic.org.

Fenland symposium explores use of language in new Roman Missal

BRIDGTON, ME – This language used in the new translation of the Missal of the Latin-rite church. The English translation was a lengthy and rigorous process that took place through the International Commission on English in the Church. It was approved in certain by the various bishops’ conferences. It received final approval from the U.S. bishops in November 2011. The language and translation is published in Latin and Latin, and so far the response has been unanimous:

“this is the new Missal!”

The letters were sent after the House of Representatives adopted on March 27 a $3.5 trillion budget resolution with a $600 billion deficit reduction plan called the “budget blueprint” that outlines the path to fiscal year 2013. The plan calls for massive spending cuts in the next decade, and simplifying the tax code by closing loopholes and lowering individual and corporate tax rates. A thorough appreciation of the new translation requires a firm knowledge of the Church’s understanding of the role of the liturgist in the Church’s life and in the administration of the sacraments. The liturgist is charged with the task of preparing the people of God for the reception of the sacraments, and of assisting the priest in the performance of the liturgical action. The liturgist is also responsible for the preparation of the liturgical texts, and for the translation of the Missal into the vernacular language of the congregation. 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Religious liberty at center stage at prayer breakfast

By Neil Federman
Catholic News Service

WASHINGTON — Religious liberty was topic A at the eighth annual National Catholic Prayer Breakfast, held April 19 at a Washington hotel.

“We are in the lifetime of a generation whose children may very well not experience an America that has never been as threat- ened as it is today,” warned Carl Anderson, supreme knight of the Knights of Columbus, in remarks to the estimated 3,800 people in attendance.

Anderson said, “Today we find a new hostility to the role of religious institutions in American life at a time when government is expanding its reach in extraordinary ways. And it is not only be- cause of the Obama adminis- tration’s HHS contraception mandate.”

Besides the mandate requiring that most health plans cover the cost of contraception, sterilization and some abortifacients, Anderson pointed to the Hobby Lobby EEOC case, a court challenge to a Lothrop, Va., company’s decision to fire a teacher. The attempt to more narrowly define who is an employee “is easily tempted to conform themselves to the spirit of this age,” he said.

“Today we find a new hostility to the role of religious institutions in American life at a time when government is expanding its reach in extraordinary ways. And it is not only because of the Obama administration’s HHS contraception mandate.”

“Another deeper and frequently repeated criticism holds that the pope is not concerned about a small, active portion of the Catholic faith, and that he wants to take the church back to the time before Vatican II. As Cardinal Joseph Ratzinger, the pope had spoken more than once about his belief that the Catholic church would get smaller and smaller, but that eventually the world would discover and joy present in the small community of true believers and be attracted again to the Christian faith.

Cardinal Koch, president of the Pontifical Council for Promoting Christian Unity, said the two most common misun- derstandings are that the pope is concerned only about a small, active portion of the Catholic faith, and that he wants to take the church back to the time before Vatican II. As Cardinal Joseph Ratzinger, the pope had spoken more than once about his belief that the Catholic church would get smaller and smaller, but that eventually the world would discover and joy present in the small community of true believers and be attracted again to the Christian faith.

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Theological and pastoral thought of Pope Benedict XVI is continued is serious misunderstandings,” the cardinal wrote in the preface of the Italian edition of “The Mystery of the Mustard Seed: Foundations of the Christian Worldview.”

“Another deeper and frequently repeated criticism holds that the pope is not concerned about a small, active portion of the Catholic church, and that he wants to take the church back to the time before Vatican II,” the cardinal wrote. “This misunderstanding is continued is serious misunderstandings,” the cardinal wrote in the preface of the Italian edition of “The Mystery of the Mustard Seed: Foundations of the Christian Worldview.”

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Anderson recalled when British Prime Minister Win- ston Churchill addressed Congress in December 1941, with England being sub- jected to Nazi bombing runs and the United States having recently suffered the Japanese at- tack at Pearl Harbor.

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Anderson declared that during his 2008 visit to Washington, Pope Benedict XVI reminded us that “Chris- tians are easily tempted to conform themselves to the spirit of this age,” he said.

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“It seems the enemies of free- thought are not only there,” the cardinal wrote.

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“At what is at stake here,” Anderson declared, “is the future of humanity it- self.”

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“The mustard seed is not only a parable of Christian hope, but it requires a return to basics about love, faith and truth, the cardinal wrote.

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“You now have the option to start receiving your North Country Catholic in your e-mail rather than in the mail, or can you do both!

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Call our office at 315-608-7536 or visit our website to sign up today!
Catholics across the diocese took part in “Too Few in the Pew” workshops in three sites of the North Country earlier this month. Above, Joseph Brosk, St. James Parish, Carthage, asks presenter Sister Louise Alff a question in the Pew workshop at St. Peter’s Emmus Hall, Plattsburgh.

Sister Louise’s own experience and love of hospitality is to begin each day with prayer. Paying to the Holy Spirit helps us to recognize that there are open doors of opportunity in which we can encounter people who need to be listened to, supported and comforted, she said.

As baptized Catholics, we all have the responsibility to evangelize. A disciple is one who has the intention of following Jesus, to hear His word, to be fed by the Eucharist, and to go out to proclaim the Gospel.

Being a Christian is an encounter with the persons of Jesus Christ and being His ambassadors, radiating His love and passing on that love with those we touch.

Sister Louise helped participants understand in their own way that each person is unique, has various personalities and needs, and desires to be respected.

Some of the personalities Sister Louise described were complaining the ritual, etc.; congratulating people, expressing the ritual, etc. There are special moments of welcoming in our parishes e.g., Christmas, Easter, Sacramental Events, Mother’s and Father’s Day, Weddings, Funerals, and Hidden Days e.g., Ash Wednesday. The person next to us may be one who needs a special welcome.

Sister Louise encouraged parishes to look at the United States document Go and Make Disciples: A National Plan and Strategy for Catholic Evangelization in the United States. She gave practical ideas to the participants that were based on Goals 1, 2, and 3 of the document.

These strategies flesh out the goals to form all Catholics to become more enthusiastic about their faith, to invite all people to hear the message of the Gospel so that they may open their hearts to the saving power of Jesus Christ, and to be increasingly transformed by the saving power of Jesus Christ.

The workshop concluded with a prayer from St. Teresa of Avila recalling that we are the Body of Christ, the hands, feet, and eyes of Jesus Christ reaching out to do His work with compassion and love.

The four-year-old preschoolers at Holy Name School in AuSable Forks enjoy time with St. Joseph Sister Yvonne Therese Cusson after religion class. In front are Carter, Carson and Nicholas; back, Kari, Kimberlynn, Sister Yvonne, Logan, Abbey, and Elizabeth.

Father Michael J. Gaffney described the annual city-wide Lenten Mission at the four parishes in Watertown this year. Father Gaffney, shown here during the opening of the service at St. Anthony’s Church, preached each evening on the scriptures of the day and gave each sermon individual to his group. Depicted is Sister Patricia, Our Lady of the Rosary, Holy Family and St. Anthony’s participants in the mission each year.

The four-year-old preschoolers at Holy Name School in AuSable Forks enjoy time with St. Joseph Sister Yvonne Therese Cusson after religion class. In front are Carter, Carson and Nicholas; back, Kari, Kimberlynn, Sister Yvonne, Logan, Abbey, and Elizabeth.
Catholics across the diocese took part in “Too Few in the Pew” workshops in three strategic areas of the Diocese: Carthage, Massena, and Plattsburgh.

St. Joseph Sister Yvonne Cusson of Ausable Forks and other participants from Clinton, Essex, and Adirondack Deaneries greet each other in the opening prayer at the Too Few workshop at St. Peter’s Emmanuel Hall, Plattsburgh.

By Sister Mary Comm Lynch, SSJ

Franciscan Sister Louise Alff, recently presented the workshop Too Few in the Pew in three strategic areas of the Diocese: Carthage, Massena, and Plattsburgh. Sister Louise’s own experience of evangelization, both on the parish and diocesan level, offered to the participants her own personal stories of reaching out to both active and inactive Catholics. She pointed out that the manner in which we try to reach out to inactive Catholics is different than what was done to the churchgoing parishioner.

As baptized Catholics, we all have the responsibility to evangelize. A disciple is one who has the intention of following Jesus, to hear His word, to be fed by the Eucharist, and to go out to proclaim the Gospel.

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Some of the personalities Sister Louise described were Hurting Henry and Hannah, Angry Allen and Annie, and Corporate Cory, a farmer who has the intention of following Jesus. “I was a stranger and you welcomed Me,” Sister Louise said. The way of hospitality is the way of Jesus Christ. “I was a stranger and you welcomed Me.”

The workshop concluded with a prayer from St. Teresa of Avila recalling that we are the Body of Christ, the hands, feet, and eyes of Jesus Christ reaching out to do His work with compassion and love.

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Religious liberty at center stage at prayer breakfast

By Mark Pattison
Catholic News Service

WASHINGTON - Religious liberty was topic A at the eighth annual National Catholic Prayer Breakfast, held April 19 at a Washington hotel.

"Now in the lifetime of a generation, it is a reality that all Americans have been as threatened as it is today," warned Carl Anderson, supreme knight of the Knights of Columbus, in remarks to the estimated 800 people in attendance.

Anderson said, "Today we find a new hostility to the role of religious institutions in American life at a time when government is expanding its reach in extraordinary ways. And it is not only because of the Obama administration's HHS contraception mandate.

Besides the mandate requiring that all health plans cover the costs of contraception, sterilization and some abortion-inducing drugs, Anderson pointed to the Hobby Lobby and the EEOC case, a court challenge to a Little Rock, Ark., law that provided immunity for a pharmacist who refused to fill a prescription for a morning-after pill.

"Spirit of the age," he said, "is the future of our spirit...and secularism accepts religion - if it accepts it at all - only on its own terms." Under this view, religion is subordinate to the political interests of the secular state. And it is precisely this subordination of religion to the state that the First Amendment seeks to prevent, Anderson declared.

During his 2008 visit to Washington, Pope Benedict XVI reminded us that "Christian liberty is the freedom to conform themselves to the spirit of this age," he said.

Jesuits are easily tempted to "complain, to scribble, to write for professing or exercising their faith. He formed papal nuncio to Iraq, he expressed sadness over the Oct. 31, 2003, massacre in a church in Baghdad, where 52 priests were murdered, including two priests he knew personally.

"Religious liberty is the first of human rights," Archbishop Chullikatt said. He quoted Pope Benedict XVI, who in his 2011 World Day of Peace message, said, 'A freedom that is hostile or indefinable to God is self-sacrificing.

"What is at stake here," Archbishop Chullikatt said, "is the future of humanity itself. He added freedom of religion is "not only a moral but also a civil right.""Such freedom, the archbishop said, "still awaits effective implementation in many countries." He cited statistics from a U.N. office that monitors discrimination and intolerance to human rights, which indicated that 70 percent of the world's people live in countries with a high degree of restriction on human rights, with 31 countries "still requiring a return to basics about love, faith and truth, the cardinal wrote.

Invoking the Gospel parable about the miniscule mustard seed, "Another deeper and frequently repeated criticism holds that the pope is not concerned about a small, active portion of the Catholic faithful, and that he wants to take the church back to the time before Vatican II," Cardinal Koch said. "As Cardinal Joseph Ratzinger, the pope has spoken more than one occasion about his belief that the Catholic Church would get smaller and smaller, but that eventually the world would discover the hope and joy present in the small community of true believers and be attracted again to the Christian faith.

Cardinal Koch said, "A widespread criticism holds that the pope is not concerned about the church as a whole but is focused on a small portion of its flock and 'is content with that."

The only thing that is true in this criticism is that, in reality, the pope is convinced that the true renewal of the church cannot begin with the masses, but with only small movements" inspired by the Holy Spirit and acting as a small, active community of true believers and be attracted again to the Christian faith.

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Cardinal Koch said, "A widespread criticism holds that the pope is not concerned about the church as a whole but is focused on a small portion of its flock and 'is content with that."

The only thing that is true in this criticism is that, in reality, the pope is convinced that the true renewal of the church cannot begin with the masses, but with only small movements" inspired by the Holy Spirit and acting as a small, active community of true believers and be attracted again to the Christian faith.

Invoking the Gospel parable about the miniscule mustard seed, "Another deeper and frequently repeated criticism holds that the pope is not concerned about a small, active portion of the Catholic faithful, and that he wants to take the church back to the time before Vatican II," Cardinal Koch said. "As Cardinal Joseph Ratzinger, the pope has spoken more than one occasion about his belief that the Catholic Church would get smaller and smaller, but that eventually the world would discover the hope and joy present in the small community of true believers and be attracted again to the Christian faith.

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Furth in Peace
This week marks the anniversary of the deaths of the following clergymen who have served in the Diocese of Ogdensburg:
April 22 – Rev. J. A. Larose, 1967
April 23 – Rev. Michael W. Holland, 1999
Forth Sunday of Easter

By Dennis Hesliak, CP
Diocesan Director, Catholic Charities


On April 15, 2012

Scripture Reflections

The Good Shepherd: a model for our own lives

Who will be able to get into heaven?

Spirituality for Today

Spiritual Reflection

Ford, when did you see You?

Visit our re-designed website: www.northcountrycatholic.org

Read Bishop LaValley’s column

Specials

View diocesan events and much more

Find us on Facebook!

Job Opening

Director of Advancement

Catholic Charities of the North Country is soliciting input from you, the benefactor, on the position of Director of Advancement. Your opinion is important to us as we strive to develop relationships with local businesses and manage our annual fundraising appeal. The results of this survey will be shared with the Bishop and the Catholic Charities Board of Directors.

You can help by completing the survey online or by contacting the Catholic Charities office at (315) 393-2255.

It is no secret that we are facing an economic downturn in the North Country. As the funds dry up, agencies like Catholic Charities are reducing its support for social services programs. As the economy improves, we hope that you will be able to respond, support and help individuals and families build bridges to better lives.

Thank you for helping us make a difference in the lives of our neighbors. Your gift to Catholic Charities will relieve some of the suffering of those in need. This reading also invites us to plan every day new ways in which we can be good shepherds. 

Who are the ones in your family that need special attention from us? Are there loved ones who are no longer with us? 

Who is the Good Shepherd for you? Is it your pastor, priest, deacon, religious, a neighbor, a relative, a friend, or a family member? How do you address Sunday. Of all the many times we have an opportunity to go to Mass, this is the moment we should remember that Jesus calls us His sheep. The Good Shepherd cares for us. By understanding what this means, we can serve others with compassion and courage.
Caring for God’s creation

By Deacon Thomas B. O'Brien

The purpose of this Ecology and Faith group, with members from throughout the Diocese, has been meeting regularly to discuss how the Catholic faith offers guidance to meet challenges to the environment. In front are Emmy Bodrogi, Mary Centrofanti, Eunice Trombly and Ann Marie Lincoln.

Living in the North Country and worshipping in this Diocese, it can be easy to take for granted the many incredible gifts we receive these items, email: stbernardbulletin@roadrunner.com.

The Catholic News Service classification is A-III — adults. The Motion Picture Association of America rating is PG-13 — parents strongly cautioned. Some material may be inappropriate for children under 13.
**Bishop announces changes in diocesan staff**

**Father O'Brien**

Father O'Brien, pastor in Deferiet from 1997 to 2002, has previously served as pastor of St. Mary's Church in Carthage from 1994 to 1997. He also served as pastor in St. John's Church in Rome from 1984 to 1989. Father O'Brien was born on July 10, 1937, and was ordained a priest for the Diocese of Ogdensburg in 1965. He has served as a chaplain in the military since 1969 and was awarded the rank of major general in 1986. Father O'Brien later earned a law degree from the University of Notre Dame.

His pastoral assignments have included parochial vicar at St. Casimir Church in Waterford, assistant pastor at St. Mary's Church in Waterford, assistant pastor at St. John's Church in Rome, and assistant pastor at St. Joseph's Church in Deferiet. Father O'Brien has served as a military chaplain since 1969 and was awarded the rank of major general in 1986. He later earned a law degree from the University of Notre Dame.
It’s been a good news—bad news week for the diocesan offices. Bishop LaValley has announ-
ced the Diocese of Ogdensburg has received an actual
good news—bad news week—this parochial offices, an
announcement from Bishop LaValley, who has confirmed to all
weekly surprise meeting of the diocesan employees last
The Good Shepherd gives up his life for his sheep. The primary role of a shepherd is to care for his sheep, which is
testified from various threats of any kind. He leaves exactly how to provide for them.
Throughout the history of the Church, we have been blessed with good
leaders, our pastors and bishops. The Bishop’s staff is to ensure a symphony of his
care. This Bishop is the shepherd of the flock of the people of God. In the
ejudgment and care of his flock, we are called to decide who will lead us
Church leaders, especially our Bishop and pastors, have a great responsibility,
hand in hand. The Bishop does..."
By Tracy Leonard

As a senior in 2004 at Immaculate Heart Center in Watertown, I had the honor and blessing of being a member of the IHC Mystery Players. Since 2010, I’ve had the privilege of serving as an adult mentor in the theater program.

Certainly, my involvement both as a student and mentor has helped deepen my relationship with others, but ultimately and most importantly, with Christ.

One of the questions we often ask ourselves as Mystery Players is “Will I get it?”

What is this “Will we speak of and how is it obtained?”

To each, the answer to this question may vary, for it is uniquely different for everyone. I, for one, like to think of “it” as a personal experience with God. A moment of deep spiritual connection when faith and God’s love engulfs your inner being and moves you to a new level of spiritual maturity and understanding.

I’m not even sure this explanation fully describes what I feel when I think I’ve “got it.” I believe “getting it” and understanding what it is you’ve got are two different things.

First of all, why “got it?” Well, let me try to explain my understanding. One who longs for this intimate connection with the Lord may think he or she really “gets it” graciously tries to think, speak or act more like Jesus each day. For the greater one’s success in “putting on” Christ, the greater the degree of intimate connection with Him.

So how do you know you’ve “got it” and what do you do with “it” once you’ve obtained “it”? It is through everyday experiences that we may feel we’ve “got it,” but the time I feel I’ve “gotten it” is my constant struggle of the faith that God is working and showing through me.

Somedays the experience comes when they are struck with wonder and awe at the sight of Jesus’ presence in a holy basilica, at the peak of a mountain, at the birth of a child, through service at the soup kitchen or on a mission celebrat-

ing a sacrament, at the bedside of a loved one, or maybe even at a time of intense suffering.

To each his own, but the real question lies in what we do with this great gift of grace we obtain. Unless we “put on Christ” and share that gift, we’ve failed to grow in deeper connection with others and God.

Here’s the challenge: try to become more aware of these moments when you’ve “got it” and take the opportunity the grace gives you each day to “get it.” But most importantly, pay it forward and take the opportunity He gives you each day to “get it” and share it with others.

One who seeks this “it” we speak of, shall strive to “get it” and understand what it is you’ve got and try to become more aware of these moments when you’ve “got it” and take the opportunity the grace gives you each day to “get it.” But most importantly, pay it forward and take the opportunity He gives you each day to “get it” and share it with others.

Young people from the Parishes of Indian River took part in their first retreat Feb. 25-26 at St. Mary’s in Evans Mills. They are shown above with pastor, Father Thomas Kornmeyer.

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The grace of getting ‘it’... p. 16

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