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The Diocese of Ogdensburg Volume 79 Number 26

# NORTH COUNTRY CATHOLIC

OCTOBER 23, 2024

## INSTALLED AS ACOLYTE



Kevin McCullough, a seminarian for the Diocese of Ogdensburg, was recently installed as an acolyte at Saint Vincent's Seminary in Latrobe, Pennsylvania, earlier this month. Pictured are, from left, Very Reverend Edward M. Mazich, OSB, rector of Saint Vincent Seminary, McCullough, newly installed acolyte, Most Reverend Joseph C. Bambera, bishop of Scranton, Pennsylvania, and Reverend Lukas H Gruber, parochial vicar of St. Peter's Massena. Acolytes are entrusted with attending to the altar, assisting the deacon and priest at Mass, and distributing Holy Communion during the liturgy and to the sick.

## ROSARY FOR PEACE



On the Memorial of Our Lady of the Rosary, formerly known as Our Lady of Victory, faithful gathered at Our Lady of Victory Church in Plattsburgh on Oct. 7 to learn about the history of the feast and the spirituality, and to recite the Holy Rosary for peace. A few days later, on Oct. 12, parishioners gathered to pray the Rosary in front of St. John's Church in Plattsburgh to commemorate the anniversary of the Miracle of the Sun at Fatima.

FULL STORY, PAGE 4

## Pope hopes for 'reconciled differences'

By Courtney Mares  
Catholic News Agency

Pope Francis expressed hope for "reconciled differences" between Catholic, Orthodox, and Protestant Christians during his Oct. 16 general audience, reflecting on the centuries-old "Filioque" dispute that has divided Western and Eastern Christians.

In his catechesis on the Holy Spirit, Pope Francis reflected on the words of the Nicene Creed: "I believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the giver of life, who proceeds from the Father and the Son." Adopted in its earliest form at the First Council of Ni-

caea in 325, the Nicene Creed is recited by Catholics during Sunday Mass.

Pope Francis noted that the later addition of the "Filioque," Latin for "and from the Son" in the creed, sparked a dispute that "has been the reason, or pretext, for so many arguments and divisions between the Church of the East and the Church of the West."

The pope added, however, that "the climate of dialogue between the two Churches has lost the acrimony of the past and today allows us to hope for full mutual acceptance, as one of the main 'reconciled differences.'"

Francis underscored the importance of moving beyond past disputes, calling for unity and reconciliation among Christians despite their differences. "I like to say this: 'Reconciled differences,'" the pope said.

"Among Christians, there are many differences: He follows this school, that one another; this person is a Protestant, that person ... The important thing is that these differences are reconciled in the love of walking together," Pope Francis said in St. Peter's Square.

Pope Francis' comments come as his designated peace envoy Cardinal Matteo Zup-

pi wraps up a trip to Moscow where he met Tuesday with a top-ranking member of the Russian Orthodox Church, Metropolitan Anthony of Volokolamsk, the head of the Moscow Patriarchate's Department for External Church Relations.

More than a dozen Orthodox and Protestant leaders are also in Rome this month as "fraternal delegates" in the ongoing Synod on Synodality assembly, including representatives of the Patriarchate of Alexandria and all of Africa, the Syrian Orthodox Patriarchate of Antioch, the Lutheran World Federation, and the World Mennonite Conference.

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## It can be fixed

I was convinced it was going to be a tough fix.

I opened the drawer-style freezer below my refrigerator and saw what looked like large snowflakes, the kind that let you know warm air is getting in your freezer.

Looking closely, I noticed the gasket on the right side of the freezer wasn't sealing.

I tried the obvious fixes... moving all the food and freezer contents around to see if something was impeding it from shutting and checking all around the drawer to

see if anything was stuck. No change. I pulled every item out of the freezer and closed it again. It still wouldn't seal.

**Darcy L.  
Fargo**

At that point, I did what most millennials would do in such a circumstance: I searched the internet looking for ways to fix it. Most of what I found suggested the rails that support and move the internal drawers were likely misaligned, but I couldn't find instructions to fix such an issue specific to my freezer. I would have to figure out parts of the job on my

own.

When I'm in a situation in which I'm facing unknowns, my mind immediately goes to the worst-case scenario. Generally intimidated by anything mechanical, my brain convinced me I was either going to struggle to complete the task or I was going to make the problem worse. I was sure I'd need to spend a fortune to repair or replace the appliance.

Then, as the main internal drawer came out of its place to make the rails accessible, a small, folded ice pack came flying out from some hidden location.

I laughed when I saw it. "I'm all primed for a giant struggle, and what to do I

get? An ice pack."

Just to check, I put the internal drawer back in and closed freezer. Sealed. Problem solved.

It was like I heard God say, "why do you do this to yourself?" I worry about the future. I try to plan for aspects of life that are outside my control. I let anxiety run away with me.

Then God reminds me I'm not in control. He reminds me I don't know what I don't know. He reminds me to live in the moment, not hung up on the past or future. He reminds me to at least try to have peace.

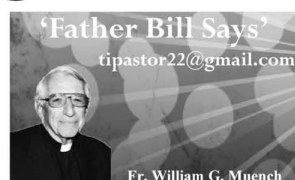
Getting that through my thick head is an even tougher fix.

## Talking about the Magisterium

Each year, no matter where I was stationed, I enjoyed having a part in the OCIA - formerly RCIA - parish program. So, this year, I am involved in the program here. This week I am asked to speak about the Church's Magisterium - the pope and the bishops. So, today, I would like to share with you my plan for my presentation. I want to demonstrate to the group the importance of the Magisterium of our Catholic Church.

I plan to begin with a Gospel story - Matthew 16, the confession of Peter. "When Jesus went into the region of Caesarea Philippi, he asked the disciples, 'Who do people say that the Son of Man is?' They replied, 'Some say John the Baptist, others Elijah, still others Jeremiah, or one of the prophets.'" Here, I want to discuss how important it is how we answer this question - for ourselves.)

The Gospel story continues, "Jesus said to them, 'But who do you say that I am.' Simon Peter said, 'You are the Messiah, the Son of the Living God.'" Here, I will tell the group the importance of Jesus realizing



that Peter understands.

Jesus continues in the Gospel, "Blessed are you, Simon, Son of Jonah. For flesh and blood has not revealed this to you, but my heavenly Father. And I say to you, you are Peter and upon this rock I will build my Church, and the gates of the netherworld shall not prevail against it. I will give you the keys of the Kingdom of Heaven." At this point, we'll discuss Peter as the rock, the foundation.

Jesus chooses Peter. He is the one to lead and build the Church. The pope - the first pope - all the bishops of Rome - all the bishops of all time - throughout the centuries are and continue to be the successors of the original apostles. The pope is the visible foundation of the bishops and the whole company of the faithful. Here, I will also speak to the group about the present pope, Pope Francis.

A bishop is the chief shepherd of their diocese. The bishop is the chief teacher of the diocese. Each bishop accepts the challenge to defend and guide the diocese. Here, I plan to speak of the bishop of their own diocese. Each bishop is a priest and celebrates the sacrament of the Catholic Church but now is chosen by the Pope to become a bishop. As a bishop, he is designated as the minister of confirmation - calling and anointing men and women to be active in their parish, in the Church. And the bishop has the most important power of ordaining deacons and priests for the ministry of the Church. I also plan to speak of the bishop as the one who builds the Catholic Church in each diocese of the world.

So, the Magisterium of the Catholic Church - the Pope, in communion with the bishops, guides the faithful in proclaiming the message of Jesus.

The Church through the Magisterium is the fulfillment of the teaching office of the Church. When the Magisterium proclaims a doctrine that has been di-

vinely revealed, it must be accepted with the obedience of faith by the whole People of God. I will also discuss here the bishops always leading with the participation of his priests and the laity.

I received an image of the Church's Magisterium in the celebration of the Second Vatican Council as a young priest, and I plan to describe the Council a bit to them. All the bishops of the world gathered with Pope John XXIII to discuss the life of the Church in their place in the world. This Council of the Church's Fathers developed ten foundational documents that continue to direct our Catholic Church today. I know personally the powerful effect of the Council; my priesthood was completely transformed. I love the Second Vatican Council.

One more thing today: On a recent Sunday, the Gospel reading tells us that Jesus spoke to his apostles that all authority is about service. "Rather whoever wishes to be great among you will be your servant; whoever wishes to be first among you will be the slave for all."



## Fr. Cerank died Oct. 16

Father Gerald A. Cerank, a retired priest of the diocese, died Wednesday, Oct. 16, 2024, in Sarasota, Florida, where he had been residing.

Father Cerank was 81. He was ordained in 1972.

Arrangements are incomplete at this time.

A Mass of Christian Burial will be planned in Florida, and a Memorial Mass will be celebrated within the Diocese of Ogdensburg at a future date.

A complete obituary and story will appear in a future edition of the *North Country Catholic*.



Father Gerald A. Cerank

## NEW THIRD-DEGREE KNIGHTS



*Editor's note: The first caption below was previously published with the incorrect photo. We apologize for the error. (Above) Father John Cosmic Council #291, Knights of Columbus recently held an Exemplification at St James Church, Carthage. Pictured are (front row from left) newly installed Third-Degree Brother Knights Harrison Scott and Jacob Buskey of Council 291; honoree, Brother Richard "Bucky" Buckingham; 3rd Degree Brothers William Nasworthy Jr., David Hill and Michael Redder of Council 259, Watertown (second row), Deputy Grand Knight Ray Bodle; District Deputy Mike Sligar; Trustees Garry Stevens and Joe Margrey; Warden Bill Busch; Grand Knight Tom Wojcikowski, (back row) Jim Gratch, financial secretary, and Father Todd Thibault, chaplain. (Right) Grand Knight Tom Wojcikowski presenting Exemplification honoree Richard "Bucky" Buckingham with a certificate of recognition.*



## Mercy Care to host technology workshop

Mercy Care for the Adirondacks will host a Technology Assistance Workshop on November 7 from 11:30 a.m. to 2:30 p.m. at BOCES Adirondack Educational Center on Route 3 in Saranac Lake.

Led by Mercy Care Volunteer and experienced instructor Scott Baerman, this workshop will focus on the basic and intermediate skills needed to use technology effectively with hands-on, one-on-one learning opportunities.

Complimentary lunch will be provided.

The Technology Workshop is free of charge but registration is required. To register, or for more information, please contact Lexi Bevilacqua, Program Director at [abevilacqua@adkmercy.org](mailto:abevilacqua@adkmercy.org) or at 518-523-5446.

Mercy Care's mission is to enhance in every dimension the fullness of life of Elders living in our community. Mercy Care hosts social impact engagement events to strengthen friendships and relationships in the Tri-Lakes area among Mercy Care Volunteers, Parish Nurses, Elder Friends, and Mercy Care's Mission Extension Partners' Volunteers and their Elder Friends.

Mercy Care is experiencing many new requests from elders in our community who need friends and informal supports to help them age in place more successfully. Mercy Care serves any older adult in need within our capacity.

Mercy Care receives requests for a Friendship Volunteer from elders themselves, their families, or friends, to help them with informal social supports and ease their isolation and loneliness.

Mercy Care's next Friendship Volunteer Training will be held January 15 in Tupper Lake. Mercy Care invites anyone in the Tri-Lakes region and surrounding communities who is interested in becoming a Mercy Care Friendship Volunteer to take the training. To register, please visit Mercy Care's website at [www.adkmercy.org](http://www.adkmercy.org) or contact Lexi Bevilacqua, Mercy Care's Program Director, at [abevilacqua@adkmercy.org](mailto:abevilacqua@adkmercy.org) or call Lexi for more information at 518-523-5446.

Mercy Care for the Adirondacks is governed by a local board of directors and relies solely on grants and charitable gifts from individuals, businesses, and foundations for its support. Mercy Care's services are provided free of charge to those we assist.

Visit our website

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

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



Find us on Facebook!



# Plattsburgh prays the Rosary for peace

By Mary Beth Bracy, consecrated virgin  
Contributing Writer

On the Memorial of Our Lady of the Rosary, formerly called Our Lady of Victory, Holy Cross Parish hosted a special evening with inspirational talks and the recitation of the Holy Rosary for peace. The Oct. 7 date coincided with the first anniversary of the conflict between Israel and Palestine, which Pope Francis asked Catholics to commemorate. Dozens of faithful gathered at Our Lady of Victory Church in Plattsburgh to celebrate the church's patronal feast.

"We will use the sorrowful mysteries because we are praying for peace in the world," said Father Kevin D. McEwan, pastor of Holy Cross Parish. "The Holy Father asked us to pray and fast today."

Following the presentations, Father McEwan led the Rosary for Peace, including petitions for peace in the Ukraine, Gaza, peace throughout the whole world, and for peace in our country and the end of violence and the loss of life. Decades were led by Ken Racette, Sister Barbara Langlois, O.P., Kitty St. Denis, Justine Cruz, and Linda Bracy. The gathering closed with a special prayer for peace which asked the intercession of the "Virgin Mary, Mother of Hope" to "obtain the gift of peace for the Holy Land that gave birth to you and for the whole world."

Father Douglas A. Schirmer, parochial vicar for Holy Cross Parish, shared an "outline of what the feast looked like in history," including "cool factoids." Around 621, he relat-

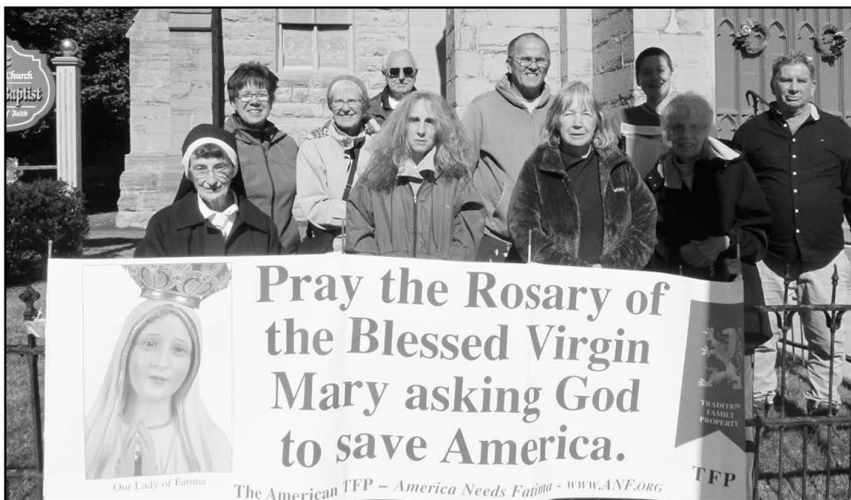


PHOTO BY MARY BETH BRACY/NORTH COUNTRY CATHOLIC

On October 12, parishioners gathered to pray the Holy Rosary in front of St. John's Church at noon in solidarity with Catholics nationwide to commemorate the anniversary of the Miracle of the Sun at Fatima which took place on October 13, 1917.

ed, the title Our Lady of Victory was used in the East by Byzantine Catholics when the Saracens encircled Constantinople. Our Lady intervened so that the Saracens couldn't enter. Again, her patronage was invoked when Catholics later fought against the Albigensians.

"Most people know the Battle of Lepanto," recalled Father Schirmer. "G. K. Chesterton wrote a beautiful long epic poem about why it was significant. The Pope formed the Holy League and banded together [in response to] the perceived threat from the Ottoman Empire. They crossed almost the entirety of North Africa in a short amount of time. They hadn't lost a naval battle.... [Among the European nations] there was in-fighting and political disputes. They were still using galleys. All of this manpower was floating down the Adriatic Sea toward Greece, manpower that couldn't get along."

The miraculous battle occurred on October

7, 1571. The Ottomans had approximately 280 fleets compared to the Holy Leagues' 200 fleets, Father Schirmer noted. Pope Pius V asked for prayers under the patronage of Our Lady, especially the recitation of the Holy Rosary in all of the churches.

"The Battle took five or six hours," Father Schirmer said. "The fleets were so tightly packed that you could have walked across them. The Holy League rescued over 15,000 Christian slaves that were owned by the Ottomans and forced into service on these warships."

The commander of the Christian forces, Don John of Austria, rallied the troops, saying "There is no Paradise for cowards," recounted Father Schirmer. They sunk 60 Turkish ships and thousands of Ottomans. At one point, the Ottomans started throwing lemons and oranges.

"The Christians won the battle to stop forces from invading Europe,"

Father Schirmer said.

The change to the title of Our Lady of the Rosary, he continued, conveyed "the emphasis of the times — Our Lady of the Rosary to build a world of peace. It is no coincidence that [this date marks] one year of fighting between Israel and Palestine. Our Lady of Victory is Our Lady of the Rosary is the Queen of Peace. When we pray the Rosary we are invoking the most powerful intercession after Jesus Christ. When we invoke Our Lady of the Rosary we are calling down to bring peace, concord, to build a world we actually want to live in."

"Spirituality involves a sense of connection with the highest being and a search for meaning in life," added Father Jude Nnadibuagha, parochial vicar at Holy Cross Parish. "In the apostolic letter Rosarium Virginis Mariae, Pope John Paul II holds that despite all prejudices, which tend to overly despise the rosary, the rosary is a healthy exercise in communion with the mys-

teries of Christ through the heart of Mary."

Father Nnadibuagha explained some of the highlights of the papal letter.

"The rosary consists of vocal and at the same time contemplative prayer of the mysteries of the Lord, composed of the luminous, joyful, sorrowful and glorious mysteries, which put us in living communion with Jesus through the heart of his mother," he said. "A unique contemplation of the face of Christ with Mary. With it the Christian people are put in the school of Mary, to be introduced to the depth of her love."

## Fatima Celebrations

On October 12, several faithful gathered in front of St. John's Church in Plattsburgh to pray the Rosary for Peace and a greater respect of human life.

On this eve which marks the Miracle of the Sun at Fatima, those assembled also recited the Litany of the Blessed Virgin Mary, an Act of Consecration to Our Lady, and other traditional prayers. This prayer service, organized by Karen Farrell, was held at noon simultaneously with other Catholics nationwide.

At Our Lady of the Adirondacks House of Prayer in Ellenburg, there was also a special commemoration of the anniversary of Fatima, led by Deacon Ken Lushia. They had time for prayer and refreshments, and watched the movie "13th Day," about the apparitions. On First Saturdays at 8 a.m., they continue to have a Communion service there, in response to Our Lady's requests. It is followed by Eucharistic Adoration, the Rosary and Divine Mercy Chaplet.



## LIVING STORIES OF OUR FAITH

## NFP: 'With the plan of God'

By Angelo & Suzzane Pietropaoli  
Diocesan NFP Directors

*Living Stories of Our Faith.* What a wonderful focus for the 2024 Bishop's Fund Appeal! Stories are as old as humanity, and Jesus Himself chose parables to help his listeners (and us!) understand something of who God is, of how much he loves us, and of what it means to love him in return. Together with all diocesan offices, the Natural Family Planning Office shares in this ongoing mission of the Church.

At the heart of it all is the truth about the human person: Created by God, created male and female *in his image*. We are body-persons, created in love, by love and for love – the Love that became Man, suffered, died and rose for us. The love between man and woman is intended by God to mirror his own love: Free, permanent, faithful, and fruitful. It is the love that wills to make a complete gift of oneself to the beloved. In a culture that rejects these truths and believes instead that "Love is love" and that every person is the author of his/her own identity, it is increasingly important to propose the truth and beauty of the Divine design.

That design includes the gift of fertility. "It is present from the beginning of love as an essential feature," writes Pope Francis, "one that cannot be denied without disfiguring that love itself. Hence, no genital act of husband and wife can refuse this meaning." (AL, 80) This truth is especially hard to understand in a world where medical technology focuses on having sex without babies – and now, babies without sex. But our faith says otherwise: God is our creator, and as creatures we are called to cooperate with his plan – not attempt to re-design it according to our preferences.

So how can we live our marriages in a way that honors both the love-giving and life-giving meaning of sexual union? We begin by recalling that God does not make mistakes: Fertility is not a disease to be "fixed," but a most precious gift from God that allows us to participate in his creation of unique new human persons! Furthermore, fertility can be readily understood and tracked so that couples can reliably plan their families as they wish, in harmony with the plan of God. Completely scientific, genuinely holistic, and entirely natural, Natural Family Planning is highly effective (99%) and free of side effects. In addition, NFP is true family planning because – in the absence of underlying organic issues – it can help couples achieve pregnancy

as well. NFP is about building a family.

The NFP Office works closely with the Family Life Office to propose the beauty of God's plan for married love to couples preparing for marriage. In Pre-Cana settings, we provide an introduction to NFP information in the context of Theology of the Body. In another common effort, we join Family Life Director Steve Tartaglia and Deacon John and Dr. Maura Fehlner in presenting "Loving Authentically." This one-day workshop examines the fallout from the sexual revolution via the personal and professional voices in the movie "Unprotected," which provides insight into our cultural chaos. Following this, Dr. Maura Fehlner illuminates happiness through the lens of Natural Law.

Each July, our office joins the efforts of the USCCB's National NFP Awareness Week. This annual event focuses on raising awareness of Natural Family Planning with posters and educational materials, which we distribute to all parishes in the diocese. We also provide ads and articles to the *North Country Catholic* at that time. As well, we deeply appreciate the significant contribution of Bishop Terry R. LaValley, who proposes these truths in his outstanding annual NFP Week letters!

Staying abreast of current NFP research and advancing methodologies remains an important focus, as is helping couples understand and choose from the varieties of NFP options. It is gratifying to be able to act as a resource for couples with health/fertility-related issues, and we continue to make referrals to Gianna Healthcare for such medical questions.

What a privilege it is to see couples discover for themselves that God's way really is good! Austin and Wendy did just that: "Like most people in our generation, we learned in high school that sex was just another bodily function. The big message was, 'Do whatever you want. Just don't get pregnant!' But we had no idea of the wonder and beauty of sex, of fertility and conception. NFP helped us understand this, and it helped us to appreciate one another in a whole new way! When we weren't ready for a baby, NFP worked perfectly. Then when we were ready to conceive, NFP also worked perfectly. For both of us, knowing I was fertile, and asking God to bless us with a baby – that was an indescribable experience!"

The NFP Office exists because of the Bishop's Fund, and we are deeply grateful for the generosity of all whose contributions make it possible. God bless you!

## MAKING SENSE OF BIOETHICS

## Catholic hospitals and youth 'gender reassignment'

In October of 2024, a group known as "Do No Harm" released the Stop the Harm Database (STHD), a searchable internet resource that comprehensively catalogs sex change treatments performed between 2019-2023 on minors in health-care facilities throughout the United States.

Do No Harm profiled children's hospitals and examined their advertised services to determine which medical interventions they provide. They also analyzed insurance claims data to determine which sex change procedures each healthcare facility had administered to minors. The data come from medical billing codes, which are submitted to insurance companies to claim payment.

The public release of the database revealed that a number of Catholic health care facilities have been involved in "gender reassignment" practices. According to the findings, Providence Health & Services, which owns 51 hospitals across seven western states, is the Catholic health system that performed the largest number of transgender interventions on children, carrying out a total of 81 transgender sur-

geries, and prescribing hormones or puberty blockers to 113 children. The National Catholic Bioethics Center, which has years of experience in working with the same types of medical billing codes, has analyzed the STHD report and issued a statement on its homepage (ncbcenter.org) addressing the report and its findings.

The best interpretation of authoritative Catholic teaching and moral principles is that a person should not cause damage to his or her healthy body (via surgery or hormones) based on a mistaken and subjective impression that he or she was "born in the wrong body." The corollary would be that Catholic health care institutions should not perform or cooperate with any gender-transitioning surgical procedures, nor provide puberty-blocking or cross-sex hormones for gender transitions.

The fact that some Catholic hospitals are involved in sex reassignment procedures reminds us of the need for continued vigilance on the part of diocesan bishops and Catholic health care leaders when it comes to Catholic health care facilities within their purview. There may also



Father Tad  
Pacholczyk, Ph.D.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 6

## Environmental Stewardship

## Mice coming indoors

Birds are not the only forms of wildlife on the move at this time of year. Many mammals also engage in a period of relocation as autumn arrives. For some, this movement is associated with a search for a breeding partner, while for others it is maturing adults attempting to find space they can claim as their own.

The best-known examples of developing juveniles exploring new places outside of their parent's territory during the autumn are the mice. Just as school starts, we begin to see signs of these familiar rodents in kitchen cabinets, on pantry shelves or on counters where crumbs have been left.

Mice are masters at finding those small, unseen cracks and holes in homes that allow them access to the warmth and food stocks available inside. As a rule, if mice can get into your home, so too can cold air. A building that is fairly air-tight should have far fewer problems with mice compared to one that has numerous places for outside air to enter.

It is never a bad idea to inspect your home to try to find those places where mice are likely to enter. The biggest problem area is with the foundation. Sealants can be used to cover any cracks and fill holes that develop along the sill where the wood attaches to the foundation. Spaces around outside faucets can be just wide enough for a juvenile mouse to squeeze through. So too are spaces that allow water and sewer lines through a wall, and electric and telecommunication wires through.

Autumn is a time for drinking cider, picking pumpkins, watching football and dealing with mice. Rather than kill them off, prevent them from entering your home. It may end up saving you money on your heating bills this winter.

By Tom Kalinowski  
St. Bernard's Parish, Saranac Lake

## Bishop's Public Schedule

**Oct. 23** – Noon – Mass at St. Mary's Cathedral

**Oct. 25** – Noon – Mass at St. Mary's Cathedral

**Oct. 26** – 9:30 a.m. – Gathering for the Formation for Ministry Candidates at St. Alphonsus-Holy Name of Jesus Parish in Tupper Lake

**Oct. 27** – 9:30 a.m. – Mass at The Catholic Community of Alexandria (St. Cyril Church) in Alexandria Bay

**Oct. 30** – 10:30 a.m. – Diocesan Finance Council Meeting at Bishop's Residence followed by Lunch

## Protecting God's Children

## The Diocese of Ogdensburg

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

## To Report Abuse

**If you have a complaint** of suspected misconduct involving diocesan clergy, religious, employees or volunteers, contact Victims Assistance Coordinator, Terrianne Yanulavich, Ph.D., LMHC, 5050 Route 374, Merrill, NY 12955; terrianneyanulavich@yahoo.com Phone: 518-358-3145, Ext. 7179 days; 518-569-0612 evenings; or Father Christopher Carrara, the Episcopal Vicar for Clergy; ccarrara@rcdony.org Phone: 315-393-2920 ext. 1340.

**If you have a complaint** of suspected sexual abuse or related misconduct by the bishops, contact the **Catholic Bishop Abuse Reporting Service** at 800-276-1562 or [www.ReportBishopAbuse.org](http://www.ReportBishopAbuse.org)

## Gender reassignment

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 5

be a need for more thoroughgoing ethical formation for employees and administrators to assist them in countering the pro-transgender ideological messaging that has recently become commonplace.

When a Catholic hospital appears in a database as having offered hormones or carried out gender reassignment surgeries, it should be noted that this may not be indicative of current policy or practice. Some Catholic hospitals, for example, have had pediatric endocrinologists on staff who had prescribed puberty blockers or cross-sex hormones, but when the fact was discovered, and meetings were arranged to review and discuss the situation, the practice came to a stop. The cessation of such practices would not typically

## Rest in Peace

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

**Oct. 23** – Rev. Discorides Forget, O.M.I., 1916

**Oct. 24** – Rev. John P. O'Rourke, 1918; Deacon Frederick J. Mader, 2018

**Oct. 25** – Rev. J. Michael Duvic, O.M.I., 1917

**Oct. 26** – Rev. J. G. Lavoie, O.M.I., 1908

**Oct. 27** – Rev. John M. Fagan, O.S.A., 1966; Msgr. George Norton Whittaker, 1971; Msgr. Gerald H. Service, 2002

**Oct. 28** – Deacon Richard Gaebel, 2008; Msgr. George M. Phillips, 2011

**Oct. 29** – Rev. James R. Scanlon, 1880; Rev. Peter F. Cody, 1888; Rev. John Canning, 1998; Deacon Robert V. Ruddy, 2013

be indicated in such databases.

The Ethical and Religious Directives for Catholic Health Care Services (ERDs) are a set of authoritative ethical guidelines prepared by the US Conference of Catholic Bishops for Catholic hospitals and health care facilities. As of 2024, there was no directive dealing explicitly with transgenderism in the ERDs. The bishops are poised to address this matter in upcoming editions of the ERDs, and have offered other definitive guidance through their March 2023 "Doctrinal Note on the Moral Limits to Technological Manipulation of the Human Body." This latter document clarifies that gender reassignment interventions are not licit, even as some Catholic hospitals may have continued to operate under the impression that definitive guidance is not yet available.

Catholic hospitals clearly must hold to a higher standard than that of their secular counterparts. Secular hospitals may promote practices that violate human dignity, by harming, mutilating, or even ending the lives of the those whose health they are supposed to be serving and protecting.

Catholic hospitals may never condone or participate in these unethical practices, whether they be vasectomies, tubal ligations, direct abortions or physician-assisted suicides, nor may they condone or participate in the range of practices coming under the heading of "gender transition." This is especially important when these

involve offering puberty blockers, cross-sex hormones, "top surgeries" and "bottom surgeries" to children and young people.

Our sex is a fixed reality of our being, given by God, not a personally-negotiable or otherwise malleable quantity, even if we may face significant struggles in accepting and fully integrating this remarkable gift.

To treat our human maleness or femaleness as "re-assignable" is to invite serious harm into the lives of those who may be dealing with genuine and deep-seated psychological challenges regarding their own "gender identity." Catholic health care facilities serve the best interests of their patients with gender confusion by directing them towards supportive psychotherapy that works to address the underlying psychiatric issues prompting them to seek gender-transition.

By holding firmly to the impermissibility of immoral procedures and safeguarding their patients' dignity in the practice of medicine, Catholic health care leaders serve the Lord's restorative designs and assure that medical practice remains an authentically healing art.

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



# Archbishop: Synod cannot 'reinvent the Catholic faith'

By Hannah Brockhaus  
Catholic News Agency

We cannot "reinvent the Catholic faith" or "teach a different Catholicism in different countries," Australian Archbishop Anthony Fisher, OP, of Sydney and a delegate at the Synod on Synodality said in an interview this week.

As the synodal assembly debates part 3 of the *Instrumentum Laboris* on "places," the bishops and laypeople are considering questions such as the future of synodality and the role and authority of national bishops' conferences, the archbishop told "EWTN News Nightly" on Oct. 15 in an interview to be broadcast Friday.

Should bishops' conferences "have the authority to teach a different Catholicism in different countries or to decide a different liturgy in different countries or different Mass for different countries? Do they bring their own local culture to questions in the area of morals, for instance?" Fisher told "EWTN News Nightly" Associate Producer Bénédicte Cederger.

"Could we, for instance, envision a Church where you have ordination of women in some countries but not in other countries, or you have same-sex marriages in some countries but not in other countries, or you have an Arian Christology in some countries and a Nicene Christology in others?" he continued. "You might guess, I think no."

One of 15 bishops on the ordinary council of the Synod of Bishops for the Synod on Synodality, Bishop Fisher, a Dominican, attended the first session of the synodal assembly in October 2023 and is back in Rome this month for the second session.

After three years of consultations at the local and universal level, at the end of this month the Catholic Church will conclude a process of discernment about how to become more synodal and more missionary.

Fisher told "EWTN News Nightly" he is "very concerned" that Catholics "hold on to the deposit of faith, the apostolic tradition, that we don't imagine, in the vanity of our age, that we are going to reinvent the Catholic faith or the Catholic Church."

"In fact, this is a tremendous treasure that we've received from generation after generation before us, all the way back to Our Lord Jesus Christ and his apostles. And we are here to transmit that faithfully to the next generations after us," he said.

The archbishop acknowledged that our understanding of the deposit of faith has developed over time and will continue to develop, and added that he thinks it is an exciting feature of the Church that "we've managed to have a great variety of cultures and different ways of praying and different ways of evangelizing, and yet we hold together as one in Christ."

"But it is the one faith, and it's important to me, coming from the peripheries of the Church in Australia, about as far away as you can be from Rome in the world," he said, that "it's the one Church, it's the one faith and we want to keep celebrating that even amidst our cultural diversity."

Fisher said one question the synod is debating is what is "the scope and what are the limits of the local and the cultural" in the universal Catholic Church.

The Synod on Synodality discussed the third and final part of the *Instrumentum Laboris*, or working document, Oct. 15-18. The last week of the gathering, which ends Oct. 27, will be dedicated to drafting and revising the final document.

In paragraph 91 of the third part, the document notes that there are structures such as parish councils, deaneries, and dioceses already regulated in canon law that "could prove to be even more suitable for giving a synodal approach a concrete form."

"These councils can become subjects of ecclesial discernment and synodal decision-making ...," the document continues. "Therefore, this is one of the most promising areas on which to act for a swift implementation of the synodal proposals and orientations, leading to changes with an effective and rapid impact."

A little further in the same part of the working document, it also says: "Episcopal conferences are fundamental instruments for creating links and sharing experiences between the Churches and for decentralizing governance and pastoral planning."

"From all that has been gathered so far during this synodal process, the following proposals emerge: (a) recognition of episcopal conferences as ecclesial subjects endowed with doctrinal authority, assuming sociocultural diversity within the framework of a multifaceted Church and favoring the appreciation of liturgical, disciplinary, theological, and spiritual expressions appropriate to different sociocultural contexts," it says in paragraph 97.

## CATHOLIC WORLD AT A GLANCE

### British veteran convicted for silent prayer near abortion clinic

A British army veteran and Christian has been found guilty of praying silently outside of an abortion clinic, with the pro-life advocate facing a near-\$12,000 fine over the verdict. The Bournemouth Magistrates' Court on Wednesday found Adam Smith-Connor guilty of silent prayer stemming from a demonstration he conducted in Bournemouth in 2022. The court "sentenced Smith-Connor to a conditional discharge and ordered him to pay prosecution costs of £9,000" (about \$11,700), Alliance Defending Freedom (ADF) International, said in a Wednesday press release. The conditional discharge stipulates that Smith-Connor "will only be sentenced if he is convicted of any future offenses in the next two years," ADF International said. Smith-Connor had approached a British Pregnancy Advisory Service abortion facility in Bournemouth, in the southwest English county of Dorset, in November 2022. He intended to pray for his unborn son, who had died in an abortion he helped procure at a similar facility more than two decades ago. He was initially fined for the prayerful demonstration before officials filed criminal charges against him. In its ruling this week, the court determined that Smith-Connor's display outside the abortion clinic amounted to "disapproval of abortion" because "at one point his head was seen slightly bowed and his hands were clasped," according to ADF International. "Today, the court has decided that certain thoughts – silent thoughts – can be illegal in the United Kingdom. That cannot be right," Smith-Connor said in the legal group's press release.

### L.A. Archdiocese announces \$1 billion abuse settlement

The Archdiocese of Los Angeles announced a massive \$880 million clergy abuse settlement on Wednesday, a record payout that Archbishop José Gomez expressed hope would "provide some measure of healing" for abuse victims. Lawyers for both victims and the archdiocese said in a joint press release that the near-\$1 billion settlement would address 1,353 childhood sexual abuse claims filed against the California archbishopric. The mediation process, conducted under retired California Judge Daniel Buckley, took roughly a year. Abuse survivors filed the claims against the archdiocese following the state's enactment of Assembly Bill 218, which offered victims a three-year window to file civil abuse claims that had otherwise gone beyond the statute of limitations. Gomez in a statement on Wednesday said the settlement — the largest ever for a U.S. diocese or archdiocese — would "provide just compensation to the survivor-victims of these past abuses." It would also allow the archdiocese "to continue to carry out our ministries to the faithful and our social programs serving the poor and vulnerable in our communities." "I am sorry for every one of these incidents, from the bottom of my heart," the prelate said. "My hope is that this settlement will provide some measure of healing for what these men and women have suffered."

## VIRTUAL EVENTS

## FRIENDSHIP GROUP MEETING

You are invited to our next Friendship Group Meeting, learn to meditate with the scriptures.

**Date:** Oct. 24

**Time:** 7 p.m.

**Place:** Zoom

**Features:** Father Jonas Verdeflor, OMV will continue to guide us in Ignatian meditation and how to pray with the Scriptures. We will discuss chapters 1 - 7 of the book "Beloved Lover" by Father Gregory Cleveland, OMV.

**Contact:** To order the book, please visit [omvusa.org](http://omvusa.org) and enter SUMMER24 at the checkout to receive 10% off.

To sign-up for the Friendship Group, receive the meeting link and discussion questions, go to <https://mailchi.mp/sophia institute/friendship-groups> Questions? Contact Mary Beth Bracy at [mbracy@sophia institute.com](mailto:mbracy@sophia institute.com)

## ADIRONDACK MOUNTAIN

## CHRISTMAS BAZAAR AND CRAFT FAIR

Lake Placid — St. Agnes School to have a Christmas Bazaar and Craft Fair.

**Date:** Dec. 7

**Time:** 9 a.m. to 2 p.m.

**Features:** Vendor space is available. A wonderful event to get you in the Spirit of Christmas.

**Contact:** For more information call 518-523-3771

## CLINTON NORTHERN FRANKLIN

## HARVEST DINNER

AuSable Forks — The Annual Knights of Columbus Harvest Dinner to be held.

**Date:** Oct. 27

**Time:** 1 p.m. to 5

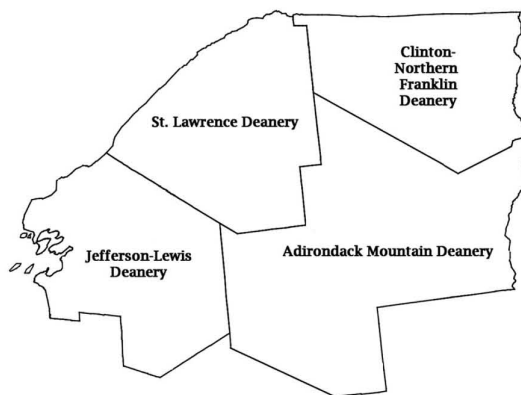
**Place:** Holy Name Parish

**Cost:** \$15

**Features:** Ham, scalloped potatoes, candied yams, glazed carrots, corn bread and dessert, Take-outs available.

## CRAFT FAIR

Brushton — St. Mary's Altar and Rosary Society to have their annual Holiday Fair.



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

Parishioners are invited to send information about activities to:

North Country Catholic, PO Box 326,  
Ogdensburg, NY 13669

e-mail [news@northcountrycatholic.org](mailto:news@northcountrycatholic.org).

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

**Date:** Nov. 2

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

**Place:** Parish Center (across from B-M Bus Garage)

**Features:** A Large selection of Vendors will be present selling gifts, decor, bake goods, home-made doughnuts, Chance Auction & much more. What a great way to get a special gift for someone. Adirondack BBQ food truck will be there for lunch.

**Contact:** Call Dianne Russel for more information 518-319-4252.

## HARVEST DINNER

Plattsburgh — Holy Cross Parish to have a harvest turkey dinner with all the trimmings.

**Date:** Nov. 3

**Time:** 11:30 a.m. to 4 p.m.

**Place:** Holy Cross Parish Center

**Cost:** Adults, \$15; Children 6-12, \$7; under 5, Free; All Take-Outs, \$15

## CRAFT FAIR

Chazy — Sacred Heart Church to have their Fabulous Fall Craft Fair.

**Date:** Nov. 9

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

**Place:** Sacred Heart Parish Center

**Features:** Great craft festival with a variety of craft vendors. Hot lunches available, baked items, silent auction. Handicapped Accessible and Free Admission.

**Contact:** For more information, contact Sharon Nephew 518-578-2666.

## HARVEST DINNER

Morrisonville — St. Alexander's Church to have their annual harvest turkey dinner with all the trimmings.

**Date:** Nov. 10

**Time:** 11:30 a.m. to 5 p.m.

**Place:** Take-out only at St.

Alexander's Church

**Cost:** \$15

**Features:** Also available at the door are raffle tickets, Basket Raffle and Bake shop.

**Contact:** Home Delivery within 10 miles, call 518-561-5039

## JEFFERSON-LEWIS

## HOLY HOUR AND DIVINE MERCY

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

**Date:** Nov. 3, Dec. 1

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

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

**Contact:** 315-348-6260

## UNTHINKABLE

Watertown — Liferight of Watertown will be sponsoring two showings of the Movie "Unthinkable"

**Date:** Oct. 23

**Time:** 5:30 p.m. and 7:30 p.m.

**Place:** Salmon Run Mall

Cinemas

**Cost:** Free

**Features:** "Unthinkable" is the shocking exposé of the abortion industry's dirtiest secrets and Abby Johnson's journey in the abortion industry.

## SPAGHETTI SUPPER

Watertown — St. Anthony's Altar and Rosary Society is sponsoring a Spaghetti Supper.

**Date:** Oct. 24

**Time:** 4 p.m. to 7

**Place:** Msgr. Sechi Hall downstairs at St. Anthony's Church

**Cost:** Adults, \$10; Child, \$8

**Features:** Take-outs available, please bring your own containers

**Contact:** For more information call the parish center at 315-782-1190

## BASKET RAFFLE

Houseville — St. Hedwig's Society will hold its Annual Theme Basket Raffles to benefit St. Hedwig's Church repairs and restoration.

**Date:** Tickets sold after the 11 a.m. Mass on Oct. 13, 20 and 27th. Drawing held Oct. 27 at 1 p.m..

**Features:** No tickets will be sold during Mass. A kielbasa luncheon and bake sale will also be featured on Oct. 27. Donations of theme baskets and baked goods are needed and appreciated.

**Contact:** Elaine 315-4865532, Lydia 315 348-7006 or Mary Ann 315-348-6260 for information or donations.

## SPAGHETTI DINNER

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

**Date:** Nov. 9

**Time:** 4 p.m. to 7

**Place:** St. Mary's Parish Center

**Cost:** Adults, \$9; Seniors, \$8;

Children 12 and under, \$5; under 5, Free

**Contact:** For more information call 315-629-4678

## RAFFLE

West Leyden — Tickets for two

separate raffles at St. Mary's Nativity are now on sale.

**Cost:** \$5 a piece or 5 for \$20, They can be purchased after the 4 p.m. Mass, by calling the Parish office at 315-348-6104, online at <https://catholicparishesofslc.weebly.com/tithely-giving.html> or from any parish council member.

**Features:** The first raffle is the church's traditional afghan raffle. Parish Council member Diane Markham created an 8 x 10 piece featuring a deer against a sunset background. The drawing for it will take place at the conclusion of the annual Chinese auction on Saturday, Nov. 2. The second raffle is the Lenten Creation Raffle. During this past Lent, West Leyden native and parish council member Jeff Nellenback built a rustic sofa table, a bulky bench, and a wooden wall quilt. These will be raffled as a first, second and third prize raffle with the drawing taking place after 4 p.m. Mass on Dec. 21.

## ST. LAWRENCE

## FALL BAZAAR

Massena — Annual Fall Bazaar to be held.

**Date:** Nov. 9

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

**Place:** St. Mary's Social Hall

**Contact:** For more information contact to parish office at 315-769-2469

## MONTHLY BRUNCH

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

**Date:** Nov. 10 (Second Sunday of each month)

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

**Place:** Father Amyot Parish Center

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

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

## EUCHARISTIC CONSECRATION

Ogdensburg — 33 DAYS TO EUCHA-

CONTINUED ON PAGE 9



# Pope Francis to release memoir in January

By Madalaine Elhabbal  
Catholic News Agency

In January 2025, Pope Francis will become the first sitting pontiff to publish an autobiographical memoir, which will be titled "Hope."

Random House Publishing announced the memoir's unprecedented global release on Wednesday. The original plan, according to the publisher, had been to release the memoir after his death. However, the pope decided to publish it in light of the upcoming 2025 Jubilee Year of Hope.

A jubilee year occurs every 25 years in the Catholic Church — although the Holy Father can declare them more often — and is a year of special grace and pilgrimage for members of the faithful.

The memoir, which the Holy Father began work on in March 2019, will be available in more than 80 countries on Jan. 14,

2025.

"The book of my life is the story of a journey of hope, a journey that I cannot separate from the journey of my family, of my people, of all God's people. In every page, in every passage, it is also the book of those who have traveled with me, of those who came before, of those who will follow," Pope Francis is quoted as saying in a Random House press release.

"An autobiography is not our own private story but rather the baggage we carry with us," the pontiff continued. "And memory is not just what we recall but what surrounds us. It doesn't speak only about what has been but about what will be. It seems like yesterday, and yet it's tomorrow. All is born to blossom in an eternal springtime. In the end, we will say only: 'I don't recall anything in which You are not there.'"

The announcement of the memoir comes after Francis'

last book, "Life: My Story Through History," was published in March of this year. In that book, the Holy Father recounted his experience of major historical events including the 1976 Argentina coup d'etat, the conclave that elected him pope, and the COVID-19 pandemic.

"Hope," according to Random House, offers a unique perspective from the pontiff and contains "a wealth of revelations and unpublished stories" in which his own life is the principal focus.

Co-written with Carlo Musso, founder of the independent Italian publishing house Libreria Pienogiorno, the memoir begins with the history of Francis' family and their emigration from Italy to Latin America. It then proceeds through his childhood, adult life, vocational story, and the whole of his papacy to the present day.

As EWTN Vice President and

Editorial Director Matthew Bunson commented earlier this year in the wake of several high-profile interviews by the pope and the release of "Life," Francis' presence in the media is not unique; his "deliberate and aggressive embrace of interview for television, radio, newspapers, and magazines" and eagerness to communicate on his own behalf is.

"Francis has forged his own path in communication and in governance," Bunson wrote in a May 20 op-ed in the National Catholic Register, CNA's sister news partner. "He is trying to shape how the world perceives him, how his reforms are received and implemented, and how permanent his program for the Church will be."

"He unquestionably stands in continuity with the modern popes in his embrace of the media," Bunson added, "but he is unprecedented in the way he goes about it."

## Around the diocese

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 8

RISTIC GLORY: 8 Week Book Study to be held.

**Date:** Nov. 11 – Dec. 30  
(Monday's)

**Time:** 9:30 a.m. or 6:30 p.m.

**Place:** Bishop Brzana Hall, St. Mary's Cathedral

**Features:** 33 Days to Eucharistic Glory is the first ever Eucharistic Consecration. This unprecedented spiritual resource presents profound truths, astonishing historical facts, powerful practical examples, a daily virtue to adopt, extraordinary prayers, and inspiring stories—all in an easy-to-follow daily format. This extraordinary spiritual guide will forever change the way you spend time with Jesus in the Eucharist.

**Contact:** For more information

Email, Text or call Deacon Bill O'Brien at billob315@gmail.com or (315) 528-0461

### DIOCESAN EVENTS

#### ANDREW DINNERS

Come and join Bishop Terry R. LaValley to learn more about being a priest. Any man of high school age and above is welcome to attend the Andrew Dinner sponsored by the Vocation Office. Parents are welcome to attend.

**Schedule:** Jefferson-Lewis Sunday, Nov. 3 St. Anthony's Sechi Hall, Watertown; St. Lawrence Sunday, Nov. 17 Brzana Hall, Ogdensburg; Clinton-Northern Franklin Sunday, Nov. 24 Emmaus

Room, Plattsburgh

**Time:** Begins at 5 p.m. followed by Holy Hour and dinner with Bishop LaValley and area priests.

**Contact:** If you are interested in attending, speak to your pastor and register at <https://www.rcdony.org/andrewdinner>.

#### PRIESTHOOD DISCERNMENT

Discernment is a call, listen with others. Are you a single Catholic man, of high school age or older, who is hearing the Lord's call to the Priesthood? You are invited to join fellow discerners and Father Howard Venette for the following gatherings.

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

**Dates:** Nov. 23; Jan. 25

**Time:** 10 a.m. to 1 p.m.

**Features:** Lunch will be provided.

**Contact:** Registration required, please go to [www.rcdony.org/priesthooddiscernment](http://www.rcdony.org/priesthooddiscernment). For more information **contact:** Father Howard Venette – [hvenette@rcdony.org](mailto:hvenette@rcdony.org)



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## SUNDAY'S SCRIPTURE

## Divine persistence

In reading this week's Gospel, a word came to mind: "persistent." The blind man in the Gospel was not perverse or doing anything wrong. But he was persistent. He yelled out to Jesus for a cure. He yelled again even when others told him to be quiet. Ultimately, Jesus calls him over and asks him what he wants. The man's simple request "Master, I want to see" is matched by Jesus' even simpler answer "Go your way. Your faith has saved you."

Then, two things happened: the man began to see, and he began to follow Jesus.

This story of the blind man is rooted in faith, but what is faith? Well, faith is certainly persistence. We frequently say that someone's faith guided his life or that faith got me through a difficult situation or

that faith has inspired me throughout my life. Then, we have the gnawing question, why do some people have faith, want faith, live on faith, but others could care less?

At Sunday Mass, we will stand and profess our faith, but certainly the articles of faith that we recite are not the same faith that allows me to face the daily struggles at home.

Simply put, faith is our response to a mystery, a response to something or someone bigger than us. Faith recognizes that there is someone beyond us, bigger and better than anyone we could imagine.

All of this sounds so very mysterious, something beyond imaginable. There are so many mysteries in life. The mystery of the universe, the mystery of others,

October 27

Thirtieth Sunday  
in Ordinary Time

READINGS

Jeremiah 31:7-9

Hebrews 5:1-6

Mark 10:46-52

and even the mystery of ourselves.

To help us understand these mysteries we have religion. Our religion tries to explain God to us, especially God as revealed in scripture, not the God we make up in our own minds. Unfortunately, so many do not see the awesome beauty of God but only see a list of doctrines.

Morality teaches us how to face the mystery of the universe, the mystery of ourselves, and the mystery of others. Morality shows us how to interact with creation, the world, others, and ourselves so that there is good harmony in the universe. Unfortunately, so many see morality as a mere list of do's and

dont's rather than a loving response to a caring God.

Prayer constitutes our way of answering God's call to us. Unfortunately, so many see prayer as a frantic attempt to reach the person in charge when you must go through a long series of recorded messages to reach the one in charge.

Our doctrines, our morality, and beliefs are all faith. Likewise, our attitude towards our doctrines, our morality, and our beliefs is likewise faith. We have been given our faith, and faith is our response to that gift.

The family is the first place where faith is shared. A child's first attitudes towards faith are shaped in the home. That faith is nurtured each week as we worship. In church and church-sponsored programs, we learn about morality, about the content of our faith as spelled out in the creed. In church, we celebrate what we believe, we re-

ceive God himself in the Eucharist. None of this can be found elsewhere. People, buildings, resources, spaces, programs are all part of the Church. Without the Church we end up making up our own beliefs and practices.

So many have given up the practice of the faith; so many have ceased practicing or perhaps practice only on occasion. We must pray for them, but we must also work at bringing them back to the regular practice of the faith. If we do not, then our church and, yes, the faith will dwindle down to nothingness. We see the signs of that lack of practice. Just look at the empty places in church. Those empty seats attest to lack of persistence.

Do something for your faith life, be persistent in your faith, so that you too can hear those words of Jesus spoken in today's gospel: "Go your way; your faith has saved you."



Msgr. Robert  
H. Aucoin

## OBITUARIES

**Brownville** — Audrey Jean (Altmire) Whitton, 95; Mass of Christian Burial Oct. 17, 2024 at Immaculate Conception Church; burial in Felts Mills Cemetery.

**Carthage** — Marie Ann (Donihee) Eighmey, 68; Funeral Services Oct. 15, 2024 at Bezanilla-McGraw Funeral Home; burial in St. Stephen's Cemetery, Croghan.

**Crown Point** — Melvina F. (Colburn) Miller, 87; Mass of Christian Burial Oct. 21, 2024 at Sacred Heart Church; burial in Sacred Heart Cemetery.

**Crown Point** — Donald C. Varmette, 89; Mass of Christian Burial Oct. 16, 2024 at Sacred

Heart Church; burial in Fairview Cemetery.

**Lake Placid** — Robert Stuart Bugbee Jr., 65; Mass of Christian Burial Oct. 19, 2024 at St. Agnes Church; burial in St. Agnes Cemetery.

**Lake Placid** — Charles Goodman Rascoe, 72; Mass of Christian Burial Oct. 23, 2024 at St. Agnes Church; burial in St. Agnes Cemetery.

**Lowville** — William U. Furr, 77; Mass of Christian Burial Oct. 17, 2024 at St. Peter's Church; burial in Lowville Rural Cemetery.

**Malone** — Alton J. Savage, 88; Mass of Christian Burial Oct. 17,

2024 at Notre Dame Church; burial in St. Joseph's Cemetery.

**Massena** — Robert J. Frederick, 92; Mass of Christian Burial Oct. 17, 2024 at St. Mary's Church; burial in Calvary Cemetery.

**Massena** — Phillip A. Martin, 76; Funeral Services Oct. 18, 2024 at Phillips Memorial Home; burial in Calvary Cemetery.

**Norfolk** — Nancy L. (Molnar) Richards, 72; Mass of Christian Burial Oct. 16, 2024 at Church of the Visitation; burial in Visitation Cemetery.

**Ogdensburg** — Kathryn M. (Mason) Prebish, 79; Private Services held; burial in St. Mary's

Cemetery.

**Plattsburgh** — Ralph Allen Darrah, 73; Funeral Services Oct. 20, 2024 at Heidrick Funeral Home.

**Plattsburgh** — Karen (Kirchoff) Hills, 85; Mass of Christian Burial Oct. 18, 2024 at Our Lady of Victory Church; burial in Saratoga National Cemetery.

**Plattsburgh** — Timothy M. Leary, 67; Mass of Christian Burial Oct. 16, 2024 at St. John's Church.

**Sackets Harbor** — Julia Rizer, 48; Mass of Christian Burial June 21, 2025 at St. Andrew's Church; burial in Lakeside Cemetery.

**Saranac Lake** — Pamela J.

(Daunais) Pion, 84; Services at a later date at St. Bernard's Church.

**Ticonderoga** — Dawn S. McVeigh Deyo, 81; Funeral Services Oct. 25, 2024 at the Wilcox & Regan Funeral Home; burial in Valley View Cemetery.

**Watertown** — Jacqueline Jane "JJ" Starling O'Brien, 91; Mass of Christian Burial Oct. 12, 2024 at Holy Family Church.

**Watertown** — Jean A. Prevost, 64; Private Services to be held.

**West Chazy** — James F. Sears, Sr., 91; Mass of Christian Burial Oct. 22, 2024 at St. Joseph's Church; burial in parish cemetery.





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

**The Society for the Propagation of the Faith  
Sister Mary Ellen Brett, SSJ, Director**

622 Washington St., Ogdensburg, NY 13669  
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## World Mission Sunday gratitude



We at the mission office would like to thank everyone who donated and prayed for the success of the World Mission Sunday collection. It is thanks to your generosity with both your money and your time that The Pontifical Mission Societies is able to provide support to mission territories in Asia, Africa, the Pacific Islands, the Middle East and parts of Latin America and Europe.

Your donations and prayers allow us to provide food, water, medicine and general and religious education to those in need. Access to these things can be live changing, as men and women learn skills to support their families, children receive medicine for treatable illnesses from which they may otherwise die, and families find support during persecution.

You will never truly know the extent to which your generosity changed the life of another.

If you were unable to make a donation this weekend and would like to make one in the future, please contact us at the email below.

*To be added to our mailing list or to learn more please feel free to contact us at amichael@rcdony.org. More information can also be found at our website [www.rcdony.org/mission](http://www.rcdony.org/mission). And as always, please remember "The Society for the Propagation of the Faith" when writing or changing your Will.*

## Called to Serve Approach the altar to assist

Come with me to the days of yesteryear, about the time the bishops of the world were called together by the pope, John XXIII, now Pope St. John XXIII, to what has been called Vatican Council II. Bishop Robert Barron in his forward to the Vatican II Collection of documents writes, "The Council was one of the most significant cultural and ecclesiastical events of the twentieth century." It would be tough to argue that observation.

Here we are 62 years since the start of the Council, and we are still interpreting those documents. What were the bishop's thinking when they suggested "full, active, conscious participation" in the liturgies of the Church for example?

Sister said to use my "schoolyard" voice when I read scripture from the middle aisle in Church during the children's Mass. I thought it was curious that I could not enter the sanctuary through the gates of the altar rail as a lector, but it was OK as an altar boy. That's how the pastor interpreted Vatican decrees back then. What

father and sister said was law. So be it.

The rail is mostly gone from our churches, and lectors enter the sanctuary to read God's Word. The reader is called the lector, by the way, not lecturer. A lector, from the Latin word, means to read. Lecture means to teach.



**Deacon  
Kevin Mastellon**

A good lector delivers the text with the proper speed, clarity, volume and comprehension and is a blessing to

the congregation and to the preacher. Parishes welcome new qualified readers.

Parishes also put out the welcome mat for women and men qualified to be Extraordinary Ministers of Holy Communion.

Around the sacristy they are called Eucharist Ministers. Technically that label is not correct. Bishops, priest, and deacons are ordinary ministers of Holy Communion by virtue of ordination.

If the congregation of those receiving communion is too large, or the bishop, priest or deacon of the Mass is unable to distribute, other ordinary ministers can, and should, assist.

If there are not enough ordinary ministers, the

celebrant can ask extraordinary ministers to assist. Those parishioners, according to the Bishop's Conference, "should receive sufficient spiritual, theological, and practical preparation to fulfill their role with knowledge and reverence. In all matters they should follow the guidance of the diocesan bishop."

Most parishes schedule extraordinary ministers. That practice is recognized but was not intended by the Council Fathers.

The important thing to note is that extraordinary ministers of Holy Communion should be qualified and approved by the diocesan bishop.

Qualified means the minister has been baptized, confirmed, receives Communion and is free to distribute.

Lectors and Extraordinary Ministers of Holy Communion are among the ministers, with a deacon, who are in the sanctuary to assist the priest celebrant at Mass.

I have not forgotten altar servers. Servers are near and dear to me. Some thoughts next week.

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



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For Vocations*

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# What does the Church teach about lying?

By Daniel Payne  
Catholic News Agency

As with any U.S. election season, the 2024 presidential election is filled with endless “fact checks” and accusations of falsehoods against various politicians. Separating lies from facts is ultimately up to the voter and lying may seem unimportant these days in the grand scheme of things, but what does the Catholic Church teach about it?

Unsurprisingly, after 20 centuries, the Church has a lot to say about lying, one of the most common phenomena of the human experience.

One of the Ten Commandments is “Thou shalt not bear false witness against thy neighbor” and the Catechism of the Catholic Church states: “Lying is to speak or act against the truth in order to lead someone into error” (No. 2483).

“By injuring man’s relation to truth and to his neighbor, a lie offends against the fundamental relation of man and of his word to the Lord,” the catechism continues.

The catechism notes in No. 2484 that a lie’s severity “is measured against the nature of the truth it deforms” and that one must consider “the circumstances, the intentions of the one who lies, and the harm suffered by its victims.” A lie that constitutes a venial sin “becomes mortal when it does grave injury to the virtues of justice and charity.”

Some of the Church’s most towering thinkers have similarly condemned lying. St. Thomas Aquinas said lying was “directly and formally opposed to the virtue of truth.”

St. Augustine, meanwhile, argued that “whoever shall think there is any sort of lie that is not sin, will deceive himself foully, while he deems himself honest as a deceiver of other men.”

There seems to be little disagreement among moral authorities as to the wrongness of lying in general. But there has been some debate as to whether or not some types of falsehoods can be justified in

certain circumstances, such as when telling some or all of the truth would bring about unjust harm against innocents.

One fabled example concerns St. Athanasius, who legend has it was rowing away from his persecutors on a river. When he encountered a group of searchers who asked if he knew where Athanasius was located, he reportedly responded: “He’s not far away!” after which he was able to flee.

Other examples involve similarly extreme circumstances, such as if a murderous villain demands to know the location of an innocent person he intends to kill.

Patrick Lee, a professor of philosophy at Franciscan University of Steubenville in Ohio, told CNA: “My view is that St. Thomas and St. Augustine and the catechism are right, that all lying is wrong.”

He acknowledged that there are “difficulties” in that prohibition, such as the famous example of someone hiding Jewish refugees in their home and having to respond to Nazis searching for them.

Still, “the rules are really, really clear in Scripture,” he argued. He cited Jesus’ sharp words in John 8 in which Christ points out that Satan “does not stand in the truth because there is no truth in him,” that in lying the devil “speaks according to his own nature,” and that he “is a liar and the father of lies.”

“It really does sound like you have an obligation to the truth,” Lee said. Satan, he argued, “is the source of lying — all lying.”

Nevertheless, there have been attempts among Catholic thinkers over the years to justify some forms of lying or dishonesty. The Jesuits many years ago popularized the practice of “mental reservation,” a controversial philosophical principle that critics have argued is tantamount to lying.

Jimmy Akin, a senior apologist at Catholic Answers, told CNA that when practicing mental reservation, “one says something that is technically true but withholds or reserves part of the truth.”

“On the basis of this partial disclosure of truth, the person to whom one is speaking may draw an incorrect conclusion, but one would not have said something technically false and thus not lied,” he said.

An example of mental reservation could be when an abusive husband demands to know where his wife is hiding. The woman’s protector might respond, “I have not seen your wife,” while thinking to himself, “...in the last 30 seconds.”

“The concept of mental reservation has been criticized on the ground that many mental reservations involve telling a truth in a deliberately misleading way and thus involve deliberate deception, making them functionally equivalent to lying,” Akin said.

Akin noted that in recent years some Catholic moral theologians “have been exploring other theories that seek to balance the importance of truth-telling with the seeming practical need to use deception in some circumstances.”

“This may be in part a response to the totalitarian regimes that arose in the 20th century and the need to deceive them in order to protect human life,” he said.

The idea of using falsehoods to save innocent victims from violent aggressors received renewed attention several years ago when Pope Francis admitted that, as a young priest in Argentina, he participated in what it could be argued were false and duplicitous actions as part of efforts to work against the dictatorship there.

Akin wrote in 2013 that the faithful should be “cautious of drawing implications from this,” in part because “people can and do make mistakes.” Additionally, at the time, Francis “was not yet pope and did not have the responsibility and the graces of that office.”

He pointed out to CNA, however, that at one point the Catechism of the Catholic Church qualified its prohibition on lying: It previously held that “to lie is to speak or act against the truth in order to lead into error someone who has the right to

know the truth.” The “right-to-know” proviso was removed in 1997.

“To my knowledge, the Holy See didn’t comment on the reason for the change,” Akin said, “but it presumably was to avoid adopting one, specific, recent theory of lying when others were still legitimate also.”

The older directive “seemed to support a theory in moral theology that would permit lying in cases where the person had no right to know the truth, such as in the famous example of lying to Nazis about the location of hidden Jewish individuals,” Akin said.

Lee said lying represents a fundamental betrayal of the person to whom you are telling the falsehood.

“You’re inviting someone to trust you that what you’re saying is in your mind,” he said. “So you, in a way, betray that trust. You ask them to believe you in the sense that what you’re saying is what you think. You’re presenting a false self and blocking community with them.”

Akin, meanwhile, pointed out that “historically, the most prominent view has been the one supported by St. Thomas Aquinas.”

“He held that lying is intrinsically wrong as a perversion of the human faculty of speech, which he saw as oriented toward communicating truthful information in a way that would preclude lying,” Akin said.

“On his view, lying is never permissible, and so one could not lie to Nazis about hiding Jews in one’s attic. One would have to do something else.”

“Examples of things a non-exception-making Thomist might do include shutting the door in the Nazis’ faces without saying anything or using a mental reservation of some kind,” he said.

“The difficulty for the Thomist,” Akin pointed out, “is finding something that would be effective (if you shut the door, the Nazis may just kick it in and search the house) and that would not involve deliberate deception (as many mental reservations do).”