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The Diocese of Ogdensburg Volume 79 Number 28

NORTH COUNTRY CATHOLIC

NOVEMBER 6, 2024

VOCATION AWARENESS WEEK



(Far left) St. André Bessette Parish in Malone recently welcomed a new parochial vicar, Father Jose John Kanyiankunel, HGN. (Above) Sister Suanne Johnson, SSJ, Father Matthew Conger, assistant vocation director, Shannon Margrey, Augustinian Academy, and Anita Soltero, Youth Ministry director, participate in a vocations panel at IHC in Watertown. (Middle left) Sister Bethany Fitzgerald welcomes Bishop Terry R. LaValley to one of the new homes of the Sisters of St. Joseph. Learn more in this week's annual Vocations Edition of the NCC. Articles about single life and an additional priest will be in next week's edition.

MAY HE REST IN PEACE



Father Clyde A. Lewis, a retired priest of the diocese, died Oct. 31 at University of Vermont Health Network Champlain Valley Physicians Hospital in Plattsburgh.

FULL STORY, PAGE 3

Pope: Confirmation is 'sacrament of witness'

By Kristina Millare
Catholic News Agency

Pope Francis addressed thousands of international pilgrims in St. Peter's Square on Oct. 30, urging them not to turn the sacrament of confirmation into their "last rites" as Catholics but to use it as "the beginning of an active participation in the Church."

Continuing his catechetical series on the Holy Spirit and the Church, the Holy Father during his Wednesday general audience said confirmation is a "gift of God" and a "milestone" that should not mark a departure from the Church for Cath-

olics.

"People say that it is the 'sacrament of goodbye' because once young people have done it they leave," he said. "They come back for weddings. That's what people say."

The pope suggested that lay faithful "who have had a personal encounter with Christ and have had some experience of the Spirit" could reignite their own faith by helping other Catholics to better prepare for confirmation, which is the sacrament of the Holy Spirit "par excellence."

Reflecting on the accounts of the confirmation of the first Christians, recorded in the Acts

of the Apostles and in St. Paul's second letter to the Corinthians, Pope Francis said it is God himself who anoints believers.

"He has put his seal upon us and given the Spirit in our hearts," he told the crowds present in St. Peter's Square. "The theme of the Holy Spirit as the royal seal with which Christ marks his sheep is at the basis of the doctrine of the indelible character conferred by this rite."

"Confirmation is for all the faithful what Pentecost was for the entire Church. It strengthens the baptismal incorporation into Christ and the Church, and the royal consecration to

the prophetic, royal, and priestly mission," he added.

During the Wednesday audience, the Holy Father expressed his desire that Catholics will "remove the ashes of habit and disengagement" to become "bearers of the flame of the Spirit" in the upcoming 2025 Jubilee Year of Hope.

Drawing attention to the solemnity of All Saints' Day, celebrated on Nov. 1, the pope reminded his listeners that those who have gone before, who now enjoy "heavenly glory" and are "by the Father's side," wish to also be in communion with us and to guide us in our journey toward heaven.

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'It doesn't work that way'

"And I'm guessing you're going to write about it in your column."

My dad said that to me on Halloween night after I recounted a story of a young child getting out of a pew, out of his family's reach and darting for the sanctuary during a recent Mass.

I told my parents that story because it was similar to a story that has become a family legend. It's told often.

I was young enough that I don't remember it. I'm guessing 3, maybe 4. I got out of the pew in which my family was seated, got

just far enough away from my parents that I couldn't easily be reached, turned around and said, "nyah, nyah, nyah! Can't catch me," and I darted to the front of the church.

**Darcy L.
Fargo**

Apparently, the whole church, including the pastor, Msgr. Clarence Devan, found my antics rather entertaining. Laughter ensued.

My parents were mortified.

As I sat later and thought about my father expecting the kid-on-the-loose story in a future column, it occurred to me: It doesn't work that

way.

Sometimes I have a fun story I'd love to tell in these pages, but it doesn't work that way. I don't always see where my fun stories relate to my faith/spiritual life. I don't drive this. The Holy Spirit is the one who drives this.

This ability to make these connections between my regular life and Jesus/my faith/some lesson from God isn't me. These ideas just drop on me or hit me like a freight train (sometimes they're kind of painful). I feel like that's at least one of the ways - probably the main way - the Holy Spirit speaks to me.

I'm truly just trying my

best to be open to the urgings of the Holy Spirit and to go where the God leads me with that.

That felt appropriate this week when we celebrate vocations. Whether it's the priesthood, consecrated life, single life, married life or the diaconate, we're called to follow the urgings of the Holy Spirit and go where God leads us.

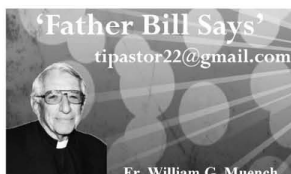
Living our vocations can be hard. Really, really hard. Every vocation has its challenges. But following God's call in our lives is following our path to him, and it's our way to true peace and joy.

That certainly seems worth writing about.

'I want to be a saint'

November is about saints. November begins with All Saints Day. I know that you are aware that we, Catholics, canonize saints. There is a Congregation of the Causes of Saints at the Vatican that determines those who is worthy of canonization. Persons are nominated for sainthood, and the congregation investigates them. There is a theologian that is declared the devil's advocate, who is to investigate if there are any problems. This congregation makes a recommendation to the pope. The pope makes the final decision. Then there is a special Mass and ceremony declaring the person's canonization.

The Catholic Church realizes that there are many, many people who are in heaven that are not canonized by the Church. Obviously, they are truly saints. So, the Church has a special feast day to remember and celebrate all the others in heaven who are not canonized - The Feast of All Saints. These are my saints. That is



why I love this feast day. I am able to celebrate my friends, the members of my family whom I truly believe are saints and are with the Lord. You can say the same for your saints. This is a feast day for all your saints. You know how worthy they are; you know that they are saints.

What a wonderful feast day, All Saints Day. I can and do remember so many special people who have been an important part of my life. I want to tell the world, everyone, about them. They did so much to enrich my life; they did so much for others. On this Feast Day of All Saints, I celebrate them. At the same time, they challenge me to become a saint myself - just like them.

Today, I want to share a story with you, a story I recently read again in a

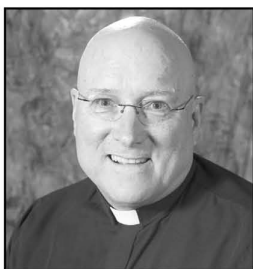
book by Thomas Merton, "The Seven Storey Mountain." I have read this book many times over the years. I first read it when I was in high school. Merton wrote this book as an autobiography of his early life, his becoming a convert to the Catholic Church, his entrance into a Trappist monastery, where he became a priest. As you well know, Thomas Merton had a powerful influence on me.

I want to share with you an incident that Merton writes about on page 260. It happens shortly after he was baptized as a Catholic and before he entered into the monastery. He is talking with his good friend, Bob Lax. I will use some of his own words in the book.

Lax asks Merton, "What do you want to be anyway?" Merton writes that he is a little confused but answers, "I don't know. I guess what I want is to be a good Catholic." Merton remembers that Lax did not accept this. Lax now says to Merton, "What

you should say, what you should say is that you want to be a saint." Merton writes that he thought, "A saint! The thought struck me a little weird." Merton says to Lax, "How do you expect me to become a saint?" Lax answers him, "By wanting to. All that is necessary to be a saint is to want to be one. Don't you believe that God will make you what he created you to be, if you will consent to let him do it? All you have to do is desire it."

I have read this story so many times. But each time I come to it in the book, I stop. I need some time again, some silence, some time to pray, time to again consider - have I truly turned to the Lord, appealed to the Lord, asked the Lord to show me the way, to guide me, to lead me to be a saint? I want to be a saint. Each All-Saints Day, I again pray to open my soul, to open myself to listen for the Lord's inspiration, his guidance. My readiness to follow Jesus. I want to be a saint.

**Father Gerald A. Cerank**

Memorial Mass planned for Fr. Cerank

A Memorial Mass for Father Gerald A. Cerank will be celebrated at 11 a.m. on Thursday, November 7, at St. Ann's Church in Moores Forks. Bishop Terry R. LaValley, Bishop of Ogdensburg, will be the principal celebrant, and Monsignor John R. Murphy will offer the homily.

Monsignor Dennis J. Duprey, VF, will receive the remains at 4 p.m. on November 6 at St. Ann's Church. Calling hours will continue until Evening Prayer at 6 p.m. Calling hours will resume at the church on Thursday morning from 9:30 until 10:30 a.m.

Burial will be at 3:30 p.m. at Immaculate Conception Cemetery in Keeseville, led by Monsignor John R. Murphy.

A Mass of Christian Burial was celebrated for Father Gerald A. Cerank on Thursday, October 24, 2024, at San Pedro Catholic Church in North Port, Florida, by Father Thomas Carzon, OMV, pastor of the parish.

Father Cerank, 81, of Sarasota, Florida, and formerly of the Diocese of Ogdensburg, died Wednesday, October 16, 2024, in Sarasota.

Father Clyde A. Lewis died Oct. 31

A Mass of Christian Burial for Father Clyde A. Lewis will be celebrated at 11 a.m. on November 4, 2024, at St. Augustine's Church in Peru. Bishop Terry R. LaValley will serve as the celebrant and Father Joseph A. Morgan, VG, will offer the homily.

Msgr. Dennis J. Duprey, VF, will preside over the Reception of the Body at 1:30 p.m. on November 3 at St. Patrick's Church in Rouses Point. Calling hours will follow until 3 p.m.

On November 4, calling hours will be held at St. Augustine's Church, Peru, from 9:30 to 10:30 a.m.

Burial will follow Mass at St. Augustine's Cemetery with a reception afterward at the parish center.

Father Lewis died Oct. 31, 2024, at Champlain Valley Physicians Hospital. He was 85.

Born April 29, 1939, in Boston, Massachusetts, he was the son of Clyde and Helen (Judge) Lewis. He grew up in Plattsburgh, attending St. John's Academy, which ignited his interest in the priesthood. He studied at Wadhams Hall in Ogdensburg, Christ the King Seminary in Olean, New York, and at the Pontifical Gregorian University in Rome.

He was ordained Dec. 16, 1964, at St. Peter's Basilica in Rome by Bishop Francis F. Reh.



*Support And Pray
For Vocations*

**Father Clyde A. Lewis**

op Francis F. Reh.

Father Lewis' first assignment was as assistant pastor in Saranac Lake. He was also an assistant pastor in Gouverneur and at St. Mary's Cathedral in Ogdensburg.

From 1966 to 1970, he served the diocese as assistant director in the youth office. He spent 10 years as associate director and director of the religious education office until 1979. He also

served as president of the New York State Council of Diocesan Directors of Religious Education and as a member of the board of directors of the National Conference of Diocesan Directors.

He became pastor of St. Augustine's in Peru and St. Patrick's in West Peru in 1979 and then Holy Family in Watertown from 1993 to 2002. In 2002, he became pastor of St. Patrick's Church in Rouses Point, an as-

signment that later grew to include St. Joseph's Church in Coopersville and St. Mary's Church in Champlain until his recent retirement.

In addition, Father Lewis served the diocese as a pro-Synodal Judge of the Marriage Tribunal, as a member of the Priests' Personnel Board and the Committee for Continuing Education of priests and as chair of the Art and Architecture Committee of the diocesan Department of Worship.

Survivors include his brother, John, and his wife, Judy; and their children, Anne Marie and David; a niece, nephew and cousins.

Father Lewis was predeceased by his parents.

An avid sports fan, Father Lewis loved baseball, basketball, football and skiing and cheered on the Boston Red Sox and Notre Dame, where his father had played football. He also collected stamps and coins.

Memorial donations may be made to the Catholic parish of your choice.

Arrangements are in the care of the Hamilton Funeral Home.

A story about Father Lewis will be in next week's edition.



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VOCATION AWARENESS WEEK

He always wanted to be a missionary

From India to Malone: Welcome

Father Jose John Kanyiankunnel, HGN

By Suzanne Pietropaoli
Staff Writer

At the end of a 27-hour flight from India, Father Jose John Kanyiankunnel arrived in Burlington, Vermont, just after midnight on September 27. A Herald of the Good News recently assigned to the Diocese of Ogdensburg, the priest was warmly welcomed by his new pastor, Father Scott R. Seymour of St. André Bessette Parish in Malone, and Monsignor Denis Duprey, dean of Clinton-Northern Franklin Deanery.

"Father Scott and Father Duprey met me at the airport," says Father Kanyiankunnel, "and they were so kind, so welcoming. I am very grateful! For me it was such a good first impression: This diocese takes care of its priests!" Father Kanyiankunnel's 7,600-mile trip to America, though, is just the latest of his many travels.

"At age 15," he explains, "I traveled 800 miles by train from my home in Kerala State to enter the Heralds of the Good News. It was my first time away from

home, from my family, and it brought me to a different climate, different food, different culture."

Though it would be a year before he saw his family again, Father Kanyiankunnel adds that "I never felt it hard."

Growing up in a devoted Catholic family that included his parents, three sisters, and three brothers, the future missionary had known quite a number of priests.

"Many priests visited our family, often on Sundays," he said. "My mother preferred to feed them well - and first! My father was a long-time parish council member; my older brother and sister taught catechism. We went every day to Mass - not always my favorite thing, though I served from age 7. While we knew many priests, I never thought of priesthood for myself. Then one day after Mass, a (religious) sister pointed to me and said to the priest: 'This one has the face of a priest.' That was the first inkling."

As the years passed, Father Kanyiankunnel

recalls, "I found myself wanting to become a missionary. At age 15, I took the exam required for higher education, then had a two-months holiday. At that point, priests we knew tried unsuccessfully to recruit me for seminary. Then one day, I met two priests I did not know. They were across the street from our house, waiting for a bus. It turned out that they were to accompany a new recruit back to their seminary. When they asked what I was doing, I told them that I wanted to be a missionary. As it turned out, they were missionaries, Heralds of the Good News!"

Naturally, the young man invited the missionaries to the family home - to his mother's delight. The newcomers informed her that her son wanted to be a priest and asked her, "What do you say?" She had no objections, but said they should ask my father. Of course, it was fine with him.

"My parents never thought I would go to seminary, but they were very happy," Father Kanyiankunnel said. "So were the parish priest and the Sister!"

Before long, Father Kanyiankunnel was on the train to the seminary, where he spent the next two years learning about prayer, priestly life and the congregation he had joined: Heralds of the Good News, a Missionary Society of Apostolic Life. The congregation's charism focuses on forming and supplying priests to wherever they are needed due to lack of local vocations.

After his first two years, Father Kanyiankunnel was sent to study philosophy - and in a brand-new language! Then came three years of theology studies.

In 2000, the young seminarian was sent to Rome, to the order's house at Rocca di Papa. He remembers that as a good opportunity to learn directly from HGN's founder.

"There should be no day without saying the Rosary, Father Jose Kaimlett liked to say," Father Kanyiankunnel recalled. "His simplicity and Marian devotion taught me a lot. I also learned from him how to be more approachable. After that year, I was sent to Genoa for four years of theological studies. I returned to India and was ordained a deacon in 2024. On January 5, 2005, I was ordained to the priesthood."

Father Kanyiankunnel's first assignment was at a retreat center that focused on the Heralds' ministry of preaching retreats. Following that "good experience," Father Kanyiankunnel remained in India to earn his master's degree in theology. Sent back to Italy in 2009, the priest served various parishes there for the next six years, and then returned to India. For those six years, Father Kanyiankunnel served as headmaster and teacher in a parish school. Then he was appointed to a house of the HGN in his home state of Kerala to promote vocations, continue the work of preaching and oversee construction.

"While there, our provincial asked me if I would go to Ogdensburg, which I was happy to do," said Father Kanyiankunnel.

Now assigned as parochial vicar at St. André Bessette parish in Malone, Father Kanyiankunnel is getting to know the area and its people.

"Father Scott has kindly shown me around," he said. "So far, I have seen Plattsburgh, Ogdensburg Lake Champlain and a little of the Adirondack mountains and lakes. This is beautiful country, good landscapes, glorious colors!"

Father Kanyiankunnel's impressions of his new parish are similarly positive.

"I am very happy to be here with Father Scott (Seymour) and such wonderful parishioners," he said. "Celebrating Masses I have met so many good people, so warm and welcoming, who want the good of priests and of the Church. I am hopeful that we can all come together to move past the heartbreak of the past, of churches and the school closing. Worshipping together, sharing faith, matters so much more than buildings and material goods."

Seeing some empty pews on Sundays does not deter Father Kanyiankunnel.

"Our mission in this parish is to bring Jesus to those who may have forgotten him for a while, to bring them the face of Christ," he said. "My training taught me to be open to any mission and ready for any surprise. Amen."

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VOCATION AWARENESS WEEK

Preparing to be permanent deacons

By Deacon Kevin Mastellon
Contributing Writer

The ordination ceremony of men to the Order of Deacon in this diocese varies.

A man in seminary preparing for the priesthood is usually ordained by the bishop in the man's home parish in the spring a year before he becomes a priest. Those men are called transitional deacons.

A man being formed for the order to function as a deacon and not the priesthood is called a permanent deacon.

Traditionally, the ordination to the permanent diaconate has occurred at St. Mary's Cathedral near the feast in October of St. Francis of Assisi, a deacon.

In 2025, the ceremony is being moved to coincide with the Feast of St. Lawrence, also a deacon and patron of the deacons of the Diocese of Ogdensburg. St. Lawrence is remembered each year on the liturgical calendar on August 10. Six men are in formation to be ordained Saturday, August 9, 2025.

A deacon is a deacon, whether he is permanent or in transition to the priesthood. He may preach the gospel, teach, baptize, lead prayers, witness marriages and conduct wake and funeral services. A permanent deacon can be married. He cannot be ordained unless he has reached the age of 35.

The men in formation now come from a variety of backgrounds, educational and life experiences and church involvement. They share a desire to serve. *North Country Catholic* asked each of the men to be ordained deacon next year

to reflect on his call to the ministry.



GORDON J. BURDO, JR.

76, married 48 years to Julie.

Education: Master's degree in liberal studies

Home parish: St. Augustine's, Peru

"One day after a Formation for Ministry class, our director, Cathy Russell, asked me to consider applying to the deacon program. The idea scared me a bit, because I considered myself to be an average Catholic at best. But after discussing it with my pastor, Father Alan, I decided to apply.

So far, it has taught me a lot about liturgy, catechesis, the Bible, homiletics and Canon Law, but mostly, I've learned about myself. It's very rewarding to discover what you were meant to do on this earth and deacon training helps with this discovery process. It is also a great way to make lasting friendships in the religious community and in your parish.

Today, the shortage of priests is a major concern for most dioceses, and Ogdensburg is no exception. Deacons can ease the effects of this shortage by sharing some of the workload. It gives one's life a purpose and it is an opportunity to show God your will-

ingness to help others."



JAMES B. KAVANAUGH

66, married 46 years to Wanda

Education: Associates Degree

Home parish: St. Mary's, Clayton

"My vocation story begins with my wife asking me to join her in registering in the Formation For Ministry class that was upcoming. I really did not think I was interested, but one of our deacons, Neil Fuller, asked me to consider it.

I did end up registering for the class and found it to be very interesting and fulfilling.

I did not think about going any further when towards the end of that two-year formation another of our deacons, Gary Frank, approached me about attending an information meeting on diaconate formation. Again, I was kind of surprised and did not see myself in the role of a deacon.

I attended the meeting and, after much praying and deliberating, thinking of all the logical reasons why I did not want to, I felt called to take this on.

Now, less than a year from ordination I find myself eager and wanting to take on the role of serving our parish and parishioners. I have

found that sometimes though it may only be a whisper, you should always be ready to listen to the Holy Spirit and see what God has in mind for you."



JAMES P. LAW

58 married 14 years to Robin

Education: Some college

Home parish: St. Bernard's, Saranac Lake

"I have always felt a need to serve God in some way since my childhood. God has always been a part of my life and upon my retirement, I discerned God's call to the diaconate. Having time to spend with family and in God's service, I am looking forward to serving Bishop LaValley, the priests and deacons of the diocese and the parishioners of my home parish in Saranac Lake"



FRANCIS E. SCZERZENIE

79, married 6 years to

Mary.

Education: Bachelor's degree some post graduate work

Home parish: St. James Major, Lake Pleasant

"I was raised in a Catholic family, but we were not religious at home. We went to Mass every Sunday and Holy Days. We ate fish on Fridays. That was pre-Vatican II. I still love to eat fish on Friday. The family Bible was somewhere on a bookshelf. Reading the Bible was for priests and nuns.

My mom was a convert from the Greek Orthodox Church, and my dad was Polish Catholic. My mom was in the Altar Rosary Society, and my dad was a member of the Knights of Columbus. My extended family included Greek Orthodox, Lutheran, Jewish and Catholic aunts and uncles. We did not discuss religion at home or with our relatives.

I have always loved the Catholic Church and desired to live the beatitudes and serve the people. As a child, I lived too far from the parish church to be an altar boy. I had a long bus ride to Catholic grammar school and high school.

The first time that I served at the altar was in college. After college, I worked for the US Army during the Vietnam War and got married. I was busy with my career, family and many hobbies.

The Catholic Church has always treated me with love. How do we repay love? St. John of the Cross wrote that to repay is to give as much as is given. I want to give back to the Church and serve the people of God in the North Country.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 6

Environmental Stewardship

Dealing with fallen leaves

As the foliage season ends, the task of raking leaves often begins. For many, a lawn covered in dead leaves is unpleasant looking. Ridding the yard of fallen foliage becomes a primary objective.

For those who recognize the importance of organic litter, autumn raking is avoided. There are ecological benefits to leaving fallen foliage on the ground until spring. Leaves insulate the soil from extreme cold. Needles and leaves may not have the same properties as a two-inch layer of foam, but they help the ground retain some of its natural heat and limit the penetrating effect of sub-zero temperatures on the soil. A carpet of dead leaves also serves as a winter retreat to bugs and other forms of life. This is why places that never get raked can support greater diversity of life compared to sites cleaned of organic debris in autumn.

Because fallen leaves are a source of organic nutrients, some homeowners run their mowers over them several times to mulch this matter. The shredded remains settle to the soil's surface and begin decomposing in the spring.

Raking should be done in the spring rather than in autumn. Also, it is best to compost collected leaves rather than bagging them for disposal to a landfill. If you have a flower garden, or an area of shrubs, you may want to spread collected leaves around the bases of these plants to help enrich the soil there.

Connecting with nature by working in the yard can be very uplifting. While recently raked lawn might look great, especially if rain has moistened the soil and sunny spells have given the grass a bright green color, remember that appearances can be deceiving. A yard that is a brownish-rust color because of a covering of dead leaves and needles is more ideal for harboring life.

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

Bishop's Public Schedule

Nov. 6 – 11 a.m. – Development Board of Advisors Meeting at Bishop's Residence followed by Lunch

Nov. 7 – 10:30 a.m. – Mass with the Students at Augustinian Academy in Carthage followed by Classroom Visits

Nov. 8 – 11 a.m. – Prayer Service with the Students at St. Bernard's School in Saranac Lake followed by Classroom Visits

1 p.m. – Prayer Service with the Students at St. Agnes School in Lake Placid followed by Classroom Visits

Nov. 11-14 – United States Conference of Catholic Bishops Plenary Assembly in Baltimore, Maryland

Rest in Peace

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

Nov. 7 – Rev. Dennis Nolan, 1911; Rev. William Ouellette, O.M.I., 1936; Msgr. William, H. Brennan, 1986; Deacon Peter J. Lawless, 2020

Nov. 8 – Rev. Patrick McGilligan, 1828

Nov. 10 – Msgr. Francis M. Kenny, 1952; Msgr. Raphael A. Hoffman, 1968

Nov. 11 – Rev. Edward O. Hervieux, 1947; Msgr. Bernard E. Christman, 2012

Nov. 12 – Deacon Garry N. Burnell, 2023

To Report Abuse

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

Deacon class

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 5

Now that my children and some of my grandchildren are adults, I have more time to study the Catholic faith and participate in the Church. I will work to make our Catholic faith more prominent at home and bring Catholic social teachings into action in our community."



GARRY H. STEVENS
66, married 45 years to Rosalie

Protecting God's Children

The Diocese of Ogdensburg has scheduled Protecting God's Children training sessions. 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. Pre-registration is encouraged at www.virtus.org. Upcoming sessions:

Nov. 8 – 1 p.m. – Diocesan Offices (Loverde Library), Ogdensburg

Education: Bachelor's degree

Home parish: St. James Church, Carthage
"My vocation story is a journey of faith, discernment and service. Throughout my life, I've felt a calling to serve others and to deepen my relationship with God. This calling has been nurtured through prayer, community support and the guidance of mentors who have helped me discern my path."

As I approach ordination to the diaconate next August, my heart is filled with gratitude and anticipation. I aspire to serve the Church and my community with humility, compassion and dedication.

Beyond ordination, I hope to continue growing in my faith, supporting others in their spiritual journeys and embodying the servant leadership that Christ exemplified. This journey is not just about fulfilling a role but living out a lifelong commitment to God's call."



NICHOLAS A. TSIBULSKY
44, married 19 years to Sarah

Education: Graduate degree in professional engineering

Home parish: St. Peter's, Massena

"My vocation story started several years ago back in the early 90s when I was an altar serv-

er. I really loved serving and being near the altar. I eventually had to give serving up as I got older, went off to college, and got started in my career and secular life.

But I was always drawn back to church and unknowingly towards a vocation. For a number of years my response, to God's call was 'I hear you, but I'm not listening.'

It wasn't until my wife went through RCIA at Sacred Heart in Massena, did I start to listen. Attempting to help answer questions she had, prompted me to dive deeper into my faith, and eventually work up enough courage to discuss a possible vocation to the diaconate with my pastor.

As I've gone through formation, I've become involved in our parish's RCIA program, as well as several ministries. As I look forward towards ordination and beyond, I look forward to continuing this work, and gladly accepting what God desires of me as I serve our brothers and sisters. I'm glad I took those steps several years ago to listen to what God wanted for me and encourage all to do the same."

Called to be a deacon

The formation program for diaconate begins with the Formation For Ministry program, a two-year program leading to being commissioned as a lay minister. If a man feels called to become a deacon, there are an additional four years of study and formation leading to ordination.

Start by visiting with your pastor. He can lead you through the discernment process. For more information, you can contact the director of Deacon Formation, Deacon Lee Trudeau at ltrudeau@rcdony.org

VOCATION AWARENESS WEEK

Seminarians seek to follow God's call

By Darcy Fargo
Editor

Michael Lennox and Keegan Robinson, both seminarians for the Diocese of Ogdensburg, are trying to determine where God is calling them as they pursue seminary students and, God willing, the priesthood.

MICHAEL LENNOX

Though the attention he gave to the urging varied over the years, seminarian Michael Lennox, 25, of Adams, said he first felt a calling to the priesthood years ago.

"I first felt the pull in high school," he said. "It was during Mass and during Consecration. I got this feeling that I should be a priest. I didn't do much with it at the time. I just let it fall to the wayside."

After high school, he attended college at Jefferson Community College and later SUNY Potsdam. It was during college that he really started considering his vocation.

"I was having doubts about what I was called to do," Lennox said. "Was I called to be married, not married? I was questioning what I really want. Big life questions were coming up. I was battling with that. Talking to friends and telling them my woes, one said, 'if you never actually give seminary a shot, you might never know for sure if you're called to be a priest.'"

While he decided he "had to go" to seminary during his junior year of college, he continued his studies, earning a bachelor's degree in history and philosophy.

"I thought I had to

**Michael Lennox**

go (to seminary), but I didn't want to worry about it yet," Lennox said. "Senior year, I was talking to (seminarian) Kevin McCullough, who was in Potsdam at the time. I told him I was thinking about applying. That was in January or February. He told me I had to contact the Vocations office immediately and that it took a while to get through the process."

Lennox is now studying at Mount St. Mary Seminary in Emmitsburg, Maryland.

"Seminary is the wildest rollercoaster of my life," he said. "It's the highest of the highs and lowest of the lows in the same week. It's so hard. At the same time, it's so much grace and so many beautiful moments. There are so many blessings throughout."

Lennox says he enjoys the fraternity at the Mount.

"It's good being with people who understand what it's like and who are walking the same path," he said.

The seminarian says it's ultimately love that attracts him to the priesthood.

"It's love of God, love of the Church, love of God's people - I want to serve them," Lennox

**Keegan Robinson**

said. "Of course, the sacraments are wonderful. And being with the people of God and helping bring them closer to Him has been a crazy gift. Even small moments I've had in my pastoral assignments or in certain ministries - it's always a gift to serve people and bring them closer to the Lord."

Lennox, who enjoys hunting, cycling and hiking in his free time, has been raised by his mother and stepfather, Margaret and Charles Briggs, and his father, Steven, who is deceased.

KEEGAN ROBINSON

After years of being somewhat of a seeker, Keegan Robinson, 24, of Lisbon, said his family had protestant ties growing up, but he found his home in the Catholic Church.

"I wasn't raised in a Catholic home," he said. "I did some investigating into other churches. I wasn't sure if I was a believer in my late teen years. Then I went off to college. At one point, I was involved in the Mormon church for a couple of years. Then I had a conversion to the Catholic faith."

His conversion started as an intellectual process, studying the Church and her teach-

ings.

"I also had it like hit me in the heart, the Catholic Church, the tradition, the sacraments, the Blessed Virgin. Especially the Blessed Virgin Mary played a significant role in my conversion. Growing up Protestant and then later in the Mormon church, I didn't have that sense of devotion to Mary. It's great having a relationship with Mary. The motherly bond with her has been very significant in my life. The Eucharist was another profound doctrine of the Church that led me to faith. Most Protestant denominations have communion, but they do so sparingly, and they see it as a symbol and not the actual Body and Blood of Jesus. The Eucharist was a game changer for me."

Not long after he converted to Catholicism, Robinson began discerning his vocation.

"I was at a point where I wanted to share what I've learned to others," he said. "I want to bring about God's mercy and love to people who need it most. Throughout my life, I've had mental health struggles - I've had some pretty low moments in my life. I feel like God is using me to bring healing to people who need it through the lens of the Catholic Church."

At first, Robinson thought he may be called to religious life in an order, but that began to change as he discerned

"I became more and more attracted to parish life and being out in the world," said Robinson, whose mother lives in Lowville and father lives in Lisbon. "Espe-

cially here, in the Diocese of Ogdensburg. It's rural. The majority of the priests have a really special bond. I feel like this diocese is a special diocese."

Robinson, who initially planned to pursue a career in the legal profession, studied for a few years at SUNY Potsdam and SUNY Canton. He currently studies at Mount St. Mary Seminary in Emmitsburg, Maryland, where he is in a propaedeutic year, a non-academic year that focuses on prayer and spiritual and human development.

"It's about how am I going to grow I holiness to become a good Christian man," he said. "How am I praying daily? How am I treating my fellow neighbors? How am I growing in certain virtues?"

Robinson said he looks forward to the academic portion of his formation.

"Right now, this sets the foundation for future rigorous academics," he said. "The instruction at Rother House (where he is housed with others in their propaedeutic year) is very good. We have skilled instructors, and they present dynamic material. Everything sets the stage for major seminary."

Robinson said he encourages any man who is considering the priesthood to trust God and follow his calling.

"If God's in the picture, there's no reason to fear where he'll lead you," he said. "It's all about trust - trusting God will use you as an instrument for his greater honor and glory through whatever vocation that may be."

VOCATION AWARENESS WEEK

Sisters of St. Joseph serve “dear neighbor”

By Keith Benman

Contributing Writer

The Sisters of St. Joseph of Carondelet are in new homes in the Watertown area but still carrying out a mission that is centuries old.

“Our mission was never to a building, it was to the people,” said Sister Bernadette Marie Collins, SSJ. “To serve the people of God, it doesn’t matter what building we live in.”

The motherhouse for the Sisters of St. Joseph was put up for sale in the spring. The 18 sisters living there moved out over the summer.

They are now living in four locations in and around the city.

The expansive motherhouse and grounds at 1425 Washington Street once housed more than 100 sisters. But with just 18 left, it was no longer economically feasible to maintain the residence.

The new homes for the sisters are the Congregation Center on Arsenal Street (former rectory at St. Anthony’s Church); a house on Ives Street Road; and another house in Calcium. Five sisters are now residents at Samaritan Summit Village. The facility offers both assisted living and skilled nursing care.

Summit Village offers what might be the best example of how the move allows sisters to continue to serve God’s people in both old ways and new.

Upon the sisters’ arrival, residents at Summit Village began asking them for prayers and other pastoral care, said Sister Shirley Anne Brown, SSJ, the order’s local major superior. The sisters were only too happy to oblige.

“They are making new friends and spreading the word of God among the

people,” she said.

The order’s tradition of being “among the people” goes back a long way. The Sisters of St. Joseph were founded in 1650 in France. They were charged with being “in union with the dear neighbor.” That meant going out to neighborhoods to serve during the day, a radical concept as most orders of nuns were cloistered at the time. They also shunned religious habits in order to be one with those they served.

“Our founder told them to ‘circle the city with love,’” said Sister Bernadette.

The sisters are also able to continue their mission of prayer in their new homes.

Congregation Center and each of the purchased houses have their own chapels. The sisters still gather at each home for evening prayer and go on retreat together once a month in contemplation of the Blessed Sacrament. For Mass they go to local parish churches, which was the routine back when they were mainly teachers in the local schools.

At Summit Village a community room is used for Mass, and the sisters in assisted living are in the same suite.

Sister Bernadette admits it was hard to give up the chapel at the motherhouse. It was full of historical significance for the order, including stained glass, a marble altar, and woodwork fashioned in the 1800s. But everyone realized with their dwindling numbers it wasn’t feasible to keep the facility operating.

The sisters in Watertown have seen many changes like the above during their years of service, Sister Bernadette

noted. But their devotion to their religious vocation has remained steadfast.

Sister Bernadette entered the order 62 years ago after graduating high school. She served as principal at several Catholic schools including 14 years at the former Our Lady of the Sacred Heart School, in Watertown. Today, she is a pastoral

associate and director of religious education at St. Mary’s Cathedral, in Ogdensburg. Among her other varied pastoral duties are bringing Holy Eucharist to people in their homes. She also serves as the diocese’s episcopal delegate for religious orders.

Nationally, the Sisters of St. Joseph have only

a handful of novitiates currently. But if another young woman came to her asking about entering the order, Sister Bernadette knows just what her response would be.

“I’d tell her, ‘Go for it,’” she said. “A religious vocation is a tremendous gift, and I wouldn’t trade it for anything. I would do it again in a heartbeat.”

National Vocation Awareness Week

November 3-9, 2024



Priesthood



Renewal of Marriage Vows

Come, follow ME, and I will make you fishers of men.”
(Matthew 4:19)



Vocations Office
Diocese of
Ogdensburg



Consecrated Religious Life

VOCATION AWARENESS WEEK

‘Living Stories of Our Faith’

By Sister Mary Eamon Lyng
Diocesan Vocations Coordinator

“Find your delight in the Lord who will give you your heart’s desire” – Psalm 37:4.

As I reflect on this year’s Bishop’s Fund theme: “Living Stories of Our Faith,” is this not the story of so many women and men who strive daily to live their Catholic Faith? The struggles and challenges that are faced today in a world that offers worldly pleasures are passing fancies that can be tempting to hang onto. God does know the desires of the heart and offers us His gifts that will last.

We can find experiences of so many contemporary saints that have shared their stories of faith, expressing their struggles and graces of their relationship with God. These saints, like us, strived to live the faith, the special relationship with Christ, day by day. One saint that we are all familiar with is St. Mother Teresa of Calcutta. She said, “We cannot all do great things, but we can do small things with great love.” She knew the struggles of the “poorest of the poor.” She was able to spread love, care, and support. She knew what it meant to bring light to a broken and dark world. St. Mother Teresa was able to find great delight in the Lord because the Lord was her heart’s desire.

Looking within our own Diocese of Ogdensburg “Living Stories of Faith,” we look to our first Bishop Edgar P. Wadhams, whose motto was “Prepare A Safe Journey” from the hymn “Ave Maris Stella,” recalls his great devotion to Mary, the Mother of



PHOTO FROM THE SISTERS OF ST. JOSEPH FACEBOOK PAGE

Bishop Terry R. LaValley blesses a chapel at one of the new residences of the Sisters of St. Joseph. Sister Shirley Anne Brown, major superior for the community, and Sister M. Gregory Munger join the bishop in prayer.

God. He did as he went from place to place in the newly established diocese to begin new parishes, bringing religious women to teach the faith in parishes and schools, and journeyed to meet his people in good health and in poor health. He credited “the work of the priests of the diocese... the religious men... the sisters... the laity... all full of devotion, all working together for the poor, for the church, in union and charity with each other and in unity with the Vicar of Christ. That’s what makes things grow!”

This living story of faith continues in our diocese, especially among our seminarians who are discerning their vocation to priesthood. Michelet Boncoeur, seminarian at Mount Saint Mary’s Seminary, Emmitsburg, Maryland, shares his living story of faith. His favorite Scripture quote from Matthew 9:35-38: “The harvest is abundant, but the laborers are few. Therefore, ask the Lord of the harvest to send out workers into His harvest.” Boncoeur shared, “this passage encourages me to offer and

surrender myself to the Lord while working in communion with other laborers.”

God created us to be in relationship with one another. This partnership invites all of us, men and women, to offer themselves to work in the Lord’s Garden. He invites all and excludes no one. Each has a place in the Lord’s Garden. It is up to us to make it fruitful.

Michael Lennox, a seminarian at Mount Saint Mary’s, Emmitsburg, Maryland, shared and “Whenever anything disagreeable or displeasing happens to you, remember Christ crucified and be silent.” This helps him live his faith. Lennox said this quote “speaks to me because I tend to suffer quite poorly most of the time and inflate my problems to seem quite larger than they truly are. The quote helps me remain grounded in the truth that my sufferings are quite minor in the grand scheme of things.”

The Vocation Office has been supported through the generous contributions of the Bishop’s Fund to support the formation and education of our seminarians and provide workshops to our schools and catechetical centers to promote the culture of vocations. The Vocation Office encourages pastors to form Parish Vocation Committees to promote the awareness of vocations to families

and parishioners. Many of the parishes have Eucharistic Holy Hours, recitation of the Rosary, and Prayer of the Faithful Intercessions to pray for vocations. The Living Stories of the Faith continue to be told and shared among the faithful people of the Diocese of Ogdensburg. It is by supporting the Bishop’s Fund that the people of the North Country make these living stories come alive and shared for ages to come.

As we celebrate “National Vocation Awareness Week, let us continue to pray for more vocations to the priesthood, consecrated life, and sacramental married life. The harvest is plentiful. Many are called. Let us pray for more women and men to answer the call to be workers in the vineyard, “saints in the making,” so that the Living Stories of the Faith continue to be told, shared, and passed on to a world in need of Jesus Christ’s message of love and mercy.

Are you being CALLED... to give your



as a Consecrated Religious... a “Bride” of Christ?

CONTACT: Sister M. Gregory, SSJ, Vocation Director
Sisters of St. Joseph
866 Arsenal Street, Watertown, NY 13601

EMAIL: smgssj@yahoo.com - **PHONE:** 315.782.3460



CATHOLIC WORLD AT A GLANCE

Vatican publishes report on safeguarding efforts worldwide

The Vatican issued its first annual report Tuesday assessing the Catholic Church's policies and procedures to prevent abuse in dioceses worldwide from Africa to Oceania. The 50-page report by the Pontifical Commission for the Protection of Minors is the first in an annual series that aims to provide analysis of safeguarding measures in dioceses, Catholic organizations, and religious orders globally over the next five to six years. Released on Oct. 29, the inaugural report found that "a significant part of Central and South America, Africa, and Asia have inadequate dedicated resources" available for safeguarding efforts. The pontifical commission also identified a "persistent concern regarding the transparency in the Roman Curia's procedures and juridical processes," noting that this lack of transparency is likely to "foment distrust among the faithful, especially the victim/survivor community." It pointed to the Dicastery for the Doctrine of the Faith (DDF) in particular for its slow processing of cases and lengthy canonical proceedings, which it said can be a "source of re-traumatization for victims." The Pontifical Commission for the Protection of Minors has been a part of the DDF since Pope Francis' reform of the Roman Curia in 2022, yet the commission has frequently underlined its independence from the dicastery.

Diocese bans 'All are Welcome,' other hymns from Masses

The Diocese of Jefferson City, Missouri, will implement a formal ban this week on the singing of certain contemporary hymns at Mass because of doctrinal inaccuracies in their lyrics as well as a blanket ban on music by three Catholic composers who have been accused of misconduct. Jefferson City appears to be the first U.S. diocese to formally align its music practices with guidelines issued by the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB) in 2020, which laid out a list of problematic hymns, faulting many of them for falling short in their presentation of the Church's teaching on the Eucharist. In a decree dated Oct. 24, Bishop W. Shawn McKnight listed a dozen commonly used but "doctrinally problematic" Catholic songs that will be "absolutely forbidden" in the diocese after Nov. 1. Most of the hymns were written in the 1980s or 1990s, with the oldest dating to the 1960s. The list includes such songs as "All Are Welcome" by Marty Haugen; "God Has Chosen Me" by Bernadette Farrell; "Led By the Spirit" by Bob Hurd; and "Table of Plenty" by Dan Schutte. The decree also forbids the use of any music composed by David Haas, Cesaréo Gabarain, and Ed Conlin due to credible accusations of abuse against them. According to the Catholic Missourian, McKnight issued the decree following a "thorough process of study and review" by the Diocesan Liturgical Commission as well as consultation with the diocesan Presbyteral Council, made up of priests who are ministering throughout the diocese. McKnight said his goal is to encourage "full, conscious, and active participation in the liturgy" through a common musical repertoire.

Questions, answers about the synod document

Catholic News Agency

On Oct. 26, Pope Francis made the unprecedented decision to accept the final document from the Synod on Synodality as authoritative Church teaching.

The 52-page text includes a theological reflection on the nature of synodality, which it says is the fulfillment of the reforms of Vatican II, as well as proposals for how to apply synodality to relationships, structures, and processes within the Catholic Church.

The end goal is to make the Church more effective at evangelization by making it more participatory and inclusive.

Here are answers to questions about the Synod on Synodality's final document:

How did Pope Francis make this document magisterial?

Pope Francis immediately approved the final document after synod members voted on it. According to reforms he made in 2018, the Synod on Synodality's final text is therefore part of his ordinary magisterium.

This decision is a break from previous practice, which usually sees the pope use a synod's final document as a basis for drafting his own apostolic exhortation on the topic (think *Amoris Laetitia* after the 2015 Synod on the Family). The fact that a synod body whose membership was 27% non-bishops just produced a magisterial text will certainly leave theologians and canonists with much to talk about.

How does the document relate to Vatican II?

The document says that the Synod on Synodality was the product of "putting into practice what the council taught about the Church as mystery and the Church as people of God."

Therefore, the document says, the synodal process "constitutes an authentic further act of the reception" of Vatican II, "thus reinvigorating its prophetic force for today's world."

What does the final report say about the role of women in the Church (including so-called "deaconesses")?

The final text says that women "continue to encounter obstacles" in living out their "charisms, vocation, and roles" in the Church.

The synod calls for women to be accepted into any role currently allowed by canon law, including leadership roles in the Church.

Regarding the question of "women's

access to diaconal ministry," the text says the question "remains open" and that "discernment needs to continue." A separate Vatican study group is currently considering that topic, with its final report expected in June 2025.

What does the text say about "decentralization?"

The document calls for episcopal conferences to play a greater role in enculturating the faith in their local context and asks for clarification about their current level of doctrinal authority. However, it does emphasize that bishops' conferences cannot override a local bishop's authority nor "risk either the unity or the catholicity of the Church."

The document also calls for more plenary and provincial councils, and for the Vatican to accept these bodies' conclusions more speedily.

Does the text mention LGBTQ inclusion?

While it does condemn the exclusion of others because of "their marital situation, identity, or sexuality," the text doesn't use the term "LGBTQ."

What does the document say about changes in Church decision-making?

The final document calls for a "synodal" reform of canon law, including removing the formula that consultative bodies have "merely a consultative" vote. It calls for the greater participation of lay people in "decision-making processes" and to do so through new synodal structures and institutions.

Church authorities, the document states, may not ignore conclusions reached by consultative, participatory bodies.

In what ways might the Church change after the Synod on Synodality?

Depending on how it's implemented, the synod's final document could impact everything from how bishops are selected to how governance decisions are made in parishes, dioceses, and the Vatican, with a greater emphasis on widespread consultation. It could also create new synodal bodies, like continental assemblies and a council of Eastern Catholic leaders to advise the pope. Which paragraphs received the most pushback?

Over 27% of delegates voted against continuing to explore the possibility of women deacons.

Thirteen percent voted against the paragraph emphasizing the significance of episcopal conferences, which also appears to bind a bishop to decisions made by his conference.

VIRTUAL EVENTS

FRIENDSHIP GROUP MEETING

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

Date: Nov. 21

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 8-14 of the book "Beloved Lover" by Father Gregory Cleveland, OMV and reflect on the beauty of God's love in the Song of Songs.

Contact: To order the book, please visit 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/sophiainstitute/friendship-groups> Questions? Contact Mary Beth Bracy at mbracy@sophiainstitute.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

CRAFT FAIR

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

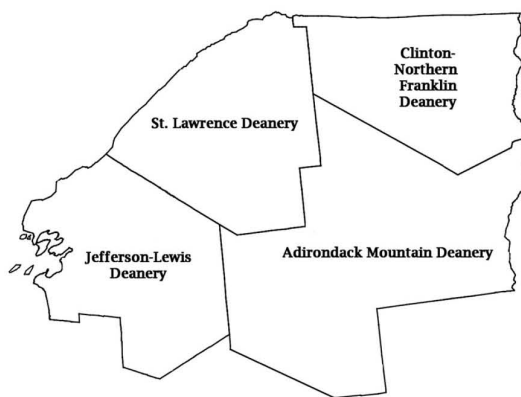
Date: Nov. 9

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.



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

Parishioners are invited to send information about activities to:

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

e-mail news@northcountrycatholic.org.

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

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

COMPASSIONATE COMPANIONS

Ticonderoga - Southern Adirondack Compassionate Companions, a faith-based Age-friendly Communities Initiative, is recruiting new volunteers and has scheduled a Companion Volunteer Training Program.

Date: Nov. 14

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

Features: We are inviting new volunteers from Ticonderoga, Schroon Lake, Crown Point, and surrounding communities in southern Essex County to pioneer this new Age-friendly Communities Initiative based on the successful model of Mercy Care for the Adirondacks in the Tri-Lakes region of the Adirondacks. Compassionate Companions

volunteers will help their elder neighbors stay connected to their communities and help make their lives easier and happier. Volunteers of all faiths or no faith are encouraged to participate. Lunch will be provided.

Contact: Registration is required. To register for the training, please contact Pam Arzberger, Southern Adirondack Compassionate Companions Program Coordinator, or visit route74catholics.org. For more information, email Pam at compassionatecare83@gmail.com or call 518-547-0782.

CRAFT FAIR

Morrisonville — St. Alexander's Church to have a craft fair.

Date: Nov. 30

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

Contact: For more information call Tina Packwood at 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

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

PANCAKE BREAKFAST

Constableville — St. Mary's Youth Group with the Faith Formation classes will be hosting a sit down pancake breakfast.

Date: Nov. 10

Time: 8 a.m. to noon

Place: St. Mary's Church hall

Cost: Adults, \$9; Children under 12, \$4.50

Menu: Pancakes, scrambled eggs, ham and home fries

Features: Profits that will be used for St. Mary's Faith Formation and family activities such as Karate & Family Fun Nights. These activities are open to all families.

Contact: If you have questions, please call our Parish Office at 315-348-6104

SPAGHETTI DINNER

Lyons Falls — There will be a drive-thru spaghetti dinner held.

Date: Nov. 12

Time: 4:30 p.m. to 6

Place: St. John's Church

Cost: \$12

Menu: Spaghetti with Dino's Meat Market sausage and meatballs, homemade sauce, tossed salad, Italian bread and dessert.

Features: The dinner proceeds will go to the Salvation Army Red Kettle Fund to start out the upcoming Christmas season.

The proceeds stay in Southern Lewis County to help many needy families.

Contact: To pre-order, call 315-348-8945 or 315-348-8577.

CHRISTMAS COMMUNITY TABLE

Clayton — Stop into St. Mary's Parish Center for the Christmas

Community Table.

Date: Dec. 7

Time: 10:30 a.m. to 1 p.m.

Cost: \$10 at the door

Features: Enjoy over 50 delicious dishes — everything from appetizers to desserts. Part of the Christmas in Clayton weekend with many venues in the village hosting events. Also stay for the Christmas parade Saturday at 6 p.m.

Contact: For more information, contact St. Mary's parish office at 315-686-3398.

PANCAKE BREAKFAST

Carthage — Pancake Breakfast to be held in support of Augustinian Academy, sponsored by the Carthage K of C Father John Cosmic #291 and Ave Maria Circle.

Date: Dec. 8

Time: 8 a.m. to noon

Place: St. James Community Room

Cost: Adults, \$9; Seniors, \$7; Children under 10, \$4; Family of 4, \$27

Menu: Scrambled Eggs, Pancakes, French Toast, Ham, Sausage, Baked Goods, Juice, and Coffee

Contact: For more information call 315-493-3224

ST. LAWRENCE

HARVEST DINNER

Gouverneur — St. James School to have a Harvest Dinner.

Date: Nov. 7

Time: 4:30 p.m. until sold out

Cost: \$15

Menu: Turkey dinner with all the fixings, mashed potatoes, dressing, vegetable, roll and dessert. Eat in or take out.

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

CONTINUED ON PAGE 12

Sister Paula Marie Skalski died Oct. 30

A Mass of Christian Burial for Sister Paula Marie Skalski, CSSF, 84, a Felician Sister for 66 years, was celebrated on Oct. 30, 2025, at Immaculate Heart of Mary Convent. Burial followed in St. Stanislaus Cemetery, Cheektowaga, New York.

Sister Paula Marie died in Immaculate Heart of Mary Convent, Buffalo, NY, on October 26, 2024.

The former Gertrude Skalski was born on October 1, 1940, in Buffalo, and was a member of Holy Name of Jesus Parish. She entered the Buffalo Province of the Felician Sisters on June 22, 1958, and professed perpetual vows on August 16, 1966. After graduating from Immaculate Heart of Mary Academy, Buffalo, NY, she earned a Bachelor of Science in Education from Medaille (Mount St. Joseph) College and a Master of Arts from St. Joseph College, West

Hartford, Connecticut.

Sister Paula Marie began her ministry as a Felician Sister in 1961 at St. Josaphat School, Cheektowaga, where she taught first grade. An excellent primary grade teacher, she served in the Diocese of Buffalo as an educator for 20 years and in the Diocese of Ogdensburg for two years at St. Mary's in Canton. Her passion for teaching younger children and the desire to the build strong readers, led her to Cardinal Stritch College, Milwaukee, Wisconsin, where she added the title of Reading Specialist to her teaching credentials. While teaching in the pre-kindergarten program at Our Lady of Black Rock School, Buffalo, Sister Paula Marie initiated an extended-day program to accommodate the needs of the students and their parents. The program offered important foundational skills for



Sister Paula Marie Skalski

its young students.

Sister Paula Marie also had a missionary heart, eager to share in the Congregation's mission to "cooperate with Christ in the spiritual renewal of the world." From 1970-75, she ministered at Mary Immaculate School, Sao Paulo, Brazil, as a primary grade teacher and instructor of English to students of multi-lingual backgrounds. Upon her return to the United States, she taught for

one year at Villa Maria Learning Center and was involved in parish ministry at Holy Cross Parish. Once again, called to serve in Brazil, Sister Paula returned to Sao Paulo to work in parish ministry at Our Lady Help of Christians Church from 1979-84. Then, Sister Paula was involved in parish ministry at Holy Cross, St. John Kanty and St. Valentine parishes in Buffalo, NY, and Holy Spirit Parish, North Collins, NY.

Ready to offer compassionate service wherever she was needed, Sister Paula ministered in many ways to the sisters at Immaculate Heart of Mary Convent, Buffalo. She was part of the pastoral care team, a chauffeur and receptionist, but above all else, in the spirit of Blessed Mary Angela, she sought to be "Eucharist...Sister...and Servant" to her sisters and all those she

encountered. Even as her own health began to diminish, Sister Paula remained present to her sisters. When she celebrated her Golden Jubilee of religious life, Sister Paula Marie gratefully acknowledged "the goodness and blessings that have been realized in my life as a member of the Felician Congregation."

Sister Paula Marie survived by her sisters, Constance (William) Waible, Barbara (the late Captain John "Jake") O'Keefe, Phyllis (Dr. Robert) Sterin; her brothers, George (Nadege), Dr. James (Marian), and Michael Skalski; and many nieces and nephews. She was predeceased by her parents, Stephen and Cornelia (Brodnick) Skalski, and her brother, Stephen Skalski.

Memorials may be made to Felician Sisters, 600 Doat Street Cheektowaga, New York 14211.

Around the diocese

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 11

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 Gonthier 315-212-5166.

8 WEEK BOOK STUDY

Ogdensburg - 33 DAYS TO EUCHARISTIC 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

FALL FESTIVAL

Waddington - St. Mary's to have a Fall Festival.

Date: Nov. 23

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

Place: St. Mary's Parish Center

Features: The Festival includes crafters and vendors, a silent auction, and bake sale. Lunch will be available. Free Admission.

Contact: For more information contact the parish at waddingtonsec@rcdony.org.

DIOCESAN EVENTS

ANDREW DINNERS

Come and join Bishop 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: The program begins at 5 p.m. followed by Holy Hour and dinner with Bishop Terry R. LaValley, and area pastors and 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. It is a journey of faith,

traveling with companions. 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; 2025: Jan. 25, March 22, May 3,

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

Features: Lunch will be provided at each of the church locations.

Contact: Registration required, please go to www.rcdony.org/priesthooddiscernment. For more information **contact:** Father Howard Venette - hvenette@rcdony.org

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Word on Fire to publish Pope Benedict's works

By Matt McDonald
Catholic News Agency

Bishop Robert Barron's media company Word on Fire plans to publish in English more than two dozen volumes of the collected works of Joseph Ratzinger from before and during the time he served as Pope Benedict XVI, including titles currently not available except in his native German.

The project, which will include books and academic articles, will require a small army of translators and editors under the direction of Tracey Rowland, an Australian theologian who has written two books about the late pope's thought and who won the Ratzinger Prize for theology in 2020.

The series will appeal to "all Catholics around the world who are interested in uniting faith and reason," Rowland told the *National Catholic Register*, CNA's sister news partner.

She also identified priests,

seminarians, and theology students as a likely audience along with Protestants who are interested in the late pope's analysis of Scripture and Christology.

Rowland touted Ratzinger's approachable style, dealing with sophisticated subjects in simple language.

"He is easy to read for people who are not professional theologians," Rowland said. "I think he always wrote with a pastoral objective in mind. He was always writing to help people understand something."

Organizers of the project envision 25 volumes appearing in English at a Bishop Robert Barron's media company Word on Fire plans to publish in English more than two dozen volumes of the collected works of Joseph Ratzinger from before and during the time he served as Pope Benedict XVI, including titles only available in German.

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"He is easy to read for people who are not professional theologians," Rowland said. "I think he always wrote with a pastoral objective in mind. He was always writing to help people under-

stand something."

Organizers of the project envision 25 volumes appearing in English at a hoped-for rate of about two per year over a dozen years or more, starting in late 2025 with the "Jesus of Nazareth" trilogy.

During his lifetime, Ratzinger worked with Ignatius Press, which published English translations of some of his books, including "Introduction to Christianity" and "The Spirit of the Liturgy," among many others.

Mark Brumley, editor of Ignatius Press, told the Register that Ignatius is sublicensing the rights to Ratzinger's titles to Word on Fire to produce the new English-language version of the "Collected Works of Joseph Ratzinger" and that Ignatius is happy to be working with Barron's publishing arm.

Jason Paone, editor of Word on Fire Academic, told the Register the new series will make more of the late pontiff's work accessible to a larger audience.

CALLED TO SERVE

Deacons are not priests

It happens more often than it should and certainly more often than we like. A parishioner is leaving church and says to the deacon, "Have a good weekend, father." Or another might tell a deacon how much he or she enjoyed the homily. "Nice sermon, father."

For a year or two after becoming a deacon, the tendency is to correct the well-intentioned speaker, "I'm deacon, not father." You can only hear "what-ever" in reply so many times before you just smile, nod, and say thank you.

Deacons are not priests. At least 98 percent of the deacons you will encounter are permanently ordained to serve the Church and the people of God as a deacon.

Some men will be ordained deacon and then,

about a year later, be ordained a priest. A priest will always remain a deacon, but as a priest, the man now acts in the person of Christ to forgive sins and change bread and wine into the body, blood, soul, and divinity of Jesus.

We need men to consider either vocation, priest or deacon.

Most folks only see a deacon assisting at Mass. I can understand why they sometimes think of the deacon as a glorified, grown-up altar server who helps the priest.

In fact, the deacon proclaims the Gospel at Mass and may preach. He presides at baptisms, can witness marriages, and conducts wake and funeral services. The deacon teaches about the faith and leads prayers.

The deacon also helps

the pastor with home visitations, taking Communion to shut-ins, hospital and nursing home visits, conducting services in local jails or serving as chaplains in prisons, working in shelters and food pantries, manning food lines in soup kitchens and the list goes on.

Those are all things a priest can do as well. The deacon usually works without compensation. Unlike a priest, a permanent deacon can be married. Most of the deacons of this diocese are married or are now widowers. A deacon promises at ordination that he will remain celibate if his spouse predeceases him. Unlike a seminarian, a man in for-

mation to become a permanent deacon cannot be ordained unless he has reached the age of 35. The age limitation is set to make sure the man is well grounded in his family and professional lives.



Deacon
Kevin Mastellon

The deacon is formed, prepared, over four years. In our diocese, the Formation for Ministry Program for lay ministers is a pre-requisite. Then, through a combination of on-line courses and on-campus work at Wadhams Hall, the deacon journeys as aspirant, candidate

and in post-ordination study. "In each path, the four dimensions or specific areas in formation - human, spiritual, intellectual, and pastoral - are

always essential."

My wife, Kathy, often asks candidate's wives, "did you ever think on your wedding day you were marrying a future deacon? God knew."

I think it is fair to say most of us deacons never thought about this ministry when we were young either, but we responded to God's call. Is God speaking to you, too?

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



SUNDAY'S SCRIPTURE

The value of generosity

Waiting in line is not one of my strong suits. On the other hand, I love going to Dunkin Donuts, but going there usually means waiting in line. As I pull into the parking lot, the major decision: "Do I wait in line in my car or do I wait in line in the store."

One day, waiting in line in my car, I was particularly annoyed because the car in front of me was taking too much time, according to me, for the transaction. The car finally moved on. Now, it's my turn to pick up my toasted multigrain bagel with plain cream cheese and large coffee cream only, all with a senior discount. When it came time to pay with my perks card, the clerk told me that the person in the car in front of me had paid for my order. When asked, the clerk couldn't tell me who it was, but that the guy does it every day.

Now, obviously that story illustrates my stupidity and made me change my attitude, es-

pecially rash judging someone else. But the story also illustrates not only generosity but random generosity. Likewise in today's readings we have two stories about two generous women.

The widow in the first reading gives the prophet the last of the food available in her home. To her surprise she and her son, even though they feed the prophet, seem to have enough food to last for a year until they were able to get back on their feet.

In a similar way, the widow in the Gospel, the source of the expression, the "widow's mite," does not consider her own needs first, but wants to make sure that she contributes to the temple because she, too, like the widow in the first reading wanted to take care of the needs of others before taking care of her own needs.

There is an essential element to generosity. We cannot practice generosity until we have

November 10

Thirty-second Sunday
in Ordinary Time

READINGS

1 Kings 17:10-16

Hebrews 9:24-28

Mark 12:38-44

a grateful heart. If we cannot express gratitude for what we have and if we do not recognize that we have been given so much, we will then mistakenly believe that we have a right to what we have.

We can speak about three kinds of givers. The grudge giver says: "I hate to give." This person gives reluctantly and with a certain amount of resentment.

The duty giver says: "I ought to give." Even though, like the reluctant, they do give with a sense of true obligation.

The thanks giver says: "I want to give." They give freely and from the heart.

Obviously, the widows in the readings today could count themselves among the third group. They did not give under constraint, nor out of obligation, but they gave from the heart.

Hearing these stories and these definitions, we can easily question our generosity. You see, sometimes when we give grudgingly of our time, talent, or money, we feel that we will be criticized or penalized in some way if we do not give. Again, if we give dutifully, we give out of obligation rather than out of a sense of generosity.

We should always give out of a sense of thanks because we have been blessed in so many ways. November gives us many opportunities to give thanks. For example, this week we will celebrate Veterans' Day, a day to commemorate those who gave their lives, their greatest gift,

so that we might have freedom and life. We celebrate the civic feast of Thanksgiving in just a few weeks, another opportunity for us to respond generously to those in need.

The women in today's readings had no surplus, but they gave from their need. Our giving from our need will not change the world overnight, but giving will change us. Changing ourselves is one step in changing the world.

If you are not sure about the value of generosity, especially God's generosity to us, remember these words which I recently read:

We ask for a flower; He gives us a bouquet

We ask for a drop of water; He gives us lakes and rivers

We ask for a blade of grass; He gives us a lawn

We ask for something to eat; He gives us his own body and blood.



Msgr. Robert
H. Aucoin

A GROWING VOICE

Consider the small things

"It all could've been avoided."

Most of us have heard of the space shuttle accident in 1986, when the Challenger tragically exploded, claiming the lives of all seven crew members.

Later, it was discovered that a single faulty O-ring caused this catastrophe.

Such a small oversight led to an event so horrific and devastat-

ing. Anger is a similar force in our lives.



Erin
Savarie

If we ignore or leave unresolved small frustrations within ourselves, they can often build and eventually explode. It might start as a disagreement with a classmate or co-worker, or a minor irritation

left unchecked. Over time, however, the tension can grow into

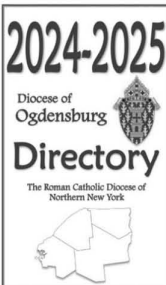
something much larger and harder to control.

God encourages us to address the sources of our anger rather than allowing them to fester.

Through prayer, He helps us identify and resolve the "O-rings" in our hearts - the small but significant things that, if left unattended, can lead to damaging outcomes.

Just imagine what could have been avoided if that one faulty O-ring had been discovered sooner.

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Sister Mary Ellen Brett, SSJ, Director

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mbrett@rcdony.org

Mission month in China

Prayers for peace in the world, donations for the mission, works of charity, pilgrimages, concerts and theatrical performances and sporting events – the participation of many Chinese Catholic communities in initiatives and moments of community during World Missionary Month in October, which the Church dedicates to mission throughout the world was spontaneous and creative.

On October 27, 26 priests, nuns and lay people from the Tangshan community took part in the “Tangshan Marathon 2024.” In the midst of 20,000 participants from 13 countries around the world, the Catholic marathon runners of Tangshan wanted to offer a simple public witness of the faith that unites them and drives them to proclaim the Gospel with perseverance and endurance, sharing with everyone the difficulties, joys and encounters along the way, as happens in a marathon.

In the parish of Hushan (diocese of Ningbo), a play inspired by biblical themes was performed on World Mission Sunday, also to celebrate 30 years of Bible courses in the parish and the Year of Sacred Scripture in the diocese. On October 19, a concert centered on the devotion to Our Lady was organized at the Cathedral of the Diocese of Zhengding (Shijiazhuang) to encourage the baptized to follow in Our Lady’s footsteps and to become missionaries.

On the last weekend of World Mission Month, the youth group of the Shanghai Cathedral made a pilgrimage to Suzhou Cathedral, where they prayed with the local community. The youth of the parish of Lucheng (Diocese of Wenzhou) also made a pilgrimage along the Way of Our Lady of the Rosary, meeting a group of Dominican sisters at the Shrine in Fujian Province to pray the Rosary together.

Fifteen Chinese bishops took part in the spiritual retreat on the theme of “Synodality and Encounter with the Lord” held at the National Seminary in Beijing during the World Mission Month.

In October, priestly ordinations were celebrated in the dioceses of Taizhou and Chifeng (Inner Mongolia), while nuns made their final vows in the diocese of Wuhan (Hubei province).

Throughout the World Mission Month, prayers for peace were held in the churches, often combined with the daily recitation of the Rosary. The communities also accepted Pope Francis’ invitation to participate in the day of prayer and fasting for peace, asking for the gift of peace and an end to conflicts in the world.

Article from FIDES missionary news service of the Pontifical Mission Societies.

OBITUARIES

Alexandria Bay – Caroline C. Wells, 81; Funeral Services Nov. 2, 2024 at the Costello Funeral Home.

Brownville – Rosetta A. (Jock) DeCilles, 95; Mass of Christian Burial Oct. 31, 2024 at Immaculate Conception Church; burial in Dexter Cemetery.

Brownville – Paul R. Shannon, 68; Mass of Christian Burial Oct. 30, 2024 at Immaculate Conception Church; burial in St. Francis Xavier Cemetery, Redwood.

Canton – Linda Nicholas Lahey Fay, 78; Mass of Christian Burial Nov. 1, 2024 at St. Mary’s Church.

Crown Point – Helen T. (Kolysko) Harpp, 96; Mass of Christian Burial Nov. 11, 2024 at Sacred Heart Church.

Lowville – Ray Edward Rhubart, 84; Mass of Christian Burial Nov. 4, 2024 at St. Peter’s Church; burial in Brantingham Cemetery.

Malone – Shirley (Brooks) LaVine, 94; Funeral Services Nov. 6, 2024 at Bruso-Desnoyers Funeral Home; burial in Notre Dame Cemetery.

Massena – B. Anthony “Tony” Diagostino, 80; Mass of Christian Burial Oct. 29, 2024 at Church of the Sacred Heart; burial in Calvary Cemetery.

Massena – Tommaso “Thomas” Gramuglia, 74; Mass of Christian Burial Nov. 2, 2024 at Sacred Heart Church; burial in Fort Lee, NJ.

Massena – Rose M. Nicola, 93; Mass of Christian Burial Nov. 2, 2024 at St. Mary’s Church; burial in Calvary Cemetery.

Ogdensburg – Thomas William McPherson, 75; Funeral Services Nov. 4, 2024 at Frary Funeral Home.

Ogdensburg – Carlton A. Washburn, 95; Funeral Services Oct. 28, 2024 at Frary Funeral Home; burial in Notre Dame Cemetery.

Ogdensburg – Michael Lucien Wood, 71; Services to be held at a later date.

Peru – Scott Thomas Osika, 45; Mass of Christian Burial Oct. 30, 2024 at St. Augustine’s Church; burial in parish cemetery.

Plattsburgh – Lita Chauvin Beachard, 98; Mass of Christian Burial Nov. 2, 2024 at St. John’s Church; burial in St. Peter’s Cemetery.

Plattsburgh – Roy A. Garrant, 90; Mass of Christian Burial Oct. 31, 2024 at St. Peter’s Church; burial in St. Peter’s Cemetery.

Potsdam – Linda Jean (Walsh) Kelley, 77; Mass of Christian Burial Nov. 9, 2024 at St. Mary’s Church.

Redwood – Ronald A. Amyot, 80; Mass of Christian Burial Oct. 31, 2024 at St. Francis Xavier Church; burial in St. Francis Xavier Cemetery.

Star Lake – James “JJ” L. Rice, Jr., 47; Mass of Christian Burial Nov. 2, 2024 at St. Hubert’s Church; burial in St. Michael’s Cemetery, Fine.

Watertown – Michael G. Powers, 80; Mass of Christian Burial Nov. 2, 2024 at St. Patrick’s Church; burial in Glenwood Cemetery.

West Chazy – Audrey L. (Trombly) Traynor, 100; Mass of Christian Burial Nov. 4, 2024 at St. Joseph’s Church; burial in parish cemetery.

West Leyden – Philip Fiorenza, 95; Funeral Services Nov. 2, 2024 at Trainor Funeral Home, Inc. (Boonville); burial in Ava Cemetery.



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vocations to the priesthood,
permanent diaconate, and
consecrated religious life in
our diocese.

“It was not you who chose me, but I
who chose you”

John 15:16

BISHOP'S FUND APPEAL

Good Samaritan Fund: Don't be a 'passer-by'

By Father Kevin J. O'Brien
Moderator of the Curia

Great insight on the Good Samaritan parable in the Gospel of St. Luke comes from Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. In his speech on April 3, 1968, he pondered why the priest and the Levite did not stop to help the man who lay victim on the side of the road. Perhaps they had someplace important to be. Maybe they were afraid. The question they asked, according to Dr. King, was "If I help this man, what will happen to me?" The Good

Samaritan, on the other hand, asked, "If I do not help this man, what will happen to him?"

The Good Samaritan Fund enables us to focus on those who are in need and help those who are unfortunate, disadvantaged, suffering, hungry or distressed. Through the Good Samaritan Fund, we as a family of faith, find the heart and the courage to ask, "if we do not help them, what will happen to them".

The assistance provided by the Good Samaritan Fund is given at a time that the recipient

is facing difficult circumstances, including the loss of employment, sickness, damage or destruction of property, a fire at their home, or the loss of a loved one. Such circumstances can result in a sense of helplessness, despair or fear. By stopping to assist them, we can give them a new vision of life. We can restore hope by the grace of God. We can support them and tell them they are not alone. We care about what will happen to them. In addition to the financial assistance we provide, we offer prayers, support, hope, and compassion to those in need.

Several of the thank you notes received by Bishop LaValley over the past year express gratitude for the fact that he heard them in their time of need and responded with compassion. One woman wrote, "your response in my time of need restored my hope and helped me more than I can say."

The Good Samaritan Fund is supported every year by the annual Bishop's Fund Appeal. Your generous support this year will help Bishop Terry R. LaValley and the Church in the North Country respond with generosity and love to those laying on the side of the road needing help. Rather than passing by, with your support we can make a difference.

Your support of the Bishop's Fund Appeal will help Bishop LaValley to stop and take the time to help those in need. If we don't stop to help them, what will happen to them?

Former Canton teacher died Oct. 9

A Mass of Christian Burial for Sister Joseph Marie Marczak, CSSF, was celebrated Oct. 22 in Immaculate Heart of Mary Convent Chapel, Cheektowaga, New York.

Sister Joseph Marie was a teacher who became a counselor for the elderly and bereaved. She died Oct. 19, 2025, in Immaculate Heart of Mary Convent, Cheektowaga, after a chronic illness. She was 77.

Born Joanne M. Marczak in Buffalo, she was the daughter of Joseph L., and Natalie A. Wojcinski Marczak and was one of three children. Her father was a member of Meat Cutters Local 34.

She grew up in Cheektowaga, played accordion as a girl and attended St. Casimir School. A 1965 graduate of Bishop Colton High School, she entered the Felician Sisters Congregation in 1966 and professed perpetual vows on Aug. 11, 1974.

Sister Joseph Marie earned an associate degree from Villa Maria College in 1971, then completed a bachelor's degree from Rosary Hill College, now Daemen University, and a master's degree from Canisius College.

She was a teacher for 22 years, beginning in 1968 at Our Lady of the Blessed Sacrament School in Depew. She taught in several elementary schools, then was a social studies teacher at Notre Dame



Sister Joseph Marie Marczak

High School in Batavia and Villa Maria Academy, where she also led classes in music and art. In the high schools, she served as a chorus and handbell choir director. She taught at St. Mary's School, Canton, from 1971-74.

She went on to receive a certificate in gerontology from Canisius College and a certificate as a bereavement facilitator from the American Academy of Bereavement.

She began 24 years of service as a counselor and companion for the elderly, sick, dying and bereaved in 1993 as a pastoral associate at St. Josaphat Parish in Cheektowaga and later at Ascension Parish in North Tonawanda and St. Gabriel Parish in Elma.

She then served as a receptionist at Christ the King Seminary in East Aurora while caring for her ailing mother, who died in 2020.

Survivors include a brother, Charles; a sister, Diane Ventresca; nieces and a nephew.

God has done
great things
for us!

As recipients of God's bountiful
gifts, we are called to:

Receive

those gifts gratefully,

Cultivate

those gifts responsibly,

Share

those gifts in justice and love,

*And return them with increase
to the Lord*

Stewardship Weekend
November 9 & 10

Please contact your local parish
to learn how you can share your
gifts of Time, Talent & Treasure.

