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The Diocese of Ogdensburg Volume 79 Number 34

NORTH COUNTRY CATHOLIC

DECEMBER 25, 2024



Henry and Keira Lieber, children of Mike and Jean Lieber from Constableville, ride on the St. Mary's Catholic Church, Constableville Youth Group float featuring Mary, Joseph and baby Jesus in a stable, at the Boonville Chamber of Commerce Christmas parade.

No NCC next week

To allow our staff and contributors the opportunity to celebrate Christmas, there will be no *North Country Catholic* next week (edition dated Jan. 1). We will resume normal publishing the week of Jan. 8. All of us at the *North Country Catholic* wish you a very blessed and merry Christmas.

YEAR IN REVIEW



Father Bryan Stitt, pastor of St. Mary's in Canton, and Mary Beth Bracy, consecrated virgin from our diocese, meet with a friend during the National Eucharistic Congress held in Indianapolis, Indiana in July. The Congress was one of the highlights of 2024 included in this week's annual year in review edition.

FULL STORY, PAGE 3

Pope Francis begins series on hope for jubilee

By Kristina Millare
Catholic News Agency

At his general audience, Pope Francis this week introduced a new catechesis series, titled "Jesus Christ Our Hope," that he said will continue for the entirety of the 2025 Jubilee Year.

Starting the series with reflections on Jesus' genealogy and childhood, the Holy Father told his listeners that the "infancy Gospels" of St. Matthew and St. Luke, recorded in the

New Testament, are in fact told through the perspectives of Jesus' parents on earth, the Blessed Virgin Mary and St. Joseph.

"We are presented with an infant child and adolescent Jesus submissive to his parents and, at the same time, aware that he is wholly devoted to the Father and his kingdom," he said.

"The difference between the two evangelists is that while Luke recounts the events through the eyes of Mary, Matthew does so through those of

Joseph, insisting on such an unprecedented paternity."

The Holy Father also drew attention to the women mentioned in Jesus' ancestry and of their importance in salvation history.

"The first four women are united not by the fact of being sinners, as is sometimes said, but by being foreigners to the people of Israel," he said. "What Matthew brings out is that, as Benedict XVI wrote, 'through them the world of the Gentiles enters ... into the

genealogy of Jesus — his mission toward Jews and pagans is made visible.'"

Before imparting his paternal blessings, the Holy Father asked international pilgrims to spiritually prepare for Christmas.

"Christmas is now here and I'd like to think that there is a Nativity scene in your homes," he said. "This important element of our spirituality and culture is a wonderful, wonderful way to remember Jesus, who came to dwell among us."

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What did you say?

"It has a hype vibe. No cap. It's a total mood."

That's slang for, roughly, "The experience had high energy. I'm not kidding. I'm feeling it."

I love slang. I remember thoroughly enjoying studying slang and the evolution of language when I was an English major in college.

Now, however, I enjoy it for an entirely different purpose.

I love slang because of the reactions I get from my son, Jake, when I use it.

"That's cringe," he may say, adding to my slang

slinging, or "just stop." He may give me an eye roll.

Why is it "cringe" when I use language he hears every day from his friends or classmates? I think it's because it sounds unnatural coming from me. To him, I'm old. I am, in fact, old enough to be his mother. I also have a normal style of speaking. My normal speech doesn't involve phrases like, "no cap."

I thought of that as my son and I journeyed all around Texas on a football-centered vacation last week.

I don't think we went a

single day of the vacation without someone telling us to "have a blessed day" or to "have a blessed Christmas," or without someone saying, "God bless!" to us or someone nearby.

To us, it was noticeable. We don't hear people talk about God or blessings in, for example, a sports card shop around here. That happened in Texas. To people around us there, people mostly from Texas or who lived there for some time, I'm pretty sure that's normal speech. No one there seemed to notice. Hearing about God in Texas is no different than Jake hearing phrases like, "that's lit" (which means, "that's awesome")

in school.

Jake and I found ourselves doing it. "God bless," we'd say walking away from small-talk conversations with business owners or people around us.

I'm hoping we can keep God in our common speech. It was nice to have Him there with us.

It seems fitting to talk about God being present in conversations in this week we celebrate him being physically present in the world, as we celebrate the birth of Christ.

From all of us at the North Country Catholic, we pray you have a blessed Christmas and new year.

"No cap."

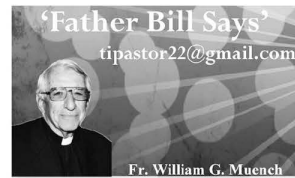
**Darcy L. Fargo**

Celebrating new life

Happy Christmas to you all! Christmas - our time to celebrate the birth of Our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. We celebrate in faith God's great love for us. God sends to our world His Son, Jesus, to live among us, to die for us, and to bring new life to us through His Resurrection.

The Birth of Jesus transformed our world. We are a blessed people; Jesus, the Son of God, is one of us. We are sacred people. Our life truly matters. Jesus was one of us.

Birthdays are such important celebrations for us all. You have probably noticed that our date of birth is used for identification by our doctors and pharmacists. I can remember as a child anticipating my birthday each year, and then I would want to celebrate my birthday for at least a week more. Even now on my birthday, I want to just shout to everyone



that "this is my birthday." I would like to tell everyone that the world became a better place on this day! I was born on this day.

I know I have told you before how blessed I was to be invited by Susan and Paul to be with them when their second child was born. His name is Will. For me, that was a very special day. I am certain that it was the most exciting day of my life. I was truly blessed to be there that day, now almost 28 years ago.

On Christmas, as I remember Jesus, I also remember being at Will's birth, as he began his life journey. Holding that newborn child helps me realize that Our Savior

came into this world in that same humble way.

People often ask me what prayers I said at Will's birth, but I must admit I was so touched by all that was happening that evening that I didn't say any prayers. I guess my prayer was the silent joy of being there.

I remember so well the love in that room that evening - the love of this young mother supported by her loving husband, the love of bringing a new child into their family. I want to tell you that I also realized the love that was evident in the care of the doctor and nurses.

I want to share with you, as I probably have before, something else I learned that evening. I was already aware - I learned it from many mothers - of the pain of childbirth, the pain mothers experience as they bring new life to this world of ours. That evening, I realized in a powerful way that my

own mother had accepted this pain of birth to bring me into this world. I pray often in gratitude to and for my mother. She is with me every day, in each episode of my life, she made everything I have done possible by the suffering she endured at my birth.

So, each Christmas as I pray at the Christmas creche, I remember again the gratitude I owe to my God and my mother. I thank Jesus for coming to our world, for giving us the confidence to walk in his way for all of this I celebrate with joy. I pray that our Lord Jesus continues to make our world what it should be. Lord, transform this world, make my world what it should be. Bring peace to all of us. Please remove violence from the hearts of us all. I found such happiness being at Will's birth; I believe the Lord Jesus whose birth we celebrate is our source of peace and joy.

FOLLOW ME

'Heirs in hope of eternal life'

"When the kindness and generous love of God our Savior appeared...He saved us through the bath of rebirth and renewal by the Holy Spirit, whom He richly poured out on us through Jesus Christ our Savior, so that we might... become heirs in hope of eternal life." (Titus 3:4-7)

Dear Sisters and Brothers in Christ:

At our Mass at dawn on Christmas Day, we will hear St. Paul speak to Titus about the gift of God's boundless mercy bringing us the hope of eternal life through Jesus. By virtue of our rebirth in Baptism, we have become "heirs in hope of eternal life."

Pope Francis has declared 2025 the Jubilee Year of Hope. What better way to prepare for the Holy Year than by making this Sacred Season a prime time to being especially attentive to all the hints of hope that are on display for you and me to embrace as we meet the challenges of the day. The Holy Father reminds us that, as followers of Jesus and members of His Body, the Church, we are called to be pilgrims of hope and builders of peace. How much our world this Christmas needs the truth of the Gospel and the witness of hope-filled disciples.

No celebration throughout the year has so many songs dedicated to it as Christmas. Yes, this is a time for singing because ours is the God of all hopefulness. As St. John of the Cross would tell us, where there was little love, God put love. That is, through the birth of Jesus Christ, Love Incarnate has redeemed the world with His merciful love. Is there a greater cause for hope and celebration?

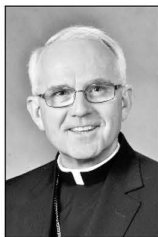
The person who has hope lives differently. Let's make a determined effort to see the signs of hope of eternal life all around us. Hope-filled, let's be a source of encouragement and blessed hope for those carrying heavy burdens at this time of the year. Christ-led and Christ-fed, we are hope-filled!

May the Christ Child bring you and your family the Gift of Love, the Blessing of Hope and the Promise of Peace. A blessed Christmas and hope-filled New Year!

Faithfully yours in Christ,

+ Terry R. LaValley

Most Reverend
Terry R. LaValley
Bishop of Ogdensburg



Bishop Terry
R. LaValley

Looking back at 2024

Editor's Note: As we prepare for a new year, we take this opportunity to look back at some of the highlights and notable moments of 2024.

Jan. 1 - Seven paintings created by artist Shana Kaminski are hung below the choir loft at Sacred Heart Church in Massena. Four of the paintings depict patron saints of Massena-area Catholic churches, and the other three depict Catholics who ministered in the region and attained sainthood.

Jan. 19 - March for Life is held in Washington, DC, and college students from the diocese participated.

Jan. 28 - Three statues that had been damaged in an act of vandalism are blessed and returned to their home at St. Mary's in Canton, the

culmination of a process of "restorative justice" and reconciliation involving the perpetrators of the vandalism.

Feb. 8 - Father Nor-mand C. Côté, a retired priest of the diocese, dies at age 95.

Feb. 18 - The Rite of Election and Call to Conversion is held, bringing individuals who were entering the Catholic Church at the Easter Vigil to St. Mary's Cathedral, Ogdensburg.

Feb. 24 - Linda Gifford receives the Bishop Edgar P. Wadhams Award from Bishop Terry R. LaValley. Gifford provided "compassionate care as a nursing assistant" at the Sisters of St. Joseph Motherhouse for 35 years.

Feb. 26 - Sister Bernadette Marie Lalonde, GNSH, dies at age 84.

Feb. 28 - Sister Patri-

cia A. Murtagh, RSM, dies at age 95.

March 2 - Sister Mary Christine Morkovsky, CDP, Ph.D., dies at age 92.

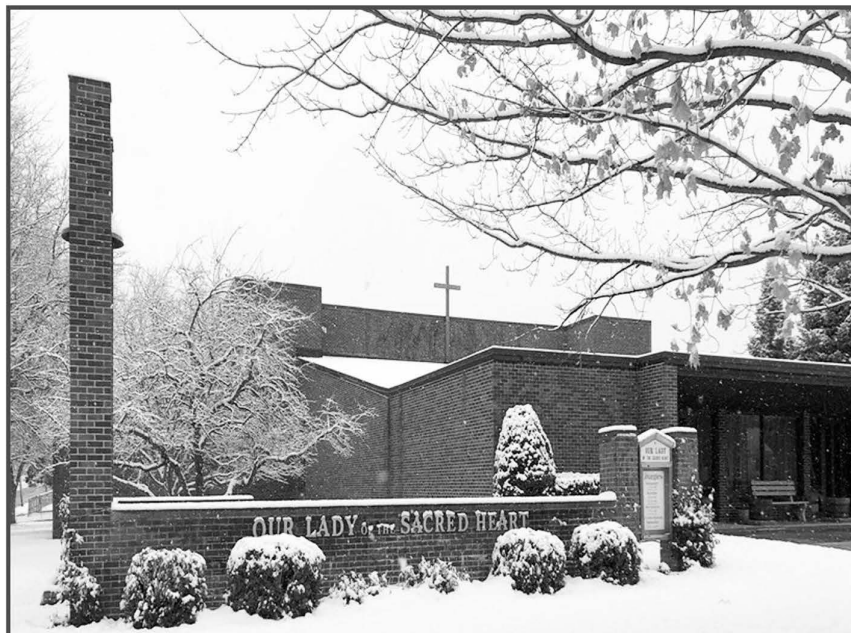
March 3 - Sisters of St. Joseph, collaborating with other local churches, community organizations and schools, present two panel discussions on human trafficking - one in Watertown and one in Plattsburgh.

March 4 - Cub Scout Pack 8061, affiliated with St. André Bes-sette Parish in Malone, celebrates 75 years of scouting and 68 years of service from Leader Pat Sauther.

March 6 - Bishop Terry R. LaValley announces that the 2023 Bishop's Fund Appeal reached its goal of \$1.3 million.

March 8 - The Catho-

CONTINUED ON PAGE 4



May you have a Blessed Christmas Season and a Happy New Year
From
Our Lady of the Sacred Heart Church and Calvary Cemetery Association
320 W. Lynde St
Watertown, NY 13601

Year in review

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 3

lic Community of Saint Alexander, Saint Augustine and Saint James, with a mission at Mother Cabrini Shrine and Saint Patrick's Oratory, holds a screening of the Angel Studios movie "Cabrini" to a packed house at Regal Cinemas in Plattsburgh.

March 9 - Speaker Leticia Ramirez leads a discussion about creating a culture of vocations at the Father Amyot Parish Center in Norfolk, an event sponsored by the diocesan Vocations Office and LEAD.

March 13 - Father Joseph N. Sestito, a retired priest of the diocese, dies at age 95.

March 15 - Sister Joyce Frances Nfodzo, Sister Martha Duawome and Sister Justine Agbeko, Sisters of Mary Mother of the Church, come to the Diocese of Ogdensburg to serve at St. Joseph's Home in Ogdensburg.

March 21 - The diocesan Chrism Mass is held at St. Mary's Cathedral.

April 7 - Bishop Terry R. LaValley celebrates a Healing Mass for those hurt by the Church at St. Mary's Cathedral.



Photo by Jesse Sovie/North Country Catholic

Father Carter G. Pierce and Father Douglas A. Schirmer were ordained by Bishop Terry R. LaValley on May 25 in St. Mary's Cathedral, Ogdensburg.

April 8 - Deacon John Murray of Ogdensburg dies at age 89.

April 11 - Father Daniel T. Keefe, a retired priest of the diocese, dies at age 95.

April 20 - Teens from around the diocese gather at Trinity Catholic School in Massena for the annual Youth Rally.

April 22 - The Sisters of St. Joseph announce that their motherhouse in Watertown will be listed for sale and the sisters will be moving to smaller homes in locations around the diocese.

April 24 - Sister Mary Virginita Tarnacki, CSSF, dies at age 87.

May 14 - Priests from

around the diocese gather at Wadhams Hall for the annual Jubilee Mass, held as part of the Presbyteral assembly. Honored at the Mass are Father Andrew Amyot (60 years), Msgr. Leeward Poissant (60 years), Father Raymond Diesbourg, MSC (50 years), Father Paul Kelly (50 years), Father

Donald Kramberg (50 years), Father Howard Venette (40 years) and Father Scott Seymour (25 years). Father Bill Muench celebrated 65 years.

May 21 - Father Leo A. Wiley, a retired priest of the diocese, dies at age 93.

May 25 - Bishop Terry R. LaValley ordains Father Carter G. Pierce and Father Douglas A. Schirmer at St. Mary's Cathedral in Ogdensburg.


May 29 - Bishop Terry R. LaValley announces changes in priest assignments, including the retirement of Father Steven M. Murray.

May 31 - Bishop Terry R. LaValley installs six candidates for the permanent diaconate, Garry Stevens (Castorland), Nicholas Tsibulski (Massena), Francis Sczerzenie (Piseco), Gordon Burdo (Plattsburgh), James Law (Rainbow Lake) and James Kavanaugh (Clayton), as lectors.

June 5 - Trinity Catholic School in Massena announces that it will close at the conclusion of the academic year.

June 12 - Aiden Pearl

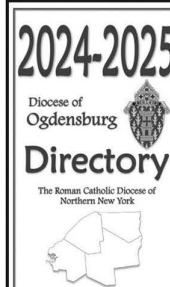
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Merry Christmas
and
Happy New Year

**Sisters Adorers
of the Precious Blood**

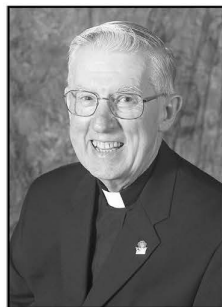
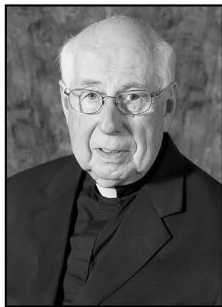
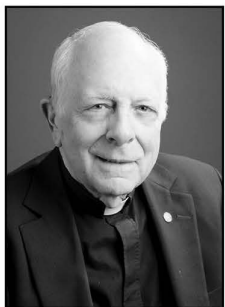
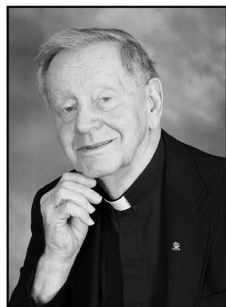
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In 2024, six priests of the diocese, (from left) Father Normand Coté, Father Joseph Sestito, Father Daniel Keefe, Father Leo Wiley and Father Clyde Lewis, passed on to eternal life.

Year in review

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 4

and Gabriella Conti are named Seton Catholic valedictorian and salutatorian, while Jack Charlebois (valedictorian), Morgan Waite (salutatorian) and Bria Larrabee (outstanding vocational student) take top honors at Immaculate Heart Central.

June 17 - a 14-foot steeple and 8-foot cross are added to St. Agnes Church in Lake Placid. Both were part of the church's original blueprints but were removed from the construction project due to cost constraints. The renovation took place almost exactly 100 years after ground was broken for the original construction.

June 19 - Trinity Catholic School student Aubrie Cameron is named a winner of the Christ is Alive! national essay contest.

June 21 - The North Country Catholic is awarded a third place Catholic Media Association Award for editor Darcy Fargo's column.

June 22 - Sister Lucille Beaulieu, OSM, dies at age 94.

July 2 - Ashley Barr, a teacher at St. James School in Gouverneur, is awarded the Distinguished Teacher Award during a luncheon at

Bishop Terry R. LaValley's residence.

July 13 - Sisters of St. Joseph Sister Mary Christine Taylor (75 years), Sister James Marie Kelly (70 years), Sister Mary Anne Croitz (65 years), Sister Mary Rita Kempney (65 years), Sister Annunciata Collins (60 years), Sister Mary Helen Hermann (60 years) and Sister Mary Eamon Lyng (60 years) celebrate jubilees.

July 17-21 - Bishop Terry R. LaValley and residents of the diocese attend the National Eucharistic Congress in Indianapolis, Indiana.

July 23 - Seminarian Michelet Boncoeur is admitted to candidacy for Holy Orders in a rite celebrated by Bishop Terry R. LaValley.

Aug. 12 - Youth altar servers, lectors, greets and catechetical assistants gather at Camp Guggenheim for the server picnic.

Aug. 23 - Over 120 people from around the diocese - priests, deacons, consecrated religious and lay people, gather at St. Agnes Parish in Lake Placid to learn about Divine Renovation.

Aug. 26 - Father Clyde Lewis, pastor of St. Mary's Church in Champlain and St. Patrick's Church in Rouses Point,

retires.

Sept. 1 - Father Donald A. Robinson is named dean of the Jefferson-Lewis Deanery, replacing Father Arthur J. LaBaff.

Sept. 8 - Marries couples from around the diocese gather to cele-

brate the annual Marriage Jubilee.

Sept. 8 - Sister Mary Alisette, CSSF, dies at age 92.

Sept. 14 - The 2024 Bishop's Fund Appeal, Living Stories of Our Faith, kicks off.

Sept. 17 - St. Mary's

Church in Ticonderoga and Mercy Care of the Adirondacks host the first Friendship Volunteer training, part of an effort to support older adults in that community and surrounding areas.

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*May the Lord
Jesus Christ
bring you peace this
Christmas Season and a
Blessed New Year!*

*St. Raphael's Church, Hewelton
&
St. Philip and James Church, Lisbon*



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Environmental Stewardship

Christmas

In many Native American traditions, forms of Celtic spirituality, the views of St. Francis of Assisi, and in the hearts of those who care deeply for the earth, the meaning of Christmas makes it the most important day of the year. Christmas represents the day God became a physical part of our world. If the Source of all power and goodness became human, all of the elements assimilated into Mary's infant must be worthy to form the body of Christ.

And surely if our Lord chose to enter our world surrounded by dirt, dust, animal waste and trampled straw, these items must be viewed by Creation's Author as important items for witnessing the Child's birth.

We celebrate Christmas because it is the ultimate reassurance from God that humans are good, as is everything else connected to the earth. Consequently, we must periodically stop and reflect on the goodness, beauty and grandeur of His creations. Not only because God formed it from nothing, but because He loves it so much that He wanted the most precious member of His family to become part of it.

Through acts of kindness to others and the earth and its many creatures, we can express gratitude to Our Lord for His unconditional love. Refraining from overeating during holiday festivities can benefit your health, and create leftovers for future meals, which can save on food purchases. Composting food scraps can be a challenge this time of year, but organic items will begin to break down during thaws. Unwrapping gifts carefully can leave pieces of paper large enough to be reused. Learning to treat everyone you encounter with kindness and respect is difficult, and trying to limit our use of earth's resources is also hard, but we must continue to try, as our efforts are more important to God than our successes. Have a great Christmas.

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

Rest in Peace

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

Dec. 25 — Rev. Patrick Lyons, 1911; Rev. Oswald L. Bentley, 1940

Dec. 26 — Rev. Aloysius Hyacinth McMahon, 1936; Deacon Andrew Yarchuk, 2019

Dec. 27 — Rev. Hollis David Burns, 1936; Rev. Henry Gilbeau, O.F.M.Conv., 1978; Rev. Wilfred L. DeRoche, 2013

Dec. 28 — Rev. Nicolaus Burtin, O.M.I., 1902; Msgr. John M. Waterhouse, 1995; Rev. Eugene J. Beaudet, 2004; Rev. Howard P. McCasland, 2010

Dec. 29 — Rev. John A. Mullen, 1887

Dec. 30 — Rev. Jean Baptiste Lemerrier, 1863; Rev. Sam D'Angelo, O.S.A., 1961; Deacon Victor Demers, 2003

Dec. 31 — Rev. Joseph Butler, 1894; Rev. Benedict Granottier, 1930; Msgr. Clarence A. Kitts, 1949

Jan. 1 — Rev. Earl Leo Taylor, 1974

Jan. 2 — Rev. Henry William McFadden, 1978; Deacon Robert J. LeClair, 2009; Rev. Patrick J. O'Reilly, 2022

Jan. 3 — Rev. A.J.M. Viau, 1966; Rev. Hilary Neal, O.P., 1986

Jan. 4 — Rev. James Edwin O'Haire, 1877; Rev. Michael Walsh, M.S.C., 1977; Rev. Charles E. Chase, 2011

Jan. 5 — Rev. Louis Lebrecht, O.M.I., 1903; Msgr. Dennis E. Lynch, 1979; Rev. Raoul J. Poirier, M.Afr., 1997; Rev. Adrian Gallagher, 2022

Jan. 6 — Rev. James Dennis Phalon, 1974; Deacon George W. Carroll, 1994; Rev. Benoit Dostie, M.S.C., 2007; Msgr. Robert J. McCarthy, 2018

Jan. 7 — Rev. Leonidas Geofrion, 1954; Rev. Vincente F. Jazmines, 2021

Bishop's Public Schedule

Dec. 25 — Christmas Day — 11 a.m. — Mass at St. Joseph's Home in Ogdensburg

Dec. 26 — Noon — Mass at St. Mary's Cathedral

Dec. 29 — 11 a.m. — Mass Celebrating the Opening of the Holy Year at St. Mary's Cathedral

Dec. 30 — Noon — Mass at St. Mary's Cathedral

Dec. 31 — Noon — Mass at St. Mary's Cathedral

Jan. 3 — Noon — Mass at St. Mary's Cathedral

6:30 p.m. — Deacon Candidates Class on Canon Law at Wadhams Hall in Ogdensburg

Jan. 4 — 7 a.m. — Morning Prayer at Wadhams Hall in Ogdensburg

4 p.m. — Mass at St. Mary's Cathedral

Jan. 5 — 8 a.m. — Mass at St. Mary's Cathedral

11 a.m. — Mass at St. Mary's Cathedral

Jan. 6 — Noon — Mass at St. Mary's Cathedral

5:30 p.m. — Annual Jefferson-Lewis Deanery Clergy Dinner at Pete's Trattoria Restaurant in Watertown

Jan. 7 — Noon — Mass at St. Mary's Cathedral

To Report Abuse

If you have a complaint of suspected misconduct involving diocesan clergy, religious, employees or volunteers, contact Victim Assistance Coordinator, Terrienne Yanulavich, Ph.D., LMHC, 5050 Route 374, Merrill, NY 12955; terrienneyanulavich@yahoo.com; Phone: 518-569-0612; 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

Year in review

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Sept. 20-22 — Teens gather at Camp Gugenheim for the annual diocesan Leadership Weekend.

Sept. 25 — Seminarian Kevin McCullough is installed as an acolyte at Saint Vincent's Seminary in Latrobe.

Sept. 27 — Father Jose John Kanyiankunnel, a priest of the Heralds of Good News, arrives in Malone, where he will serve as parochial vicar.

Sept. 28 — St. James Church, Gouverneur, celebrates its 150th anniversary.

Sept. 29 — Representatives of local law enforcement, emergency services, corrections and emergency communications gathered at St. Mary's in Canton for the annual Blue Mass.

Sept. 29 — St. Regis Mission Church dedicates a memorial honoring all who spent time at residential schools.

Oct. 6 — Life Chain, a prayerful demonstration advocating for the protection of life from conception to natural death, is held in Plattsburgh, Massena, Potsdam, Saranac Lake and Watertown.

Oct. 16 — Father Gerald A. Cerank, a retired priest of the diocese,

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

dies at age 81.

Oct. 21 — Diocesan Catholic school educators gather at the Cambria Hotel and St. Agnes Church in Lake Placid for the annual superintendent's conference.

Oct. 22 — Sister Joseph Marie Marczak, CSSF, dies at age 77.

Oct. 26 — Sister Paula Marie Skalski, CSSF, dies at age 84.

Oct. 31 — Father Clyde A. Lewis, a retired priest of the diocese, dies at age 85.

Nov. 6 — A time capsule is placed at Sacred Heart Church in Massena, part of the church's 100th anniversary celebration.

Nov. 14 — Sister Kathryn Healy, GNSH, dies at age 92.

Nov. 27 — Youth artists from Catholic Schools and religious education programs win a contest to design Bishop LaValley's Christmas cards. Winners include Ella Fitzgerald, St. Bernard's School, Saranac Lake, Ruthie Joyner, St. Bernard's School, Emilia Gradis, Seton Catholic, Plattsburgh, Minerva Herina, Immaculate Heart Central, Watertown, and Mary Curtis, Immaculate Heart Central.

Nov. 28 — Sister Anne Hogan, SSJ, dies at age 91.

Dec. 5 — Sister Judy Adams, SSJ, dies at age 82.

Dec. 7 — The diocesan cross for the Jubilee Year 2025 began its trek across the diocese, stopping first in Plattsburgh, then Tupper Lake and then Watertown before making its way to St. Mary's Cathedral for the opening of the jubilee year on Dec. 29.

CALLED TO SERVE

Christmas is sharing

My cousins, the Doyle family, lived in Valley Stream on Long Island. My brother and I grew up with the seven Doyle kids. The older ones were about our age and then the younger ones came along, seven of them in all.

Aunt Cookie, I found out many years later that her real name was Helen, was my Mother's sister. That's how we came to be together. We were family.

We shared great times together. I recall one in-

cident. It is not a Christmas story. In fact, this took place in the summertime.

A bunch of us were rummaging around the ruins of an old barn on the Doyle's property.

Some one of us, I honestly do not recall who, disrupted a beehive hiding among the piles of wood that once constituted this stately structure.

The scene that followed was straight out of a Little Rascals plot. Picture five or six kids

running for all they are worth around the property, several times, while a horde of bees chased, and occasionally stung, one of the frantic kids.

The Calamine Lotion flowed freely that day. In all we collectively had somewhere around a dozen or a dozen and a half bee stings.

Family. What great memories.

I do not recall

how it was resolved. Something about a hose and water.

I was reminded of that moment by a flurry of events this past week.

On the 17th the Gospel reading was the genealogy of Jesus. Mat-

thew's account proves Jesus is a descendant of Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, and David, fulfilling the Old Testament prophecies of the Messiah.



Deacon
Kevin Mastellon

On the 4th Sunday of Advent is the Visitation story. How Mary, the mother of God, travelled to be with her cousin Elizabeth. Both were pregnant for the first time. They need-

ed each other.

This may seem odd to you, but I was reminded of family by the final episode of Blue Bloods. For fourteen seasons we have watched Reagan's debate, share, disagree, sometimes argue, and joke about

the events of their lives around the Sunday night dinner table. Oh, they solved crimes each week too, but that was secondary to the wisdom that came from the mouths of family members at the family meal.

Reagan dinner reminded me of the Doyle family too.

Kathy and I pray you can be with your family this Christmas and share great memories of years gone by. If family is gone, toast to their memory and love the ones you are with.

Merry Christmas!

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

A GROWING VOICE

'The things we take for granted'

"The things we take for granted, someone else is praying for."

I found that quote in a book my mom assigned me to read for school titled "Your Blue Flame" by Catholic author Jennifer Fulwiler, a book I highly recommend reading.

It really hit me in the head, because I've had a lot of trouble with being truly grateful for everything I have. I'll go out and do something incredible and then come home and instantly be looking for the next great thing, instead of looking around at everything I already have, all the things that some people are less fortunate not to have.

In this, the season of giving, the season of

blessings, I invite you to join me in recognizing all the things we take for granted - having a warm house in winter, when people down in North Carolina lost their homes to hurricane Helene; having good food when the people in the Middle East are being starved out; even the little things, like getting to see friends, or having the comfort of loved ones nearby, when so many others have lost people in their life.

Take some time this Advent and Christmas season, and I will too, to notice all the things that are around you every day, all the little things you forget about, and be truly grateful for all the blessings in your life.



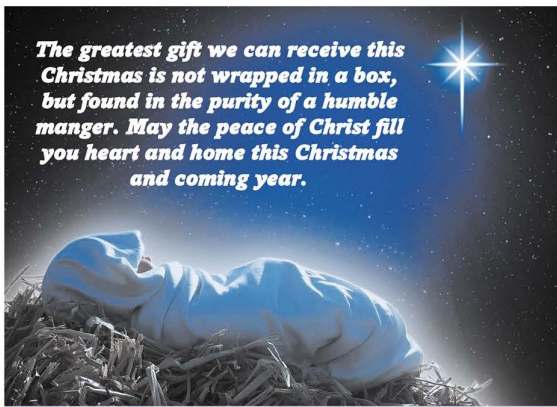
Erin
Savarie



and a Happy New Year to our diocese family.

*From the Clergy and People of
Blessed Sacrament Parish of Watertown*

The greatest gift we can receive this Christmas is not wrapped in a box, but found in the purity of a humble manger. May the peace of Christ fill your heart and home this Christmas and coming year.



~Office of Episcopal Delegate for Religious~

May the Hope of Christmas shine brightly on you and your loved ones.

And may the wonder, love and peace of our savior Jesus Christ, be with you this season and all year through.

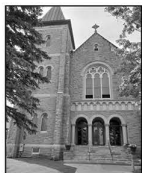
Merry Christmas from St. Peter's Parish, Massena!



WISHING YOU A MERRY CHRISTMAS!



The magic of Christmas is not in the presents, but in His presence.
Prayers & Blessings to you and yours during this Holy Christmas season & always!
Merry Christmas from
Sister Mary Ellen Brett, SSJ
and Alexis Michael
in the
Pontifical Mission Societies of the
Diocese of Ogdensburg!



100 Years
Catholic Community of
St. Patrick's
Chateaugay, NY



152 Years
Catholic Community of
St. Francis of Assisi
Constable, NY



188 Years
St. Mary's of the Fort
Fort Covington, NY

To All the Parishioners
Merry Christmas
&
Blessed New Year 2025!



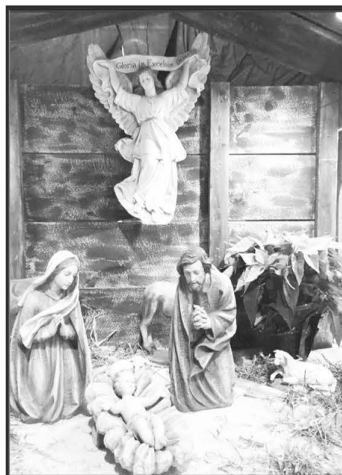
Fr. Pasala, Fr. Looby, Deacon Brian & Staff

*May the blessings of that first Christmas
be yours this season and always.*



From the Staff of the Development Office
Scott Lalone, Valerie Mathews & Lorraine Carney

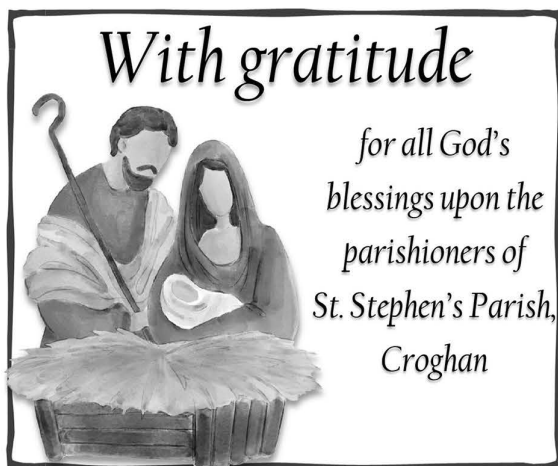
WISHING YOU A MERRY CHRISTMAS!



Let there be peace on earth...

The Vocation Office wishes you the gift of faith, the blessing of hope and the peace and joy of God's love found in the Christ Child this Christmas.

Rev. Christopher Carrara, Vocation Director
Rev. Matthew Conger, Assistant Director
Sister Mary Eamon Lyng, SSJ, Vocation Coordinator



Blessing of the Son of God Living Among us

The Sisters of St. Joseph have been blessed by the outpouring of support and care of our Bishop, our priests, our families, and friends across the diocese during this past year of transition.



CATHOLIC WORLD AT A GLANCE

Pope names head of Mission Societies a monsignor

Father Roger Landry is now Monsignor Roger Landry — but he says he's not ready to abandon the title "Father" anytime soon. Monsignor Landry, 54, the incoming national director of the Pontifical Mission Societies in the United States and a regular contributor to the National Catholic Register, CNA's sister publication, said he got the news this past weekend. He made it public Tuesday morning. He said the new title, which is an honor bestowed by the pope, "will take some getting used to," adding that he prefers the simpler title he has had during his 25 years of priesthood. "I really love being called 'Father,' which is an ever-present challenge, every time it's used, to respond as a spiritual father in the image of God the Father and of my own hardworking manly dad. I think it's the greatest title to which any man and priest ought to aspire," he told the Register. "But I anticipate those who have always known me as 'Father' or strangers who see me dressed in black, will still use it as the most natural vocative. I hope they do," he continued. Monsignor Landry is a priest of the Diocese of Fall River, Massachusetts.

SCOTUS will hear case on defunding Planned Parenthood

The United States Supreme Court has agreed to hear a six-year-old case about whether South Carolina can prevent Medicaid funds from covering non-abortion services at Planned Parenthood facilities and other abortion clinics. On Wednesday, the justices announced they would take the case in their 2024-2025 term. The case stems from a lawsuit Planned Parenthood filed in 2018 after Gov. Henry McMaster blocked abortion clinics from receiving those funds through an executive order. Under federal law, federal Medicaid funds cannot be used to pay for abortion unless the life of the mother is at risk or the pregnancy results from rape or incest. However, federal law does allow those funds to pay for other services at abortion clinics. The court's ruling will determine whether states can prevent those funds from covering non-abortion services at those facilities.

Pope Francis celebrates 88th birthday

Pope Francis, who celebrates his 88th birthday Dec. 17, has become one of the oldest-serving popes in the Catholic Church's 2,000-year history. Having instituted the World Day of Grandparents and the Elderly in 2021, the Holy Father is keeping true to his inaugural message dedicated to older Catholics: "There is no retirement age from the work of proclaiming the Gospel." Just this past Sunday, Dec. 15, he completed his 47th apostolic journey to the French region of Corsica to spend a full day with the Catholic faithful and take part in their cultural and pious traditions. In the wake of the opening of the Jubilee Year of Hope on Christmas Eve, Dec. 24, the pope has not put a pause in his work schedule. In December, Pope Francis has met with country leaders, dicastery prefects, and even smaller delegations of Catholic communities who have come to visit him in the Vatican.

Canada launches 'national consultation' on 'advance requests' for euthanasia

By Daniel Payne
Catholic News Agency

The Canadian government is actively soliciting citizen input for a proposal to legalize "advance requests" in which citizens can prearrange to be euthanized at a time when they are unable to consent to the procedure.

The country's federal government is inviting citizens to "share [their] thoughts" from December into February, soliciting input from "patients, health care providers," Indigenous citizens, and "persons with lived experiences."

The move toward potentially allowing "advance requests" comes after the provincial government of Quebec implemented its own policy earlier this year. In that province, "advance requests" for medical aid in dying (MAID) may be made by individuals who have "been diagnosed with a serious and incurable illness leading to incapacity" such as Alzheimer's disease.

The request "must be made while the person is still capable of consenting to care," the Quebec government said, acknowledging that the lethal procedure will be carried out "when they become incapable of [consenting]."

The Canadian federal government describes advance requests as a "complex and serious topic." The results of the country's "national conversation" on the matter will be published in a report next year, the government said.

The "conversation," the government said, will help to ensure the country's euthanasia program "reflects the evolving needs of people in Canada," "protects those who may be vulnerable," and "supports autonomy and freedom of choice."

Alex Schadenberg, the executive director of the Ontario-based Euthanasia Prevention Coalition (EPC), wrote on Wednesday that "euthanasia by advance request is technically euthanasia without consent," inso-

far as it is administered to individuals who cannot consent at the time.

"Once a person becomes incompetent, they are not legally able to change their mind, meaning that some other person will have the right to decide when the person dies, even if that person is happy with life," he pointed out.

The EPC is urging readers to use the group's guide for completing the national consultation, one that argues in favor of the sanctity of life and which puts forth "strong opposition" to the country's euthanasia law and its expansion.

Euthanasia "was originally legalized in Canada under the guise of being limited to mentally competent adults, who are capable of consenting and who freely 'choose,'" the group says on its blog.

"Euthanasia by advanced request undermines these principles," it says.

Activists in Canada have regularly pushed to expand MAID since the law was first implemented in 2016.

A group of pro-euthanasia advocates sued the federal government in August to allow physician-assisted suicide for those suffering from mental illness.

The government earlier in the year paused a planned expansion of the MAID program that would have included the mentally ill, although it said it would consider the policy again in three years' time in order to allow provinces to "prepare their health care systems" for the expansion.

Health Canada's fifth annual medical assistance in dying (MAID) report, released last week, revealed that MAID accounted for nearly 1 in 20 deaths in the country last year.

Government statistics indicated that 15,343 people were euthanized by medical officials in Canada in 2023, out of a total of just under 20,000 requests.

Those numbers represent "an increase of 15.8%" over 2022, the report says.

Priest's healing paved way for canonization

By **Kate Quiñones**
Catholic News Agency

When a seminarian was injured while playing basketball in 2017, he had no idea it would one day contribute to the cause for canonization of Blessed Pier Giorgio Frassati.

Father Juan Gutierrez, 38, then a seminarian at St. John's Seminary in Camarillo, California, got an MRI and soon learned he had torn his Achilles tendon. Concerned about the long and painful recovery and expenses, Gutierrez headed for the seminary chapel the following day "with a heavy heart."

As he prayed, Gutierrez felt inspired to make a novena to Frassati. A few days into the novena, Gutierrez went into the chapel to pray when nobody was there. As he prayed, he recalled feeling an unusual sensation around his injured foot.

"I was praying, and I started to feel a sensation of heat around the area of my injury. And I honestly thought that maybe something was catching on fire, underneath the pews," Gutierrez recalled at a Monday press conference at St. John the Baptist Parish in Los Angeles County, where he now serves as an associate pastor.

Gutierrez checked for a fire, but saw none, even as he still felt the sensation of heat on his injury. The seminarian remembered from his experiences with the Charismatic Renewal movement that heat can be associated with healing from God. He found himself gazing at the tabernacle, weeping.

"That event touched me deeply," Gutierrez said.

He was not only touched spiritually, but he was also healed physically. Incredibly, he was able to walk normally again and no longer needed a brace. When Gutierrez visited the orthopedic surgeon, the surgeon confirmed that he didn't need surgery. The tear that had once shown up on an MRI scan was gone, something

unheard of with this type of injury, the surgeon told him.

"His healing was a miracle. His doctors could not explain it," Los Angeles Archbishop José Gómez said at the press conference. "Of course, miracle is a word that gets overused in our culture; that is not well understood. But the Scriptures tell us that Jesus worked miracles on earth. ... And we believe that Jesus continues to work miracles from heaven."

"And we believe that Jesus hears not just our prayers but also the prayers that the saints make for us," Gómez said. "Now we have a new saint who is watching over us from heaven."

Gutierrez said his healing "reminds us that prayer works."

"The saints can help us to pray for our needs and that there is somebody listening to our prayers," Gutierrez said. "God is always listening to our prayers."

The surgeon's confirmation was the beginning of a Vatican investigation into the miracle that ultimately led to Frassati's canonization.

Monsignor Robert Sarno expressed his awe at "how this all came about," noting that there were many odd connections that led to it all coming together. After retiring from the Vatican's Dicastery for the Causes of Saints, Sarno was teaching a class on causes of canonization at St. John's Seminary in Camarillo, where he met none other than Gutierrez. The seminarian approached Sarno outside of class once and told him about the healing he had experienced.

"When I heard it, I immediately suspected that there might have been some substance to this case," Sarno said at the press conference, tuning in remotely from New York.

With the approval of the Vatican and Gómez, Sarno began the canonical investigation into the healing. Only the final step remains — a "final consultation" of cardinals and

bishops with the Holy Father to approve or disapprove the canonization. Sarno noted that "in a case like this, it's really truly a formality."

Frassati is an example for young people, Sarno said.

"What we are called to do is to imitate the holiness of Pier Giorgio and pray for his intercession, especially for young people who are so confused today and so looking for answers, to life and to faith," Sarno said.

A friend in heaven

Gómez called Frassati "a saint for our times." Frassati was born to a wealthy Italian family but had a heart for the poor and the Eucharist. He was known for his good humor and love of hiking.

"He was a young man who loved life and enjoyed life to the full," Gómez said. "He was a good friend to others, a good son, and a good brother. And he was a man of deep prayer who taught us to find Jesus in the holy Eucharist and the face of the poor."

Frassati will be canonized a saint next year, 100 years after his death from polio at the age of 24 in 1925.

"Some of his last words were this: 'I will wait for them all in heaven,'" Gómez said. "I am confident through these prayers, Our Lord will lead many to follow him there."

Gutierrez shared that he doesn't know why he was chosen for this.

"I will be the first one to recognize that God could have chosen a more charismatic, easygoing, and less trouble-stirring person. Trust me, I know, and my colleagues will be able to tell you how true that is," Gutierrez said. "But as the Scripture tells us, it wasn't us who chose the Lord. It was him who chooses us. And he has chosen us to bear fruit."

Gutierrez described the events following the healing as a "roller coaster" of "excitement, anticipation, trepidation, and even fear."

"There have been moments

that left me thinking, how did I end up here? And what was I thinking when I got on this ride?" he said. "But at the end of the day, I am left with a heart filled with gratitude and with awe at what God does in our lives."

"And I'm also left humbled by the fact that in Pier Giorgio, God has given me not only an intercessor but also a friend."

"There's a lot of similarities between Pier Giorgio Frassati and Juan, whether he knows it or not," Sarno added. "Both of them were very athletic, very young, and involved in sports. And for this reason, Pier Giorgio Frassati was declared as one of the patrons of World Youth Day."

Wanda Gawronska, the niece of Frassati, shared at the conference her excitement that her uncle will "finally" be canonized next year. Gawronska recalled the challenges that her mother faced as she advocated for his canonization beginning in the early 1930s.

Gawronska read a line from a letter that Frassati wrote exactly 100 years ago on Dec. 16, 1924, just six months before his death.

"I hope with the grace of God to continue along the path of Catholic ideas and to be able one day, in whatever state God wills, to defend and propagate these rare and true things," Frassati wrote.

When asked by a parish school student attending the conference how it felt to be a part of the canonization process, Gutierrez said: "It's crazy. But it's a wonderful blessing."

"Giorgio wanted to spread the faith in God, and this will allow for more people to hear his message that invites us to take our Catholic Christian faith seriously and to be willing to take it outside of the doors of the Church to influence the life of society — because that's where the love of God, Jesus, and what he brought us is so desperately needed," Gutierrez concluded.

ADIRONDACK MOUNTAIN

ADORATION

Wells — Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament to be held.

Date: The Third Sunday of the Month.

Time: After Sunday Mass

Place: St. Ann's

Features: A beautiful and blessed half hour.

ADORATION

Lake Placid — Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament is held Tuesday.

Time: 1 p.m. to 5:20 followed by Mass

Place: St. Agnes Church

Features: Come rest in the presence of Jesus. **Contact:** To sign up as a sub or for a weekly hour, call 518-523-220. Sign-up is not necessary to attend.

CLINTON NORTHERN FRANKLIN

HOT DINNERS

Malone — St. Andre Bessette Parish to offer free community hot dinners.

Date: Every Wednesday

Time: 4 p.m. to 5

Place: St. Andre Outreach Center

Features: Food is prepared by the BOCES Culinary Arts Students. Eat in only.

SACRED HEART FRATERNITY

Plattsburgh — Come join our Franciscan Secular order, the Sacred Heart Fraternity.

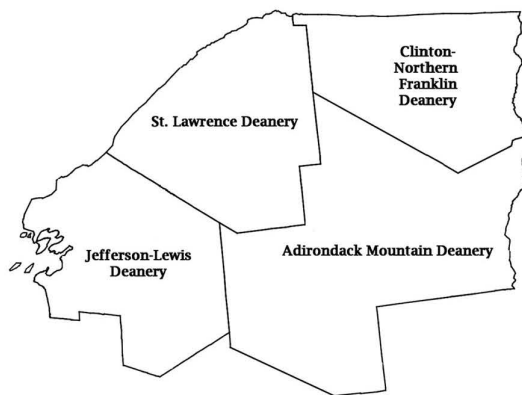
Date: Second Sunday of the month

Time: 12:30 p.m.

Place: St. John the Baptist basement

Features: All men and women, single or married, who want to live as St. Francis and live "Gospel to Life and Life to Gospel" can become part of the Secular Franciscan Order. Join us for prayer, fellowship, and formation. In addition, we do a retreat once a year and support in some capacity an organization that helps people.

Contact: For more information call David Garrant: 518-578-8377



The North County Catholic welcomes contributions to "Around the Diocese"

Parishioners are invited to send information about activities to:

North Country Catholic, PO Box 326,

Ogdensburg, NY 13669

e-mail news@northcountycatholic.org.

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

ADORATION

Plattsburgh — Adoration to be held weekly.

Date: Wednesdays, Thursdays and Fridays

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

Place: St. John's in the Holy Family Basement

Features: Come to an out of the way place and rest awhile in Jesus' Presence. Experience His healing power, grace, love and mercy for yourselves and loved ones. Pray for the sick, suffering, vocations, our priests, country and peace in the world.

Contact: For more information, to become a substitute or to sign up for an hour, please contact 518-563-3773.

DEVOTION AND HOLY HOUR

St. Regis Falls — All are invited to the monthly first Saturday Devotion and Holy Hour for Vocations.

Date: First Saturday of the Month

Time: Following the 4:30 anticipated Mass

Place: St. Ann's Church

Features: Prayer after Mass, Night Prayer, Prayer for All Souls and the Holy Souls, Novena in Honor of Our Lady of the Miraculous Medal, Chaplet of Divine Mercy, The Reparation Rosary of the Blessed Virgin Mary with private meditation on the 15

Mysteries of the Rosary, Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament reposed in the Tabernacle, and Prayers for the Holy Father and his intentions.

JEFFERSON-LEWIS

POLISH CHRISTMAS WAFER

Houseville — The Polish Christmas wafer or Oplatek is available from St. Hedwig's Church.

Cost: \$3 per package plus postage.

Features: The Christmas wafer or OPLATEK is part of a Polish, Lithuanian and Slovak custom that is observed during the Vigil of Christmas (Wigilia). After the first star is visible, family and friends gather around the dinner table to share the OPLATEK, which symbolizes the presence of Christ, the Newborn Child. The OPLATEK is sent and shared with family and friends all over the world as a symbol of love, unity and forgiveness while wishing God's Blessing on each other.

Contact: 315-348-6260

PANCAKE BREAKFAST

Constableville — The Youth group will be hosting a pancake breakfast.

Date: Jan. 4

Time: 8 a.m. to noon

Place: St. Mary's Parish Hall

Cost: Adults, \$9; Children 10 and under \$4.50

Menu: Plate of eggs, a meat (bacon or ham), home fries and all you can eat Pancakes.

Features: Proceeds help fund the continued youth activities at St. Mary's such as Family Fun Nights and karate.

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: Jan. 5

Time: Following 11 a.m. Mass

Place: St. Hedwig's Church

Contact: 315-348-6260

SPAGHETTI &

MEATBALL DINNER

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

Date: Jan. 11

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

ST. LAWRENCE

TRIVIA NIGHT

Ogdensburg — The Vocations Committee for the Catholic Churches of Ogdensburg (St. Mary's Cathedral and Notre Dame), Heuvelton (St. Raphael's) and Lisbon (Ss. Philip and James) is planning a Trivia Night.

Date: Jan. 3

Time: Doors open at 6 p.m., Trivia starts at 7 p.m.

Place: Martin Field House (Knights of Columbus)

Cost: \$20 per person and receive a free mulligan (answer).

Features: All funds raised will be donated to the Diocese of Ogdensburg to help offset the miscellaneous college costs for the seminarians. Join us for a night of fun and friendly competition in a contest of general knowledge across a variety of topics! Teams of up to 6 will compete for the bragging rights and the Grand

Prize. All players are eligible for door prizes!

Contact: Register your team by Dec. 1. More rules and registration at www.saintmaryscathedral.net/trivia or by emailing vocation-sarenotrivial@rcdony.org

ROSARY WITH DEVOTIONS

Ogdensburg — The Legion of Mary will pray the rosary with devotions for First Saturday.

Date: Jan. 4

Time: 8 a.m.

Place: Notre Dame Church, Ogdensburg

Features: Rosary with devotions

FIRST SATURDAY ROSARY

Massena — Sacred Heart Church to have first Saturday Rosary Devotion.

Date: Jan. 4

Time: 3:15 p.m.

Features: First Saturday Rosary Devotion to OUR Lady of Fatima. Confessions will be available. Saturday Vigil Mass at 4 p.m.

MEN'S PRAYER GROUP

Massena — First Saturday of the month, men's prayer group to meet for Mass and Adoration.

Date: Jan. 4

Time: 9 a.m.

Place: Sacred Heart Church

MONTHLY BRUNCH

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

Date: Jan. 12 (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.

ADORATION

Ogdensburg — Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament to be held every Wednesday.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 13

Pope authors essay on humor

By Jonah McKeown
Catholic News Agency

Pope Francis on Tuesday penned an essay for the New York Times on the importance of fostering a sense of humor, of quelling narcissism through “appropriate doses of self-irony,” and of avoiding “wallowing in melancholy at all costs.”

“The Gospel, which urges us to become like little children for our own salvation (Matthew 18:3), reminds us to regain their ability to smile,” Pope Francis wrote in an essay adapted from his new book, “Hope: The Autobiography,” set to be published in January.

The pontiff called the many children he meets, as well as the elderly, “examples of spontaneity, of humanity.”

“[T]hey remind us that those who give up their own humanity give up everything, and that when it becomes hard to cry seriously or to laugh passionately, then we really are on the downhill slope. We become anesthetized, and anesthetized adults do nothing good for themselves, nor for society, nor for the Church,” he wrote.

“Irony is a medicine, not only to lift and brighten others but also ourselves,

because self-mockery is a powerful instrument in overcoming the temptation toward narcissism,” the pope continued.

“Narcissists are continually looking into the mirror, painting themselves, gazing at themselves, but the best advice in front of a mirror is to laugh at ourselves. It is good for us. It will prove the truth of that old proverb that says that there are only two kinds of perfect people: the dead and those yet to be born.”

Pope Francis has spoken about humor several times throughout his papacy; in June of this year, he hosted and entertained a group of over 100 comics, stand-up comedians, and humorists in the largest — and possibly only — gathering of comedians in the Vatican since Pope Pius V eliminated the role of the papal jester in the 1500s.

During a recent visit with French President Emmanuel Macron in Corsica, Pope Francis recommended that Macron read his apostolic exhortation *Gaudete et Exultate*, drawing attention to a passage referencing St. Thomas More’s prayer for a sense of humor.

“Lord, give me a sense of humor. Grant me the grace to understand a

joke, to discover in life a bit of joy, and to be able to share it with others,” reads the prayer, which Pope Francis has previously described as “very beautiful” and recites daily.

The pope in his essay offered examples of good humor shown by his fellow popes St. John XXIII and St. John Paul II.

St. John XXIII, for example, was said to have showcased his self-deprecating wit when he joked that he often resolved to speak with the pope about serious problems before remembering “that the pope is me.”

Relaying an anecdote about St. John Paul II’s playful resistance to rigid expectations of clerical conduct, Francis wrote that the saint was once, while still a cardinal, rebuked for enjoying many outdoor sporting activities, whereby John Paul responded that “these are activities practiced by at least 50% of cardinals.” In Poland at the time, there were only two cardinals.

“[S]ometimes we [popes] unfortunately come across as bitter, sad priests who are more authoritarian than authoritative, more like old bachelors than wedded to the Church, more like

officials than pastors, more supercilious than joyful, and this, too, is certainly not good,” the pope wrote.

“But generally, we priests tend to enjoy humor and even have a fair stock of jokes and amusing stories, which we are often quite good at telling, as well as being the object of them.”

The pope in his essay also told a joke involving himself, printed here in its entirety:

As soon as he arrives at the airport in New York for his apostolic journey in the United States, Pope Francis finds an enormous limousine waiting for him. He is rather embarrassed by that magnificent splendor, but then thinks that it has been ages since he last drove, and never a vehicle of that kind, and he thinks to himself: OK, when will I get another chance? He looks at the limousine and says to the driver, “You couldn’t let me try it out, could you?” “Look, I’m really sorry, Your Holiness,” replies the driver, “but I really can’t, you know, there are rules and regulations.”

But you know what they say, how the pope is when he gets something into his head ... in short, he insists and insists, un-

til the driver gives in. So Pope Francis gets behind the steering wheel, on one of those enormous highways, and he begins to enjoy it, presses down on the accelerator, going 50 miles per hour, 80, 120 ... until he hears a siren, and a police car pulls up beside him and stops him. A young policeman comes up to the darkened window. The pope rather nervously lowers it and the policeman turns white. “Excuse me a moment,” he says, and goes back to his vehicle to call headquarters. “Boss, I think I have a problem.”

“What problem?” asks the chief.

“Well, I’ve stopped a car for speeding, but there’s a guy in there who’s really important.” “How important? Is he the mayor?”

“No, no, boss ... more than the mayor.”

“And more than the mayor, who is there? The governor?”

“No, no, more. ...”

“But he can’t be the president?”

“More, I reckon. ...”

“And who can be more important than the president?”

“Look, boss, I don’t know exactly who he is, all I can tell you is that it’s the pope who is driving him!”

Around the diocese

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 12

Time: 3 p.m. to 6

Place: The Deacon Winter Chapel at St. Mary’s Cathedral, enter through the glass doors on the Green Street side.

Features: A sign up book will be at the podiums at the front entrances of St. Mary’s Cathedral and Notre Dame Church, however you may attend without signing up. Everyone is welcome.

HOLY HOUR

Canton — Holy Hour for Vocations

to be held.

Date: Every Tuesday

Time: 4:10 p.m.

Place: St. Mary’s Church

Features: Holy hour followed by Mass at 5:15 p.m. and confessions at 5:45 p.m.

ROSARY FOR LIFE

Canton — Rosary for life to be held.

Date: Every Sunday

Time: 4:25 p.m. preceding the 5 p.m. evening Mass

Place: St. Mary’s Church

ADORATION

Norwood — St. Andrew’s Church to offer Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament every Friday.

Time: After 8:30 a.m. Mass until Noon

Features: Sign up is not needed.

DIOCESAN EVENTS

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: 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



SUNDAY'S SCRIPTURE

The virtues in family life

The Christian vocation consists in making heroic verse out of prose each day. I read that somewhere, but do not remember where. Said another way: our lives are quite plain, like prose, but when we live them each day out of love, then they are like poetry, appealing to the higher senses.

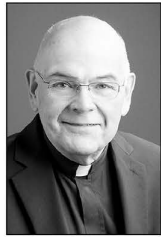
family for many years.

The scripture readings for this Sunday extol family life, the virtues to be practiced in

family life, the essential respect within the family, the proper roles within the family. The political arena speaks about the breakdown in family structures.

A breakdown or, unfortunately, a breakup occurs whenever the virtues are not practiced, whenever the roles of husband, wife, child, father, mother, son, daughter are not exercised correctly, whenever the "we" of respect is replaced by the "me" of my wants and desires.

Scripture readings



Msgr. Robert H. Aucoin

We celebrate Holy Family Sunday, a day to commemorate the Holy Family, Jesus, Mary, and Joseph and the life they lived as a family. Likewise, we take a glimpse at our own family life. After all, we are supposed to be imitating Christ in our lives, and he lived in

December 29

Feast of the Holy Family

READINGS

Sirach 3:2-6, 12-14

Colossians 3:12-15

Luke 2:41-52

may sound antiquated. Some may say that families are much different now than they were back when scripture was written. That is so true. Much has changed. There have been radical revolutions in industry, science, technology, education, social structures, methods of communication. The list is unbelievable and overwhelming.

But for all the changes, the underlying virtues have not changed. Over time, values can vary, but virtue remains. For example, education is valued more now than

it was a few centuries ago when education was only for the rich. Traveling for pleasure was seen as only for a few but has now become almost an essential part of growing up. Many college students have experienced more geography than many of us older people.

But virtues do not change. Virtues make us who we are. Virtues such as faith, hope, love, prudence, justice, fortitude, temperance transcend time and space. Our readings about family point to virtues not just values.

In the family, the father and the mother have authority over children. Likewise, children must be obedient because obedience is a recognition of that authority. The family will fall apart if parents do

not exercise authority towards their children or if children do not recognize that authority and do not obey their parents. Chaos ensues. Scripture never says that exercising authority will be fun or that always being obedient will bring us the latest toy. Sometimes parents may relinquish their authority because it's easier, and they don't have to argue with their children. That is tantamount to relinquishing one's parental role. In being disobedient, a child ultimately hurts his or her own life because the child is not learning how to live in society. The result, of course, will be a spoiled child unable to interact with others in society.

At weddings, we often hear the scripture passage from Paul's letter to the Corinthians. The passage describes the qualities of the virtue of love, not romantic love, but love that imitates God's love for us. The family is the core unity of society in which this love must be played out. Within the family structure, love needs to motivate all interactions between the members of the family. Without love, the other virtues cannot flourish.

For most of us, our lives are very ordinary. Remember the opening sentence is this article: "The Christian vocation consists in making heroic verse out of prose each day." May your families be blessed and flourish with joy and peace because you live the message of Jesus in the prose of each of your days.

THE MONTHLY PRAYER REQUEST FOR PRIESTS

WOULD YOU PRAY FOR A PRIEST EACH DAY?

— PRAYER SUGGESTION —

Eternal Father,
we lift up to you these
and all the priests of the world.
Sanctify them.
Heal and guide them.
Mold them into the likeness and
holiness of your Son, Jesus,
the Eternal High Priest.
May their lives be pleasing to
you. In Jesus' name we pray.
Amen

(With ecclesiastical approval)

Mass
Rosary
Fasting
Day Offering
Eucharistic Adoration
Offering of Sufferings
Divine Mercy Chaplet

Or whatever the Lord
inspires you to offer Him



JANUARY

DIOCESE OF
OGDENBURG, NY

2025

| SUNDAY | MONDAY | TUESDAY | WEDNESDAY | THURSDAY | FRIDAY | SATURDAY |
|---|-----------------------------------|-------------------------------------|-----------------------------------|---------------------------------------|------------------------------------|---------------------------------------|
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Diocese of Ogdensburg, Inc.**

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

622 Washington St., Ogdensburg, NY 13669
(315) 393-2920; fax 1-866-314-7296
mbrett@rcdony.org

Merry Christmas and happy New Year



Photo courtesy of the Pontifical Mission Societies.

We at the Pontifical Mission Societies of the Diocese of Ogdensburg would like to wish you all a very Merry Christmas and Happy New Year! Know that we are praying for your health and happiness during this time of the year and always.

Many this time of year do not have the ability to share a meal with loved ones in the comfort of a warm home. As you sit around the Christmas tree this coming holiday, we hope you will remember those less fortunate than yourselves, both abroad and in our own communities. Help spread the gift of love and kindness this holiday season by helping your neighbors in need, whether by providing some food to the hungry, visiting the lonely, or simply giving a kind word to those having a bad day.

Together we can spread His light to the world and keep the spirit of giving alive in this Christmas season and the next.

OBITUARIES

Adams — Mary Lou Edmonds Ferry, 70; Mass of Christian Burial Dec. 17, 2024 at St. Cecilia's Church.

Adams — Elizabeth (King) Kastner-Mulliger, 95; Private services to be held in the spring at Fairview Cemetery, Rodman.

Altona — Theresa R. (Lucia) Naro, 86; Funeral Services Dec. 17, 2024 at Brown Funeral Home; burial in Holy Angels Cemetery, Altona.

Cadyville — James Harold Layhee, 82; Mass of Christian Burial Dec. 16, 2024 at St. James Church; burial in St. Paul's Cemetery, Bloomingdale.

Canton — Keith James Pcolar, 51; Mass of Christian Burial Dec. 23, 2024 at St. Mary's Church.

Canton — Geraldine M. (Roy) Tierman, 94; Mass of Christian Burial Dec. 19, 2024 at St. Mary's Church; burial in Hermon Cemetery.

Champlain — John H. Zurlo, 86; Mass of Christian Burial Dec. 17, 2024 at St. Mary's Church.

Ellenburg — Ronald Manor, 65; Mass of Christian Burial Dec. 16, 2024 at St. Edmund's Church.

Hogansburg — Veronica "Sweetie" (Lazore) Henry, 75; Mass of Christian Burial Dec. 20, 2024 at St. Regis Church; burial in St. Lawrence Cemetery.

Massena — Sarah A. (McDonald) Holcomb, 87; Mass of Christian Burial in summer 2025 at St. Mary's Church; burial in Calvary Cemetery.

Massena — Fleurette Shirley Romeo, 89; Mass of Christian Burial in summer of 2025 at Church of

the Sacred Heart.

Mooers Forks — Irene (Gokey) LaValley, 104; Mass of Christian Burial Dec. 23, 2024 at St. Ann's Church; burial in St. Joseph's Cemetery, Mooers.

Morrisonville — Peter G. Belair, 78; Memorial Mass Dec. 18, 2024 at St. Alexander's Church.

Morrisonville — Robert Lee Fecteau, 78; Mass of Christian Burial Dec. 19, 2024 at St. Alexander's Church; burial in Plattsburgh Community Mausoleum.

Morrisonville — Mildred Mae (LaMar) Sears, 89; Mass of Christian Burial Dec. 20, 2024 at St. Alexander's Church.

Ogdensburg — James Robert Layng, 81; Funeral Services Dec. 20, 2024 at Frary Funeral Home; burial in Oswegatchie Mausoleum.

Olmstedville — Arthur J. Liberty, 83; Mass of Christian Burial Jan. 20, 2025 at St. Joseph's Church; burial in St. Mary's Cemetery.

Plattsburgh — Janet P. King, 91; Funeral Services Dec. 14, 2024 at Brown Funeral Home.

Plattsburgh — Joseph A. LaPorte, 71; Mass of Christian Burial Dec. 16, 2024 at St. Peter's Church.

Plattsburgh — Geraldine Ann (Duprey) Rasco, 89; Mass of Christian Burial Dec. 17, 2024 at St.

Peter's Church; burial in Assumption Cemetery, Redford.

Plattsburgh — Robert Ratigan Jr., 79; Mass of Christian Burial Dec. 16, 2024 at Our Lady of Victory Church.

Saranac Lake — Patricia (Tyler) Riley, 93; Funeral Services in the spring of 2025; burial in St. Bernard's of Monjoux Parish Cemetery.

Ticonderoga — Anthony Patrick Ezzo, Jr., 67; Mass of Christian Burial Jan. 4, 2025 at St. Mary's Church; burial in St. Mary's Cemetery.

Watertown — Jane L. (Ashwood) Hodgkinson, 88; Mass of Christian Burial May 22, 2025 at Holy Family Church; burial in Sanford Corners, Calcium.

Watertown — Gerald F. Wiley, 102; Mass of Christian Burial Dec. 20, 2024 at Holy Family Church; burial in Glenwood Cemetery.

West Chazy — Beverly M. Gagnier, 86; Mass of Christian Burial Dec. 13, 2024 at St. Joseph's Church; burial in parish cemetery.

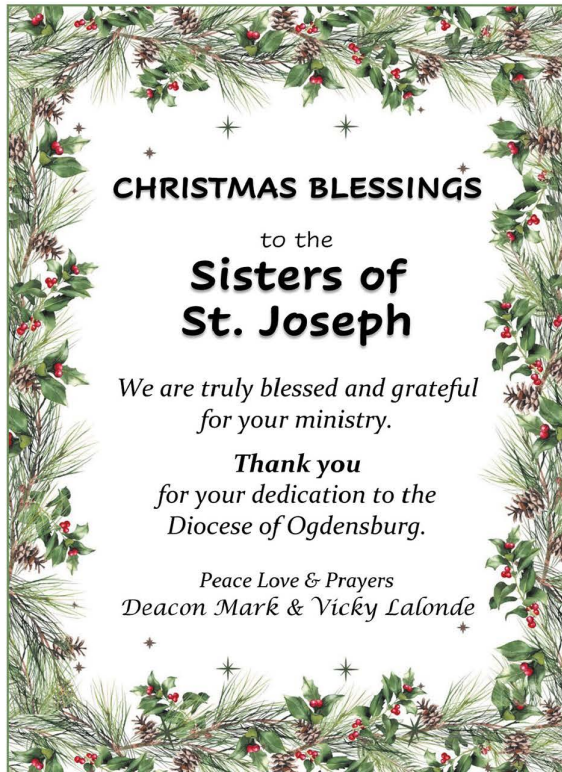
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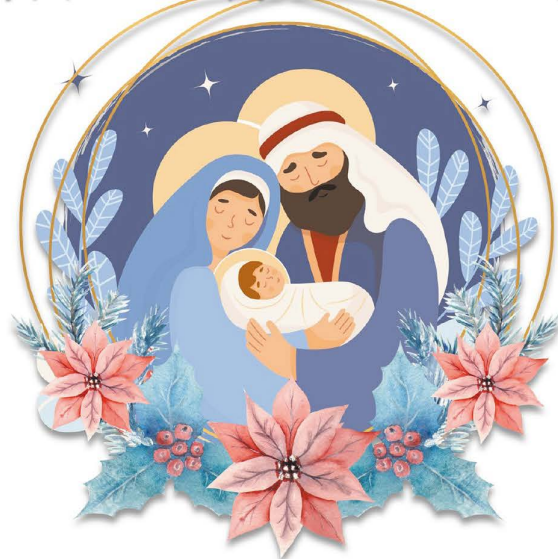
*Jesus
IS THE
REASON
FOR THE
season*

St. Mary's Church,
Champlain
&
St. Patrick's Church,
Rouses Point

Please remember "The Society for the Propagation of the Faith" when writing or changing your Will.



May the celebration of our Savior's humble birth be a source of joy & blessing for you & all those you love.



**St. Mary's Church, Potsdam &
St. Patrick's Church, Colton**



THANK YOU FOR SHARING IN THE CARING

The Religious of the Diocese Wish to Thank All of the Generous People Who Contributed to the 2024 Retirement Fund Collection. You Will Be Remembered in Our Prayers.

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