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The Diocese of Ogdensburg Volume 79 Number 10

# NORTH COUNTRY CATHOLIC

JUNE 5, 2024

## CONGRATULATIONS, FR. PIERCE & FR. SCHIRMER



PHOTO BY JESSE SOVIE/NORTH COUNTRY CATHOLIC

**Father Carter G. Pierce (left) and Father Douglas A. Schirmer were ordained to the Order of the Priesthood by Bishop Terry R. LaValley on May 25. See additional photos on Page 12.**

## Missioned to lead God's people

Bishop Terry R. LaValley ordained two men, Father Carter G. Pierce and Father Douglas A. Schirmer, to the priesthood on May 25 at St. Mary's Cathedral.

Read Bishop LaValley's homily from the ordination Mass starting on Page 3.

"As Bishop Sheen once preached, 'The priest is not only the shepherd who cares for his sheep; he is also the lamb who is offered in caring for them. Our parishioners are not disturbers; we commit to them our heart, our body, our blood,'" Bishop LaValley said. "Let

your holiness of life be a delightful fragrance to Christ's faithful. God's people deserve nothing less from their priests. As Pope Francis recently exhorted some men he was to ordain: Do not be a mere functionary who does priestly things, be a true pastor of souls. God's people know instinctively that we priests are called to be holy for them. We strive to be holy not instead of their own holiness, but we strive to be holy for them, as part of our priestly sacrifice. Everything about the priest, everything, is to be for them in Christ.

## CAMP GUGGENHEIM STAFF



Madonna Champagne and Stephen Dwyer, both counselors at Camp Guggenheim during summer 2023, will return to staff for the 2024 camp season. Learn about Champagne and Dwyer in our first installment of camp staff profiles on Page 4.

## Pope to teach on Holy Spirit's role in salvation

Catholic News Agency

Pope Francis opened a new catechetical series during his weekly general audience, focusing on the theme of creation across history and the role of the Holy Spirit in the story of salvation.

Titled "The Spirit and the Bride: The Holy Spirit Guides God's People Toward Jesus Our Hope," the new cycle will unfold across three main themes: the Old Testament, the New Testament, and "the time of the Church."

"The Spirit of God, who in the beginning transformed chaos into cosmos, is at work to bring about this transformation in every person," the pope said during the general audience held May 29 in St. Peter's Square.

The first part of the

series will begin with an overview of creation according to the Old Testament, but it will not be "biblical archaeology." The pope explained that it will instead focus on how the promise given in the Old Testament "has been fully realized in Christ."

"It will be like following the path of the sun from dawn to noon," he added.

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NORTH  
COUNTRY  
CATHOLICPO Box 326  
Ogdensburg, NY 13669  
USPS 0039-3400**Bishop Terry  
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President**Rev. Joseph A. Morgan**  
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Darcy L. FargoEditor &  
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# What did you call me?

"Hi, Deanna."

I'm called that a lot.

Deanna is my sister, my identical twin.

While being constantly mistaken for each other annoyed us in our youth, Deanna and I have come to find it endearing and entertaining as adults. I've met some delightful people that way, and both my twin sister and I believe, "if they're your people, they're my people, too," so it never feels like I'm talking to strangers.

While I've believed that as it relates to my twin sister for as long as I can

remember, for the last few years, I've been trying to apply the concept to other friends and family - "if they're your people, they're my people, too."



**Darcy L.  
Fargo**

I recently almost choked on those words.

The situation: Someone I don't particularly like, someone I perceived as having wronged me in the past, needed assistance.

To be completely honest, I had no interest in helping that person and no intention of doing so, even though I was well positioned to help in the sit-

uation he was facing.

Then, it happened. Someone I love, a person who is also friends with the person I don't like and who doesn't know my history with him, asked me to help.

My immediate instinct was to say, "not a chance."

Thankfully, though, my friend asked me to help just minutes after I had been mistaken for my twin sister, so I had "if they're your people, they're my people" on my mind.

I helped her friend, but I did it sort of begrudgingly, and I didn't feel very pleasant about it.

Reflecting on the situation, it struck me: I love God and try to be close

to him. Everyone belongs to God. We're all his people. So, if I love God, my "if they're your people, they're my people" concept should apply to everyone.

I know we're all called to love our enemies, but that's a hard calling to follow, and - to be honest - I'm not very good at it.

Somehow, though, I find it a bit easier to wrap my head around "if they're your people, they're my people" than I do "love your enemy."

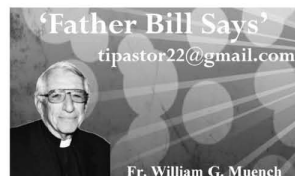
I pray God gives me the grace to remember that lesson and apply it. Regardless of what others call me, it's where God is calling me.

## 'A bond that can never be broken'

Recently, our Catholic Church celebrated the Feast Day of Corpus Christi, the Feast of the Body and Blood of Jesus. Actually, I think every Mass celebrated is a celebration of the Body and Blood of Jesus. However, I do believe that it is important for us to dedicate a Sunday for a glorious celebration of the Sacrament of the Holy Eucharist.

The Mass is the most sacred opportunity for us, Catholics, to gather as the people of God. At each Mass, we join as the Church to praise God. Our Mass is a Eucharist - in this time we join to offer our gratitude to our God for all things and are joined with our Lord Jesus as he joined his disciples at the Last Supper.

I believe we must often take some quiet time to recognize the powerful love that the Lord brings to us through each Mass. The Mass is our opportunity to unite ourselves



with our Lord and Savior, Jesus, as we all receive the Body and Blood of Jesus in Holy Communion.

During these last few weeks in most Catholic dioceses, deacons were ordained to the priesthood of Jesus Christ. It was an opportunity for me to remember my own ordination - the time when I was now called to celebrate the Holy Mass. Before that time, I could not stand at the altar and say the very same words that Jesus prayed at the Last Supper, consecrating bread and wine to the Body and Blood of Jesus.

Through the Blessed Sacrament, God forms a bond with us - a bond that can never be broken. This is what we celebrate

each time we offer the Eucharist. Each Mass is a perpetual reminder of the intimate love we share with God through the saving death of Jesus.

In faith, we believe the Holy Eucharist nourishes us with the spiritual bread of life. Just as for the apostles, the Eucharist leads us to be of service to others in the image of Jesus. We receive Jesus in Holy Communion so that we become in Communion with others. Through the Blessed Eucharist, we are formed into a community - a parish - that calls us to work together to make our world a better place.

When I preach at Mass, I encourage the congregation to recognize that this Eucharist should unite us as a family. I encourage the people to look around at each other and realize that each of us should pray for each other, and we should be grateful for the prayers of those

around us. We are all one in the Eucharist.

One more thing to add here - the consecrated Eucharist is reserved in the Tabernacle in each Catholic Church. We believe the presence of Our Lord Jesus is present to our world everywhere. Yet we believe that the Church building is the place where Our Lord's presence is greater - especially when we open our hearts to the Lord. When we pray alone in a church, it will always bring us closer to the ever-present Savior. This is a sacred place. It is here that we prepare to take the Lord Jesus out into our world by the way we live our lives and where our Lord gets us ready to serve others as best we can. It is here that we must listen as the Lord calls us and reaches us to truly be his disciples. The Lord always has a message for us.

We are a Eucharistic people.





PHOTOS BY JESSE SOVIE & DARCY FARGO

(Far left) Bishop Terry R. LaValley was principal celebrant for the ordination Mass held May 25 at St. Mary's Cathedral, (Middle left) Deacon James Crowley proclaimed the Gospel, (middle right), seminarian Michael Lennox and (far right) Kevin McCullouch served as lectors.

## 'Missioned to lead God's people'

*Editor's note: The following is Bishop Terry R. LaValley's homily from the May 25 ordination Mass.*

"Hope does not disappoint" is the central message that Pope Francis offers for our reflection as we prepare for Jubilee Year 2025. The Holy Father writes that "everyone knows what it is to hope. In the heart of each person, hope dwells as the desire and expectation of good things to come, despite our not knowing what the future may bring." The Pope desires that this Jubilee be "an opportunity to be renewed in hope." Surely, this local Church is brimming over with hope and joy as we gather to see two of our sons ordained to the ministerial priesthood. Because we are Christ-led and Christ-filled, we are hope-filled. We are blessed!

Deacon Douglas Schirmer and Deacon Carter Pierce, soon you shall be consecrated priests, handed over to God forever to bring glad tidings to the lowly, earthen vessels bringing the light of Christ to a world searching for enlightenment. The grace that dwells within you

can give you the strength to live in a society which is undermined by unbelief and religious indifference, even hostility. Your mission is not to save a fragile world or even to rescue a battered Church. There is but one Savior. Your mission is to live out with fidelity and without compromise the faith you received from Christ. It is not a matter of influencing opinions. It is a matter of living the Gospel passionately. It's that simple. It's that difficult.

As pastor of souls, you are missioned to lead God's people. These are God's people, not yet a fully risen people, not yet a perfect people. Today you shall take them unto your heart as their priest, as their loving shepherd.

Deacons Carter and Doug, know your people, as Christ, the Good Shepherd knows His sheep and they know Him, as we just heard Jesus say in the

Gospel passage you selected for your ordination. Be with them, rejoice and mourn as one of their own. As the Holy Father urges: Smell of your sheep. Make "Father" Carter and "Father" Doug more than a title of

CONTINUED ON PAGE 4



The call to speak with the heart radically challenges the times in which we are living.

—Pope Francis, World Communications Day, 2023

Reading and meditating on the Word of God is a devotion that opens our hearts to the promptings of the Holy Spirit and draws us closer into communion with the whole Church, especially when we meditate on the Scripture passages used in the Mass. For more than 15 years, thousands of people across the United States have viewed the daily reflection videos found on the website of the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops. Presented by a diverse group of clergy, consecrated religious, and lay volunteers, this popular feature helps viewers grow in faith each day by engaging with the texts of the daily Mass readings. These treasured, high-quality videos are among the faith-enriching programs made possible with your support of the Catholic Communication Campaign.

### 2022 DISTRIBUTION OF GRANTS: \$3,622,232

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Preserving Church History	\$202,094	5.58%
Media Training	\$75,000	2.07%
Building Media Capacity Grants	\$43,597	1.20%

### EXPENSES

Allocations-USCCB Communications Projects***	71.36%
Grants and Donations	22.20%
Promotion and Fundraising Expenses	5.40%
Program Costs	1.03%
<b>Total Expenses</b>	<b>\$3,892,764</b>

\* Includes funding to support resource production and distribution of print and electronic media from the USCCB.

\*\* Includes funding to support Catholic News Service's coverage of Pope Francis and his global ministry to share the mercy of God.

\*\*\* Includes funding to support Catholic News Service's coverage of Pope Francis and his global ministry to share the mercy of God.

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Half of the collected funds remain in your diocese to support local communications projects. The other half provide grants that support the collective communication work of the bishops of the United States as well as other national projects in the United States and around the world.

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THIS IS A JOINT COLLECTION WITH  
THE COLLECTION FOR THE  
CATHOLIC UNIVERSITY OF AMERICA  
THE WEEKEND OF JUNE 8 & 9, 2024

# Meet this year's camp staff

## Madonna Champagne Counselor

**Age:** 25

**Hometown:** Malone

**Parish:** St. André Bessette

**What are your hobbies/talents/interests?** I love to sing, learn about our faith, dance, make music (especially praise and worship!), laugh, be outside, participate in Crossfit, and spend time with friends and family!

**Why did you want to work at Camp Guggenheim?** I love our faith with all of my heart!

I truly believe the most important thing I could do with my life is help others find God and the truth, beauty and goodness of our faith, which is the exact opportunity camp provides! Camp provides a wonderful, FUN place for the youth to be encouraged on their faith journeys. I am beyond grateful for the opportunity to share our beautiful faith and hopefully encourage others to see how, "Life with Christ is a beautiful adventure!"



## Stephen Dwyer Counselor

**Age:** 19

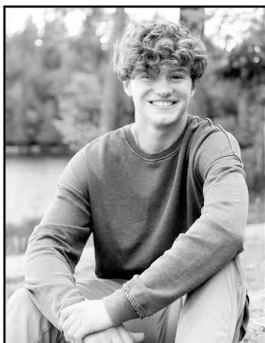
**Hometown:** Chateaugay

**Parish:** Catholic Community of Burke and Chateaugay

**What are your hobbies/talents/interests?** I enjoy getting to know people, singing, baseball, hiking, and being outside in general. I love science, especially human anatomy.

**Why did you want to work at Camp Guggenheim?**

After being on staff last year, I can truly say it was the best summer of my life. The life and holiness that Guggenheim brings to the campers and the staff make working there again this summer a no-brainer. I want to do everything I can to help the youth of our diocese and beyond deepen their connection with God and keep that flame burning even after camp.



**Register for camp at [rcdony.org/youth/camp](http://rcdony.org/youth/camp)**

Look for more staff profiles in future editions

# Lead God's people

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 3

respect but, also, a term of endearment. Wear the title as a badge of proof of your Christ-like bond-ness with your people. To be conformed to Christ is to go out of oneself. The priest who seldom goes out of himself misses out on the best of our people, on what can stir the depths of his priestly heart. Going out of ourselves is where our priestly hearts find joy, where the word "Father" truly describes who we are and becomes more than a courteous greeting. Yes, the Good Shepherd went out to tend to His sheep. You cannot tend to another from a safe distance.

Be kind to them and gentle. Urge them to be what God wants them to be but forgive them when they fail to become what God wants them to become, as they will forgive you for your sins, for your weaknesses. Courageously, always preach to them the truth and be its credible witness.

As Bishop Sheen once preached, "The priest is not only the shepherd who cares for his sheep; he is also the lamb who is offered in caring for them. Our parishioners are not disturbers; we commit to them our heart, our body, our blood."

Let your holiness of life be a delightful fragrance to Christ's faithful. God's people deserve nothing less from their priests. As Pope Francis recently exhorted some men he was to ordain: Do not be a mere functionary who does priestly things, be a true pastor of souls. God's people know instinctively that we priests are called to be holy for them. We strive to be holy not instead of their own holiness, but we strive to be holy for them, as part of our

priestly sacrifice. Everything about the priest, everything, is to be for them in Christ.

The fervor of a priest's life depends entirely upon the Mass, where the priest offers his own life in sacrifice. Each time you kiss the altar as you begin the celebration of the Eucharist, consciously make it an intimate gesture which expresses the joining of your own self-sacrifice with that of the High Priest, Jesus Christ. Every time we bow humbly at the altar, we remind ourselves that a priest never belongs to himself. Daily celebration of the Eucharist helps transform the busy priest's life from a surface activism into a focused and unified life of pastoral service.

Following Christ in the priestly ministry with a clear awareness of whose you are brings a transparent joy and evangelizing zeal. A faithful priest shines out and attracts people to Jesus if his life and his ministry is a joyful expression of his love for Jesus. It's all about Jesus. The priest's life is a continuation of the life and action of Christ Himself. Therein lies your joy, your Cross, your hope, your sense of fulfillment.

In the continuation of Christ's life, you will administer the Holy Sacraments. You will baptize. You will heal and reconcile. You will extend the tender mercy of God in

the Sacrament of Penance and experience it personally through your own confession of sins. Deacons Carter and Doug, you will anoint and console the suffering and dying.

Know that, with your ordination, Jesus does not suppress the beautiful qualities of who you are as a unique child of God. No, He uplifts them, He ennobles them. He makes them His own, using them to serve His mystery and His work. Each of you, who is so beautifully unique and gifted, will become, as a priest of God, a true instrument, mediator of Jesus' merciful love and compassion. The world needs God and will therefore always need people like you who live for Him totally and proclaim Him to others.

Deacon Doug, Deacon Carter, live your priestly life to its fullest! Through your ministry may God be praised! I extend my deep gratitude to your family, particularly your parents—all your loved ones who are rightly very proud individuals this day. And now, my brothers, rise to declare publicly your desire to become a priest and to serve the Church of God."



*Support And Pray  
For Vocations*



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## WORLD DAY OF PRAYER FOR THE SANCTIFICATION OF PRIESTS

## Like Christ 'in service and love'

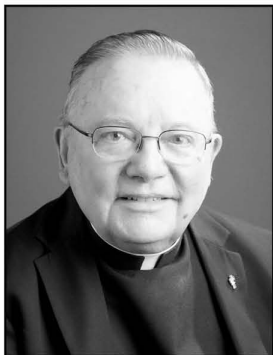
By Sister Mary Eamon Lyng, SSI  
Diocesan Vocations Coordinator

*"A good vocation is simply a firm and constant will in which the called person has to serve God in the way and in the place God has called." - St. Francis de Sales in "Introduction to the Devout Life"*

Jesus Christ the Priest, par excellence, is the one who is the source of love for all people. This love was expressed in His healing the sick, teaching the crowds the way of love, preaching compassion and forgiveness, raising the dead to life and being present in the villages making friends and eating with them.

At the Last Supper, Jesus' act of love of breaking the bread and drinking of the cup to be consummated on the cross, was given to the Apostles when He said, "Do this in remembrance of Me." After His death and resurrection, Jesus appeared to the Apostles bringing His Peace and promising the Holy Spirit said, "Whose sins you forgive, they are forgiven; whose sins you retain, they are retained." With the gift of the Holy Spirit on Pentecost, the ministry of priesthood began in the life of the Church.

On the Feast of the Solemnity of the Most Sacred Heart of Jesus, Friday, June 7, we pray for the sanctification of priests on this World Day for Priests. We pray for all priests who are the "bridge builders" between God and his people.



Father F. James Shurtleff

The priest is an effective symbol of Christ. He represents Christ to the community by what he does and through his presence. But the priest also "presents" the community to Christ and is therefore a representation of his people: their wants, sufferings, needs, and desires. The call of being a priest is a response to the call to be "the persona of Christ," that is, being one with Christ, to be like him in service and love for others. He, in the person of Christ, "effects the eucharistic sacrifice and offers it to God in the name of all the people" (Lumen Gentium #10).

How blessed we are in the Diocese of Ogdensburg of the priests who love and serve the people of the North Country. We are blessed with faithful retired priests who continue to serve in parishes, visiting the sick, celebrating the Eucharist, baptizing and forgiving sins. Priests love their vocation because they have come to know Christ the priest whom they imitate.

Father James Shurtleff, a retired priest from the parishes of St.



Father Matthew S. Conger

Mary's Cathedral and Notre Dame, shares with us his call to priesthood:

"What got me thinking about the possibility of a religious vocation several things come to mind. First is God's universal call to holiness and a desire to do what God was calling me to do, to please God, and to serve God. What influenced this way of thinking...this thought and question...was...the goodness of my parents, grandparents and family, and the example, in grade school and in high school. The lives of the saints also made a big impression on me as a young person. This discernment process was not an overnight decision. All through the years in the seminary I continued to ask myself whether or not God was calling me to the priesthood. The good example of my fellow seminarians inspired me. And so I was ordained on December 17, 1966. After ordination the example and holiness of the priests I came into contact with encouraged me to persevere in the priesthood. God has blessed me

with a wonderful, happy and fulfilling life, first as a seminarian, then as a priest in my ministry and now as a retired priest. I thank God for His gift."

Father Matt Conger, Parochial Vicar, Blessed Sacrament Parish, Watertown was inspired by Father Shurtleff's life and witness as a priest. It was his example and love for priesthood that inspired Father Matt to enter the seminary, discerned his vocation throughout his seminary days, and finally responded to the call of priesthood on May 29, 2021.

The Diocese of Ogdensburg has celebrated the ordination of two new priests, Father

Douglas Schirmer and Father Carter Pierce. The Catholic Community of Ogdensburg continues to pray for these priests, for the seminarians in their priestly formation for the Church, and for more vocations to the priesthood.

Let us pray for our bishop and all the priests of the Diocese as they continue to serve and to pray for their parishioners and families. On this Feast of the Most Sacred Heart, offer a special thank you to your priests in your parish for the ministry they do. Pray that they may be strengthened and renewed each day as they serve as a priest of Jesus Christ.

### Correction

#### Father Ojuok's future assignment

In the May 29 edition, Father John Kennedy Ojuok's future assignment was incorrectly stated. Father Ojuok will be parochial vicar for the Catholic Community of St. Peter's, St. Mary's and St. Hedwig's in Lowville, Glenfield and Houseville. The assignment will be effective June 26.

We apologize for this error.

## JOB OPENING

### Assistant Superintendent of Schools

The Roman Catholic Diocese of Ogdensburg is seeking an **Assistant Superintendent of Schools**. The position is responsible for curriculum development including instruction and assessment components that promote excellence in the Catholic Schools. Applicants must be a practicing Catholic with experience as a School Administrator. Applicants should have a Master's Degree in Education with a concentration in curriculum and assessment. Certification as a School District Administrator is preferred. Salary: \$53,818 - \$66,415.

Submit letter of interest, resume and three professional references to: Human Resources Office,  
Diocese of Ogdensburg,  
P.O. Box 369, Ogdensburg, NY 13669  
or e-mail [ksnover@rcdony.org](mailto:ksnover@rcdony.org)  
Deadline for application is June 26, 2024.  
Employment starts September 2024.

## Environmental Stewardship

## Another uninvited guest

As our State observes Invasive Species Awareness this first week of June, we are mindful of an urgent plea expressed in Pope Francis' *Laudate Deum*. This plea calls humanity to address climate change and work for the wellbeing of our "common home." One way to do that is by working to eliminate unwanted guests.

Along with the natural species found around our diocese, there are also what biologists call invasive species. Eastern hemlock trees are threatened by an invasive species discovered in Adirondack Park in 2017. The woolly hemlock adelgid (HWA) was first discovered in the 1920s in western states and is now found along the eastern seaboard. The primary host for this aphid-like insect are eastern hemlocks and Carolina hemlocks. Juvenile adelgids attach to the base of hemlock needles and feeds on the sap. When this happens, the tender twigs of the tree eventually die due to the loss of moisture. Infected trees are identified by small white woolly masses on the underside of branches and at the base of the needle. A tree infected in this way will succumb in 5-10 years.

Although insecticides can be used to treat for HWA, researchers have found more natural means of control. In the Finger Lakes area of NYS, they have introduced with some success a beetle from the Pacific Northwest that is a natural predator of HWA.

If you find a hemlock that appears to be infected with HWA, report it to your county extension office or NYS Department of Conservation. Clean equipment that may have contacted infected branches, and do not transport infected material. We are the guardians of God's creation and are called to do our part to protect our environment. It is our responsibility to be aware and safeguard our common home.

**By Jack Lucia**  
St. Mary's Church, Clayton

# New friendship volunteers trained

Mercy Care for the Adirondacks trained and commissioned 12 new friendship volunteers on May 15 at Heaven Hill Farm in Lake Placid.

Volunteers learned about offering friendship and assistance to elders in sessions on healthy aging, spirituality and aging, community resources for elders, how to recognize scams aimed at older adults, understanding the types and signs of dementia, and the effects of isolation and loneliness on the aging population. New Volunteers also heard from experienced Mercy Care Friendship Volunteers who find purposeful service to their elder friends to be meaningful in their own lives. Mercy Care Friendship Volunteers provide informal supports such as assistance with grocery shopping, transportation to medical appointments



Mercy Care's newly trained Friendship Volunteers include (front row, from left) Peter Roland, Cindy Gallagher, Deb Story, Maxine O'Reilly, Paul Collin, (back row, from left) Annabelle Favet, Lorraine Becker, Diane Armstrong-Kane, Peggy Silverstein, Valerie Ireland, Keith Murphy and Marge Murphy.

or social outings, or visiting with an elder in their home.

These new Volunteers will join Mercy Care's more than 100 Friendship Volunteers from Lake Placid, Saranac Lake, and Tupper Lake and surrounding areas who are helping their elder neighbors stay connected to their communities and helping to make their lives a little easier and happier. Volunteers

of all faiths are encouraged and invited to participate.

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

## Can you help?

Mercy Care receives requests for a Friendship Volunteer from elders

themselves, their families, or friends, to help them with informal supports and ease their isolation and loneliness.

Mercy Care's next Friendship Volunteer Training will be held September 25th in Saranac Lake. Mercy Care invites anyone in the Tri-Lakes region and surrounding communities who is interested in becoming a Mercy Care Friendship Volunteer to take the training.

To register, visit [www.adkmercy.org](http://www.adkmercy.org) or contact Lexi Bevilacqua, Mercy Care's program director, at [abevilacqua@adkmercy.org](mailto:abevilacqua@adkmercy.org) or call 518-523-5446.

## Bishop's Public Schedule

**June 5** – 10:30 a.m. – Pontifical Mission Society Board Meeting at Bishop's Residence followed by Lunch

6 p.m. – Annual Banquet for the Staff of Our Lady of Outreach Ministry at Martin Field Club in Ogdensburg

**June 6** – Noon – Mass at St. Mary's Cathedral

**June 7** – 8:15 a.m. – Closing School Year Mass at St. Catherine of Siena Academy in Canton

**June 8** – 5 p.m. – Mass at St. James Major Church in Lake Pleasant

**June 9** – 8 a.m. – Confirmation and First Communion at St. James Major Church in Lake Pleasant with St. Ann's Church in Wells

**June 12-14** – United States Conference of Catholic Bishops Plenary Assembly in Louisville, Kentucky

## Rest in Peace

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

**June 5** – Rev. Charles Donaher, O.S.A., 1984

**June 6** – Msgr. Euclid Elie, 1962; Rev. John E. Silver, 2014

**June 8** – Rev. Anthime Constantineau, 1942; Rev. James J. McGowan, 1961; Deacon Ronald Coryea, 1995

**June 9** – Rev. James Bolton, O.S.A., 1925; Rev. John W. Ryan, 1982

**June 10** – Rev. Augustus Gaudet, O.M.I., 1895; Rev. Alfred J. Boulrice, 1952; Rev. Rupert P. Hajna, O.F.M.Conv., 1979

**June 11** – Rev. Lawrence K. Brady, 1993

## 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](mailto: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](mailto:ccarrara@rcdony.org) Phone: 315-393-2920 ext. 1340.

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

## Protecting God's Children

**The Diocese of Ogdensburg** has scheduled Protecting God's Children training sessions. This 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](http://www.virtus.org). Upcoming sessions: **June 6** – 2 p.m. – St. James School, Gouverneur **June 22** – 9 a.m. – Camp Guggenheim, Saranac Lake



# Bishops' synod synthesis reveals desire for unity

By Jonah McKeown  
Catholic News Agency

A synthesis of feedback received from 35,000 U.S. Catholics as part of the ongoing Synod on Synodality reveals that amid political and theological polarization, many lay Catholics desire unity, both among themselves and among the clergy.

In addition, participants in synodal listening sessions acknowledged that the synodal process has unearthed tensions in the Church, in which some said they “were challenged by the Church’s “indecisiveness,” by “lack of reverence,” and by the perception that the Church is “changing the traditional methods.”

But other participants also expressed concern that some people, including those who identify as LGBT, “feel hurt by the Church and are not willing to come back.”

“This document reflects the sense that there exists among Catholics in the United States a deep desire to rebuild and strengthen our communion as the body of Christ,” Bishop Daniel Flores of Brownsville, Texas, chairman of the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops’ (USCCB) doctrine committee, wrote in the report’s introduction.

“Rebuilding trust where it is frayed involves practicing the humanly graceful art of listening to each other and speaking together. The more we do this, the more we realize that it is the Lord who never fails us. He responds to us and knows well how to accomplish his will through the communion of his imperfect and often wounded servants.”

Pope Francis initiated the Synod on Synodality in October 2021, kicking off a multiyear worldwide Church effort to engage in listening sessions with Catholics. The faithful were asked to submit feedback to their local dioceses on the question “What steps does the Spirit invite us to take in order to grow in our ‘journeying together’?”

The first monthlong session of the Synod on Synodality concluded at the Vatican on Oct. 29, 2023, with the finalization of a 42-page synthesis report. The October 2024 session is expected to produce a final report, which will be presented to Pope Francis for his consideration in issuing any related teaching.

During the interim period between the 2023 and 2024 synod sessions at the Vatican, U.S. dioceses were encouraged to hold two to three listening sessions during Lent and submit a three- to five-page document to the U.S. synod team. Seventy-six percent of U.S. dioceses and eparchies submitted syntheses based on more than 1,000 listening sessions and the contributions of over 35,000 participants.

The National Synthesis document for the “interim stage” follows the previous September 2022 release of a national synthesis for the synod’s diocesan phase, which saw about 700,000 people participate, out of 66.8 million Catholics in the country.

“Our Church might be a little messy”

As synthesized in the May 28 report, many of the reports from the listening sessions expressed a wish for an “increased focus on formation for evangelization ... a need for stronger catechesis and formation, focusing specifically on programs for evangelization, Catholic social teaching, and the role of the family.”

Also emphasized was the importance of clerical and lay Catholics working together. “It is important for laypeople to rely on their pastors and help their pastors, and it is important for pastors to rely on their laypeople.”

Participants noted that parishes with “numerous small faith communities, Bible studies, and prayer groups prove most successful in welcoming and integrating people from diverse backgrounds” in a manner “beyond superficial welcoming.” The role of Catholic schools in evangelizing the community was also widely recognized.

Many participants said they were thankful for the witness of those who serve as priests, religious, and consecrated men and women as well as those who are discerning their vocations, but they are also concerned about “the lack of vocations and the need for vocation awareness, encouragement to discern vocations, and formation of discernment communities.”

Participants also expressed hope for priests to be united, something the bishops expressed hope for as well. “Division in the priesthood will bring division in the Church,” one participant commented.

## CATHOLIC WORLD AT A GLANCE

### Diocese of Buffalo to merge a third of its parishes

The Diocese of Buffalo announced it will be merging over a third of its 160 parishes, calling the move an effort to “reinvigorate the Catholic faith in western New York.” Buffalo Bishop Michael Fisher said in a May 28 video statement that 34% of its parishes – about 55 parishes – will be merged in a process of “rightsizing and reshaping.” Determinations about which parishes are being shut down will be made between Aug. 15 and Sept. 1. According to Fisher, the mergers are necessitated by a shortage of priests, declining Mass attendance, aging congregations, and financial difficulties brought on by clergy abuse lawsuits. A fact sheet available on the diocesan website says that nearly half – 49% – of parishes in the diocese have seen a decline in registered households, while 60% of parishioners are over the age of 60. Sacraments are also down in the diocese with 52% of parishes performing only one baptism a month.

### NY AG sued for ‘targeting’ pro-life pregnancy centers

The nonprofit law firm Alliance Defending Freedom (ADF) and others are suing New York Attorney General Letitia James for allegedly “using her power to censor pro-life pregnancy centers” because they promote abortion pill reversal, according to a Tuesday press release. The naturally occurring hormone progesterone can be used to combat the abortifacient effect of the first abortion pill. James sued 11 faith-based, pro-life pregnancy help centers earlier this month alleging that the centers promoted misleading statements about abortion pill reversal. ADF filed the suit along with The National Institute of Family and Life Advocates (NIFLA) on behalf of two nonprofit pro-life pregnancy centers. “New York is intentionally denying women the freedom to continue their pregnancies by censoring those who promote it. They are forcing women to follow through with an abortion – even if they don’t want to,” said Thomas Glessner, president and founder of NIFLA, in a statement shared with CNA.

### Vatican apologizes after pope’s remark on gay men

The Vatican on Tuesday issued an apology after Pope Francis’ use of an offensive word in Italian regarding seminarians who identify as gay. Matteo Bruni, the Holy See spokesman, said in Tuesday’s press statement that the Holy Father was “aware of the articles recently published about a conversation, behind closed doors, with the bishops” of the Italian Episcopal Conference (CEI). Italian media reported that Pope Francis had met with the CEI on May 20 in the Vatican’s Synodal Hall. At that meeting the pope was asked about the admission of declared gay men to the seminary. Telling the bishops that gay men should not be admitted to priestly formation, the pope argued “there is too much ‘frocigginne’ in seminaries,” a slur translated as “faggotry” or “faggotness.” Bruni told journalists that the pope “never intended to offend or express himself in homophobic terms, and he apologizes to those who felt offended by the use of a term reported by others.”

## VIRTUAL EVENTS

## BROWN BAG SERIES

In preparation for the Divine Renovation Unlocked event on Aug. the Office of Evangelization will offer two options to become more familiar with the Divine Renovation process of bringing a parish from maintenance to mission.

**Sessions:** Option 1, Divine Renovation, 5 Wednesdays starting June 12 at Noon. We will use videos of an interview with Father Mallon to introduce the principles of Divine Renovation and how they can help inspire a process of parish renewal, form intentional disciples, and equip us to transform parish life. Option 2, Reading Diving Renovation, 9 Mondays starting June 17 at 6:30 p.m. Read and discuss the book's 7 chapters in 9 sessions. The book can be purchased online from Amazon or second hand from AbeBooks or other second hand online book sellers.

**Place:** virtually through Microsoft TEAMS (similar to ZOOM)

**Contact:** To register, go to [www.rcdony.org/dr](http://www.rcdony.org/dr). For more information, contact Marika at [mdonders@rcdony.org](mailto:mdonders@rcdony.org).

## FRIENDSHIP GROUP MEETING

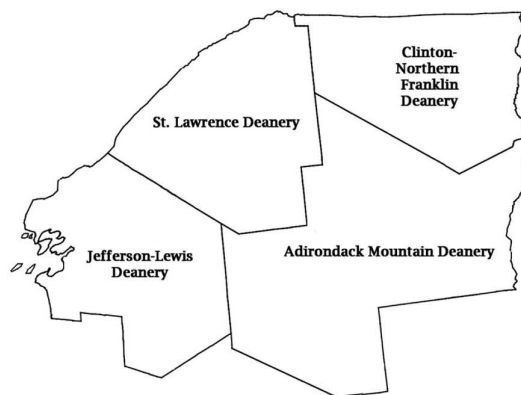
Father Bill Neubecker, OMV, will talk with us about the first half of "Finding Peace in the Storm," by Dan Burke and answer questions.

**Date:** June 13

**Time:** 7 p.m.

**Place:** Zoom

**Features:** Following the death of his spiritual director, St. Alphonsus Liguori penned timeless advice in a letter to one of his spiritual daughters, and it became the famous work titled "Uniformity with God's Will." Dan Burke breaks open St. Alphonsus's eighteenth-century classic for you. You will acquire tips on what to do during periods of aridity or desolation. Above all, you will discover how to enjoy peace of heart in all circumstances and foster loving conversation with God. By learning how to entrust yourself fully to God's holy will,



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@northcountycatholic.org](mailto:news@northcountycatholic.org).

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

you will experience His divine embrace and the fulfillment of your deepest desires.

**Contact:** To order the book, visit [sophiainstitute.com](http://sophiainstitute.com) and enter Friendship25 at checkout to receive a 25% discount. Sign up at <https://mailchi.mp/sophiainstitute/friendship-groups>. You will receive the Zoom link and discussion questions about a week prior to the meeting. Questions? Please contact Mary Beth Bracy at [mbracy@sophiainstitute.com](mailto:mbracy@sophiainstitute.com)

## CLINTON NORTHERN FRANKLIN

## BAZAAR

Fort Covington — St. Mary's of the Fort will have their Annual Bazaar.

**Schedule:** June 7, 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. and June 8, 7 a.m. to 3 p.m.

**Features:** Gift Raffle, Yard Sale, Flea Market Vendors, 50/50 Raffle, Food Concession, Thrift Store Bargains.

**Contact:** For more information please contact the parish office at 518-358-2500.

## CONCERT

Peru — Benefit concert to be held for the North Country Mission of Hope.

**Date:** June 9

**Time:** 7 p.m.

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

**Cost:** Donation with all proceeds used to support ongoing

projects of the North Country Mission of Hope.

**Features:** The band, Towne Meeting, known for their powerful vocal harmonies and engaging performances, will be performing. Oriented in folk, their music branches out into many other genres, from Americana to classic acoustic rock and sometimes country and bluegrass. Come, relax and enjoy an evening of fine music while helping our neighbors here and around the globe.

## GOLF TOURNAMENT

Peru — The 36th Annual Peru Knights of Columbus Council 7273 William J. "Bill" McBride Jr. Memorial Golf Tournament will be held.

**Date:** June 14

**Time:** Shotgun start at 10 a.m.

**Place:** Adirondack Golf and Country Club

**Cost:** 4 Person Scramble, \$300. Includes, Green fees, cart, awards & beverage

**Features:** Awards for 1st, 2nd and 3rd place teams. Prizes for the longest drive and closest to the pin. Chance to win a New vehicle with a Hole in One sponsored by Bailey Ford.

**Contact:** Register by June 1 by contacting Greg Lombard at 518-593-2652, email [gnetlombard@charter.net](mailto:gnetlombard@charter.net) or Scarlett

McBride 518-572-8790 or email [scar6064@charter.net](mailto:scar6064@charter.net)

## 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:** June 2, July 7, Aug. 4.

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

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

**Contact:** 315-348-6260

## HEALING MASS

Clayton — St. Mary's Church to have their annual Healing Mass and Antoine Tetrault Memorial Service.

**Date:** June 8

**Time:** 11 a.m.

**Features:** Father Arthur LaBaff and Father Frank Natale will be the presiders. The Sacrament of the Sick will be offered during the Mass. Prayer teams will be available after the Mass for individual prayer needs. Refreshments will follow the Mass in the Parish Center. All are welcome.

**Contact:** For more information, contact the parish office at 315-686-3398 or [claytonsec@rcdony.org](mailto:claytonsec@rcdony.org).

## 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:** June 9

**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

## OPEN HOUSE AND PICNIC

Highmarket — The St. Patrick's Restoration Society will have an Open House and Picnic.

**Date:** June 9

**Time:** Noon Mass with Father Marullo

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

**Cost:** Donation \$10

**Features:** Hamburgers and Hot Dogs, Bake sale and 50/50, Basket Raffles and door prizes.

## ST. LAWRENCE

## ST. JAMES RAFFLE

Gouverneur — St. James School to have summer raffle with a chance to win \$10,000. Only 350 tickets will be sold.

**Cost:** Donation price of \$100 each

**Features:** Grand Prize, \$10,000; 2nd Prize, \$5000; 3rd Prize, \$2500; 4th Prize, \$1500, 5th Prize, \$500. Plus, there will be 5 early bird drawings for \$100 each on June 30th. Grand Prize drawing will be held Sept. 8 at the chicken bar-b-que being held at the school. All tickets remain in the drum and are eligible for every prize drawing.

**Contact:** Tickets are available by calling the church office at 315-287-0114.

## CHICKEN BBQ

Canton — St. Mary's to have their annual Chicken BBQ.

**Date:** June 9

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

**Cost:** Full Meal, \$15; Half a Chicken only, \$10

**Menu:** 1/2 BBQ Chicken, Potato Salad, Macaroni Salad, Coleslaw, Dinner Roll, Brownies

**Features:** Drive-Thru at 2 Powers Street with picnic seating available on lawn.

**Contact:** Questions? Contact the Parish Office at 315-386-2543.

## MONTHLY BRUNCH

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

**Date:** June 9 (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;

CONTINUED ON PAGE 9



## GET THE POPCORN

# 'Thérèse - The Story of a Soul'

Wide screens, special effects beyond the pale, stunning video and wrap around audio punctuate today's cinema experiences. With so much going on in a movie, remembering the plot or the theme of the movie may be difficult.

Thérèse, an early 21st century film presenting the life of St. Thérèse of Lisieux, the Little Flower, is an underwhelming cinematic experience but, at the same time, an overwhelming faith experience. Remember Joe Friday in the 1950s TV series "Dragnet"? His famous line - "just the facts, ma'am" characterizes this plain but deeply spiritual presentation of her life.

Those interested in viewing the life of the Little Flower but who want the latest in cinematic pizzazz will not find it in this production. Those

who want to experience the faith life of a saint will find satisfaction in this film.

The classic definition of love is "willing the good of the other." God wills our good. We, made in the image and likeness of God, must imitate God by extending that love (willing the good of the other) to all in our lives. That is not always easy, but that's what "love one another" means.

St. Thérèse loved others especially in difficult circumstances. Upon entering the convent at age 15, she was the youngest sister in the community. She exercised love to all even when the other person came across as a bully or ornery. In fact, on one occasion, one such

sister asked Thérèse why she was always smiling. Her response reflected her love for the other no matter what.



Msgr. Robert H. Aucoin

The Martin family had five girls, the father, and the mother who died when Thérèse was quite young. Faith and attachment to the Church marked the Martins' daily lives and activities. In expressing her desire for holiness and to live as a saint,

Thérèse compared herself to a grain of sand in contrast with a mountain.

Early in her life, there were the stirrings of a religious vocation that eventually led her to the local Discalced Carmelite monastery. Many objected to her entering at such a young age, but

the same spirit of persistence that marked her maturing process outweighed those objections. She deeply believed that a call to consecrated life with the Carmelites was her pathway to holiness.

Thérèse experienced difficulty in the convent but her deep commitment to love others provided her with the stamina needed to persevere. However, even before entering the convent she experienced health issues that ultimately led to her death on September 30, 1897, at the age of 24.

Thérèse, commonly known as the Little Flower, penned her spiritual reflections compiled in the book, *Story of a Soul*. The movie illustrates her thoughts and spiritual journey along with actual citations from the book.

Spend time with Thérèse in this movie as well as in her writings. Her special journey may seem unreal and unattainable in today's world. However, the opposite is true. Holiness is rooted in our attachment to Christ especially in the Most Holy Eucharist. Thérèse discovered and embraced Christ in this way. So can we. The movie can be streamed for free from formed.com available through many parishes. It is also available to rent on Amazon.

"Jesus Thirsts: The Miracle of the Eucharist" is a new movie available at Regal Cinemas in Watertown on June 4 and 5 and in Plattsburgh on June 5. Don't miss it.

Our next movie to discuss in this column will be a 1950s classic - "On the Waterfront" available from various streaming sources.

## Around the diocese

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 8  
Take-outs available

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

### DIOCESAN EVENTS

#### DOVS RAFFLE

The Diocese of Ogdensburg Vacation Society (DOVS) is having a Raffle from Sunday, April 21-June 20, 2024 to support promoting the culture of vocations in the Diocese. On June 20, DOVS will make a Pilgrimage to St. Anne's Shrine in Vermont to pray for vocations.

**Cost:** The cost of the tickets is \$5.00 or 5 tickets for \$20.00.

**Features:** 1st Prize--\$500.; 2nd Prize--Quilt and Rocking Chair; 3rd Prize--\$50 gift card, \$25. Visa Gift Card, \$25.00 Gift Card to Walmart.

**Contact:** For any questions,

contact Constance Randall, connierandall47@yahoo.com (315) 783-0574.

#### CAMP GUGGENHEIM

Saranac Lake -- Registration is now open for Camp Guggenheim.

**Schedule:** Session 1: June 30 to July 3 (11-13 yrs old); Session 2: July 7 to July 12 (12-15 yrs old) \$425; Session 3: July 14 to July 19 (12-15 yrs old) \$425; Session 4: July 21 to July 26 (12-15 yrs old) \$425; Session 5: July 28 to Aug.

2 (12-15 yrs old) \$425; Session 6: Aug. 4 to Aug. 9 (16-18 yrs old) \$425

**Cost:** Session 1, \$200 per Camper. Session 2-6, \$425 per camper

**Features:** Since 1972, young people have called Guggenheim "home away from home." Located on the shores of lower Saranac Lake, Summer Camp Guggenheim is a great place to make friends,

draw closer to Christ and have a whole bunch of fun in a natural setting.

**Contact:** For more information or to register go to [www.rcdony.org/youth/camp](http://www.rcdony.org/youth/camp)



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## SUNDAY'S SCRIPTURE

## Where are we on our journey?

"Where are you?" What an interesting question coming from God. Why would God ask such a question? Doesn't God know everything? God knew Adam's geographical location even before Adam told him that he was hiding in the garden. Adam acknowledged that he had done something wrong.



Msgr. Robert H. Aucoin

So, look at God's question in a different way. "Adam, where are you now that you have wasted your patrimony, now that you have injured your relationship with me, now that you have signed and sealed a declaration of independence from me, now that I am no longer the center of your life?" "Are you better off now than you were before you sinned?"

Couldn't God ask us the same question? Where are we on our journey of faith, on our journey with God? Before the sin, mankind had a strong filial relationship with God. After all, we are made in the image of God. Sin changed that relationship.

The relationship changed because Adam changed, not because God changed. God is love, love which never changes. Adam realized the evil of his act. So, out of fear, fear which did not have before sinning, he hid from God.

How did Adam react to God's question about why he sinned? Adam had the distinct "honor" of being the first person to "pass the buck." He blamed Eve, who in turn blamed the serpent. See how easily we can pass the buck. Like Adam and Eve, we act likewise when we do not want to take

responsibility for our behavior. Ascribing blame to someone else magnifies how guilty we really are.

When we sin, do we hide from God? When we sin, do we blame someone else or something else? That approach deviously removes our personal guilt and gives us a ticket to get on with our lives to absolve our own guilt. After all, when we avoid the Sacrament of Reconciliation, we hide

June 9

**Tenth Sunday  
of Ordinary Time**

**READINGS**

Genesis 3:9-15

2 Corinthians 4:13-5:1

Mark 3:20-35

from God and appropriate the blame elsewhere.

Also, in avoiding the sacrament, we don't give God the chance to express his love for us by his forgiving our sins. Also, in avoiding the Sacrament of Reconciliation, we make ourselves judge and jury, and place our-

selves at the same level as God.

We believe there are other ways to obtain forgiveness of our sins such as prayer, fasting, receiving the Eucharist, works of charity. For serious sin, the sacrament is definitely required, but regular reception of the sacrament when we recognize our many less serious faults can give us the power to answer the question God asked of Adam: "Where are you? Where are you on your spiritual journey? Where are you in applying the salvific act of Christ to

your daily life? Where are you in letting God love you?"

At the end of today's Gospel, Jesus exclaims: "Here are my mother and my brothers. For whoever does the will of God is my brother and sister and mother." In other words, Jesus does not reject his natural family. Rather, he is opening his family membership to all who do the will of God. Let's make sure that our spiritual ID card clearly states who we are: sons and daughters of God, brothers and sisters of Jesus Christ.

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**THIS IS A JOINT COLLECTION WITH THE  
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THE WEEKEND OF JUNE 8 & 9, 2024**





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

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

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

## Congratulations to our new priests!



Photo by Jesse Sovie/North Country Catholic  
**Father Carter G. Pierce and Father Douglas A. Schirmer during the  
May 25 ordination.**

The Pontifical Mission Societies of the Diocese of Ogdensburg, Inc. is excited to congratulate our new priests on their ordination to the Roman Catholic priesthood!

### Father Douglas A. Shirmer & Father Carter G. Pierce

Thank you for answering God's call to serve His people as a priest of the Diocese of Ogdensburg! May God bless you in your vocation and the fruits of your labor.

We look forward to working with you both.

## CALLLED TO SERVE With commitment comes responsibilities

When we are little, we start to appreciate that certain things happen with some regularity. We are told "it is time for a nap" for instance. We go down for a nap. That particular habit, napping, will come back around when you get older by the way.

Things become second nature like eating with a fork, doing what your mother or father says to do when they say to do it, going to church on Sunday. When we are young, we learn to comply with those things. We are beginning to learn obedience.

Commitment comes a little later. We learn to be on time for the school bus, or to do homework and turn it in when the teacher says, or to be at rehearsal or team practice when we are supposed to be there, maybe even a few minutes early.

Some would argue that is merely obedience, but any kid who accepted a role in a school play or to a sports team knows there is a certain amount of commitment involved, too.

Back in my college days, I was involved a little in the student government. A book I read to prepare me for that part of my life was entitled Student's Rights and Responsibilities.

It was the responsibilities part of the book that grabbed my attention.

Sure, we had or perceived we had rights, but those rights came with responsibilities. By extension I came to understand that commitment comes

with responsibility, too. Perhaps I learned this over the years from my parents and teachers. The teaching lit up like a 100-watt incandescent bulb in my brain.

It was not quite a two-by-four to the head moment, but the awakening was significant.

The responsibilities that come with a commitment are not always easy. Marriage is a good example. Husband and wife commit in their vows to love and honor each other all the days of their lives. That commitment implies a lot of responsibility, one the couple cannot take lightly.

The commitment clergy and religious make to God and the people of God is not easy either. It carries a lifetime of responsibilities. A lifetime of highs and lows, of joys and doubts.

Commitment struck me at the ordinations to the priesthood of Deacon Carter Pierce and Deacon Doug Schirmer. They are Father Carter and Father Doug now.

May the Lord shine his face on you Fathers. You have committed to the priesthood with all its responsibilities. In the book of Isaiah, we read:

*As a young man marries a virgin,  
your Builder shall marry you;  
and as a bridegroom rejoices in his  
bride so shall your God rejoice in you.*

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



**Deacon  
Kevin Mastellon**

## OBITUARIES

**Alexandria Bay** — Donna A. (Senecal) Millett, 96; Mass of Christian Burial June 8, 2024 at St. Cyril's Church; burial in Barnes Settlement Cemetery.

**AuSable Forks** — Joan Elizabeth Liberty, 92; Mass of Christian Burial May 29, 2024 at Holy Name Church; burial in Holy Name Cemetery.

**Canton** — Nancy Ann (Richey) Jones, 80; Mass of Christian Burial May 31, 2024 at St. Mary's Church;

burial in St. Mary's Cemetery.

**Clayton** — Joan M. (Ely) Bristol, 95; Mass of Christian Burial May 31, 2024 at St. Mary's Church; burial in Grove Cemetery.

**Croghan** — Beverly A. McCrickert, 94; Mass of Christian Burial May 31, 2024 at St. Stephen's Church; burial in St. Stephen's Cemetery.

**Massena** — Albert N. Nicola, 82; Mass of Christian Burial June 1,

2024 at Sacred Heart Church.

**Ogdensburg** — Mary "Pinky" L. (Corrice) McDonald, 88; Mass of Christian Burial May 31, 2024 at Notre Dame Church; burial in Oswegatchie Mausoleum.

**Ogdensburg** — Claudia J. (Zelka) Quinn, 78; Mass of Christian Burial June 15, 2024 at St. Mary's Cathedral.

**Ogdensburg** — Jean (Dickson)

Thornhill, 92; Memorial Services June 29, 2024 at St. Joseph's Nursing Home Chapel; burial in Pine Hill Cemetery, Heuvelton.

**Peru** — Randy John LaForest, 68; Graveside services May 30, 2024 at St. Augustine's Cemetery.

**Potsdam** — Ann Jeannine (Sumbler) Austin, 92; Mass of Christian Burial May 31, 2024 at St. Mary's Church; burial in St. Mary's Cemetery.

**Rouses Point** — George A. Rivers, 88; Mass of Christian Burial May 30, 2024 at St. Patrick's Church; burial in St. Patrick's Cemetery.

**Saranac Lake** — George C. Tolhurst, 93; Mass of Christian Burial June 8, 2024 at St. Bernard's Church; burial in St. Bernard's Cemetery.

**Tupper Lake** — Terry J. Lemieux, 75; Mass of Christian Burial May 18, 2024 at St. Alphonsus Church.

# NEW PRIESTS ORDAINED

Photos by Jesse Sovie & Darcy Fargo



(Above left) Bishop Terry R. LaValley embraces Father Douglas A. Schirmer as part of the fraternal kiss of peace welcoming the newly ordained to the Order of Priests. (Above middle) Bishop LaValley hands over the bread and wine to Father Carter G. Pierce. (Far right, top) Bishop LaValley lays hands on then Deacon Pierce, conferring the gift of the Holy Spirit and ordaining him to the priesthood. (Far right, middle) Father Joseph W. Giroux vests the newly ordained Father Schirmer.



(Above left) Father Douglas A. Schirmer gives his first blessing to Bishop Terry R. LaValley. (Above right) Father Carter G. Pierce is greeted by his parents, Kelvin and Carolyn Pierce, after the new priest said a blessing over them. (Far right, bottom) Bishop Douglas J. Lucia, bishop of Syracuse and former Vocations director for the Diocese of Ogdensburg, looks on as Father Pierce and Schirmer are ordained.