

## INSIDE THIS ISSUE

World Day  
for Consecrated  
Life | Page 3

Law barring men from  
women's sports  
upheld | Page 6

The Diocese of Ogdensburg Volume 79 Number 38

# NORTH COUNTRY CATHOLIC

JANUARY 29, 2025

## Bishop's Fund Appeal meets 2024 goal

Through the generous support of more than 6,200 households across the diocese, the 2024 Bishop's Fund Appeal has surpassed its goal of \$1,330,000.

This generosity will allow the Diocese of Ogdensburg to continue to its mission to meet others on their journey of faith through the proclamation of the Gospel, the celebration of the Eucharist and sacraments, and in the loving service of our neighbors. The programs and ministries of the Bishop's Fund Appeal encourage deeper prayer life and spiritual knowledge, strengthen families and welcome those who feel marginalized.

FULL STORY, PAGE 4

## WINNING WORDS



The Knights of Columbus Father John Cosmic Council 291 (Carthage) recently held its annual Essay Contest for high school students. Winners for the essay contest were selected by the council's trustees. Grand Knight Tom Wojcikowski presented the essay winners with their prize checks after the December 14 Mass at St. James. The winners are Adam Workman, Matt Clarkson, and Parker Richards. Adam and Parker have written essays and won the contest for two years in a row. The essays were themed around "what values our political leaders should have."

## EXPRESSION OF HOPE



Our Lady of Grace parishioner Maureen Holleran created a jubilee-year painting, which was on display for the Christmas season at St. John the Evangelist church, Morristown. The painting will make stops in the parish's other churches as part of the 2025 Jubilee.

FULL STORY, PAGE 5

# Pope: Jesus gives us 'grace of not fearing'

By Kristina Millare  
Catholic News Agency

Pope Francis on Wednesday continued his yearlong jubilee catechesis series on "Jesus Christ Our Hope," emphasizing that those who trust in God have no reason to fear.

"The presence of the Lord always gives us this grace of not fearing," the Holy Father said at his Jan. 22 general audience. "He says to Mary: 'Do not be afraid! ... And he says to us too: 'Do not be afraid, keep going; do not be afraid!'"

Reflecting on St. Luke's Gospel account of the annunciation and incarnation of Jesus Christ, the pope encouraged Catholics to constantly live in "the presence of the Lord" by welcoming the "Word of God" — just like the Blessed Virgin Mary — into their lives.

"Mary welcomes the Word in her own flesh and thus launches the greatest mission ever entrusted to a woman, to a human creature," he told his listeners. "She places herself in service: She is full of everything, not like a slave but as

a collaborator of God the Father."

"Let ourselves open our ears to the divine Word and to welcome it and cherish it, so that it may transform our hearts into tabernacles of his presence, in hospitable homes where hope grows," he added.

After greeting the groups of international pilgrims in the Vatican's Paul VI Audience Hall, the pope asked people to pray for the people of Los Angeles, who are still suffering from the ongoing wildfires.

The Holy Father also asked

people to pray for peace in Ukraine, Myanmar, Israel, and Palestine.

At the end of the general audience, the Pope also shared news he heard from Gaza: "Yesterday I called — I do it every day — the parish in Gaza: They were happy! There are 600 people there, between the parish and school."

"And they told me, 'Today we had lentils with chicken.' Something they were not used to doing in these times: just some vegetables, something ... They were happy!"

NORTH  
COUNTRY  
CATHOLICPO Box 326  
Ogdensburg, NY 13669  
USPS 0039-3400**Bishop Terry**  
**R. LaValley**  
President**Rev. Joseph A. Morgan**  
Vice President**James D. Crowley**  
Secretary-Treasurer  
Darcy L. FargoEditor &  
Communications Director

Publish  
45 issues  
per year:  
Weekly except  
skipping every  
other week be-  
ginning July through August  
and skipping one week in  
December by the  
Diocese of Ogdensburg.  
622 Washington Street,  
Ogdensburg, N.Y. 13669.

**Editorial Office:**622 Washington Street,  
Ogdensburg, N.Y. 13669.**Telephone:**

(315) 608-7556

**E-mail:**news@northcountry  
catholic.org**Entered at the****Post Office:**Ogdensburg, NY  
13669 and additional mailing  
offices as  
Periodical Postage.**Subscription:****For one year:**In-Diocese Rate: \$27  
Outside of Diocese Rate: \$30

Matters for publication  
should be addressed to  
PO Box 326  
Ogdensburg, NY 13669  
and should be received by  
Wednesday prior to  
publication. Paper is  
printed each Friday;  
dateline is Wednesday.  
Member, Catholic  
Press Association.

**POSTMASTER:**Send address changes to  
North Country Catholic,  
PO Box 326  
Ogdensburg, NY  
13669-0326

# Yes, I'm biased

"There's no such thing as unbiased journalism."

I say that any time someone complains to me, a newspaper person, about biases in media.

I always use the same example:

"Whether you say, 'Columbus discovered America,' 'Columbus invaded America,' or 'Columbus encountered America,' they all mean something different and have different connotations. Language

is biased."

Our words matter. Our language matters.

**Darcy L. Fargo**

In Church circles, I often hear the phrase, sometimes attributed to St. Francis of Assisi, "Preach the Gospel at all times, and if necessary, use words."

I agree that it's important that we live according to Gospel values and show with our actions that Christ is at the center of our lives, but I think the words

are almost always necessary (I'm tempted to say 'words are always necessary,' but I'm sure there's some exception).

Words are how we share with others what God has done in our lives. It's how we teach others about Christ and about how he was crucified and died, and how he rose from the dead and saved us from sin and death. It's how we talk about God's love.

It's easy to feel like we don't have the right words to share Jesus and to share our faith with others. I'm a word nerd,

and my career has been focused on words and language, and I feel that way.

God's given me a couple opportunities to talk about Him with people who aren't people of faith in the last couple of weeks.

I still feel awkward and inadequate as I'm talking, and I'm not sure if anything I said had any impact, but I keep finding that the Holy Spirit gives me the words.

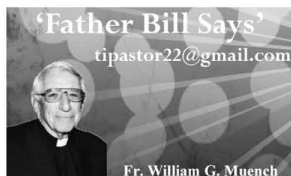
And at least those words are biased toward Jesus.

## Considering prayer

One of my tasks this week is preparing a presentation for this year's RCIA group on "prayer." So, today, I thought I would share with you some of my ideas that I hope to share with them. This is the group that is spending this year preparing to enter the Catholic Church.

I have decided as an opening for this presentation to have a few minutes of silence. I want this to be a time of calm quiet as preparation for this class. I also want to demonstrate that silence can be a prayer, a time to open our hearts to recognize the presence of God. I believe and hope that the Lord's love and peace will touch their hearts.

I then plan to begin the presentation just as Jesus did. The Gospels tell us that on one occasion the apostles asked Jesus to teach them how to pray. Jesus then taught them the Lord's Prayer. This prayer is now a part of the spirituality of all Christians.



The Lord's Prayer is a profound prayer, and these are the words of Jesus. This prayer keeps our attention on God. The prayer opens our hearts to the very presence of the Lord. Jesus teaches us that when we pray to God we should begin "Our Father." We are called by the Lord to establish a relationship with our God. He tells us that God wants to be our Father.

Then we begin to praise our God "who art in Heaven." We remember "Hallow be his name." We pray "Thy Kingdom come, and Thy will be done." We ask God to "give us our daily bread" - remembering the gift of the Sacred Eucharist. Then we bargain with God: "forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us."

Prayer is about placing

ourselves in the Lord's Presence. We do know how active our minds are; we are so easily distracted. So, words can help to draw us closer to the Lord. The words of Sacred Scripture can help to focus our attention on the Lord. The Scriptures can be our prayers. They can keep us close to the Lord. There are also many books of prayers that keep our attention on our Lord and Savior.

The official prayer of our Catholic Church is called the Divine Office. There are the prayers of the monks in their monasteries. They pray this Office every day, every hour. The Divine Office is also the daily prayer of the deacons and priests of the Church. The interesting thing is that nowadays everyone can find and pray these prayers of the Divine Office using an app on our cell phone.

We begin to pray with the Sign of the Cross. This is a prayer. This gesture is a beautiful moment of prayer. A prayer to seek

God's support and help. I also want them to understand that our best prayer is our participation in the celebration of the Holy Mass. This is also a sacrament, a time to find the presence of God as we remember the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus and a time to receive the body and blood of Our Lord in Holy Communion.

Our Church has many more prayer opportunities, like spending time in adoration before the Blessed Sacrament in Church, the recitation of the rosary, the Stations of the Cross - these are again times to place ourselves in the presence of our God, a time for God to find us, a time to realize that God has always loved us first.

Each time we turn to the Lord in prayer is a time to dedicate our prayers for someone - family or friend, someone we have promised to remember in prayer, someone in need. In fact, we can pray for our whole world or country, for peace and hope for all.

## Fasting before Mass



### FROM WONDERING TO WONDER IN WORSHIP

With Father Bryan Stitt, Diocesan Director of Worship

**Editor's Note:** In celebration of the Eucharistic Revival, Father Bryan D. Stitt, director of Worship for the Diocese of Ogdensburg, will answer questions about worship, the Eucharist and related topics. To submit a question, email [bstitt@rcdony.org](mailto:bstitt@rcdony.org).

**Father, I heard someone talking about fasting before Mass recently. I thought the Church did away with that years ago. Can you explain?**

Great question. Thanks for asking. Why would we fast from the goods of the earth if they are in fact "good"? Because there is something better. Each Ash Wednesday and Good Friday, the Church asks us to fast by eating less than two full meals. We also fast for at least an hour before receiving Holy Communion. This is such a simple request that sometimes we're tempted to not take it seriously. But fasting is important.

Here's why: Fasting is allowing us to hunger for something more. To give up something delicious or appealing is good in that it makes room in our lives for something even better - God. If you're like me, you're aware that after a few weeks of Christmas feasting, things don't fit the way they are supposed to (my collar is literally a little tight these days).

But the benefit of fasting is much more than just making us feel better in our own skin. It strengthens our minds, our spirits, and our souls. If we cannot say no to that which is appealing, we are enslaved to them. We want to live freely as God's sons and daughters, so we fast.

So fasting isn't just about limiting what we eat - though it is that. It's also drink, social media, music, noise, video games, and shopping. Not giving into every urge is to make room for God.

## February 2 is World Day for Consecrated Life

By Sister Mary Eamon Lyng, SSI  
Diocesan Vocations Coordinator

*"The Church must keep the lamp of hope burning and clearly visible, so that it may continue to shine as a sure sign of salvation."*

- Pope Francis.

This "lamp of hope" must be kept burning bright and shining in the world today.

As we begin the Jubilee Year of Hope: Pilgrims of Hope on the Path of Peace, the Church celebrates World Day for Consecrated Life on the Feast of the Presentation of the Lord in the Temple on February 2.

The Church honors consecrated men and women who have radically set aside their lives to serve Christ and His Church by means of their vowed lives of poverty, chastity and obedience within their respective religious community or living in the world for the sake of the Gospel.

Let us pray for each of our religious congregations who continually pray for and serve the needs of the People of the North Country and to pray for more vocations to the consecrated life.

### Why do we celebrate?

Consecrated women and men — together with Catholics in general — are invited to celebrate the World Day for Consecrated Life Feb. 2.

Here are a few things Catholics should know about it.

### When is it celebrated?

The Catholic Church celebrates the World Day for Consecrated Life Feb. 2, the feast of the Presentation of the Lord, also known as Candlemas or the feast of the Purification of the Blessed Virgin Mary. Just as candles are blessed on this day to symbolize Christ as the light of the world, "So too, those in consecrated life are called to reflect the light of Jesus Christ to all peoples," the USCCB says.

### When did it begin?

Pope Saint John Paul II established this day of prayer for women and men in consecrated life in 1997.

Consecrated life, he said, "is at the very heart of the Church as a decisive element for her mission, since it 'manifests the inner nature of the Christian calling' and the striving of the whole Church as Bride towards union with her one Spouse," citing his apostolic exhortation *Vita Consecrata*.

### How should Catholics respond?

Catholics should recognize the day with prayer and gratitude. "Please pray for all those who have made commitments in the consecrated life, and be sure to thank them on their special day," the USCCB encourages. "May they continue to be inspired by Jesus Christ and respond generously to God's gift of their vocation."

Source: Catholic News Agency

### WORLD DAY FOR CONSECRATED LIFE ~ FEBRUARY 2



*Thank You!*

Brothers and Sisters,

Thank you for your presence and gifts to the Church of Ogdensburg

The Vocation Office



Diocese of Ogdensburg

Sisters of the Cross of Chavanod, Cadyville, Sackets Harbor, Watertown  
Sisters of St. Joseph, Carthage, Ogdensburg, Ticonderoga, Watertown  
Sisters of Mercy, Lake Placid, Plattsburgh, Watertown  
Sisters of Mary, Mother of the Church, Lisbon  
Sisters of Charity of the Blessed Virgin Mary, Massena  
Daughters of Charity of the Sacred Heart of Jesus, Plattsburgh  
Dominican Sisters of Hope, Plattsburgh  
Sisters of Charity of St. Louis, Plattsburgh  
Sisters Adorers of the Precious Blood, Watertown  
Missionaries of the Sacred Heart, Watertown  
Consecrated Virgins Lived in the World, Plattsburgh, NY and St. Albans, VT  
Third Order Penitents of St. Francis, Inlet, NY



### North Country Catholic has Green option

Our E-paper is now easier to read online. You can receive your *North Country Catholic* in your e-mail rather than in the mail. Fill in your information and send this form to:

☐ Please switch my current NCC subscription to E-mail

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

E-mail \_\_\_\_\_

PO Box 326

Ogdensburg,

NY 13669

OR Call

Christine at

315-608-7556

to make the  
change

# Bishop's Fund Appeal surpasses goal

By Valerie Mathews

Director of Bishop's Fund Appeal & Stewardship

Through the generous support of more than 6,200 households across the diocese, the 2024 Bishop's Fund Appeal has surpassed its goal of \$1,330,000.

This generosity will allow the Diocese of Ogdensburg to continue to its mission to meet others on their journey of faith through the proclamation of the Gospel, the celebration of the Eucharist and sacraments, and in the loving service of our neighbors. The programs and ministries of the Bishop's Fund Appeal encourage deeper prayer life and spiritual knowledge, strengthen our families and welcome those who feel disaffected or marginalized.

"I am profoundly grateful to the many parishioners in our North Country churches who have so generously supported the mission of the Diocese of Ogdensburg with their contributions to the annual Bishop's Fund Appeal," said Bishop Terry R. LaValley. "On behalf of the many individuals and families we serve through our programs, ministries, and outreach efforts: THANK YOU! I also wish to extend my deep appreciation to our priests and deacons whose strong leadership and personal contributions support this vital appeal each year."

As of January 23, the total gifts received are \$1,375,614.55 with an additional \$90,866.65

remaining in pledges promised. The Bishop's Fund Office will continue to receive payments on pledges until the close of the fiscal year on June 30.

The Bishop's Fund Appeal continues to provide the following programs and ministries of the Diocese of Ogdensburg: Education of Seminarians; Family Life Ministry; Natural Family Planning; Respect Life Ministry; Formation for Ministry Program; Office of the New Evangelization; Continuing Education and Formation of Priests; Priests' Graduate Studies; Vocations; Permanent Deacons; Deacon Formation; Tuition Assistance Program; Campus Ministry Program; Matching Gifts to Catholic Schools; Department of Faith Formation; Youth Ministry; Young Adult Ministry; Guggenheim Center; Department of Worship and the Bishop's Good Samaritan Fund.

It is our hope that 6,700 households will participate in this year's Bishop's Fund Appeal. We are currently 480 households away from our participation goal.

All funds received over this year's goal will provide additional emergency grants to individuals and families through the Bishop's Good Samaritan Fund.

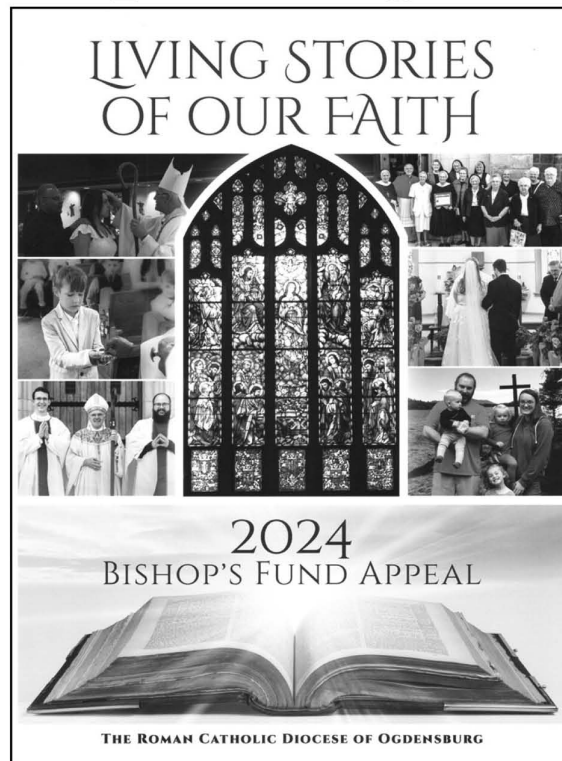
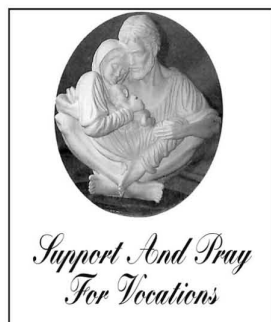
During the year, many families and individuals reach out to their pastor for help with unexpected emergencies. Pastors, on behalf of a parishioner or community member, request Bishop LaValley's assistance

to help the person or family in need. Grant requests for assistance from Bishop's Good Samaritan Fund continue to be on the rise with many of our North Country neighbors in urgent need of assistance due to illness and high medical costs, heating costs, home repairs and loss of homes to fire.

The Bishop's Good Samaritan Fund also provides assistance to food pantries, soup kitchens, outreach centers and snack pack programs so that they may continue to help families in need.

If you have made a pledge to the 2024-25 Bishop's Fund Appeal, you are encouraged to mail your final pledge payment before June 15, 2025.

If you have not made a gift or wish to make an additional gift, donations can be mailed to: The Bishop's Fund Appeal, PO Box 150, Ogdensburg, NY 13669 or made online at [www.rcdony.org/giving/donate-now-bishop-s-fund](http://www.rcdony.org/giving/donate-now-bishop-s-fund).



## REQUEST FOR PRIESTS

WOULD YOU PRAY FOR A PRIEST EACH DAY?

### PRAYER SUGGESTION

O Jesus, Eternal High Priest, live in (name a priest), act in him, speak in and through him. Think your thoughts in his mind, love through his heart. Give him your own dispositions and feelings. Teach, lead and guide him always. Correct, enlighten and expand his thoughts and behavior. Possess his soul; take over his entire personality and life.

Replace him with yourself. Incline him to constant adoration and thanksgiving; pray in and through him. Let him live in you and keep him in this intimate union always. O Mary, Immaculate Conception, Mother of Jesus and Mother of priests, pray and intercede for (...) Amen.

### FEBRUARY

DIOCESE OF  
OGDENSBURG, NY

2025

SUNDAY MONDAY TUESDAY WEDNESDAY THURSDAY FRIDAY SATURDAY

For more copies contact: Diocese of Ogdensburg PO Box 369 Ogdensburg, NY 13669							BISHOP TERRY R. LAVALLEY
REV. JUSTIN THOMAS, HGN	2 REV. SEVERINUS ASIOWME, KWSI TORWOL	3 REV. HOWARD J. VENETTE	4 REV. DANE WESTOFF	5 REV. JOHN R. YONKOVIG, VF	6 REV. PHILIP T. ALLEN	7 OUR PASTOR	8
REV. ANDREW J. AMYOT	9 REV. MEDENEL ANGRAND	10 REV. PIERRE AUBIN, MSC	11 MSGR. ROBERT H. AUCOIN	12 REV. SCOTT A. BELINA	13 REV. CORNELLE EKILA BOYEVE, MSC	14 POPE FRANCIS	15
REV. TIMOTHY G. CANAAN	16 REV. LEAGON J. CARLIN	17 REV. CHRISTOPHER C. CARRARA	18 REV. TOJO CHACKO, HGN	19 REV. DANIEL L. CHAPIN	20 REV. MARTIN E. CLINE	21 DECEASED PRIESTS	22
REV. DOUGLAS G. COMSTOCK	23 REV. MATTHEW S. CONGER	24 REV. THEODORE A. CROSBY	25 REV. PEDRO EDGARDO DE LA ROSA	26 REV. DOUGLAS A. DECKER	27 REV. ROBERT L. DECKER	28	

A donation to help support THE MONTHLY PRAYER REQUEST FOR PRIESTS will be appreciated. For more information visit us online at [www.mprpaprastate.com](http://www.mprpaprastate.com). The Monthly Prayer Request for Priests is graciously underwritten by: Diocese of Ogdensburg, Vocations Society, [www.mprpaprastate.com](http://www.mprpaprastate.com)

# A painting of hope at Our Lady of Grace

Parishioner's art  
helps kick off  
Jubilee 2025

By Keith Benman  
Contributing Writer

The jubilee year theme "Pilgrims of Hope" has been made visible for parishioners at three Catholic churches in southwest St. Lawrence County.

Our Lady of Grace parishioner Maureen Holleran has created a jubilee-year painting, which was on display for the Christmas season at St. John the Evangelist church, in Morristown. It will make the rounds of the parish's other churches for the jubilee declared by Pope Francis.

Its symbolism evokes the theological virtues of faith, hope, and charity, the artist said.

"It's basically meant to be a reference point to engender spirituality among the people in the pews," Holleran said of her painting. "So they can take their spiritual journeys - but they are always anchored in those virtues."

Jubilee year 2025 began when Pope Francis opened the Holy Door of St. Peter's Basilica on Christmas Eve. The pope proclaimed the jubilee last year in a papal bull titled *Spes Non Confudit*, "Hope Does Not Disappoint."

The jubilee year will include a Jubilee for Artists at Vatican City in February, and individual dioceses and parishes throughout the world are being



PHOTOS PROVIDED BY OUR LADY OF GRACE PARISH

**This painting was displayed alongside the Nativity scene at St. John the Evangelist, in Morristown, during Christmas. It was created by Our Lady of Grace parishioner Maureen Holleran.**

asked to include the arts in their celebrations.

With that in mind, Our Lady of Grace pastor Father Christopher C. Carrara approached Holleran in the fall, asking if she could create something that would help convey the meaning of the Jubilee. Holleran has been training for lay ministry, and Father Carrara knew she had an extensive arts background.

"I know that the arts have this ability - whether its music, or painting or drawing - to touch our hearts," Father Carrara said. "They just have the ability to touch the human soul in a way that words sometimes fall short."

The two prayed about it and discussed possible themes and designs. Holleran drew up var-

ious designs and they settled on one where an anchor would be a central design element. The anchor has been displayed by Christians as a symbol of hope since the early days of the Church. It is also an element in the Vatican's "Pilgrims of Hope" logo for the jubilee. Holleran got to work, and her painting was ready for display over the Christmas season.

Along with the theological virtues of faith, hope and charity the painting evokes the parish's setting along the St. Lawrence River. A cross embedded in the anchor signifies faith. The anchor is surmounted by a heart. A chain, signifying "the things that weigh us down," wraps around the anchor. Playful blue and white swirls running across the

bottom of the painting recall the waves of the St. Lawrence River. The word "HOPE" plays across the waves.

Father Carrara will use the painting as an aid for his sermons when it's displayed at the churches. He said he likes the way it can be used to illustrate a wide variety of Gospel readings.

"My interest has always been in helping with liturgical design," Holleran said. "I am enamored of symbolism and all the methods the church has used throughout history to communicate the ideas of faith."

For Holleran, that interest has been developed and refined through years of art education and teaching.

She remembers when as a girl attending St. John's School, in Mor-



Maureen Holleran

ristown, a teacher from Ogdensburg's Mater Dei College would visit for art lessons. Later, she attended the college for a year before going on to SUNY Potsdam and earning a bachelor's degree in art history and ceramics.

She began creating liturgical art early. As a teen and young woman, she created banners for St. John the Evangelist. Later, she created banners for The Shrine of Lourdes in Litchfield, Connecticut. She

spent 22 years teaching art at Catholic schools in Virginia.

Holleran raised four children in Virginia along with her husband John Considine, who passed away in 2015. In 1988, the family began spending summers in Morristown, and Holleran now splits her time between Virginia and Morristown, owning a home there.

"I just feel like I'm fortunate enough to have had the education and the exposure to do something for the Church," she said. "It's very important to me."

## Environmental Stewardship

## What's in your trash?

How often do we throw things into our trash containers without much thought as to where it goes or how much it is costing to remove it? Annie Leonard reminds us in the YouTube video, *The Story of Stuff*, "There is no such thing as away. When you throw something away, it must go somewhere."

When I choose to purchase something online instead of supporting a local store, I will have outer and inner packaging to throw away. Even if it offers free shipping, the earth is paying a cost in carbon emissions to get it to my doorstep and filling my trash container.

What I bring into my home, I will need to dispose of it. So, what is in your trash container? Are there things in it that could be eliminated if shopping was done with attention to packaging? Are there plastic containers that could be washed and repurposed for leftovers or other uses? What ways you have discovered to reduce the amount of trash in your home? One woman shared that her goal was to reduce her waste to one small container a week. Over time, she accomplished her goal through her careful observation of what is in her trash and finding creative ways to reduce it.

When you read this challenge, you may ask yourself why bother? It is just too much work, and I don't have time! If we go back to the Book of Genesis, we may find a reason worth my efforts. "In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth." (Gen. 1:1)

"God took the man and settled him in the garden of Eden to cultivate and take care of it." (Gen. 2:15) When we look around at what we humans have done to this beautiful earth, often through our mindlessness and overconsumption, we can find a spiritual reason for taking on the task of examining what's in our trash and exploring ways to reduce it! So, let's get started!

## Bishop's Public Schedule

**Jan. 30** — 9:45 a.m. — Episcopal Council Meeting at Bishop's Residence followed by Lunch

**Jan. 31** — 6:30 p.m. — Deacon Candidates Class on Canon Law at Wadhams Hall in Ogdensburg

**Feb. 1** — 4 p.m. — Mass at St. Mary's Cathedral

**Feb. 2** — 8 a.m. — Mass at St. Mary's Cathedral

**Feb. 3** — Noon — Mass at St. Mary's Cathedral

## Protecting God's Children

**The Diocese of Ogdensburg** has scheduled Protecting God's Children training sessions. This required training addresses child abuse, the methods and means by which abusers commit abuse, and the five steps to prevent abuse from occurring and stop it from continuing. Pre-registration is encouraged at [www.virtus.org](http://www.virtus.org). Upcoming sessions:

**Feb. 6** — 1 p.m. — Diocesan Offices, Ogdensburg

## 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; [terriannyanulavich@yahoo.com](mailto:terriannyanulavich@yahoo.com); Phone: 518-569-0612; 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)

# New York Supreme Court upholds law barring men from women's sports

By Kate Quiñones  
Catholic News Agency

The New York Supreme Court ruled on Jan. 22 that a Nassau County law prohibiting men from competing in female sports at a county-run facility is constitutional.

State Supreme Court Judge Bruce Cozzens ruled against the Long Island Roller Rebels, a women's roller derby league that had sought to block a Nassau County law banning men from participating in wom-

en's sporting events at the county's parks and recreational facilities.

In his decision, the judge wrote that he "does not find that Local Law 121-24 excludes transgender women and girls from the public facilities based on their gender identity, and the plaintiffs have not shown discrimination under the Human Rights Law and the Civil Rights Law."

Cozzens ruled that the law was not discriminatory as those who identify as transgender can still play in coed sports leagues. In the decision, Cozzens emphasized the risk of injury for women if men are allowed to play on their sports teams.

"The plaintiff is not only asking that transgender athletics be included on female teams but also that they not disclose the transgender identity," Cozzens wrote. "Potentially that creates an even greater risk to the females since they would not even be aware (nor it is assumed would they be permitted to inquire) if a player was a biological male."

"Common sense requires weight classification for wrestling and boxing clearly to protect the safety of the individuals. Common sense requires the same here," Cozzens continued.

Gabriella Larios, staff attorney at the New York Civil Liberties Union, opposed the decision, calling it discriminatory.

"This decision is an outlier among the many courts to have considered the same question," Larios said. "It is

also inconsistent with long-standing state law, which makes clear that Nassau's ban unlawfully discriminates against transgender girls and women, as well as the teams that welcome them."

"This ban leaves a lasting stain on the county's government and legislature, which have been relentless in their efforts to shut trans people out of sports," Larios said.

Nassau County Executive Bruce Blakeman welcomed the decision, calling it "common sense."

"I'm very happy that State Supreme Court Judge Bruce Cozzens ruled that Nassau County's local law banning biological males from playing on female sports teams is constitutional and that we did abide by the law," Blakeman said in a statement.

"As we've said all along, it's just common sense," Blakeman said. "Biological males should not play in female sports. They have a competitive advantage. It's unfair, and it's also unsafe."

Blakeman said he was grateful that federal courts recently ruled in a similar manner.

"The federal courts have recently ruled the same way, so we have the federal courts and the state courts saying that you can make this distinction," Blakeman noted. "We're very happy that both courts have agreed with us."

"I'm gratified that we were the first in America to do it, and I think we set the tone for the rest of the nation," Blakeman said.

## Rest in Peace

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

**Jan. 29** - Msgr. James T. Lyng, 1965; Deacon John L. White, 2019

**Jan. 30** — Rev. John T. Sullivan, 1884; Rev. Eusebius Schlingmann, O.F.M., 1937

**Jan. 31** — Rev. James McGowan, 1910; Rev. B. J. O'Connell, O.S.A., 1925; Rev. Timothy M. Ladden, 2003

**Feb. 1** — Rev. John B. Doonan, 1949; Msgr. George T. Donnelly, 1968; Rev. Edward M. Delaney, 1977; Rev. Robert L. Cotter, 2015

**Feb. 2** — Rev. William Bennett, O.M.I., 1887; Rev. Amadeus Viger, O.S.A., 1915; Rev. George E. Racette, 1961; Rev. Gilbert O. Boisvert, 2017

**Feb. 3** — Rev. John McDonald, 1879

**Feb. 4** — Rev. Joseph Redington, 1892; Rev. Edmund Walsh, 1925; Msgr. Michael R. Burns, 1932; Rev. Henry McArdle, O.S.A., 1969; Rev. Francis Maurus Kearns, 1990

# Trump ends policy of 'sensitive locations' for immigration raids

By Jonah McKeown  
Catholic News Agency

The Department of Homeland Security (DHS) under President Donald Trump this week rescinded Biden-era guidelines that previously required Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) agents to seek their superior's approval before arresting people at or near "sensitive locations" such as churches, hospitals, or schools.

The "sensitive locations" policy began in 2011 with a memo from then-ICE director John Morton. It precluded ICE agents from carrying out immigration enforcement actions in locations like hospitals, places of worship, schools, or during events such as weddings or parades unless there is an urgent need, such as a person who poses an imminent threat or if the agents have sought higher approval to do so.

The Biden administration later issued an expanded definition of "sensitive locations," which added places like playgrounds, homeless shelters, emergency response centers, and domestic violence shelters.

The order was signed by Acting Homeland Security Secretary Benjamin Huffman, who is serving as head of the agency pending the confirmation of South Dakota Gov. Kristi Noem.

"This action empowers the brave men and women in CBP [Customs and Border Protection]

and ICE to enforce our immigration laws and catch criminal aliens — including murders [sic] and rapists — who have illegally come into our country," a DHS spokesperson said Jan. 21.

"Criminals will no longer be able to hide in America's schools and churches to avoid arrest. The Trump administration will not tie the hands of our brave law enforcement and instead trusts them to use common sense."

The possibility of the policy change had been telegraphed in December, when three unnamed sources stated that Trump planned to change the policy as soon as his first day in office as part of his broader immigration agenda. Trump on Monday signed a series of executive orders on immigration, including several that put into motion his campaign promises to close the border to asylum seekers and to carry out mass deportations of people residing in the U.S. illegally — a plan numerous Catholic leaders have criticized as unjust.

Catholic and other Christian leaders had spoken out with "grave concern" over Trump's plans to end the "sensitive locations" policy. The Catholic bishops of Arizona in December argued that raids at "sensitive locations" like churches would violate basic human rights, including religious freedom and the right to family unity, and under-

mine societal stability by discouraging undocumented immigrants from seeking essential services.

Commenting on the then-prospective change, the Catholic Legal Immigration Network Inc. (CLINIC), a group launched by the U.S. bishops in 1988 to support community-based immigration programs and represent low-income migrants, said in December it is "deeply concerned about any changes that would undermine the safety and well-being of immigrants and their families."

"Sensitive locations — such as houses of worship, schools, and hospitals — are sanctuaries where individuals seek solace, education, and critical care without fear of intimidation or detention," Anna Gallagher, CLINIC's executive director, said in a statement to CNA.

"This policy has long recognized the importance of these spaces for fostering trust and community stability. Rescinding it would not only disrupt families and communities but could also deter individuals from accessing essential services, such as education and health care, or practicing their faith freely ... We call for the preservation of protections at sensitive locations to ensure immigrants and their families can live without fear and fulfill their basic needs, including the practice of religion."

## CATHOLIC WORLD AT A GLANCE

### Dems vote down protections for infants who survive abortion

Every Democrat in the U.S. Senate on Jan. 22 voted against legislation that would have required doctors to provide lifesaving health care to infants who are born after a failed abortion attempt, with the party-line opposition effectively dooming the bill. The "Born-Alive Abortion Survivors Protection Act," which was introduced by Republican Sen. James Lankford, would have guaranteed equal protection under the law for "any infant born alive after an abortion." The proposed legislation would have required all health care practitioners present during such a birth to "exercise the same degree of professional skill, care, and diligence to preserve the life and health of the child as a ... health care practitioner would render to any other child born alive at the same gestational age." Although a majority of senators voted to advance the legislation, the bill failed to reach the 60-vote threshold needed to overcome the filibuster. The vote was 52-47 with every voting Republican supporting the bill and every Democrat in opposition. One Republican was not available for the vote.

### Nicaraguan dictatorship confiscates seminary in Matagalpa

The seminary of the Diocese of Matagalpa, Nicaragua, has been confiscated by the country's dictatorship. The confiscation was first reported by the Nicaraguan newspaper Mosaico CSI. According to the outlet, at the time of the confiscation there were at least 30 students in formation at the seminary. St. Aloysius Gonzaga Major Seminary of Philosophy is located in the Diocese of Matagalpa, whose exiled bishop is Rolando Álvarez, who has been living in exile since January 2024 after serving almost one year in prison on the charge of treason. In a post on X, researcher Martha Patricia Molina denounced that in addition to confiscating the seminary, the government of President Daniel Ortega has "also increased surveillance of priests in the diocese." Molina accused the dictatorship of aiming "to completely stop priestly formation" and "annihilate and eliminate the Diocese of Matagalpa." In addition to the seminary, the regime also confiscated on Jan. 16 the La Cartuja Pastoral Center of the Diocese of Matagalpa.

### President Trump pardons imprisoned pro-life activists

President Donald Trump issued pardons for 23 pro-life activists on Jan. 23, fulfilling a promise he made during the presidential campaign. Trump signed the pardons on Thursday in the Oval Office of the White House on the day before the March for Life to be held in Washington, D.C., according to the Thomas More Society. Last week, the religious liberty law firm petitioned the incoming president to issue 21 individual pardons for pro-life advocates who were arrested for violating the federal Freedom of Access to Clinic Entrances (FACE) Act and "Conspiracy Against Rights" statute while peacefully engaging in protests at abortion clinics. Several of those convicted and imprisoned were elderly and in poor health. During his campaign, Trump said he intended to release pro-life activists who are currently imprisoned.

## VIRTUAL EVENTS

## LUNCH TIME DISCUSSION

Join us for a lunchtime discussion of the encyclical letter by Pope Benedict XVI "Spe Salvi: On Christian Hope."

**Date:** Feb. 12, 19 and 26

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

**Place:** Online via Microsoft Teams

**Features:** The document is relatively short (about 30 pages) and can be downloaded [https://www.vatican.va/content/benedict-xvi/en/encyclicals/documents/hf\\_ben-xvi\\_enc\\_20071130\\_spe-salvi.pdf](https://www.vatican.va/content/benedict-xvi/en/encyclicals/documents/hf_ben-xvi_enc_20071130_spe-salvi.pdf). Please join us for this wonderful opportunity learn about Christian Hope and so enter more deeply into this Jubilee Year as Pilgrims of Hope.

**Contact:** If you would like to participate, please register at [www.rcdony.org/brownbag](http://www.rcdony.org/brownbag). The link for the virtual meetings will be sent to you on Feb. 10. For more information, contact Marika Donders at [mdonders@rcdony.org](mailto:mdonders@rcdony.org).

## CLINTON NORTHERN FRANKLIN

## BREAKFAST

Altona — Holy Angels and St. Ann's to have breakfast prepared by the Mooers Knights of Columbus.

**Date:** Feb. 9

**Time:** 8 a.m. to noon

**Place:** Holy Angels Hall

**Cost:** Adults, \$12; Children 5-12, \$7; under 5, Free

**Menu:** Eggs, egg cups, sausage, bacon, pancakes, French toast, cinnamon rolls, homefries, coffee, tea and juice.

## BREAKFAST

Peru — St. Augustine's Knights of Columbus will serve a "Pancakes Plus" Breakfast.

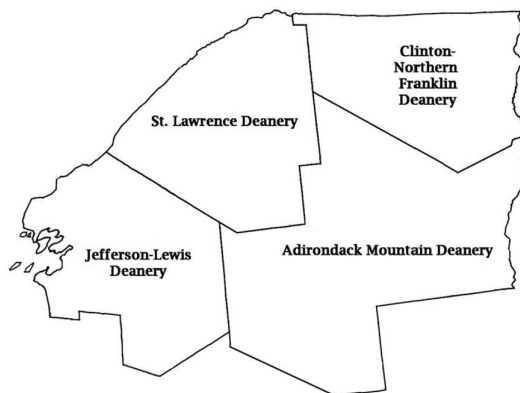
**Date:** Feb. 9

**Time:** 8:30 a.m. to noon

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

**Cost:** Adults, \$10; Children 5 to 11, \$5; under 5, Free; Take-outs, \$10

**Menu:** Pancakes, Waffles, French Toast, Scrambled Eggs,



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

Parishioners are invited to send information about activities to:

North Country Catholic, PO Box 326,

Ogdensburg, NY 13669

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

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

Sausage, Bacon, home fries, Real Maple Syrup, Strawberry Sauce, Coffee, Orange Juice, and Milk.

## JEFFERSON-LEWIS

## SPAGHETTI DINNER

Watertown — St. Anthony's Altar and Rosary Society is sponsoring a spaghetti dinner.

**Date:** Jan. 30

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

**Place:** Downstairs in St. Anthony's church in Msgr. Sechi Hall

**Cost:** Adult, \$10; Child, \$7

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

**Contact:** For more information contact the Parish Center at 315-782-1190

## 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:** Feb. 2

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

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

**Contact:** 315-348-6260

## SPAGHETTI &amp; MEATBALL DINNER

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

**Date:** Feb. 8, March 8

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

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

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

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

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

## PANCAKE BREAKFAST

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:** Feb. 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

## ST. LAWRENCE

## THE RESCUE PROJECT

Massena — Join us as we experience the gospel surrounded by light food, conversation and prayer.

**Date:** Tuesdays starting Jan. 21

**Time:** 6 p.m. to 8

**Place:** St. Mary's Social Hall and via Zoom

**Features:** Facilitated by Father

John Riccardo, the Rescue Project seeks to proclaim the gospel in a compelling and attractive way over 8 weeks in a small group format.

**Contact:** For more information or to register, contact the parish office or visit our website at [www.massencatholics.com](http://www.massencatholics.com).

## ROSARY WITH DEVOTIONS

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

**Date:** Feb. 1

**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:** Feb. 1

**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:** Feb. 1

**Time:** 9 a.m.

**Place:** Sacred Heart Church

## TRIVIA NIGHT

Canton — St. Mary's Church is hosting a Winter Trivia Night.

**Date:** Feb. 8

**Time:** Door open at 5:30 p.m. and trivia starts at 6 p.m.

**Cost:** \$20 per person includes 2 beverages (beer, wine, soda), 2 slices of pizza, popcorn, and an opportunity to win door prizes.

**Features:** Ages 21+. Teams of 4-6 players (single players welcome and will be placed with a team). Free childcare will be available.

**Contact:** Visit [cantoncatholics.com/trivia](http://cantoncatholics.com/trivia) or call the parish office at (315)386-2543 to register your team!

## ST. JAMES GALA

Gouverneur — Save the date for St. James Gala Denim and Diamonds.

**Date:** Feb. 8

**Time:** Starts at 5:45 p.m.

**Place:** St. James School

**Features:** Blue jeans and bling, something for everyone.

**Contact:** For more information visit the school's website for Gala Registration

<https://stjamesk-6.org/> or email Bridgette LaPierre at [advancement@stjamesk-6.org](mailto:advancement@stjamesk-6.org)

## MONTHLY BRUNCH

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

**Date:** Feb. 9

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

**Place:** Father Amyot Parish Center

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

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

## YOUTH ROSARY DAY

Morristown — Youth in grades three through 12 are invited to learn more about the Rosary: Praying with Jesus and Mary.

**Date:** Feb. 21

**Time:** 9:30 a.m. to 3 p.m.; 2:10 p.m. Mass at St. John's Church — Families welcome

**Place:** Our Lady of Grace Parish Center

**Features:** Youth day to learn more about the Rosary including mystery, what it means to meditate, how prayer transforms us and the joyful, luminous, sorrowful and glorious mysteries. Youth will make their own Rosary, pray the Rosary together and celebrate Mass.

**Contact:** Please register by Feb. 14 using the registration form found at <https://www.rcdony.org/parishevent>

## DIOCESAN EVENTS

## SURVIVING DIVORCE

Canton — If you or someone you

CONTINUED ON PAGE 12

# Cardinal Sarah publishes new book

By **Walter Sánchez Silva**  
Catholic News Agency

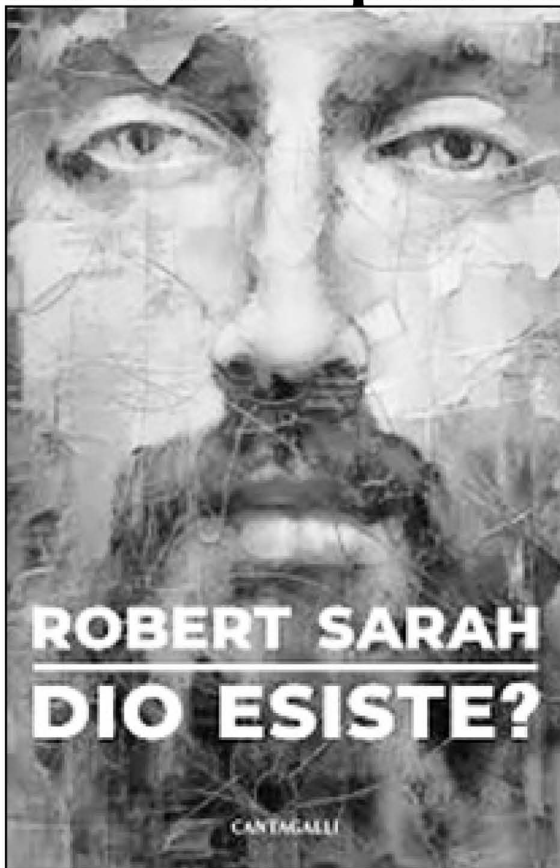
"Does God Exist?: The Cry of Man Asking for Salvation" is the title of a new interview book by Cardinal Robert Sarah, prefect emeritus of the Congregation — now Dicastery — for Divine Worship and the Discipline of the Sacraments.

In the book published in Italian at the end of 2024, the African cardinal answers various questions posed by journalist David Cantagalli and explains that the text "arises from an attempt to answer the questions of the editor ... who with authentic apostolic zeal" wanted to ask "difficult questions."

"I have sought the answers in my personal history and in my heart, in the magisterium of the Church and in that of the popes who have marked my life, and, last but not least, in the fruitful dialogue with friends, priests, and laypeople, who live an authentic passion for Christ and for the Church, bearing witness in the world to him whom they have encountered," Sarah writes.

In a recent interview with *Il Timone* of Italy and reported by *Religion en Liberté*, the cardinal explained why it is man and not God who has "died" in the West: "The West is experiencing a profound identity and anthropological crisis in which man, in his truth and beauty, seems no longer to be aware of his dignity and his vocation to happiness, to the fulfillment of his personal being."

The cardinal also noted that "it is obvious that all this has remote roots, starting from the substitution of the Augustinian 'amo ergo sum' ('I love, therefore I am') with the Cartesian 'cogito ergo



'Does God Exist' by Cardinal Robert Sarah

sum' ('I think, therefore I am'), thus reducing relational ontology to subjective self-consciousness, depriving man of that healthy relationship with reality on which ontology, the knowledge of one's being, is founded."

Sarah warned that there is in fact a crisis of faith in today's world and that it is now at "the deepest and most crucial" point.

As for those who give their lives to God, he emphasized that "I would not say that consecrated

persons 'don't believe'; rather, I am convinced that, precisely because of the cultural conditions unfavorable to the radical nature of virginity for the kingdom of heaven, those who respond to

the vocation today have a serious and radical initial intention."

"The most discussed point is that of fidelity, over time, to the task that God has assigned. In an increasingly hostile cultural context, with the fragmentation of relationships, which does not allow us to perceive the support and warmth of a believing community, it is increasingly complex to live the radical nature of the Gospel. I believe that this is the crucial point for all laypeople and consecrated persons, for all the baptized."

Regarding those who leave the Catholic Church, the African cardinal lamented that "those who leave are always making a mistake. They are making a mistake because they abandon [their] Mother; they are making a mistake because they commit a very dangerous act of pride, setting themselves up as judges of the Church."

"Sometimes not everything is immediately understandable, and some things may seem completely inappropriate, not adequately considered, even pastorally unfounded or harmful; despite all this, this does not authorize them to

leave."

Sarah, 79, is one of the most distinguished cardinals in Africa and the universal Church. He is a staunch defender of the liturgy, the right to life, the family, and religious freedom. On June 15, when he turns 80, he will no longer be a cardinal-elect for a possible conclave to elect the pope's successor.

He has criticized gender ideology, an approach that considers gender to be a sociocultural construct rather than identical to one's sex.

In 2018, during the Synod of Bishops on Young People, he pointed out that "watering down" Catholic moral doctrine in the area of sexuality will not succeed in attracting young people.

He was prefect of the Congregation — now Dicastery — for Divine Worship and the Discipline of the Sacraments during the pontificates of Benedict XVI and Pope Francis.

He is the author of books such as "God or Nothing: A Conversation on Faith," "The Power of Silence," "The Day is Now Far Spent," and "From the Depths of Our Hearts," the latter written with Pope Benedict XVI.

Warm up with Good News!

Visit our website at [www.northcountrycatholic.org](http://www.northcountrycatholic.org)  
to pay by Credit Card for immediate delivery.

OR Send this coupon with payment to:  
North Country Catholic

PO Box 106, Canajoharie, New York, 13317

\*\*Please allow 3-4 weeks for delivery when mailing in your renewal\*\*

☐ Inside Diocese \$27 ☐ Outside Diocese \$30

I want to be a Patron: ☐ \$35 ☐ \$50 ☐ \$100 ☐ \$250

☐ New Subscription ☐ Renewal

☐ Please send my  
subscription to my  
e-mail address:

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Parish \_\_\_\_\_



Warm up with a  
subscription to the  
*North Country Catholic*  
and find out what is  
happening with the  
Diocese of Ogdensburg.

## SUNDAY'S SCRIPTURE

## Wonder and surprise

Christmas time is filled with surprises. We plan for the regular routine of Christmas: crib, Mass, meals, presents. We look forward to repeating and celebrating and reliving this great feast.

But amid the routine events of Christmas, there are the surprises. The unexpected gift, the unplanned visitors, and maybe the unwanted extra burdens. Yes, Christmas is filled with routine and surprises.

The feast of the Presentation of the Lord is replete with routine and surprise. This feast occurs on February 2. So, when that date is a Sunday, it replaces the Sun-

day readings. Isn't that a surprise!

The Gospel tells us that, according to custom, Mary and Joseph went to the temple in Jerusalem to present their new child to the Lord. Who knows what they were saying to each other or thinking as they traveled. Little did they know that the words from Malachi in the first reading would be fulfilled in their lives.

"And suddenly there will come to the temple the Lord whom you seek." Isn't that a surprise!

Can you imagine yourself bringing your child for baptism into the church and having a

February 2

Feast of the  
Presentation of the Lord

READINGS

Malachi 3:1-4

Hebrews 2:14-18

Luke 2:22-40

stranger hold your baby and his saying something like: "Well, now, I have seen everything. My life is complete. This is the child who will fulfill all my expectations." Imagine his surprise and certainly that of the child's parents.

Mary and Joseph were without a doubt pleasantly surprised at Simeon's words. However, their delight may have turned to sorrow when Simeon added "and you yourself a sword will pierce." A seemingly or-

inary couple with an ordinary child approached by an ordinary man with extraordinary and unexpected comments and warnings.

The prophetess Anna, a daily participant in the temple, adds her comments to the situation. She, too, envisions this child as the fulfillment of "all who were awaiting the redemption of Jerusalem."

Place yourself into this Gospel scene and, like Simeon and Anna, bask in knowing who this child is, what this child will do, and ultimately realizing that this child will be humanity's savior, the chosen one, the Christ who is the savior of humanity and your personal savior. Can it get any better than this? To add to the wonder

and surprise, we, too, share in this awe each time we receive the Eucharist.

The Presentation of the Lord is not just a moment in time. The feast reminds us that Jesus truly is for the world and for each one of us.

Would you like a surprise in your life? Reflect carefully the second reading of this Sunday's Mass - Hebrews 2:14-18. Jesus is not just a man; Jesus is God who became one of us in order to save us, to free us from sin, to give us a new perspective on life, and to help us on the right path to eternal life. Committing one's life as a faithful disciple of Jesus will bring surprises now and into eternity.



Msgr. Robert  
H. Aucoin

## CALLED TO SERVE

## Should I bow or genuflect?

Some things make me cringe. Inappropriate reverence in church and at Mass is one of those things. Last week I wrote about the actions of ministers. This week, I'll vent some more.

When and why we take a knee or bow is important - not earth shattering but significant.

We genuflect before God. We acknowledge His presence by humbly saying "We adore you, God." We genuflect when we arrive at our pew and when we leave the pew at the end of Mass. That's it.

"We bow because we are grateful to be in this place, in this moment of prayer," an online Catholic Practices author writes. "We bow be-

cause we are listening and speaking to God. We bow to the altar, to the cross, to any symbol that calls to mind what He's done for me."

If I witness genuflecting or bowing taken to extremes, my natural inclination is to make a face. We call that kind of facial distortion a gurn.

I have learned to keep my gurns to myself. If I did not remain expressionless, you might see me scowl, or shake my head, or give some other facial sign that what just happened rubbed me the wrong way. There is no place for personal opinion at Mass.

But a column like this is different. Watch me make a face!

When a minister who thinks he or she should genuflect when passing the Tabernacle does not stop long enough to pay appropriate reverence God is a good example. The minister in this case never misses a step as he bends his knee as if in a dance routine and keeps going. Gurn!

When ushers genuflect at the first pew before they take-up a collection.

I particularly dislike the attempt to genuflect at the first pew if the ushers have returned for a second collection.

Why are they genuflecting? Is it to the tab-

ernacle, the altar, the celebrant? Is it to impress the congregation with their lock-step action?



Deacon  
Kevin Mastellon

Each usher is carrying a basket for collection. We tell altar servers not to genuflect if they are carrying a cross or candle or incense. Do offertory baskets qualify? I think so.

Gurn! There are a few ushers who should not try to genuflect anyway. Bow if you must do something.

When a member of the congregation heads for the restroom or takes a wailing child out of the nave, it is not necessary to genuflect every time

you exit or enter a pew. You may have been taught that, but it isn't necessary. Genuflect when you enter Church, usually at the pew. Genuflect when you leave Church, usually at the pew. Say "we adore you, God" each time.

None of this is intended to teach disrespect for Jesus, quite the opposite.

We are at Mass to thank God for His blessings and to ask Him to walk with us on our journey. We need to avoid any distractions from that purpose.

*Deacon Kevin Mastellon ministers in Watertown.*

*He is the director of Permanent Deacons for the Diocese of Ogdensburg.*

# Our mission to migrants and refugees

I am the son of Ukrainian refugees.

My parents came to the United States after World War II, carrying with them scars of trauma and stories of survival. As teens, they experienced the brutality of both the Soviet and Nazi regimes – witnessing repression and genocide, ultimately being forced to flee their homeland. During World War II some seven million inhabitants of Ukrainian lands were killed. My mother lost her older sister, a member of the Ukrainian resistance who was bludgeoned to death by a Soviet agent, as well as her mother, who died as a refugee in Austria. My father was the only one from his family who managed to escape; the rest remained trapped behind the Iron Curtain. He was finally able to see his mother 25 years later, just a year before her death.

I share these family



## 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  
info@rcdony.org

memories to convey that for me and for many Ukrainian Americans the images of February and March 2022 – of millions of Ukrainians forced to leave their homes and lives behind due to the Russian invasion – resonate deeply.

I grew up with – stories of profound, often unspeakable and unspoken carnage woven into our family history. Yet in these stories, there was also hope. My parents' generation did more than survive or find coping mechanisms; they lived fully and fruitfully, creating new life...

How can the Church in the United States support those currently facing

challenges here? What actions can be taken to assist individuals who have lost their homes due to destruction, occupation? How can we enhance the physical, mental and spiritual well-being of those who found refuge in the U.S.?

In Ukraine, my parents lived less than 20 miles apart, yet they met at Saint George's Church in Manhattan. For them, the church was a safe haven – a place to find themselves amid turmoil. Within a year, they were married in that same church. Their cohort, known in Ukrainian diaspora studies as the "third wave," counted 85,000 people. Arriving

with nothing but their faith, the refugees filled existing parishes, established new ones, opened schools and built community organizations.

My parents sought out the Church. Today, the Ukrainians who arrive need the Church to seek them out. Pope Francis calls us to be a "Church on her feet," a Church that "goes forth" – a community of missionary disciples who take initiative, engage, accompany, and bear fruit. This is especially true for a Church that seeks to serve forced migrants and refugees who carry profound trauma and need healing... Violence and forced displacement tear apart a person's life, sever relationships, and create a great unknown. "Who am I now that I have lost all my possessions, possibly family members, and the ground beneath my feet?"

People need to feel

the healing presence of the Church. The Church must listen; most people need to be heard before they can begin to heal.

At the heart of our mission is the call to help people rediscover who they are – that they are beloved children of God. It is vital to hear their pain and their questions and to bear witness to the Good News of the Gospel. If we can be present, then God's presence becomes more understandable. The Lord has placed us in this world to be signs of the personal relationship He offers.

Our mission to migrants and refugees – whether serving millions or just one person we encounter – starts with presence. That's what the Church seeks to offer.

*Article by Metropolitan Borys Gudziak, Ukrainian Catholic Archbishop of Philadelphia and courtesy of the National Pontifical Mission Societies.*

## OBITUARIES

**Brushton** – Korleen A. (Denio) Savage, 92; Mass of Christian Burial Jan. 25, 2025 at St. Mary's Church; burial in St. Mary's Cemetery.

**Carthage** – Josephine L. (Remedianni) Avallone, 99; Memorial Mass to be held at a later date; burial in St. James Cemetery.

**Carthage** – Nancy Ann Braun Colton, 90; Memorial Mass Feb. 1, 2025 at St. James Church.

**Copenhagen** – Clifford G. Mattis, 91; Mass of Christian Burial Jan. 24, 2025 at St. Mary's Church; burial in St. Peter's Cemetery, New Bremen.

**Edwards** – Deborah (Boyle) Clark, 76; Mass of Christian Burial Jan. 25, 2025 at Sacred Heart Church; burial in Fairview Cemetery.

**Ellenburg** – Marguerite LaBombard Colgan, 92; Mass of Christian Burial Jan. 27, 2025 at St. Edmund's Church; burial in the Town of Ellenburg Mausoleum.

**Ellenburg** – Dorothy F. (Trombley) Rabideau, 95; Mass of Christian Burial Jan. 21, 2025 at St. Edmund's Church.

**Hogansburg** – Julius Louis David, 61; Mass of Christian Burial Jan. 22, 2025 at St. Regis Church; burial in Kateri Cemetery.

**Hogansburg** – Louie R. Smoke, 83; Services Jan. 23, 2025 at Akwesasne Homemaker.

**Lake Placid** – Andrew Allan Hood, 86; Mass of Christian Burial Jan. 22, 2025 at St. Agnes Church; burial in St. Agnes Cemetery.

**Lowville** – Herbert Rowsam, 80; Funeral Services Jan. 26, 2025 at

Iseneker Funeral Home; burial in Martinsburg Cemetery.

**Malone** – Gordon Joseph Marlowe, 87; Mass of Christian Burial Jan. 23, 2025 at Notre Dame Church; burial in Notre Dame Cemetery.

**Massena** – Barbara J. (McGuire) Rochefort, 74; Mass of Christian Burial Jan. 25, 2025 at St. Joseph's Church; burial in Calvary Cemetery.

**Plattsburgh** – Margaret R. (LaValley) Page, 80; Mass of Christian Burial Jan. 24, 2025 at St. Peter's Church.

**Plattsburgh** – Tracy Jocoldvard-Pellerin, 61; Mass of Christian Burial Jan. 25, 2025 at St. John's Church.

**Ogdensburg** – Sandra J. (White) Montroy, 85; Graveside Services

in the spring at Ogdensburg Cemetery.

**Rouses Point** – Christopher Andrew Young, 74; Mass of Christian Burial Jan. 28, 2025 at St. Patrick's Church.

**Saranac Lake** – Kevin Michael Callaghan, 60; Mass of Christian Burial in Spring; burial in St. Paul's Catholic Cemetery, Bloomingdale.

**Ticonderoga** – Robert John Bush, Jr., 70; Mass of Christian Burial in Spring at St. Mary's Church; burial in St. Mary's parish cemetery.

**Tupper Lake** – Marcella M. (Richer) Gaudet, 97; Mass of Christian Burial Jan. 25, 2025 at St. Alphonsus Church; burial in St. Alphonsus Cemetery.

**Tupper Lake** – Jeannette Mary (Madore) Gills, 94; Mass of

Christian Burial Jan. 28, 2025 at St. Alphonsus Church.

**Watertown** – Estelle A. (D'Agostino) Guardino, 88; Mass of Christian Burial April 12, 2025 at Holy Family Church; burial in Glenwood Cemetery.

**Watertown** – Marion E. (Barrisford) Kirkland, 92; Mass of Christian Burial Jan. 22, 2025 at Holy Family Church; burial in Brookside Cemetery.

**Watertown** – Jean C. (O'Brien) Lillie, 101; Mass of Christian Burial Jan. 28, 2025 at Our Lady of the Sacred Heart Church; burial in Calvary Cemetery.

**Watertown** – Rosa (Guglielmetti) Muglia, 77; Mass of Christian Burial Jan. 25, 2025 at St. Anthony's Church; burial in Glenwood Cemetery.

## Around the diocese

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 8

know is separated or divorced and looking for hope and healing, please consider joining us for the Surviving Divorce Program. We are now accepting registrations for sessions held at the Canton location.

**Cost:** \$25

**Features:** The sessions will begin the last week in January or as soon as we receive registrations from sufficient participants. Days and times will vary by the scheduling needs of the participants. The facilitator will contact participants to set the dates and times of the meetings.

**Contact:** For more information or help with registering, please contact Steve Tartaglia at 315-393-2920.

### 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: 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](http://www.rcdony.org/priesthooddiscernment). For more information **contact:** Father Howard Venette – [hvenette@rcdony.org](mailto:hvenette@rcdony.org)

### NEIGHBORING DIOCESES

### FINDING THE ONE, SPRING WORKSHOP

Dewitt, Syracuse – Spring Workshop to be help about rebuilding the bridge and welcoming people back home to the church.

**Date:** March 22

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

**Place:** Holy Cross Church

**Cost:** Free, but you must register to attend

**Features:** It's no secret, the fastest growing population in our Church, sadly, are those who have left the Church. These may include our grown children, a spouse, a parent or grandparent, another relative, or a close friend. No generation has been immune from this departure. Let's turn our sadness into HOPE by taking a deep dive into understanding that God works through everyone - including YOU - to act as His hand, open and outstretched, to meet people where they are, ready to listen to their story, joyfully prepared for an encounter with our sisters and brothers who have left, to welcome them home. In addition to the variety of speakers for this event, we are honored to have Bishop Douglas Lucia as our keynote speaker.

**Contact:** To register go to <https://events.syracusediocese.org/view/6896/finding-the-one-for-ministry-spring-workshop> For more information contact Deacon Jeff Dixie: [jdixie@syrdio.org](mailto:jdixie@syrdio.org)

### IGNITE 2025

Syracuse – Catholic Men's Conference to be held

**Date:** March 29

**Features:** We are excited to announce that the IGNITE Catholic Men's Conference is back with a great lineup of speakers: Bear Woznick, Father Chase Hilgenbrinck and Ben Steele. Bishop Lucia will start the day with Mass. IGNITE will return to Bishop Ludden Junior/Senior High School this year. Mark your calendar NOW and register early to save \$20. We are challenging everyone to not only register yourself but bring a family member or friend to share the day. Please go to the event website for the bios of the speakers, schedule for the day and to register.

**Contact:** Register online at [www.ignitecatholicmen.org](http://www.ignitecatholicmen.org)



## Adoration in the Diocese of Ogdensburg

The following is a list of Adoration hours and sites across the Diocese of Ogdensburg. If your parish offers Eucharistic Adoration or if this information is incorrect email [news@rcdony.org](mailto:news@rcdony.org)

### Holy Angels Church, Altona

After 8 a.m. Mass  
Dedicated to Vocations and the church

### St. Patrick's Church, Brasher Falls

Wed. & Fri. 11 a.m. to 5 p.m.

### St. Mary's Church, Canton

Tues. 4:10 p.m. to 5:10  
Fri. 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. ending with Divine Mercy Chaplet

### St. Vincent of Paul, Cape Vincent

First Friday of the month

### St. James Church, Carthage

Wed., 3 p.m. to 6  
Thurs., 10 a.m. to 11  
First Friday, 10:15 a.m. to 7 a.m. Saturday morning

### St. Patrick's Church, Chateaugay

Wed. 5 p.m. to 6, Adoration  
First Friday 8:30 a.m., Communion  
Service followed by Adoration for Vocations

### All Saints Church, Chaumont

First Thursday of the month 3 p.m.

### Sacred Heart Church, Chazy

At various times as needed, please contact parish 518-846-7650 for more information

### St. Mary's Church, Clayton

First Fridays after 9 a.m. Mass

### St. Francis of Assisi, Constable

Second Friday of the Month, 5 p.m. to 6

### St. Mary's Church, Constableville

First Fridays 6 p.m.

### St. Stephen's Church, Croghan

First Friday, 6:30 p.m. to 7:30 including prayer for Vocations

### St. Joseph's Church, Dannemora

Wed. & Fri. 11 a.m. before noon Mass

### St. Elizabeth's Church, Elizabethtown

Summer 9 a.m. to 10  
Winter 11 a.m. to 12 p.m.

### St. Edmund's Church, Ellenburg

Monday after 5:30 p.m. Mass

### St. Mary's of the Fort, Fort Covington

Tues. 5 p.m. to 6, Sat. 9 a.m. to 10 except when it's a First Saturday

### St. Hedwig's Church, Houseville

First Sunday following 11 a.m. Mass

### Immaculate Conception, Keeseville

Sun, 1 p.m. to 4

### St. Agnes Church, Lake Placid

Tues 1 p.m. to 5:30,  
Vocations Emphasized

### St. Peter's Church, Lowville

First Friday of the month with intention to Vocations

### St. Bernard's Church, Lyon Mountain

First Friday of the month after 9 a.m. Mass

### St. Peter's Parish, Massena

Held at Sacred Heart Church  
Thursday 12:45 p.m. to 1:45  
First Friday 2 p.m. to 6

### St. Ann's Church, Mooers Forks

after 8 a.m. Mass  
Dedicated to Vocations and the church

### St. Augustine Church, North Bangor

Thurs. 10 a.m. to 11 a.m.

### St. Andrew's Church, Norwood

Fri after 8:30 a.m. Mass until noon

### St. Mary's Cathedral Parish, Ogdensburg

Entryway for the Deacon Winter Chapel  
Thurs. before First Friday from 7 p.m. to 8  
Adoration each Wednesday 3 p.m. to 6

### St. John's Church, Plattsburgh

Holy Family Basement  
Wed., Thurs., Fri., 9 a.m. to 9 p.m.

### St. Martin's Church, Port Leyden

Rectory Chapel  
Wed. Mornings after Mass for 30 minutes

### St. Mary's Church, Potsdam

Tues. 12:45 p.m. to 4:30  
First Friday 8:30 a.m. to 9:30

### Church of the Assumption, Redford

Tues. & Thurs. 11 a.m. before noon Mass

### St. Ann's Church, St. Regis Falls

First Saturday, following 4:30 anticipated Mass

### St. Andrews Church, Sackets Harbor

Fri. 3:30 p.m. to 4:30

### St. Alphonsus-Holy Name of Jesus Parish, Tupper Lake

Monday 7 p.m. to 8

### Holy Family Church, Watertown

Monday's following noon Mass

### Our Lady of the Sacred Heart Church, Watertown

1 hour prior to Mass, First Friday of the Month

### St. Anthony's Church, Watertown

First Sunday of the Month 2 p.m. to 3

### St. Patrick's Church, Watertown

Every Thurs. after Noon Mass until 8 p.m.

### St. Ann's Church, Wells

Half an hour after Sunday Mass every Third Sunday of the month.

### St. Philip Neri Church, Westport

Half Hour every other Fri. (before Mass Winter/after Mass Summer)

### St. Philip of Jesus, Willsboro

Full Holy Hour on First Fridays (before Mass Winter/after Mass Summer)